# unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

## v89

## Psalms

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Tyre, Tyrians ..... 4968
understand, understanding, thinking ..... 4969
vain, vanity ..... 4970

vine ..... 4971
vineyard ..... 4972
virgin, virginity ..... 4973
vision, envision ..... 4974
wadi ..... 4975
waste, wasted, wasteland, becomes weak ..... 4976
watch (biblical time) ..... 4977
watch, guard, take heed, beware ..... 4978
watchtower, tower ..... 4979
wheat ..... 4980
wine, wineskin, new wine ..... 4981
winnow, sift ..... 4983
wise, wisdom ..... 4984
woe ..... 4986
womb ..... 4988
word of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, word of truth, scripture ..... 4989
world, worldly ..... 4992
wrath, fury ..... 4994
wrong, wronged, wrongdoer, mistreat, hurt, hurtful ..... 4996
Yahweh of hosts, Yahweh of armies, God of armies, God of hosts, host of heaven, host of the heavens, Lord of hosts ..... 4997
Yahweh, Yah ..... 4998
year ..... 5002
zeal, zealous ..... 5003
Zebulun ..... 5004
Zion, Mount Zion ..... 5005

# unfoldingWord® Translation Notes - Psalms

## Introduction to Psalms

### Part 1: General Introduction

#### Outline of Psalms

1. Book One (Psalms 1–41): Psalms of David
2. Book Two (Psalms 42–72): Mostly psalms of David
3. Book Three (Psalms 73–89): Psalms of Asaph, the Korahites, Ethan
4. Book Four (Psalms 90–106): Mostly anonymous psalms
5. Book Five (Psalms 107–150): Mostly anonymous, several psalms of David

#### What is the book of Psalms?

The book of Psalms is a collection of songs that are addressed to God or that speak about God. The word “psalm” comes from a Greek term that described a song that a person would sing while playing a stringed instrument. In many languages, the word now refers to the songs in this collection in the Bible. (All of the songs were written in Hebrew, but they are now called by a Greek name because at one point many Jews became speakers of Greek.) People often call the writers of these psalms “psalmists.”

#### What title should translators use for this book?

Translators may use the traditional title of this book, “The Book of Psalms,” or just “Psalms.” Another possible title for this book is “Songs for Worship,” which expresses the meaning of the term “psalms” as it applies to the songs in this book. Translators may use a title that expresses that meaning in their own language, or they may choose to transliterate the term “psalms,” that is, to use that word and spell it the way it sounds in their own language.

## Why were the songs in this book written?

The psalmists composed these songs for a variety of reasons. In some psalms, they expressed their praise to God. In other psalms, they asked God for help and expressed confidence in his love and power. In still others, they confessed their sins and begged for mercy. The Israelites wrote some psalms to ask Yahweh to defeat their enemies. Other psalms celebrated the event of a new king beginning his reign. They wrote some psalms to instruct people on how to be wise by honoring Yahweh and obeying his law. Pilgrims sang some of the psalms while traveling to Jerusalem to worship there. Psalms written for all of these reasons became songs that people sang to worship Yahweh at his temple. Many songs that people found especially meaningful and enjoyable to sing in temple worship were collected together into this book, which has become part of the Bible.

## When were the songs in the book of Psalms written?

The psalms were written over a long period of time. Moses probably wrote the earliest psalm around 1400 B.C. David and Asaph wrote their psalms between 1020 and 975 B.C. The Korahites may have written their psalms before Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jews were exiled to Babylon in 587 B.C. Psalm 126 appears to come from the period after the exile, which ended in 538 B.C.

## Why do some versions number the psalms differently from others?

From ancient times, people have numbered the psalms in different ways. The Jews numbered the psalms in Hebrew in one way. When the psalms were translated into Greek, they were numbered in a different way. Also, the people who compiled and transmitted the book of Psalms seem to have wanted a round number of 150 psalms, and they divided and combined individual psalms in order to achieve that total. This was done in different ways in different versions. For example, in the traditional Hebrew text, Psalms 42 and 43 are presented as separate psalms while Psalm 116 is presented as a single psalm. In the ancient Greek version, Psalms 42 and 43 are a single psalm and Psalm 116 is presented in parts as two different psalms. The Hebrew and Greek numbering and the divisions and combinations of some psalms were passed down through the centuries, and a variety of systems are in use today. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to use the system that it uses. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to use the system that the ULT uses.

## Part 2: Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Book

Most of the psalms were written in one of a few basic forms that were common in ancient Hebrew songwriting. These forms allowed the biblical songwriters to structure a creative expression of the powerful emotions and intense spiritual sensations that arose from their deep experiences with God. Psalmists used specific forms for specific purposes.

Notes to individual psalms will suggest what form they use. (Some psalms combine or adapt the basic forms.) Recognizing from the form the type of situation that the psalmist was addressing will help translators understand and appreciate each psalm as a whole in order to translate it effectively into their language.

### Psalms of supplication (laments)

The most common type of psalm in this collection is a plea for God's help in a time of trouble. About one third of the psalms fit this type. These are often called "psalms of supplication" or "laments." Many begin with a cry for help. The psalmist calls out to God, begging for rescue in urgent and emotional tones. The psalmist may then describe the troubles he is experiencing, but he may also make a statement of trust, expressing his confidence in God's goodness and power despite these difficulties. He may ask God to do something specific to help him. He may say that God should do this because he is innocent of any wrongdoing. He may promise to praise God publicly once he has received his help. Not every psalm of supplication has all of these elements, and the elements that are present may appear in a variety of orders. Nevertheless, in these psalms of supplication, there is a recognizable basic pattern of calling for help from a standpoint of trust.

### Psalms of thanksgiving

People who had promised to praise God publicly for his help sang another kind of psalm in order to do that. Those psalms are often called "psalms of thanksgiving." They too are composed from a number of common elements. There may be an opening summary statement that God helped the psalmist when he was in trouble. The psalmist may call others to join him in praising God for this. He may describe the trouble he was in and state specifically that he asked God to help him. He may then depict, often through vivid imagery, how God helped him, and he may conclude with an expression of praise and thanks. Once again, not every psalm of thanksgiving

has all of these elements, and the elements that are present may appear in a variety of orders, but a basic pattern is recognizable.

## Psalms of praise

The third basic type of song in this book is often called a "psalm of praise." Its focus is not on the writer and his situation but on God and his worthiness to be worshiped. In a psalm of praise, the writer calls other people to worship God with him, and he gives reasons why they should do that. The essential dynamic of psalms of praise is alternation between calls to worship and reasons to worship (though some of them consist almost entirely of a call to worship). A reason to worship is typically introduced with the term "for." Psalm 47:5–6 say, for example, "Sing praise to our king, sing praise! For God is the king of all of the earth." One particular type of praise psalm is a "song of Zion," which celebrates Mount Zion and the city of Jerusalem and the temple there as the center of God's presence and rule over the earth.

## Psalms of trust

A psalmist may sometimes expand one element of a basic form so that it fills all or most of a psalm. For example, psalmists who asked God for help often expressed their trust in him. Some psalms consist almost entirely of an expression of trust. The troubles of the psalmist may be dimly perceptible in the background, but these psalms are essentially calm, stately affirmations of reliance on God. They are therefore called "psalms of trust."

## Penitential psalms

Sometimes a psalmist recognizes that the trouble that he is experiencing is the result of sin that he has committed. In addition to difficulties that are consequences of his sin or punishments for it, he is deeply troubled by guilt. He asks God to forgive him and restore him. Expressing sorrow for doing wrong is sometimes called "penitence," and so such psalms are sometimes called "penitential psalms." They are a specific kind of psalm of supplication.

## Imprecatory psalms

Sometimes psalmists who are troubled by wicked enemies become concerned not only for their own survival but for God's reputation for upholding justice. If treacherous people succeed and prosper, others may question whether God is good

and powerful enough to vindicate the righteous and punish the wicked. Those others may then choose to act wickedly themselves, and the entire society will become violent and corrupt. So a psalm of supplication for deliverance from enemies may include a call for God to destroy the wicked. That kind of request is sometimes called an “imprecation.” When this call expands and becomes the major element of a composition, that psalm may be called an “imprecatory psalm.” Christian readers of such psalms, knowing that Jesus told his followers to love their enemies, are often troubled by the call for God to destroy wicked people. It is important to appreciate that psalmist is not asking for revenge. He is asking God to demonstrate his justice.

## Wisdom psalms

Some psalms make a practical application of the truth about God’s justice. They teach their listeners about the two very different fates that await wicked people and righteous people. These psalms urge their audiences to cultivate wisdom (the ability to choose the right course in life) by fearing God, that is, by having great reverence for God and obeying him. While some wisdom psalms present their teaching within the framework of one of the basic types, other wisdom psalms are different. They are addressed to people, rather than to God, and they consist essentially of teaching rather than of supplication, thanksgiving, or praise. One type of psalm that is similar to a wisdom psalm depicts God assembling and addressing the Israelites, commending those who are faithfully obeying his covenant but warning those who are acting wickedly.

## Royal psalms

God’s power and goodness can be questioned in a psalm of supplication, vindicated in a psalm of thanksgiving, and celebrated in a psalm of praise. Some praise psalms celebrate how God is enthroned as king above all the earth and how, from that position of authority, he exercises his power on behalf of justice and helps needy people. The description of God’s enthronement as a reason to worship can expand to fill an entire psalm of praise. When it does, the psalm may be known as a “divine enthronement psalm” or “royal psalm.” Another type of royal psalm is a prayer for God to help the Israelite king uphold justice and help needy people as God’s representative on earth. This type of royal psalm, a specific kind of psalm of supplication, may also ask God to defeat the king’s foreign enemies so that he can continue to rule. Some such psalms celebrate the occasion of a new king beginning his rule.

## Styles of psalms

The background information that the book of Psalms provides about many of the songs in this collection (see the discussion of "superscriptions" in Part 3 of this introduction) sometimes includes a description of the style of a psalm.

In several cases, a psalm is identified as a "maskil." Biblical scholars have different understandings of what that term means. Some say it means "to instruct," while others say that the word refers to the skill used in creating the psalm. Still others think it means that meditation should be used in reading this psalm. Since the meaning is not certain, in your translation, you may wish to represent this word in its Hebrew form, as the ULT and UST do, and spell it the way it sounds in your language.

In several other cases, a psalm is identified as a "miktam." The exact meaning of this term is also uncertain. Some scholars think it may refer to a kind of writing or musical style, while others suggest it describes the psalm's tone or purpose. It may mean that a psalm is a prayer for protection or a song of confidence. Since the meaning is not certain, you may wish to represent this word as well in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language.

Fifteen short psalms, collected together as Psalms 120–134, are each called a "song of ascents." Most interpreters understand this title to mean that they were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for the great festivals of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. (The term "ascents" is used because going up to Jerusalem involved a climb of about 3,000 feet up Mount Zion.) These songs are written in a variety of forms, and while many of them refer directly to the journey and the festivals, they also speak about a broad range of other experiences. So this description refers as much to the occasion of these psalms as their style, although they are generally short and communal.

Several of the psalms follow a pattern in which the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet begin each poetic line, each half-line, every second line, or even every eight lines in a row. This pattern is known as an "acrostic," from a Greek term that describes the start of a line of poetry. The alphabetic pattern may be used as an aid to memory, and it may also depict a composition as speaking comprehensively about a subject. The background information that the book of Psalms provides does not identify these psalms as having been written in this style, since this would have been obvious to the original Hebrew audience, but notes to these psalms will identify them as acrostics.

## Part 3: Translation Issues in This Book

### How should translators represent the poetry in the book of Psalms?

The psalms, as the words to songs, are poetry. Hebrew poetry was based on the repetition of ideas. Typically the first part of a line would say something, and the second part of that line would repeat the same idea in different words. (In some cases, the second part of a line may elaborate on the idea in the first part or state something contrasting.) Translation teams must decide how to represent the lines in which both parts express the same idea. Readers may think that the psalmist is saying something different in the second part of the line but not be able to figure out what that is, since the psalmist is actually not doing that. So one approach is to combine the two parts into a single statement of the idea. However, to show readers the character of Hebrew poetry, it may be preferable to include both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. (This can be valuable in many cases because the second part, while restating the idea, often advances or intensifies it in some way.) Often the term "and" connects the two parts, and it may be clearer in your language to connect them with a different term in order to show that the second part of the line is repeating the idea in the first part, not saying something different. For example, Psalm 19:1 says, "The heavens are declaring the glory of God, and the sky is proclaiming the work of his hands." A translation might say, "The heavens are declaring the glory of God; indeed, the sky is proclaiming the work of his hands."

Translation teams must also decide whether to try to represent the poetry in the Psalms in a poetic form that is characteristic of their own language. This is often difficult to do, since poetic forms vary so much from one language to another. Unless poetry in the translators' language happens to be very similar to Hebrew poetry, a common approach is to represent the psalms as prose, that is, as ordinary language, but to format them in a way that shows they are poetry in the original language. The ULT and UST do that by setting each line farther to the right on the page than regular text. They indent the second part of a line (and a third part, if there is one) farther to the right than the first part of the line. Translators may have conventions in their own languages and cultures that will allow them to translate the psalms as ordinary language but display them as poetry.

However translation teams decide to represent the poetry in the Psalms, it is valuable to retain the images that the psalmists use, such as God being like a shepherd or like a huge rock. These images reflect the original cultural and historical context of the Bible, which is helpful background for readers to have in order to understand what

the Bible is saying. In many cases the images are used in various parts of the Bible with similar meaning but significant shades of difference, and it is helpful for readers to see how the biblical writers are using images in these different ways. So if an image communicates well in your language, please use it in your translation. If not, consider expressing it as a comparison. For example, for the statement in Psalm 23:1, "Yahweh is my shepherd," you might say, "Yahweh cares for me as a shepherd cares for his sheep." For the statement in Psalm 18:2, "Yahweh is my rock," you might say, "Yahweh to me is like a high rock that I can climb up to reach safety from danger."

## How should translators represent the introductions that many psalms have?

In many cases, information about a psalm is provided before the beginning of the psalm. This information is sometimes called a "superscription." That term describes something that is written above something else.

Some versions do not give verse numbers to the superscriptions, while other versions do. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to do what it does. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to do what the ULT does. Whether or not translators give the superscriptions in the Psalms verse numbers, they should consider them as part of the divinely inspired biblical text. They may wish to use special formatting to show that they are not part of the original composition of the psalm. The ULT does this by putting them in italics.

Translators should use care in translating the phrases in superscriptions that associate a psalm with a person. For example, about half of the psalms are called a "psalm of David" or simply "Of David." This may mean that King David wrote them. However, it could also mean that someone else wrote the psalm for David, or that the psalm was written in the same style that David used when he wrote songs. Translators can be more confident that this expression means that David wrote the psalm when the superscription describes a historical situation in David's life as the occasion of its composition. The UST models various ways to translate the phrases that associate a psalm with a person, sometimes with expressions that could allow a range of meanings ("A psalm of David") and sometimes with more specific expressions ("David wrote this psalm when …").

Some superscriptions give instructions about how a psalm should be played and sung. They may tell which instruments, singers, or melodies should be used for that psalm. The superscriptions to about a third of the psalms indicate that they are "for

the chief musician." This suggests that while they were originally composed in a variety of life situations, they have been collected for use in temple worship. The ULT and UST model how the technical terms in the superscription about performance can be translated in either a form-based or meaning-based way.

Some biblical scholars suggest that these musical instructions apply to the previous psalm rather than to the psalm that immediately follows them. For example, the current superscription to Psalm 4 reads, "For the director, with stringed instruments. Of David." The phrases "For the chief musician; with stringed instruments" may belong at the end of Psalm 3, so that the superscription to Psalm 4 would be just "Of David." Similarly, the superscription to Psalm 5 may be just "A psalm of David," and the musical instructions "For the chief musician; on the flutes" may belong at the end of Psalm 4. This suggestion is a matter of ongoing scholarly debate, and Bible publishers have so far not adopted it, so these resources treat the entire traditional superscriptions as applying to the psalms that immediately follow them. However, you may wish to consider the merits of this suggestion and make your own decision about it as a translation team.

### "Selah" and "Higgaion"

The terms "Selah" and "Higgaion" occur within many psalms. They seem to be musical terms inserted as directions for singers and musicians. Scholars do not agree as to their exact meaning. For this reason, rather than try to translate them, translators may decide to include the Hebrew words and spell them the way they sound in their language or leave them out.

## How should translators represent passages in the psalms that look forward to the Messiah?

New Testament writers quote many passages from the psalms as prophecies about the Messiah, Jesus Christ. The psalms that contain these prophecies are therefore sometimes called "Messianic psalms." In translating them, translators should take care not to limit the potential meaning only to the original writer. For example, David says in Psalm 16:10, "You will not hand over your godly one to see the pit." In speaking to Yahweh, he is referring initially to himself in the third person as "your godly one." In some languages, a speaker would not refer to himself in the third person in this way, and translators of the Bible into those languages might ordinarily use an expression such as "me, your godly one." However, Peter cites this statement in Acts 2:27 as a prophecy of the Messiah. So it would be preferable to translate the

phrase “your godly one” with a phrase such as “any godly person who belongs to you.”

### “shall”

The ULT represents the Hebrew instructional verb form with the English helping verb “shall.” For example, when Yahweh said, as quoted by Asaph in 81:9, “There shall not be a strange god among you.” he was instructing the Israelites how to act. Other ways to say this are “You are not to have a strange god among you,” “You should not have a strange god among you” “I want you not to have a strange god among you,” or “Do not have a strange god among you.” Translate this form with the most natural way in your language for giving instructions.

### “let” and “may”

The ULT uses the English helping verbs “let” and “may” to show that a speaker is expressing a desire that something happen or that someone do something. It uses the verb “let” for more assertive expressions, and it uses the verb “may” for more deferential expressions. For example, when David says in 69:34 “Let the heavens and the earth praise him,” he means “I want the heavens and the earth to praise him.” Languages that do not have a volitional form might say “The heavens and earth ought to praise him,” or they might use an imperative, “Praise him, heavens and earth!” When David says in 70:5 “Yahweh, may you not delay,” he is being more deferential, even though his wish is urgent, because he is addressing a superior. Languages that do not have a volitional form might say “Yahweh, I desire that you do not delay,” or they might use an imperative with an indication that it is a polite request, “Yahweh, please do not delay.” Translate this volitional form in the most natural way in your language to indicate that the speaker is expressing what he wants someone to do or what he wishes someone would do.

### “your God,” “my God,” and “our God”

Throughout this book, the psalmist refers to Yahweh with possessive forms such as “your God,” “my God,” and “our God.” By using these possessive forms, he is not saying that the Israelites possess or control Yahweh. Rather he is using these words to indicate that Yahweh is the God whom the Israelites worship. Also, when the psalmist says, “your God,” he is referring to the same God that he also worships. He is not distinguishing between the God of the Israelites and his own God.

# Psalms 1

## Psalm 1 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 1 is usually considered to be a “wisdom psalm,” which gives advice to those who hear it read or sung.

1. The happy: Those devoted to Yahweh’s instruction prosper (1–3)
2. The unhappy: Those who reject Yahweh’s instruction come to nothing (4–5)
3. Authority: Yahweh directs each path to its destination (6)

### About the Psalm

1. Purpose: to celebrate the one who follows Yahweh’s guidance
2. Content: It is the one who delights in Yahweh’s guidance who is “happy.” All of this is because Yahweh cares for righteous people, but wicked people keep sinning until Yahweh destroys them forever. (6)
3. Message: Devotion to Yahweh’s guidance leads to success and honor.

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

1. Words associated (whether by sound or by meaning) with a journey appear throughout the psalm.
2. In Hebrew, in the word “wicked” the consonant sounds in “happy” are reversed.
3. Verses 1 and 5 have a number of correspondences with one another. There are negated clauses in both verses, and both contain motion verbs. Additionally, the phrase “advice of the wicked” in verse 1a is similar to the phrase “congregation of the righteous” in verse 5b. The phrases also have similar structure. In Hebrew the words for “advice” and “congregation” sound very similar. See: Poetry
4. The psalm begins and ends with the metaphor of a journey.

5. There is agricultural imagery which is frequent in scripture: a tree by water (representing flourishing through God's blessing) and separating wheat from chaff (representing the different judgments of the righteous and wicked). See: Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

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Significant portions of the ULT, UST, and TNs for this psalm are derivative from "Psalms, Layer by Layer" (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Welcome), "Psalm 1" (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Psalm_1) by Cambridge Digital Bible Research, Katie Frost, Meaghan Smith, Nikki Mustin et al, used under CC BY

# Psalms 1:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The happinesses of the man who walks not in the advice of the wicked, and stands not in the pathway of sinners, and sits not in the seat of scoffers,* | *The person who will have a truly good life is the person who does not do what evil people tell him to do, who does not imitate sinful people's behavior, and who does not become like people who enjoy mocking.* |

ULT **The happinesses of**
UST who will have a truly good life
(אַשְׁרֵי)

The psalmist is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling, what constitutes true happiness from God's perspective. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy is]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **The happinesses of the man who walks not in the advice of the wicked, and stands not in the pathway of sinners, and sits not in the seat of scoffers**
UST The person who will have a truly good life is the person who does not do what evil people tell him to do, who does not imitate sinful people's behavior, and who does not become like people who enjoy mocking
(אַשְׁרֵי־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר ׀ לֹא הָלַךְ֮ בַּעֲצַ֪ת רְ֫שָׁעִ֥ים וּבְדֶ֣רֶךְ חַ֭טָּאִים לֹ֣א עָמָ֑ד וּבְמוֹשַׁ֖ב לֵצִ֣ים לֹ֣א יָשָֽׁב)

In some languages it may be more natural to place the declaration of the state of the man at the end of the verse after the description of the characteristics that he avoids. However, starting the psalm with the **happinesses of the man** was an intentional poetic decision by the author, who intended to set the mood of the psalm. Translators should consider how their language might start the psalm in this way. Alternate translation: [The man who does not walk in the advice of the wicked ones, and stands not in the pathway with sinners, and sits not in the seat of mockers is happy.]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **the man**
UST The person … is the person
(הָאִישׁ)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [any man] or [a person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **walks not in the advice of the wicked**
UST does not do what evil people tell him to do
(לֹא הָלַךְ֤ בַּעֲצַ֣ת רְשָׁעִ֑ים)

Here, **walks** refers to a man doing the things that **the wicked** suggest. This is the beginning of a pattern of doing wrong. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the comparison. Alternate translation: [does not walk into sin that wicked people suggest] or [never does what wicked people suggest]

**Support Reference:** Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

ULT **the wicked**
UST does not do what evil people tell him to do
(רְשָׁעִ֑ים)

The psalmist 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]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **walks not in the advice of the wicked, and stands not in the pathway of sinners, and sits not in the seat of scoffers**
UST does not do what evil people tell him to do, who does not imitate sinful people's behavior, and who does not become like people who enjoy mocking
(לֹא הָלַךְ֤ בַּעֲצַ֣ת רְשָׁעִ֑ים וּבְדֶ֥רֶךְ חַטָּאִ֗ים לֹ֣א עָ֭מָד וּבְמוֹשַׁ֣ב לֵצִ֑ים לֹ֣א יָשָׁ֗ב)

It may be helpful to read these three phrases in an inverted way. That way the negative trajectory that the happy man avoids can be more clearly seen. Consider: "Unhappy is the man who walks in the advice of the wicked ones and then who stands in the pathway of sinners and then who sits in the seat of scoffers." The meaning of each of these parts of this extended metaphor is expanded in later notes, but translators should see a trajectory of worsening character that a happy man avoids.

**Support Reference:** Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

ULT **and stands not in the pathway of sinners**
UST who does not imitate sinful people's behavior
(וּבְדֶרֶךְ חַטָּאִים לֹא עָמָד)

Here, **stands not in the pathway of sinners** refers to not copying how sinners continually live their lives, that is, their sinful habits. Standing means joining with sinners. The **pathway** means how a person lives his life. Not only does the happy man not do what the wicked say but he habitually avoids doing what sinners do. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the comparison. Alternate translation: [and does not stand with sinners in the path of sinning] or [and does not make sinning a habit]

**Support Reference:** Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

ULT **sinners**
UST who does not imitate sinful people's behavior
(חַטָּאִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **sinners** 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: [sinful people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and sits not in the seat of scoffers**
UST and who does not become like people who enjoy mocking
(וּבְמוֹשַׁב לֵצִים לֹא יָשָׁב)

Here, **sits not in the seat of scoffers** means to not become like people who spend their time mocking people, things, and God. By avoiding the previous two progressions towards a sinful life, the happy man avoids this final state where he would be just like the wicked. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the comparison. Alternate translation: [and does not sit with scoffers to join them in scoffing] or [so he never becomes like wicked mockers]

**Support Reference:** Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| in the advice of | does not do what evil people tell him to do |
| the wicked | does not do what evil people tell him to do |
| sinners | who does not imitate sinful people's behavior |

# Psalms 1:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *but in the instruction of Yahweh {is} his delight, and in his instruction he meditates day and night.* | *Instead, he delights in what Yahweh teaches, he thoughtfully reads it aloud every day and every night.* |

ULT **but**
UST Instead
(כִּי אִם)

The psalmist uses the word **but** here to indicate a strong contrast between what the happy man does and does not do. In your translation, indicate this strong contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Rather,]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **in the instruction of … and in his instruction**
UST in what … teaches … it
(בְּתוֹרַת & וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ)

Alternate translation: [in the instruction of … and in his instruction]

ULT **{is} his delight … he meditates**
UST he delights … he thoughtfully reads … aloud
(חֶפְצוֹ & יֶהְגֶּה)

Here, **his** and **he** refer to the happy man.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **{is} his delight**
UST he delights
(חֶפְצוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **delight**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [he delights] or [he rejoices]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and in his instruction**
UST it
(וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ)

Here, **his** refers to Yahweh. Alternate translation: [and in Yahweh's instruction]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **day and night**
> UST every day and every night
> (יוֹמָם וָלָיְלָה)

Here the psalmist is referring to all the time by naming two major components, **day and night**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [round-the-clock] or [all the time]

**Support Reference:** Merism

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| in the instruction of | in what … teaches |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} his delight | he delights |
| and in his instruction | it |
| he meditates | he thoughtfully reads … aloud |

# Psalms 1:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he is like a tree set to grow by streams of water, which gives its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither, and he makes successful all that he does.* | *Like having plenty of water causes a well-cultivated tree to produce fruit at the right time, and keeps it from dying, so {his faithfulness to Yahweh} causes everything this person does to prosper.* |

ULT **And he is like a tree set to grow by streams of water, which gives its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither, and he makes successful all that he does**
UST Like having plenty of water causes a well-cultivated tree to produce fruit at the right time, and keeps it from dying, so {his faithfulness to Yahweh} causes everything this person does to prosper
(וְהָיָה כְּעֵץ֮ שָׁתוּל עַל־פַּלְגֵ֪י מָ֫יִם אֲשֶׁ֥ר פִּרְי֥וֹ ׀ יִתֵּ֣ן בְּעִתּ֑וֹ וְעָלֵ֥הוּ לֹֽא־יִבּ֗וֹל וְכֹ֤ל אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשֶׂ֖ה יַצְלִֽיחַ)

The point of this verse's comparison between the happy man and a well-watered tree is that just like the streams of water cause the tree to flourish, learning Yahweh's instructions causes the man to flourish. (In the original, the phrases even sound similar.) Both a positive and negative comparison are given to strengthen the force of the point. The tree, fruit, and leaf references connect both back to Eden and forward to the end of Revelation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make the argument a little more explicit as the "Like … so" connection does in the UST. See 92:12–92:14 for another use of this imagery.

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **set to grow**
UST Like having plenty of water causes a well-cultivated tree
(שָׁתוּל)

The point of the choice of the word **set** is to emphasize the intentional placement of a tree so that it gets abundant water. The word translated as **set to grow** refers to intentional planting or transplanting. Translators could use a word meaning "planted" if their readers would understand that this was intentional. Alternate translation: [deliberately planted] or [transplanted]

ULT **set to grow**
UST Like having plenty of water causes a well-cultivated tree
(שָׁתוּל)

The expression **set to grow** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [that someone set to grow]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and its leaf does not wither**
UST and keeps it from dying
(וְעָלֵהוּ לֹא־יִבּוֹל)

The psalmist is referring figuratively to the tree dying by association with the way the leaves on a tree **wither** when a tree is dead or dying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and it will not die]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and its leaf does not wither**
UST and keeps it from dying
(וְעָלֵהוּ לֹא־יִבּוֹל)

Here the psalmist is emphasizing a strong positive meaning by using a negative word, **not**, together with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If it would be helpful in your language, you could emphasize the positive meaning in a strong way. Alternate translation: [and its leaves are strong and green]

**Support Reference:** Litotes

ULT **and he makes successful all that he does**
UST so {his faithfulness to Yahweh} causes everything this person does to prosper
(וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשֶׂה יַצְלִיחַ)

Here, both instances of **he** refer to the happy man.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| its fruit | to produce fruit at the right time |
| he makes successful | so {his faithfulness to Yahweh} causes everything this person does to prosper |

# Psalms 1:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Not so the wicked! But {they are} like the chaff that wind chases away.* | *That is not what wicked people are like! Instead, they are like chaff that the wind blows away.* |

ULT **Not so**
UST That is not what … are like
(לֹא־כֵ֥ן)

The **so** here refers to everything in the first three verses. The wicked are not in any way like the happy man. If your language has a way to indicate that **so** refers back not just to the last line about success but to the wider context of the first three verses, consider using it.

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(הָרְשָׁעִ֑ים)

See how you translated the phrase **the wicked** in 1:1.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **{they are} like … chaff**
UST they are like chaff
(כַּמֹּֽץ)

The word **chaff** refers to the parts of a wheat or other grain plant that are not food. The husk that surrounds the edible seed is very light, and it blows away when the wheat is threshed to separate out the edible seed. Thus, the chaff is with the grain until harvest but then separated and blown away. If your readers would not be familiar with the word **chaff** you could use a more general term or use another light and worthless material to describe the wicked. Alternate translation: [they are like … dried seed husks] or [they are like … fallen]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **But {they are} like the chaff that wind chases away**
UST Instead, they are like chaff that the wind blows away
(כִּי אִם־כַּמֹּץ אֲשֶׁר־תִּדְּפֶנּוּ רוּחַ)

The idea of **the wicked** as waste material gathered at the harvest and eliminated in some way is a common biblical image of God judging the wicked. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the wicked | wicked people |
| {they are} like … chaff | they are like chaff |

# Psalms 1:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Thus the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.* | *Just so, wicked people will not be able to endure {when Yahweh} judges {the world}. Neither will sinful people {be present when Yahweh} gathers all the righteous people together.* |

ULT **Thus**
UST Just so
(עַל־כֵּן)

**Thus** indicates that the connection between the previous statements and this is one of similarity. Just like the chaff is removed from the good harvest and destroyed, thus the wicked will be removed from Yahweh's righteous people and destroyed. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [In the same way,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

See how you translated the phrase **the wicked** in 1:1.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the wicked will not stand in the judgment**
UST wicked people will not be able to endure {when Yahweh} judges {the world}
(לֹא־יָקֻמוּ רְשָׁעִים בַּמִּשְׁפָּט)

The psalmist is using **stand in the judgment** as a common expression of his culture to mean to be declared innocent. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the wicked ones will not get off the hook] or [the wicked ones will not be found innocent]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **in the judgment**
UST when Yahweh} judges {the world}
(בַּמִּשְׁפָּט)

This refers to the time when Yahweh will finally judge the whole world. 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: [in Yahweh's final court]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **nor sinners**
UST Neither will sinful people {be present … }
(וְחַטָּאִים)

See how you translated **sinners** in 1:1.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **nor sinners**
UST Neither will sinful people {be present … }
(וְחַטָּאִים)

The psalmist 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 it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [nor will sinners stand]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **the righteous**
UST all the righteous people
(צַדִּיקִים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the wicked | wicked people |
| in the judgment | when Yahweh} judges {the world} |
| nor sinners | Neither will sinful people {be present … } |
| in the congregation of | { … when Yahweh} gathers … together |
| the righteous | all the righteous people |

# Psalms 1:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For Yahweh knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.* | *{All of this is} because Yahweh cares for righteous people, but wicked people keep sinning until {Yahweh} destroys them {forever}.* |

ULT **For Yahweh knows the way of**
UST {All of this is} because Yahweh cares
(כִּי־יוֹדֵעַ יְהוָה דָּרֶךְ)

Here, **knows the way of** is a common expression of the culture that refers to Yahweh's intimate and active involvement in the life of the righteous. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh cares for the needs of]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **For**
UST {All of this is} because
(כִּי)

**For** here introduces an explanation of the contrast throughout this psalm. If possible, use a connector here that can refer back to more than just the immediate context.

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **the righteous**
UST for righteous people
(צַדִּיקִים)

See how you translated the phrase **the righteous** in the previous verse.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish**
UST cares for righteous people, but wicked people keep sinning until {Yahweh} destroys them {forever … }
(דֶּרֶךְ צַדִּיקִים וְדֶרֶךְ רְשָׁעִים תֹּאבֵד)

The psalmist is speaking of how a person lives or lifestyle as if that were a **way** or path that the person was walking along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the lifestyle of the righteous, but the lifestyle of those who are wicked causes them to perish]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| knows | cares |
| the righteous | for righteous people |
| the wicked | wicked people |
| will perish | until {Yahweh} destroys them {forever} |

# Psalms 2

## Psalm 2 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 2 is usually considered a royal psalm because it is about the king.

1. Rebellion: Earthly kings plot rebellion (1–3)
2. Response: The Heavenly King laughs (4–6)
3. Decree: The King on Zion recounts Yahweh's covenant (7–9)
4. Ultimatum: Earthly kings, "Serve Yahweh … Kiss the son!" (10–12)

### About the Psalm

1. Purpose: It was probably first sung when a new person became the king.
2. Content: While there are (from the perspective of the New Testament) clear references to Jesus, the Anointed (Messiah) Son of God (Yahweh), translators should avoid bringing this fuller understanding into the translation of this psalm, which was written around 1,000 years before Christ.

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

1. The place of reference moves between things being on earth (2), in heaven (4), on the mountain (often seen as a meeting place between heaven and earth) (6), and on earth again (10).
2. The rebellious words in verse 3 are echoed by similar sounding but very contrastive (obedient) words in verses 10–12.
3. The word for son in verse 12 is highlighted by being Aramaic rather than Hebrew and having several occurrences of similar sounding consonant groups near it. See: Poetry
4. Nations are personified.

5. Yahweh's rule is pictured as physical bonds.

6. Power is figured as an iron rod.

7. Nations are figured as pottery.

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Significant portions of the ULT, UST, and TNs for this psalm are derivative from "Psalms, Layer by Layer" (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Welcome), "Psalm 2" (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Psalm_2) by Cambridge Digital Bible Research, Katie Frost, Meaghan Smith, Nikki Mustin et al, used under CC BY

# Psalms 2:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Why do nations conspire and peoples plot futilely?* | *Foreign kingdoms are scheming, and people groups are planning, but it is useless.* |

> ULT **Why do nations conspire and peoples plot futilely**
> UST Foreign kingdoms are scheming, and people groups are planning, but it is useless
> (לָמָּה רָגְשׁוּ גוֹיִם וּלְאֻמִּים יָהְגוּ־רִיק)

The proper understanding of the questions that make up this verse is provided in verses 4 and those that follow. They are not true questions; they are statements of mocking disbelief. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [Nations are in turmoil and peoples are complaining uselessly.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

> ULT **nations**
> UST Foreign kingdoms
> (גּוֹיִם)

Here, **nations** represents either the people of the nations or the leaders of the nations. If **nations** could not be understood to **conspire**, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. However, it is best to not narrow the meaning to leaders yet, as the psalm will do that in the next verse. Alternate translation: [people from other nations]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> **Note:**

What the **nations** are conspiring and the **peoples** are plotting is not mentioned in this verse, but since it becomes clear from the next two verses, you do not need to explain its meaning further here.

**Support Reference:** When to Keep Information Implicit

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| nations | Foreign kingdoms |

# Psalms 2:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The kings of the earth take their stand, and the rulers conspire together against Yahweh and against his anointed.* | *Earthly kings prepare to revolt, the rulers plot together to fight against Yahweh and against his chosen king.* |

**ULT The kings of the earth take their stand, and the rulers conspire together**
UST Earthly kings prepare to revolt, the rulers plot together
(יִתְיַצְּבוּ ׀ מַלְכֵי־אֶ֥רֶץ וְרוֹזְנִ֗ים נוֹסְדוּ־יָ֥חַד)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. However, if it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word other than **and** in order to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [The kings of the earth take their stand; indeed, the rulers conspire together]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The kings of | kings |
| the earth | Earthly |
| and the rulers | the rulers |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| his anointed | his chosen king |

# Psalms 2:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“Let us tear apart their bonds and cast their cords away from us.”* | *{They shout,} “We should break free from the shackles {that they control us with}. We should throw aside the ropes {that they rule over us with}!”* |

ULT **Let us tear apart their bonds and cast their cords away from us**
UST They shout,} “We should break free from the shackles {that they control us with}. We should throw aside the ropes {that they rule over us with … }
(נְנַתְּקָה אֶת־מוֹסְרוֹתֵימוֹ וְנַשְׁלִיכָה מִמֶּנּוּ עֲבֹתֵימוֹ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word other than **and** in order to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Let us tear apart their bonds; truly, let us cast their cords away from us.]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Let us tear apart their bonds and cast their cords away from us**
UST They shout,} “We should break free from the shackles {that they control us with}. We should throw aside the ropes {that they rule over us with … }
(נְנַתְּקָה אֶת־מוֹסְרוֹתֵימוֹ וְנַשְׁלִיכָה מִמֶּנּוּ עֲבֹתֵימוֹ)

The people of other nations speak of Yahweh and his anointed one’s rule over them as if it were **bonds** and **cords**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [We should free ourselves from their control; we should not let them rule over us any longer]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their bonds | from the shackles {that they control us with} |

# Psalms 2:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He who is sitting in the heavens laughs; the Lord mocks them.* | *But the heavenly ruler sneers at them; the Lord ridicules those rulers.* |

**ULT He who is sitting in the heavens laughs; the Lord mocks them**
**UST** But the heavenly ruler sneers at them; the Lord ridicules those rulers
(יוֹשֵׁב בַּשָּׁמַיִם יִשְׂחָק אֲדֹנָי יִלְעַג־לָמוֹ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [He who sits in the heavens sneers; indeed, the Lord mocks them.]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT He who is sitting**
**UST** But the … ruler
(יוֹשֵׁב)

The psalmist is referring specifically to God **sitting** on his throne, and he is using that action to represent God ruling. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [He who is enthroned] or [He who rules]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the Lord | the Lord |
| mocks | ridicules |

# Psalms 2:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then he will speak to them in his anger and terrify them in his fury,* | *Then he speaks to them angrily. He terrifies them by {showing them how} furious he is.* |

**ULT in his anger and … in his fury**
**UST** angrily … by {showing them how} furious he is
(בְּאַפּוֹ וּבַחֲרוֹנוֹ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **anger** and **fury**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [when he is angry and … with how furious he is]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and … in his fury | by {showing them how} furious he is |
| terrify them | terrifies them |

# Psalms 2:6

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *“I, I have poured out my king on Zion, the mountain of my holiness.”* | *{Yahweh says,} “It is I who has made my king rule in Zion, {which is} my sacred hill.”* |

**ULT I, I have poured out my king on Zion, the mountain of my holiness**
**UST** { … Yahweh says,} “It is I who has made my king rule in Zion, which is} my sacred hill
(וַאֲנִי נָסַכְתִּי מַלְכִּי עַל־צִיּוֹן הַר־קָדְשִׁי)

This verse is a quotation of Yahweh (who is mentioned before this verse as the Lord who is sitting in the heavens). If the speaker would be unclear, you may want to introduce him as the UST does.

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

**ULT I, I have poured out**
**UST** {Yahweh says,} “It is I who has made … rule
(וַאֲנִי נָסַכְתִּי)

Yahweh is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **I will cut** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize how significant it was that it was he and not someone else who was setting up this king on Zion. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [I alone have poured out]

**Support Reference:** Reflexive Pronouns

**ULT I have poured out**
**UST** I … has made … rule
(נָסַכְתִּי)

Scholars debate the meaning of this verb. However, all the options lead either symbolically or literally to the idea that Yahweh has made his king the ruler on Zion. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I have installed] or [I have placed]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my king | my king |
| Zion | Zion |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my holiness | my sacred |

# Psalms 2:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will describe a decree of Yahweh. He said to me, "You are my son! Today I have begotten you.* | *{Yahweh's king says,} "I will proclaim what Yahweh has decreed. Yahweh said to me, 'You are my son; today I have become your father.* |

**ULT I will describe a decree of Yahweh**

**UST** {Yahweh's king says,} "I will proclaim what Yahweh has decreed

(אֲסַפְּרָה אֶל חֹק יְהוָה)

The person saying this is the king that Yahweh placed in Zion. This is a change of speaker from the previous verse, though both are unmarked in the original. You can include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [The king says he will describe a decree of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a decree of | what … has decreed |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| have begotten you | have become your father |

# Psalms 2:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Ask from me, and I will give nations {as} your inheritance and the extremities of the earth {as} your possession.* | *Request {this from} me: {ask to} inherit the nations, {ask to} own the {whole} earth {even the} farthest parts. I will give them to you.* |

**ULT { … as} your inheritance and … {as} your possession**
**UST** {ask to} inherit … {ask to} own
(נַחֲלָתֶךָ וַאֲחֻזָּתְךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **inheritance** and **possession**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [for you to inherit and … you shall possess]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT the extremities of the earth**
**UST** the {whole} earth {even the} farthest parts
(אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ)

Here, **the extremities of the earth** is referring to all of the world by naming its edges or limits. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the entire world]

**Support Reference:** Merism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| nations | the nations |
| {as} your inheritance | {ask to} inherit |
| and … {as} your possession | {ask to} own |
| the earth | the {whole} earth {even the} farthest parts |

# Psalms 2:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You will break them with an iron rod; like a jar of a potter, you will smash them to pieces.”* | *You will strike them with an iron rod and they will shatter into small pieces as if they were a clay pot.’”* |

ULT **You will break them with an iron rod; like a jar of a potter, you will smash them to pieces**
UST You will strike them with an iron rod and they will shatter into small pieces as if they were a clay pot
(תְּרֹעֵם בְּשֵׁבֶט בַּרְזֶל כִּכְלִי יוֹצֵר תְּנַפְּצֵם)

Here the king is speaking of his own power and anger as if it was an **iron rod** and of nations as if they were a **jar of a potter**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning another way. Alternate translation: [Your power is like an iron rod, which will shatter the nations, which are like mere clay pots.]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **like a jar of a potter, you will smash them to pieces**
UST and they will shatter into small pieces as if they were a clay pot
(כִּכְלִי יוֹצֵר תְּנַפְּצֵם)

Using a simile in the second clause is a way to intensify the statement in biblical poetry. Use a method in your language’s poetic forms to intensify the second clause if possible. Alternate translation: [more than that, you will smash them to pieces like a jar of a potter]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **like a jar of a potter**
UST as if … a clay pot
(כִּכְלִי יוֹצֵר)

A **potter** is a person who makes clay pots and jars. These are fragile and can be broken easily. If your readers would not be familiar with this, you could use the name of something similar in your area or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [like a clay jar]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| with an … rod | with an … rod |
| iron | iron |

# Psalms 2:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And now kings, act prudently; be admonished, rulers of the earth.* | *So then, you kings should act wisely! All rulers on the earth should allow Yahweh and his king to correct them!* |

**ULT be admonished**
UST should allow Yahweh and his king to correct them
(הִוָּסְרוּ)

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: [listen to this warning]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| kings | you kings |
| act prudently | should act wisely |
| be admonished | should allow Yahweh and his king to correct them |
| rulers of | All rulers |
| the earth | on the earth |

# Psalms 2:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Serve Yahweh with fear and rejoice with trembling.* | *Worship Yahweh respectfully. Be joyful and afraid {while you are worshiping him}!* |

**ULT with fear and rejoice with trembling**
UST respectfully. Be joyful and afraid {while you are worshiping him … }
(בְּיִרְאָה וְגִילוּ בִּרְעָדָה)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **fear** and **rejoice**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [fearfully, and joyfully tremble]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Serve | Worship |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| with fear | respectfully |
| and rejoice | Be joyful |
| with trembling | and afraid {while you are worshiping him} |

# Psalms 2:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Kiss the son, lest he be angry and you perish in the way, for his anger burns for just a moment. The happinesses of all the seekers of refuge in him.* | *Swear to be truly loyal to his son otherwise, he may become angry and suddenly kill you because he can become angry quickly. But all those who ask him to protect them will have a life that is truly good.* |

ULT **Kiss the son**
UST Swear to be truly loyal to his son
(נַשְּׁקוּ־בַר)

To **kiss the son** is a symbolic action showing loyalty and pledged obedience. If this would not be clear to your readers, you can explain the significance of this action in the text or in a footnote. People would show their king that they were loyal to him by kissing him, perhaps on the feet. Alternate translation: [Show the son that you are truly loyal to him] or [Bow down humbly before his son]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **and you perish in the way**
UST and suddenly kill you … he
(וְתֹאבְדוּ דָּרֶךְ)

The implication is that the **son** will kill you if you are not loyal to him. You can include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and he kill you in the way]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **for his anger burns for just a moment**
UST because … can become angry quickly
(כִּי־יִבְעַר כִּמְעַט אַפּוֹ)

The anger of the **son** is spoken of as if it were a fire that **burns**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when he suddenly becomes very angry]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **The happinesses of all the seekers of refuge in him**
UST But all those who ask him to protect them will have a life that is truly good
(אַשְׁרֵי כָּל־חוֹסֵי בוֹ)

The protection that submitting to the **son** provides is spoken of as if the son himself were a safe place or **refuge** within which people could be protected. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Everyone who asks the king to protect them is happy]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **The happinesses of**
UST But … will have a life that is truly good
(אַשְׁרֵי)

The psalmist is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of joy or blessing. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy are]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Kiss | Swear to be truly loyal to |
| and you perish | and … kill you … he |
| for just a moment | can become angry quickly |
| the seekers of refuge | ask him to protect them |

# Psalms 3

## Psalm 3 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

1. Foes “rising” against psalmist (1–2)
2. Trust expressed to Yahweh (on his holy hill, see 2:6) (3–4)
3. Trust in Yahweh proclaimed (5–6)
4. Help petitioned from Yahweh (“rising” and saving refer back to 1–2) (7–8)

See 2 Samuel 15–18 for the story of David fleeing from Absalom.

### About the Psalm

1. Purpose: to pray for salvation from enemies
2. Content: Yahweh, save me! My enemies are many, but you are my defense.
3. Message: Salvation is of Yahweh

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

1. The psalm divides into four sections that are nearly the same length (14 words / 14 words / 14 words / 15 words).
2. The second and third sections share similar beginnings; both begin with an independent personal pronoun (3a: “you;” 5a: “I”). “You” (=Yahweh) is the topic of the second section (3–4), and “I” (=David) is the topic of the third section (5–6).
3. The first section (1–2) and the two middle sections (3–6) are connected by the ideas of “many/multitudes … against me.” See: Poetry
4. Yahweh is pictured as a shield.
5. Safety is pictured as sleeping.
6. Yahweh’s salvation from enemies is pictured in violent graphic language.

7. Wicked people's power is represented by their teeth.

## Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

1. Selah: This psalm contains the first instances of the Hebrew word "Selah." Refer to the introduction to Psalms for more information.

2. Superscriptions: This psalm is the first one which starts with a superscription. Refer to the introduction to Psalms for more information.

# Psalms 3:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A psalm of David, when he fled from the face of Absalom his son* | *David wrote this psalm when he was fleeing from his son Absalom.* |

**ULT of David**
UST David
(לְדָוִד)

This could mean: (1) David wrote the psalm or (2) the psalm is about David or (3) the psalm is in the style of David's psalms.

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm | wrote this psalm |
| of David | David |
| Absalom | Absalom |

# Psalms 3:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, how many my oppressors have become! The risers against me are many.* | *Yahweh, I have so many enemies! Many people are deciding to oppose me.* |

**ULT Yahweh, how many my oppressors have become**
UST Yahweh, I have so many enemies
(יְהוָה מָה־רַבְּוּ צָרָי)

The word **how** marks this as an emotional outburst that is emphasizing to Yahweh how very desperate the author's situation is. Use an exclamation that would communicate that meaning in your language. Alternate translation: [Oh Yahweh, I have so many enemies]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

**ULT The risers against me**
UST people are deciding to oppose me
(קָמִים עָלָי)

Here, **risers against me** is an common expression that means "people who rebel against me" or "people who wish to fight me." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, use an expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Those getting in my face] or [Those who rebel against me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my oppressors | enemies |

# Psalms 3:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{There are} many sayers about me, "There is no salvation for him in God." Selah* | *Many people are saying about me, "God will not rescue him." Selah* |

**ULT There is no salvation for him in God**
UST God will not rescue him
(אֵין יְשׁוּעָתָה לּוֹ בֵּאלֹהִים)

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: [Surely God will not save him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Selah**
UST Selah
(סֶלָה)

This is the first instance of the Hebrew word **Selah**, the meaning of which is unknown. The ancient Greek translation uses a term that means "musical interlude." Your translation team should decide if you will (1) spell this word to reflect its Hebrew form, "Selah," or (2) omit "Selah" or (3) translate with a word meaning something like "musical interlude" or "pause" in your language.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| salvation | will … rescue |
| in God | God |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 3:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But you, Yahweh, are a shield round about me, my glory, and the lifter up of my head.* | *But Yahweh, you are like a shield that protects me. You greatly honor me, and you encourage me.* |

ULT **are a shield round about me**
UST are like a shield that protects me
(מָגֵן בַּעֲדִי)

Here, **shield** represents protection. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [are my protection]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **my glory**
UST You greatly honor me
(כְּבוֹדִי)

Because Yahweh is the actor in all the other actions in this verse, calling **Yahweh** his **glory** probably means that Yahweh gives the psalmist glory or honor. Since the psalmist has just spoken about his enemies and about Yahweh being his protector, he probably means that Yahweh gives him glory by giving him victory over his enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one who gives me glory] or [the one who gives me victory]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and the lifter up of my head**
UST and you encourage me
(וּמֵרִים רֹאשִׁי)

Lifting the author's **head** could mean (1) giving him courage or (2) giving him victory over his enemies or (3) restoring him to being king of Israel (given the context of David fleeing from his son's usurping). If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the one who encourages me] or [and the one who lifts me over my enemies] or [and the one who lifts me to the throne]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| are a shield | are like a shield |
| my glory | You greatly honor me |
| and the lifter up of | and you encourage me |

# Psalms 3:4

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *{With} my voice I call to Yahweh, and he answered me from the hill of his holiness. Selah* | *Whenever I cry loudly to Yahweh {for help}, he {comes} from {Zion,} his sacred hill, to help me. Selah* |

**ULT I call … and he answered me**

**UST** Whenever I cry loudly … for help}, he {comes … } … to help me

(אֶקְרָא וַיַּעֲנֵנִי)

The implication is that the psalmist is calling to Yahweh for help and that Yahweh's answer takes the form of giving help. You can include this information if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I call for help … and he helped me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| I call | Whenever I cry loudly … for help |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| his holiness | his sacred |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 3:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I laid myself down and slept. I awoke, for Yahweh protects me.* | *I {can} lie down and sleep, {knowing that} I {will} wake up because Yahweh guards me {all night}.* |

**ULT I laid myself down and slept. I awoke, for Yahweh protects me**
**UST** I {can} lie down and sleep, {knowing that} I {will} wake up because Yahweh guards me {all night … }
(אֲנִי שָׁכַבְתִּי וָאִישָׁנָה הֱקִיצוֹתִי כִּי יְהוָה יִסְמְכֵנִי)

The phrase **laid myself down and slept** is not a one-time occurrence but a universal statement about his daily peace because of Yahweh. If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases since the second phrase, **for Yahweh protects me**, gives the reason for the result, **I awoke** as well as the reason for the author's confidence that he can lie down and sleep. Alternate translation: [Because Yahweh protects me, I lie down, sleep, and awake]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 3:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will not fear the multitudes of people who stand against me round about.* | *There may be thousands {of enemy soldiers} who surround me, but I am not afraid.* |

ULT **I will not fear**
UST but I am not afraid
(לֹא־אִירָא)

The psalmist does **not fear** because of Yahweh's protection, mentioned in verse 5. Be sure that connection is clear in your language.

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will … fear | afraid |

# Psalms 3:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Rise up, Yahweh! Save me, my God! For you hit all my enemies on the cheek; the teeth of the wicked you break.* | *Yahweh, get up! My God, rescue me! You can {insultingly} slap my enemies on their cheeks, and destroy those wicked people's {power like breaking animals'} teeth,* |

ULT **Rise up**
UST get up
(קוּמָה)

The psalmist is using **rise up** as a common expression of the culture to ask Yahweh to take action. He is not telling him to get out of bed or stand up from a seated position. If this expression does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Take action] or [Do something]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **my God**
UST My God
(אֱלֹהַי)

The psalmist is not using the phrase **my God** to mean that he possesses or controls Yahweh, but rather to emphasize that Yahweh is the God he worships. See the introduction to Psalms for further discussion. Alternate translation: [oh God whom I worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **you hit all my enemies on the cheek; the teeth of the wicked you break**
UST You can {insultingly} slap my enemies on their cheeks, and destroy those wicked people's {power like breaking animals'} teeth
(הִכִּיתָ אֶת־כָּל־אֹיְבַי לֶחִי שִׁנֵּי רְשָׁעִים שִׁבַּרְתָּ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Translate these phrases according to the decisions your team has made regarding translating parallelism in Hebrew poetry. See the Introduction to Psalms (../front/intro.md) for more information. The phrases **my enemies** and **the wicked** refer to the same group of people. Alternate translation: [you hit all my enemies on the jaw; you even break those wicked enemies' teeth] or [you destroy all my enemies]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **you hit all my enemies on the cheek**
UST You can {insultingly} slap my enemies on their cheeks
(הִכִּיתָ אֶת־כָּל־אֹיְבַי לֶחִי)

Hitting an enemy on the cheek was a way of insulting people. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [you will insult all my enemies like someone hitting them on the jaw]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **the teeth of the wicked you break**
UST and destroy those wicked people's {power like breaking animals'} teeth
(שִׁנֵּי רְשָׁעִים שִׁבַּרְתָּ)

Animals attack with their teeth. Breaking their teeth takes away their power to attack. David speaks as if Yahweh would come and physically fight against the wicked. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you make the wicked unable to harm me like someone breaking the teeth of a ferocious animal]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the wicked**
UST those wicked people's
(רְשָׁעִים)

See how you translated the phrase **the wicked** in 1:1.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Save me | rescue me |
| my God | My God |
| my enemies | my enemies |
| the wicked | those wicked people's |

# Psalms 3:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Salvation {is} of Yahweh. Your blessing {is} on your people. Selah* | *Yahweh rescues! Bless your people! Selah* |

**ULT Salvation {is} of Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh rescues
(לַיהוָה הַיְשׁוּעָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **salvation**, you could express the same idea in another way. The meaning of this phrase is that Yahweh is characterized by saving his people. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is the savior] or [Yahweh saves his people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Your blessing {is} on your people**
**UST** Bless your people
(עַל־עַמְּךָ בִרְכָתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **blessing**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Please bless your people] or [You always bless your people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Salvation | rescues |
| {is} of Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Your blessing | Bless |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 4

## Psalm 4 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

1. Distress (1)
2. Rebuke (2–6)
3. Blessing (7–8)

### About the Psalm

1. Purpose: to intercede for the people and call them to repentance
2. Content: People, trust in Yahweh alone! He has relieved our suffering in the past, and he will help us again when I call to him. Yahweh, shine on us!
3. Message: Yahweh alone gives peace and security in times of distress.

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

1. Features between verses 1, 6, and 8. See the note in verse 6.
2. Hebrew roots from verse 5 repeat in verses 7–9. See the note in verse 5.
3. There seems to be a morning and night pattern. The word translated **call** in verses 1 and 3 sound like the Hebrew word for morning, and then bed is mentioned in verse 4. Yahweh lifting up the light of his face is like the dawn in verse 6 and in verse 8 the psalmist lies down to sleep.
4. The last verse of the psalm seems to wind down peacefully, even repeating “s” sounds. See the note in verse 8.

See: Poetry

### CCBYSA

Significant portions of the ULT, UST, and TNs for this psalm are derivative from “Psalms, Layer by Layer” (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Welcome), “Psalm 4” (https://

psalms.cdbr.org/w/Psalm_4) by Cambridge Digital Bible Research, Katie Frost, Meaghan Smith, Nikki Mustin et al, used under CC BY

# Psalms 4:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; with stringed instruments; a psalm of David.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: David wrote this psalm to be accompanied by people playing stringed instruments.* |

**ULT For the chief musician**

UST This is a note for the worship leader

(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a psalm | wrote this psalm |
| of David | David |

# Psalms 4:1

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Answer me when I call, God of my righteousness; in distress you relieve me. Be gracious {to} me and hear my prayer.* | *Righteous God, respond to me when I pray to you. You who have {always} rescued me when I was distressed, act mercifully toward me and pay attention to what I pray.* |

ULT **God of my righteousness**
UST Righteous God
(אֱלֹהֵי צִדְקִי)

Here **God of my righteousness** could mean: (1) my righteous God or (2) God who vindicates me. Both options are grammatically possible, and both fit the context well. The following relative clause (verse 1b), which highlights God's past faithfulness, may suggest that it is God's righteousness that is in view (hence the UST rendering). You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers.

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **God of my righteousness**
UST Righteous God
(אֱלֹהֵי צִדְקִי)

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: [my God, the righteous one]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in distress**
UST when I was distressed
(בַּצָּר)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distress**, you could express the same idea in another way. The original word is related to narrowness. Alternate translation: [in trouble] or [when I am oppressed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| when I call | when I pray to you |
| God of | God |
| my righteousness | Righteous |
| in distress | when I was distressed |
| Be gracious {to} me | act mercifully toward me |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my prayer | to what I pray |

# Psalms 4:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Son of man, until when {will} my glory become shame? {Until when} will you love futility, {until when} will you seek falsehood? Selah* | *How long will you mortal people dishonor me instead of honoring me? How long will you love what is useless, and chase lies? Selah* |

ULT **Son of man**
UST you mortal people
(בְּנֵי אִישׁ)

**Son of man** could refer to: (1) the mortality and finitude of his enemies (as opposed to God's eternal infinitude), (2) important or wealthy men, or (3) the fact that the psalmist is now addressing people rather than God. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [You men]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **until when {will} my glory become shame? Until when} will you love futility, {until when} will you seek falsehood**
UST How long will … dishonor me instead of honoring me? How long will you love what is useless, and chase lies
(עַד־מָ֤ה כְבוֹדִ֨י לִכְלִמָּ֗ה תְּאֱהַ֣בוּן ריק תְּבַקְשׁ֥וּ כָזָ֗ב)

The psalmist is using the question form to rebuke his enemies. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate these three questions as statements or exclamations. Alternate translation: [stop calling glory shame! Stop loving futility! Stop seeking falsehood!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **my glory become shame**
UST dishonor me instead of honoring me
(כְבוֹדִ֨י לִכְלִמָּ֗ה)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **glory** and **shame**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [you consider my glorious deeds as shameful deeds]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{Until when} will you love futility, {until when} will you seek falsehood**
UST How long will you love what is useless, and chase lies
(תֶּאֱהָבוּן־רֵ֥יק תְּבַקְשׁ֗וּ כָּזָ֫ב)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **futility** and **falsehood**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [How long will you love vain things? How long will you pursue untrue things?]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Son of man | you mortal people |
| my glory | instead of honoring me |
| become shame | dishonor me |
| {Until when} will you love | How long will you love |
| {until when} will you seek | and chase |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 4:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But know that Yahweh has set apart the faithful for himself. Yahweh hears when I call to him.* | *You all should know that Yahweh treats people who are faithful to him as special to him. Yahweh will pay attention when I pray to him.* |

**ULT the faithful**
**UST** people who are faithful to him
(חָסִיד)

David is using the adjective **godly** 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: [godly people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| But know | You all should know |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the faithful | people who are faithful to him |
| when I call | when I pray |

# Psalms 4:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Tremble and do not sin! Meditate in your heart on your bed and be silent. Selah* | *You should be afraid of Yahweh, and {because of that} stop sinning! While you lie on your bed, examine what you are thinking and stop accusing {me}. Selah* |

**ULT Tremble and do not sin**
UST You should be afraid of Yahweh, and {because of that} stop sinning
(רִגְזוּ וְאַל־תֶּחֱטָאוּ)

The implication could be: (1) that the hearers should **tremble** in fear of Yahweh's punishment for the unfaithful or (2) that if the hearers are angry, they should control themselves and not sin. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Tremble in fear and do not sin] or [Even if you tremble in anger, do not sin]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT Meditate in your heart**
UST examine what you are thinking
(אִמְרוּ בִלְבַבְכֶם)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts and motives exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Consider your thoughts and motives]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Meditate in your heart on your bed**
UST While you lie on your bed, examine what you are thinking
(אִמְרוּ בִלְבַבְכֶם עַל־מִשְׁכַּבְכֶם)

The Hebrew root words for speak, **heart**, and **bed** in this verse appear in verses 6 (as "say"), 7, and 8 (as "lie down") respectively (in the same order). Consider if a similar pattern would create a natural poetic effect in your language.

**Support Reference:** Poetry

**ULT Meditate in your heart**
UST examine what you are thinking
(אִמְרוּ בִלְבַבְכֶם)

Alternate translation: [Think to yourselves]

ULT **and be silent**
UST and stop accusing {me}
(וְדֹ֑מּוּ)

Here, **be silent** means that the listeners should show self-control and not act on sinful impulses. You could include this information in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and do not act on evil thoughts]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Tremble | You should be afraid of Yahweh |
| do … sin | sinning |
| Meditate | examine what you are thinking |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 4:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sacrifice sacrifices of righteousness and trust in Yahweh.* | *Instead, offer to Yahweh the proper sacrifices and continually trust him.* |

**ULT sacrifices of righteousness**
**UST** the proper sacrifices
(זִבְחֵי־צֶ֑דֶק)

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: [sacrifices that are righteous]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT righteousness and trust**
**UST** the proper … and continually trust
(צֶ֑דֶק וּבִטְחוּ)

The words **righteousness** and **trust** form the poetic center of this psalm. **Righteousness** is mentioned in verse 1 and **trust** is the same word translated as "securely" in verse 8. You may wish to explore whether you can reflect this symmetry in a natural way in your language.

**Support Reference:** Poetry

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| sacrifices of | sacrifices |
| righteousness | the proper |
| and trust | and continually trust |
| Yahweh | Yahweh … him |

# Psalms 4:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Many say, "Who will show us good?" Lift up the light of your face on us, Yahweh!* | *Many people are wishing for something good to happen. Yahweh, please do good things for us!* |

**ULT** **Who will show us good**
**UST** for something good to happen
(מִי־יַרְאֵנוּ טוֹב)

The people asking this are using the question form to make a complaint and an implied request. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as an exclamation or plain request. Alternate translation: [No one is showing us good!] or [Please, someone show us good!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT** **Who will show us good**
**UST** for something good to happen
(מִי־יַרְאֵנוּ טוֹב)

Here, **good** is spoken of as if it were something that someone could **show** to someone else. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Who will do good things for us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT** **Lift up the light of your face on us**
**UST** please do good things for us
(נְסָה־עָלֵינוּ אוֹר פָּנֶיךָ)

The writer speaks of Yahweh acting favorably towards them as if Yahweh's face shone a light on them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Act favorably towards us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT** **Lift up the light of your face on us, Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh, please do good things for us
(נְסָה־עָלֵינוּ אוֹר פָּנֶיךָ יְהוָה)

This is a reference to the high priest's blessing in Numbers 6:25.

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| good | for something good to happen |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 4:7

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *You have put joy in my heart more than the time {when} their grain and their new wine abound.* | *You have made me very joyful, even more than {these complainers are} when they have plenty of food and drink.* |

**ULT You have put joy in my heart**
**UST** You have made me very joyful
(נָתַתָּה שִׂמְחָה בְלִבִּי)

Here the phrase **put joy in my heart** represents that the author's emotional state is joyful. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You have made me happy]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT You have put joy in my heart**
**UST** You have made me very joyful
(נָתַתָּה שִׂמְחָה בְלִבִּי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **joy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [You have made me glad]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT their grain and their new wine abound**
**UST** they have plenty of food and drink
(דְּגָנָם וְתִירוֹשָׁם רָבּוּ)

Here, **grain and new wine** represent basic food necessities. An abundance of them represents material prosperity. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they have a lot of bread and fresh milk] or [they are quite rich]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**Note:**

In Hebrew, this verse uses progressively shorter lines and repeated sounds to create a sense of peaceful rest. Consider if there is a way in your language to create the same sensation.

**Support Reference:** Poetry

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| joy | very joyful |
| their grain | food |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and their new wine | and drink |

# Psalms 4:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for you alone, Yahweh, cause me to dwell securely.* | *I can lie down at night and sleep without worrying because {I know that} it is only you, Yahweh, who keeps me safe.* |

ULT **In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for you alone, Yahweh, cause me to dwell securely**

UST I can lie down at night and sleep without worrying because {I know that} it is only you, Yahweh, who keeps me safe

(בְּשָׁלוֹם יַחְדָּו֮ אֶשְׁכְּבָה וְאִישָׁן כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה לְבָדָד לָבֶטַח תּוֹשִׁיבֵנִי)

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: [Since you alone, Yahweh, cause me to dwell securely, therefore in peace I will both lie down and sleep.]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **In peace**

UST without worrying

(בְּשָׁלוֹם)

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: [Peacefully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| In peace | without worrying |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 5

## Psalm 5 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

1. Appeal (1–2)
2. Precedent (3–7)
3. Petition (8–11)
4. Resolution (12)

### About the Psalm

1. Purpose: to petition the divine King and Judge for justice from enemies
2. Content: Yahweh, act justly! Banish the evildoers! Shelter the righteous!
3. Message: Yahweh is a just ruler, and he blesses the just.

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

1. The first word of the content portion of the psalm starts with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet and the final word starts with the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. This symbolizes completeness; the author's appeal to Yahweh is complete.
2. There is a parallel structure between verses 3–7 and verses 8–11:

A. Verses 3 and 8 start with an address to Yahweh, who is also the subject.

B. Verses 4 and 9 start with "For" followed by a word of negation. They use a verbless clause in Hebrew, and the wicked are the topic.

C. Verses 7 and 11 contrast with what is immediately before, and they speak of being with Yahweh.

D. There is also progression between each earlier verse and its related later verse either in specificity or time.

See: Poetry

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Significant portions of the ULT, UST, and TNs for this psalm are derivative from “Psalms, Layer by Layer” (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Welcome), “Psalm 5” (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Psalm_5) by Cambridge Digital Bible Research, Katie Frost, Meaghan Smith, Nikki Mustin et al, used under CC BY

# Psalms 5:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on the flutes; a psalm of David* | *This is a note for the worship leader: David wrote this psalm to be accompanied by people playing flutes.* |

**ULT For the chief musician**

UST This is a note for the worship leader

(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| on the flutes | to be accompanied by people playing flutes |
| a psalm | psalm |
| of David | David wrote this |

# Psalms 5:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{To} my words give ear, Yahweh! Understand my murmuring!* | *Yahweh, listen to what I say! Comprehend my distressed sigh.* |

**ULT Yahweh … Yahweh … Yahweh … Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh … Yahweh … Yahweh … Yahweh
(יְהוָה & יְהוָה & יְהוָה & יְהוָה) (5:1,3,8,12)

The direct address to **Yahweh** in each of these verses marks the start of a new section of the psalm. If your language marks section beginnings in poetry in a certain way, you could use it at the beginning of these verses.

**Support Reference:** Poetry

**ULT {To} my words**
**UST** to what I say
(אֲמָרַי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of spoken **words**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [To what I say]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT give ear**
**UST** listen
(הַאֲזִינָה)

Here, **give ear** is an idiom that means "listen." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have this meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [pay attention]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Understand | Comprehend |

# Psalms 5:2

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Listen attentively to the sound of my cry for help, my king and my God, for to you I pray!* | *{Since} you are my king and my God, hear and respond when I plead aloud for rescuing, because I am praying to you {only}.* |

**ULT to the sound of … my voice**
**UST** aloud … me pleading
(לְקוֹל & קוֹלִי) (5:2-3)

The words translated as **sound** and **voice** are the same in the original. If your language has a word that could be the same in both places, you could consider using it to follow the poetic parallel of the original.

**Support Reference:** Poetry

**ULT my king and my God**
**UST** {Since} you are my king and my God
(מַלְכִּי וֵאלֹהָי)

The psalmist is not referring to two people; both of these terms refer to Yahweh. He is also not using the phrase **my king** or **my God** to mean that he possesses or controls Yahweh, but rather to emphasize that Yahweh is the God he worships. See the introduction to Psalms for further discussion. Alternate translation: [you are the king and God whom I worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my cry for help | when I plead … for rescuing |
| my king | {Since} you are my king |
| and my God | and my God |
| I pray | I am praying |

# Psalms 5:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, in the morning you hear my voice. In the morning I prepare for you and watch.* | *Yahweh, you will hear me pleading each morning. Every morning I will request that you save me, and I will wait for you to do it.* |

**ULT I prepare for you and watch**
**UST** I will request that you save me, and I will wait for you to do it
(אֶעֱרֹךְ־לְךָ֥ וַאֲצַפֶּֽה)

This could mean: (1) the psalmist prepares his argument or legal case for Yahweh. Alternate translation: [I prepare my case for you and watch for your judgment] (2) the psalmist prepares to be rescued by Yahweh. Alternate translation: [I prepare to be rescued by you and wait for you] You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers.

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and watch | and I will wait for you to do it |

# Psalms 5:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you are not a god pleased with wickedness; evil ones will not sojourn with you.* | *You are a God who certainly does not approve of wicked people; evil-doers never stay as your guests.* |

ULT **wickedness**
UST wicked people
(רָשַׁע)

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 deeds]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a god | a God |
| wickedness | wicked people |
| evil ones | evil-doers |
| will … sojourn with you | stay as your guests |

# Psalms 5:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The arrogant will not stand in front of your eyes; you hate all doers of iniquity.* | *Boasters are not allowed to come worship you. You hate everyone who does evil things.* |

ULT **The arrogant will not stand in front of your eyes**
UST Boasters are not allowed to come worship you
(לֹא־יִתְיַצְּבוּ הוֹלְלִים לְנֶגֶד עֵינֶיךָ)

The psalmist is using **stand in front of your eyes** as a common expression of his culture to mean “come near you,” which implies worshiping Yahweh. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The arrogant will not be allowed to draw near to you] or [The arrogant will not be allowed to offer pleasing worship to you]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **doers of iniquity**
UST who does evil things
(פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן)

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: [who trouble others]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The arrogant | Boasters |
| iniquity | evil things |

# Psalms 5:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You will destroy speakers of falsehood; the man of blood and deceit Yahweh abhors.* | *You kill liars. Yahweh despises murderers and people who deceive others.* |

**ULT the man of blood and deceit Yahweh abhors**
UST Yahweh despises murderers and people who deceive others
(אִישׁ־דָּמִים וּמִרְמָה יְתָעֵב ׀ יְהוָה)

The psalmist now speaks about Yahweh in the third person. If changing between second and third person like this would not be natural in your language, you could continue the second person form. Alternate translation: [the man of blood and deceit you, Yahweh, abhor]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You will destroy | You kill |
| speakers of falsehood | liars |
| and deceit | and people who deceive others |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| abhors | despises |

# Psalms 5:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But I, in the greatness of your covenant faithfulness, I will come into your house; I will bow down toward your temple of holiness in fear.* | *As for me, I will come {worship you} where you live, because you faithfully love us so abundantly. I will reverently kneel to worship you at your sacred temple.* |

ULT **But I**
UST As for me
(וַאֲנִי)

Here the psalmist mentions himself explicitly to make a contrast between himself and the wicked people he's been talking about. Draw attention to this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I, on the other hand] or [In contrast, I]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **in the greatness of your covenant faithfulness**
UST because you faithfully love us so abundantly
(בְּרֹב חַסְדֶּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **covenant faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [because you always keep your covenant promises]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your temple of holiness**
UST your sacred temple
(הֵיכַל־קָדְשְׁךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **holiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [your holy temple]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **I will bow down toward your temple of holiness in fear**
UST I will reverently kneel to worship you at your sacred temple
(אֶשְׁתַּחֲוֶה אֶל־הֵיכַל־קָדְשְׁךָ בְּיִרְאָתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **fear**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [I will reverently bow down toward your temple of holiness]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your covenant faithfulness | faithfully love us |
| your house | {worship you} where you live |
| I will bow down | I will … kneel to worship you |
| your temple of | your sacred temple |
| holiness | your sacred temple |
| in fear | reverently |

# Psalms 5:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, guide me in your righteousness because of my watchers; straighten before my face your path.* | *Yahweh, my enemies are watching me {to try to catch me doing something wrong}. Please show me how to do what is right, just as you always do what is right. Make it easy for me to live obediently to you.* |

**ULT guide me in your righteousness**
**UST** Please show me how to do what is right, just as you always do what is right
(נְחֵנִי בְצִדְקָתֶךָ)

The psalmist speaks of **righteousness** as if it were a path, and of teaching as guiding. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [teach me to do what is righteous as you are righteous] or [teach me to do what is righteous as you do what is righteous]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT my watchers**
**UST** my enemies are watching me {to try to catch me doing something wrong}
(שׁוֹרְרָי)

Alternate translation: [those who watch for a chance to attack me]

**ULT straighten before my face your path**
**UST** Make it easy for me to live obediently to you
(הַיְשַׁר לְפָנַי דַּרְכֶּךָ)

The psalmist speaks of following Yahweh's commands as if doing so were a path. He asks Yahweh to put a straightened path before him, because a straight path is easy to see or walk on. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [show me clearly how to live in the right way] or [make it easy for me to do what is right]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| in your righteousness | to do what is right, just as you always do what is right |

# Psalms 5:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For there is no firmness in his mouth; their inward being is destruction. An open tomb is their throat; their tongue they make smooth.* | *Please do this because my enemies are untrustworthy; one of their strongest desires is to destroy people. They speak things that are vile like the smell of an open grave. They flatter people {to trap and destroy them}.* |

ULT **there is no firmness in his mouth**
UST my enemies are untrustworthy
(אֵין בְּפִיהוּ נְכוֹנָה)

Here, **firmness** means trustworthiness or dependability. If your language does not use an abstract noun for this idea, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [you cannot trust what they say] or [you cannot rely on them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in his mouth … is their throat; their tongue**
UST my enemies are untrustworthy … They speak things … They flatter people {to trap and destroy them}
(בְּפִיהוּ & גְּרוֹנָם לְשׁוֹנָם)

The words translated **his mouth**, **their throat**, and **their tongue** represent people's speech. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in their speech … are their words … their talk] or [what they say … is everything they say … everything they say]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **their inward being is destruction**
UST one of their strongest desires is to destroy people
(קִרְבָּם הַוּוֹת)

The **inward being** represents people's thoughts and desires. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [their thoughts and desires are for destruction]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **An open tomb is their throat**
UST They speak things that are vile like the smell of an open grave
(קֶ֣בֶר־פָּת֣וּחַ גְּרוֹנָ֑ם)

Their **throat** is spoken of as if it were an open tomb. This could mean: (1) what they say is bad, like the smell of dead bodies. Alternate translation: [Their words are as bad as the smell from a tomb] or (2) it is ready for dead bodies to be put into it. Alternate translation: [They say that they will kill people] or [What they say kills people] If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **their tongue they make smooth**
UST They flatter people {to trap and destroy them}
(לְשׁוֹנָ֖ם יַחֲלִיקוּן)

Here the psalmist is comparing what the enemies say to something **smooth**, which means they flatter people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they lie to people to get what they want] or [they say nice things about people without really meaning it]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| is destruction | is to destroy people |
| tomb | that are vile like the smell of an open grave |
| their tongue | They flatter people {to trap and destroy them} |

# Psalms 5:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Make them guilty, God; may they fall due to their schemes! Because of their many transgressions, drive them out, for they rebel against you!* | *O God, declare that they are guilty and punish them. Cause to happen to them the harmful events that they plan to cause to happen to others. Get rid of them because they have sinned often, and rebelled against you.* |

ULT **due to their schemes! Because of their many transgressions**
UST Cause to happen to them the harmful events that they plan to cause to happen to others … because they have sinned often
(מִמֹּעֲצוֹתֵיהֶם בְּרֹב פִּשְׁעֵימוֹ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **schemes** and **transgressions**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [due to their scheming! Because they transgress many times]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **may they fall**
UST Cause to happen to them the harmful events that they plan to cause to happen to others
(יִפְּלוּ)

Here, **fall** represents the moral, spiritual, or social decline of the author's enemies as the inevitable and divinely caused consequences of opposing God's will. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [may they suffer]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Make them guilty | declare that they are guilty and punish them |
| God | O God |
| their … transgressions | they have sinned |
| they rebel | rebelled |

# Psalms 5:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But may all refuge seekers in you rejoice; may they shout joyfully to eternity, and may you cover over them, and may lovers of your name exult in you.* | *But enable all the people who ask you to protect them to be glad; enable them to sing gladly always. Please protect them. Enable everyone who loves it when you are famous to praise you.* |

ULT **refuge seekers**
UST who ask … to protect them
(חֹוסֵי)

Here the psalmist speaks of people who trust in Yahweh to save and protect them as if they were **seekers** and Yahweh were a **refuge**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [who seek protection]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to eternity**
UST always
(לְעוֹלָם)

Alternate translation: [forever]

ULT **and may you cover over them**
UST Please protect them
(וְתָסֵךְ עָלֵימוֹ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of protection as if it were to **cover over** someone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and may you defend them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **lovers of your name**
UST everyone who loves it when you are famous
(אֹהֲבֵי שְׁמֶךָ)

Here Yahweh's **name** represents his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [lovers of your good reputation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| But may … rejoice | But enable … to be glad |
| refuge seekers | who ask … to protect them |
| to eternity | always |
| and may … exult | Enable … to praise |
| lovers of | everyone who loves it |

# Psalms 5:12

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *For you, Yahweh, you bless the righteous, you surround him {with} favor as a shield.* | *{I ask this} because Yahweh, you always bless those who act righteously; you protect them as if your good acts are like a shield around them.* |

ULT **the righteous**
UST those who act righteously
(צַדִּיק)

See how you translated the phrase **the righteous** in 1:5.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **you surround him {with} favor as a shield**
UST you protect them as if your good acts are like a shield around them
(כַּצִּנָּה רָצׂוֹן תַּעְטְרֶנּוּ)

Yahweh's **favor** is spoken of as if it were **a shield**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you favor them and protect them as a soldier protects himself with his shield] or [because you are kind to them, you will protect them]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **you surround him**
UST you protect them as if your good acts are like a shield around them
(תַּעְטְרֶנּוּ)

Alternate translation: [you crown him]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| you bless | always bless |
| the righteous | those who act righteously |
| {with} favor | you protect them as if your good acts are like a shield around them |
| as a shield | you protect them as if your good acts are like a shield around them |

# Psalms 6

## Psalm 6 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

1. Plea (1–5)
2. Death (6–7)
3. Answer (8–10)

The psalm divides neatly in half between verses 5 and 6 with 34 words in each. The first half divides into two parts, verses 1–2 and verses 4–5, which parallel each other in structure and content.

### About the Psalm

1. Purpose: to plead for mercy and healing
2. Content: Yahweh have mercy and heal me, because I am near death, and no one can praise you in death.
3. Message: Yahweh's loyalty to David is stronger than sin and death (30:6)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

1. The first section (1–3) and the last section (8–10) are parallel. Not only are they the same length (3 verses, 6 lines), but they are also similar in content and sounds. Structurally, the first section and the last section stand in a symmetrical relationship to one another. The parallels help to define the structure of the psalm.
2. The effect of the repetition in the last section is to highlight the complete resolution and reversal of the situation. David's prayer has been heard, his question of "How long?" has been answered ("in an instant!"), and the deep dismay that he experienced is now imparted to his enemies on whom Yahweh's punishment rightfully falls.
3. The second section (6–7) stands out in a number of ways, including figurative language, line structure, use of rare words, alliteration, delay of information, word

repetition, and use of similar-sounding words. The effect is to draw attention to this section of the poem, wherein David, on the brink of death, reaches to the heights of poetic/rhetorical technique in order to express the depths of his suffering in a last-ditch effort to persuade Yahweh to rescue him.

4. Yahweh's name appears eight times throughout the psalm, but it is conspicuously absent from the second section (6–7), which follows the Psalmist's statement that "in death, there is no remembrance of you" (5a).

5. In verses 6–7, it is as though David has descended into the world of the dead, the place where Yahweh is neither named nor praised. It is a place of darkness (night) and associated with watery chaos (tears/swim/melt). In the last section (8–10), David regains energy, confidence, and authority, and he proclaims Yahweh's name three times, as though he has come back from the dead.

6. Almost every verse in this psalm displays parallelism. Verse 2 and the first line of verse 3 are a three-part parallel while the last line of verse 3 and the first line of verse 4 seem to be the only lines not in a parallelism construction. While all these phrases mean basically the same thing with the second emphasizing the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words, Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word other than **and** in order to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. (See: Parallelism)

See: Poetry

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Significant portions of the ULT, UST, and TNs for this psalm are derivative from "Psalms, Layer by Layer" (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Welcome), "Psalm 6" (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Psalm_6) by Cambridge Digital Bible Research, Katie Frost, Meaghan Smith, Nikki Mustin et al, used under CC BY

# Psalms 6:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; with stringed instruments; on Sheminith; a psalm of David.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: Musicians playing stringed instruments should accompany this song. Perform it in a low range. David wrote this psalm.* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **on Sheminith**
UST Perform it in a low range
(עַל־הַשְּׁמִינִית)

The exact meaning of the word translated as **Sheminith** is uncertain. It is related to the word for “eight.” It may refer to (1) the pitch of the music. Alternate translation: [perform an octave lower] or (2) a type of instrument. Alternate translation: [perform with an eight-stringed lyre] or (3) the tune of the song. Alternate translation: [perform to the tune “Sheminith”]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a psalm | this psalm |
| of David | David wrote |

# Psalms 6:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, rebuke me not in your nose, and in your rage discipline me not.* | *Yahweh, do not correct me angrily, do not punish me wrathfully.* |

**ULT rebuke me not in your nose, and in your rage discipline me not**
**UST** do not correct me angrily, do not punish me wrathfully
(אַל־בְּאַפְּךָ תוֹכִיחֵנִי וְאַל־בַּחֲמָתְךָ תְיַסְּרֵנִי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. See the Introduction to this chapter for additional information on parallelism. Alternate translation: [do not rebuke or discipline me when you are angry]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT in your nose**
**UST** angrily
(בְּאַפְּךָ)

Here the **nose** represents anger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in your anger]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT in your rage**
**UST** wrathfully
(בַּחֲמָתְךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **rage**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [furiously]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| rebuke me | do … correct me |
| in your rage | wrathfully |

# Psalms 6:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Be gracious {to} me, Yahweh, for I am frail! Heal me, Yahweh, for my bones are shaking!* | *Yahweh, act kindly toward me because I have become weak. Yahweh, heal me because my body shakes fearfully.* |

**ULT my bones are shaking**
**UST** my body shakes fearfully
(נִבְהֲלוּ עֲצָמָי)

The **bones** represent the whole body. His body may have been shaking because he was sick or extremely tired. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my whole body is shaking]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Be gracious {to} me | act kindly toward me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| are shaking | shakes fearfully |

# Psalms 6:3

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And my soul is very disturbed. And you, Yahweh, until when?* | *Yahweh, I am greatly troubled in my inner being. How long must I endure this?* |

**ULT And my soul is very disturbed … my soul**
**UST** I am greatly troubled in my inner being … me
(וְנַפְשִׁי נִבְהֲלָה מְאֹד & נַפְשִׁי) (6:3-4)

The psalmist is using **My soul** to represent his entire person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And I am very disturbed … me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT disturbed**
**UST** troubled
(נִבְהֲלָה)

Alternate translation: [terrified] or [shaken]

**ULT And you, Yahweh, until when**
**UST** Yahweh … How long must I endure this
(וְאַתָּה יְהוָה עַד־מָתָי)

The psalmist is using the question form to request an end to his suffering. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [Please, do not let this continue!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And my soul | in my inner being |
| disturbed | troubled |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 6:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Turn back, Yahweh! Rescue my soul! Save me for the sake of your covenant faithfulness!* | *Yahweh, relent from your anger and deliver me! Help me because you always do what you promise!* |

ULT **Turn back**
UST relent from your anger
(שׁוּבָה)

Here, **Turn back** refers to a change from one activity to another, in this case from anger to mercy. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Have mercy on me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Save me for the sake of your covenant faithfulness**
UST Help me because you always do what you promise
(הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי לְמַעַן חַסְדֶּךָ)

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: [Save me because you are faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Rescue | and deliver |
| my soul | me |
| Save me | Help me |
| your covenant faithfulness | you always do what you promise |

# Psalms 6:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For in death, there is no remembrance of you. In Sheol, who will thank you?* | *{Do this} because {I and} no one {else} who is dead can honor you. {I and} no one {else} can praise you {if we are} in the place where the dead are.* |

ULT **in death**
UST who is dead
(בַּמָּוֶת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **death**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [when someone has died]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **remembrance of you**
UST I and … one {else} … can honor you
(זִכְרֶךָ)

Here, **remembrance** represents praise or honor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [praise of you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **For in death, there is no remembrance of you**
UST {Do this} because {I and} no one {else} who is dead can honor you
(כִּי אֵין בַּמָּוֶת זִכְרֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **remembrance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [For in death people cannot remember you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **In Sheol, who will thank you**
UST {I and} no one {else} can praise you {if we are} in the place where the dead are
(בִּשְׁאוֹל מִי יוֹדֶה־לָּךְ)

David uses this question to emphasize that no one in Sheol thanks God. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for this purpose, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [No one in Sheol will give you thanks!] or [The dead cannot praise you!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| In Sheol | {if we are} in the place where the dead are |

# Psalms 6:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I am weary with my groaning. During every night, I cause my bed to swim, With my tears, my couch I melt.* | *I am exhausted because of my pain. I cry all night long, so that my tears soak and seem as if they will wash away my bed and my cushions.* |

ULT **I am weary with my groaning**
UST I am exhausted because of my pain
(יָגַעְתִּי ׀ בְּאַנְחָתִי)

The author's **groaning** represents the pain or distress that he feels. If your language does not use an abstract noun for that idea, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [I am very tired because I hurt]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **my bed … my couch**
UST my … my bed and … cushions
(מִטָּתִי & עַרְשִׂי)

These are different words for the same thing. Alternate translation: [my sleeping place … my sleeping place]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **During every night, I cause my bed to swim, With my tears, my couch I melt**
UST I cry all night long, so that my tears soak and seem as if they will wash away my bed and my cushions
(אַשְׂחֶה בְכָל־לַיְלָה מִטָּתִי בְּדִמְעָתִי עַרְשִׂי אַמְסֶה)

The psalmist says his **tearscause** his **bed to swim** and his **couch** to **melt** as extreme statements for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [Every night my bed gets very wet from my many tears that make my whole couch very wet]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

# Psalms 6:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My eye has wasted away from grief, it advances because of all my adversaries.* | *I am very sad and {I cry so much that} I cannot see well. My vision has become weak from {crying because of} all my enemies.* |

**Note:**

In this verse, the implied cause of the eye (vision) problems the psalmist is having is his excessive crying. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers.

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **My eye has wasted away**
UST I am very sad and {I cry so much that} I cannot see well
(עָשְׁשָׁה & עֵינִי)

Here, **eye** represents the ability to see. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [My vision has wasted away] or [I cannot see clearly]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **My eye has wasted away**
UST I am very sad and {I cry so much that} I cannot see well
(עָשְׁשָׁה & עֵינִי)

Here the **eye** having **wasted away** means to lose the ability to see. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I have lost the ability to see well]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **from grief**
UST I am very sad and {I cry so much that} I cannot see well
(מִכַּעַס)

Here, **grief** represents crying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from crying] or [because I cry so much]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **it advances**
UST My vision has become weak from {crying … }
(עָתְתָה)

Here the **eye** is said to **advance** which figuratively means to grow old or weak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [it weakens] or [my sight weakens]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| has wasted away | I am very sad and {I cry so much that} I cannot see well |
| my adversaries | my enemies |

# Psalms 6:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Turn away from me, all you doers of iniquity, for Yahweh has heard the sound of my sobbing!* | *{I advise} all you people who do evil things to get away from me because Yahweh heard me when I was crying;* |

**ULT Yahweh … Yahweh … Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh … he … and he
(יְהוָה & יְהוָה & יְהוָה) (6:8-9)

**Yahweh** is mentioned three times in these verses to focus the audience on who has changed the author's circumstances. However, if repeating a name like this in your culture would not create a similar focus effect you could substitute some with pronouns as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| iniquity | evil things |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 6:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh has heard my appeal for mercy,<br>Yahweh accepts my prayer.* | *he heard me when I called out for him to help me, and he will answer my prayer.* |

ULT **my appeal for mercy**
UST when I called out for him to help me
(תְּחִנָּתִֽי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **mercy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [my appeal for him to be merciful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Yahweh accepts my prayer**
UST and he will answer my prayer
(יְהוָ֥ה תְּפִלָּתִ֗י יִקָּֽח)

Being willing to do what the psalmist prayed for is spoken of as if his **prayer** was something that **Yahweh accepts** from him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will respond to my prayer]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | he |
| my appeal for mercy | when I called out for him to help me |
| my prayer | my prayer |

# Psalms 6:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let all my enemies be shamed and greatly disturbed. Let them turn back. Let them be shamed {in} an instant.* | *{When that happens,} all my enemies will be ashamed and very troubled. They will relent {from attacking me because they will} suddenly {be} ashamed.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Let … be shamed | When that happens … will be ashamed |
| my enemies | my enemies |
| and … disturbed | and … troubled |

# Psalms 7

## Psalm 7 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

1. Injustice Rejected (1–5)
2. Justice Requested (6–9)
3. Justice Expected (10–16)
4. Justice Praised (17)

### About the Psalm

1. Purpose: to invoke justice from Yahweh towards both the righteous (specifically himself) and the wicked (false accusers)
2. Content: God is a righteous judge. He saves the upright, and he brings an end to the wicked's violence.
3. Message: King Yahweh will see to it that the wicked receive their punishment and that the righteous are vindicated.

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Heights and depths provide the structure of the Psalm.

1. The Psalmist is brought down (1–5)
2. Yahweh goes up to the highest place (6–9)
3. The enemies are brought down (10–16)
4. Praise to the Most High God (17)

## Other translation issues

1. There are a number of explicit and implicit references to Yahweh as both warrior and judge, which are both important functions of a king, especially King Yahweh—a metaphor that runs throughout the Psalms.

2. The subject in verses 12–16 is ambiguous; only the pronoun “he” is used (but it must be the wicked in verses 14–16). The psalmist might have chosen to leave the participants grammatically ambiguous in this entire section to create tension in what is a prominent section of the psalm (which is it, Yahweh or the wicked?!), as well as to teach an important lesson in line with the meaning of this psalm: to be wicked is to bring death upon oneself, but Yahweh is the one who ensures the destruction. In the UST and notes, the most likely persons are identified.

## Cush the Benjamite

Note the superscription and the specific circumstances. There is no other reference to this incident in the Scriptures. But there are references to David being opposed by those of the tribe of Benjamin during the time he was serving King Saul.

See: Poetry

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Portions of the ULT, UST, and TNs for this psalm are derivative from “Psalms, Layer by Layer” (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Welcome), “Psalm 7” (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Psalm_7) by Cambridge Digital Bible Research, Katie Frost, Meaghan Smith, Nikki Mustin et al, used under CC BY

# Psalms 7:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A musical composition of David, which he sang to Yahweh concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite.* | *A psalm that David sang to Yahweh because of a Benjamite named Cush.* |

**ULT A musical composition of David**
**UST** A psalm … David
(שִׁגָּיוֹן לְדָוִד)

Alternate translation: [This is a song that David wrote]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of David | David |
| to Yahweh | to Yahweh |
| of Cush | named Cush |

# Psalms 7:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh my God, in you I have taken refuge; save me from all my pursuers, and rescue me!* | *Yahweh my God, I have come to you so that you can protect me. Save me from everyone who is chasing me {in order to harm me}. Rescue me!* |

ULT **my God**
UST my God
(אֱלֹהַי)

The psalmist is not using the phrase **my God** to mean that he possesses or controls Yahweh, but rather to emphasize that Yahweh is the God the one he worships. See the introduction to Psalms for further discussion. Alternate translation: [the God whom I worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **in you I have taken refuge**
UST I have come to you so that you can protect me
(בְּךָ חָסִיתִי)

Here the psalmist is speaking of going to Yahweh for protection as taking refuge in him, as if Yahweh were something strong or safe he could hide inside of. Alternate translation: [I always go to you for protection]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my God | my God |
| I have taken refuge | I have come … so that you can protect me |
| save me | Save me |
| and rescue me | Rescue me |

# Psalms 7:2

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Lest he rip my life apart like a lion, tearing apart, and there is no one to rescue.* | *If you do not do that, they will maul me like a lion {does when it attacks the animals it wants to kill}; they shred me and there is not a rescuer.* |

**ULT he rip my life apart like a lion**
**UST** they will maul me like a lion {does when it attacks the animals it wants to kill} … me
(יִטְרֹף כְּאַרְיֵה נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is saying that, just **like a lion** would, his enemy would both rip his body apart and tear it in pieces. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [they violently kill me like a lion ripping apart its victim's body] or [they violently put an end to my life]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| like a lion | like a lion {does when it attacks the animals it wants to kill} |
| to rescue | a rescuer |

# Psalms 7:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh my God, if I have done this, if there is wrong on my hands,* | *My God Yahweh, suppose that I have done these things, that I am really guilty.* |

**Note:** (7:3-5)

In some languages, translating verses 3–5 might require a significant rearrangement to make the meaning clear. This section presents a hypothetical situation where the psalmist calls a potential curse onto himself. You might have to connect each hypothetical situation in verses 3–4 with a consequence in verse 5, or even put verse 5 before the hypotheticals. However, it is important to notice that both verses 3–4 and verse 5 build up to a greater level of tension, with the peak of this tension at the end of verse 5. As you translate, try to capture this growing sense of hypothetical sin and its consequences, doing so in a way that feels natural to the poetic style of your language.

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **if I have done this, if there is wrong on my hands … if I have repaid evil {to} one {who was at} peace with me, or senselessly rescued my adversary**
UST suppose that I have done these things, that I am really guilty … { … Suppose that I have harmed my ally, maybe} I {was unfaithful to my ally and instead} rescued an enemy for no reason
(אִם־עָשִׂיתִי זֹאת אִם־יֶשׁ־עָוֶל בְּכַפָּי׃ אִם־גָּמַלְתִּי שִׁלֻּמַי רָע וָאֲחַלְּצָה צוֹרְרִי רֵיקָם) (7:3-5)

The psalmist presents a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he is sure that the condition he describes is not true. He is making the case that he is not guilty. When translating, use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true (similar to how it is done in the UST). Be careful, though: if you choose to translate it as a statement of the opposite, as seen in an alternate translation, you will need to also change the wording in verse 5 to reflect this negation, as shown at the end of the provided example. Alternate translation: [since I have not done this, and since there is no wrong on my hands, since I have not repaid evil to one who was at peace with me, or senselessly rescued my adversary, then do not]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions

ULT **my God**
UST My God
(אֱלֹהָ֑י)

The psalmist is not using the phrase **my God** to mean that he possesses or controls Yahweh, but rather to emphasize that Yahweh is the God he worships. See the introduction to Psalms for further discussion. Alternate translation: [the God whom I worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **if there is wrong on my hands**
UST that I am really guilty
(אִם־יֶ֥שׁ־עָ֝וֶל בְּכַפָּ֗י)

Here the psalmist is speaking of **wrong** as if it were something that could be held in someone's hands. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [if I have done something wrong with my hands] or [if I have treated someone wrongly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **if there is wrong on my hands**
UST that I am really guilty
(אִם־יֶ֥שׁ־עָ֝וֶל בְּכַפָּ֗י)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wrong**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [if I have wronged someone]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my God | My God |
| wrong | I am really guilty |

# Psalms 7:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *if I have repaid evil {to} one {who was at} peace with me, or senselessly rescued my adversary,* | *Suppose that I have harmed my ally, {maybe} I {was unfaithful to my ally and instead} rescued an enemy for no reason.* |

**ULT I have repaid evil {to} one {who was at} peace with me**
UST I have harmed my ally
(גָּמַלְתִּי שְׁוֹלְמִי רָע)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evil**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [I have acted evilly to one who was at peace with me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT {to} one {who was at} peace with me**
UST my ally
(שְׁוֹלְמִי)

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: [to my friend] or [to my peaceful neighbor]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT or senselessly rescued my adversary**
UST {maybe} I {was unfaithful to my ally and instead} rescued an enemy for no reason
(וָאֲחַלְּצָה צוֹרְרִי רֵיקָם)

This could mean: (1) being an unfaithful friend by saving a person who is the author's and his ally's enemy. Alternate translation: [or saved my enemy for no reason] (2) attacking an enemy without immediate cause (in this case the verb translated rescue could be taken as plunder). Alternate translation: [or plundered my enemy without cause] (3) not only doing evil to friends but even doing good to enemies. In this case the phrase would be less logically connected to the previous one. Alternate translation: [and I even rescue one who is my enemy without reason]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| evil | harmed |
| {to} one {who was at} peace with me | my ally |
| or … rescued | {maybe} I {was unfaithful to my ally and instead} rescued |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my adversary | an enemy |

# Psalms 7:5

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *let my enemy pursue my soul and overtake {it}, and let him trample my life to the ground and cause my honor to live in the dust. Selah* | *Then allow my enemies to chase and capture me. Allow them to stomp me into the ground and leave me lying {dead} in the dirt. Selah* |

**ULT** **my soul … my life … my honor**
**UST** me … me … and … me
(נַפְשִׁי & חַיַּי וּכְבוֹדִי)

Here, **my soul**, **my life**, and **my honor** represent the whole person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [me … me … me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT** **and cause my honor to live in the dust**
**UST** and leave me lying {dead} in the dirt
(וּכְבוֹדִי ׀ לֶעָפָר יַשְׁכֵּן)

This refers to lying dead and unburied in disgrace. (This is the same word for dust as in Genesis 3:19.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and throw my dead body on a dirt pile]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT** **and overtake {it}**
**UST** and capture
(וְיַשֵּׂג)

This represents capturing him. Alternate translation: [capture me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my enemy | my enemies |
| my soul | me |
| and overtake {it} | and capture |
| and let him trample | Allow them to stomp |
| my honor | and … me |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 7:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Arise, Yahweh! In your nose, be lifted with the rage of my adversaries! And wake up for me! You have ordered judgment.* | *Get up Yahweh! Because you are angry, show that you are greater than what my furious enemies can do! Be alert so you can rescue me by doing what you have said is just!* |

ULT **Arise**
UST Get up
(קוּמָה)

**Arise** represents doing something or taking action. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Do something] or [Take action]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **In your nose**
UST Because you are angry
(בְּאַפֶּךָ)

Here, **In your nose** is an idiom meaning that **Yahweh** is angry. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Because you are angry]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **be lifted**
UST show that you are greater than
(הִנָּשֵׂא)

Here, **be lifted** represents overcoming or conquering people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [overcome]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **with the rage of my adversaries**
UST what my furious enemies can do
(בְּעַבְרוֹת צוֹרְרָי)

The **rage of my adversaries** represents their attacks. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [against the attacks of my adversaries] or [against my adversaries who attack me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **And wake up**
UST Be alert
(וְעוּרָה)

The psalmist is speaking to **Yahweh** as if he were asleep and needed to **wake up**. Here waking up represents starting to do something or take action. It does not imply that the psalmist thinks Yahweh is asleep. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Take action] or [Start to do this]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **You have ordered judgment**
UST by doing what you have said is just
(מִשְׁפָּט צִוִּיתָ)

This wording serves a dual function: it both justifies the demands made earlier in this verse and sets the stage for the expectations expressed in the following verses. When translating, consider how to maintain this two-fold connection in your language, ensuring that it aligns with the logical and emotional flow of the text.

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| with the rage of | what my furious enemies can do |
| my adversaries | what my furious enemies can do |
| judgment | is just |

# Psalms 7:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And an assembly of peoples surround you, and over it return on high!* | *The people of all nations gather around you; return to ruling over them all!* |

ULT **And an assembly of peoples surround you**
UST The people of all nations gather around you
(וַעֲדַת לְאֻמִּים תְּסוֹבְבֶךָּ)

Alternate translation: [And let an assembly of peoples surround you]

ULT **and over it return on high**
UST return to ruling over them all
(וְעָלֶיהָ לַמָּרוֹם שׁוּבָה)

Yahweh ruling the **assembly of peoples** from heaven is spoken of as being **over it** and **on high**. Alternate translation: [rule over them from heaven] or [rule over them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And an assembly of | The people of |
| return | return |

# Psalms 7:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, adjudicate the peoples! Judge me, Yahweh, according to my righteousness and according to my integrity, Most High!* | *Yahweh, judge the people of all nations! Decide favorably for me, Yahweh, because I am righteous and honorable {before you the} highest judge.* |

**ULT Yahweh, adjudicate the peoples! Judge me, Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh, judge the people of all nations! Decide favorably for me, Yahweh
(יְהוָה֮ יָדִ֪ין עַמִּ֫ים שָׁפְטֵ֥נִי יְהוָ֑ה)

The word **adjudicate** is used to show that in the original two different words meaning judge are used. If you have two terms in your language, you can use two; if not, you can use the same term twice. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, judge the peoples! Judge me, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

**ULT Judge me**
**UST** Decide favorably for me
(שָׁפְטֵ֥נִי)

The implication is that Yahweh will find the psalmist innocent. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Judge me innocent]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT according to my righteousness and according to my integrity**
**UST** because I am righteous and honorable
(כְּצִדְקִ֣י וּכְתֻמִּ֣י)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **righteousness** and **integrity**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [according to how I live rightly and according to how I live honestly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Most High**
**UST** before you the
(עָלָֽי)

This could be: (1) a title for Yahweh. Alternate translation: [O you, Above All] (2) a clause locating the author's righteousness and integrity in himself. Alternate translation: [which is in me]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Judge me | Decide favorably for me |
| according to my righteousness | because I am righteous |
| and according to my integrity | and honorable |
| Most High | before you the |

# Psalms 7:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May the evil of the wicked end, and {would} you establish the righteous. The righteous God examines hearts and kidneys.* | *God, you are righteous and look closely at what people think and want. Please stop evil people from doing wicked things, and make {all of us} who are righteous secure!* |

ULT **the evil of**
UST evil people
(רַע)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evil**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the evil things of]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the wicked**
UST from doing wicked things
(רְשָׁעִים)

See how you translated the phrase **the wicked** in 1:1.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the righteous**
UST {all of us} who are righteous
(צַדִּיק)

See how you translated the phrase **the righteous** in 1:5.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **hearts and kidneys**
UST at what people think and want
(לִבּוֹת וּכְלָיוֹת)

The **hearts and kidneys** are internal organs that represent peoples' thoughts and desires in the author's culture. If these body parts do not have that meaning in your language, you could use an equivalent expression that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [thoughts and motives]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT The righteous God examines hearts and kidneys**

**UST** God, you are righteous and look closely at what people think and want

(וּבֹחֵן לִבּוֹת וּכְלָיוֹת אֱלֹהִים צַדִּיק)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could move the last clause in this verse to the beginning as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the evil of | evil people |
| the wicked | from doing wicked things |
| the righteous | {all of us} who are righteous |
| God | God |

# Psalms 7:10

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *My shield is with God, the savior of the upright of heart.* | *God, you protect me as a shield protects soldiers; you rescue all those who are righteous in their inner being.* |

**ULT My shield is with God**
**UST** God, you protect me as a shield protects soldiers
(מָגִנִּי עַל־אֱלֹהִים)

The word **shield** represents God's protection. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [God protects me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the upright of heart**
**UST** all those who are righteous in their inner being
(יְשָׁרֵי־לֵב)

Here the **heart** represents the thoughts and motives. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those whose thoughts and motives are upright]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| My shield | protect me as a shield protects soldiers |
| God | God, you |
| the savior of | you rescue |
| the upright of | all those who are righteous |

# Psalms 7:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God is a righteous judge, and a God {who is} indignant on every day.* | *God judges everyone correctly. God condemns {the wicked} constantly.* |

**ULT and a God {who is} indignant on every day**
**UST** God condemns {the wicked} constantly
(וְאֵל זֹעֵם בְּכָל־יוֹם)

The psalmist assumes that his readers will understand that God is indignant with the wicked. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and a God who is angry with evil people every day]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT on every day**
**UST** constantly
(בְּכָל־יוֹם)

Here, **on every day** represents a constant state. God is angry with the wicked all the time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all the time]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| is a … judge | judges everyone |
| righteous | correctly |
| and a God | God |

# Psalms 7:12

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *If he does not repent, his sword he will sharpen, his bow he has bent and prepared.* | *Whenever the wicked do not repent, it is as though God sharpens his sword and puts a string on his bow {to get ready to kill them}.* |

**ULT his sword he will sharpen**
**UST** it is as though God sharpens his sword
(חַרְבּוֹ יְלַטָּוֹשׁ) (7:12-13)

In verses 12 and 13, David speaks of God deciding to punish the wicked as if God were a warrior preparing to fight against them with weapons. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [God will prepare to punish him like a warrior prepares to fight by sharpening his sword]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT he does … repent, his sword he will sharpen, his bow he has bent**
**UST** the wicked do … repent, it is as though God sharpens his sword and puts a string on his bow {to get ready to kill them … }
(יָשׁוּב חַרְבּוֹ יְלַטָּוֹשׁ קַשְׁתּוֹ דָּרַךְ)

The first **he** in this verse refers to the wicked. After the word **repent** all the **he** and **his** refer to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| he does … repent | the wicked do … repent |
| his sword | his sword |
| his bow | on his bow |

# Psalms 7:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And for him he has prepared implements of death; he has made his arrows into burning {arrows}.* | *He prepares his deadly weapons to kill {the wicked}, he makes his arrows have flaming tips.* |

**ULT And for him**

**UST** the wicked

(וְלוֹ)

This could mean: (1) for the wicked, that is, God has prepared to use these weapons against the wicked. Alternate translation: [and for the wicked] (2) for himself, that is, God has prepared the weapons for his own use. Alternate translation: [and for himself]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he has prepared | He prepares |

# Psalms 7:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Behold he is pregnant with wickedness, and he conceives trouble, and he births lies.* | *Look at the wicked person who is filled with evil intentions, as though pregnant with them, who plans to trouble people like conceiving a child, and who lies as naturally as giving birth.* |

ULT **he is pregnant with wickedness, and he conceives trouble, and he births lies**
UST the wicked person who is filled with evil intentions, as though pregnant with them, who plans to trouble people like conceiving a child, and who lies as naturally as giving birth
(יְחַבֵּל־אָוֶן וְהָרָה עָמָל וְיָלַד שָׁקֶר)

These three phrases mean basically the same thing. The second and third emphasize the meaning by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the later phrases are repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [he who is pregnant with wickedness, who also conceives trouble, who even births lies]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **he is pregnant with wickedness, and he conceives trouble, and he births lies**
UST the wicked person who is filled with evil intentions, as though pregnant with them, who plans to trouble people like conceiving a child, and who lies as naturally as giving birth
(יְחַבֵּל־אָוֶן וְהָרָה עָמָל וְיָלַד שָׁקֶר)

The psalmist speaks of the things that a wicked person does as if the person were **pregnant**, and **wickedness**, **trouble**, and **lies** are the baby. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Just as a woman conceives a child, carries it to term, and gives birth to it, so evil people think of wrong things to do, they do those wrong things, and then they lie about what they have done] or [the person ready to do wicked things. He makes plans for trouble and produces lies]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **he is pregnant**
UST the wicked person who is filled with evil intentions, as though pregnant with them
(יְחַבָּֽל)

Here the subject switches from God back to the evil person. Alternate translation: [the wicked person is pregnant]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **he is pregnant with wickedness, and he conceives trouble, and he births lies**
UST the wicked person who is filled with evil intentions, as though pregnant with them, who plans to trouble people like conceiving a child, and who lies as naturally as giving birth
(יְחַבָּל־אָ֭וֶן וְהָרָה֣ עָ֑מָל וְיָלַ֖ד שָֽׁקֶר)

Here, **he** represents evil people in general. It may be strange in some languages to use a masculine pronoun when talking about someone being pregnant or giving birth, even in a figure of speech. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a more natural expression. Alternate translation: [the person pregnant with wickedness, who conceives trouble, who births lies]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| with wickedness | the wicked person who is filled with evil intentions, as though pregnant with them |
| trouble | who plans to trouble people like conceiving a child |
| lies | and who lies as naturally as giving birth |

# Psalms 7:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He digs a pit and hollows it out and falls into the hole he has made.* | *If he digs a deep pit to trap others, he will fall into his own trap.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a pit | a deep pit to trap others |

# Psalms 7:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *His trouble returns on his head, and his violence comes down on the top of his head.* | *He experiences the bad things that he wants to cause to others, he hurts himself by the violent things that he wants to do to others.* |

ULT **His trouble returns on his head, and his violence comes down on the top of his head**

UST He experiences the bad things that he wants to cause to others, he hurts himself by the violent things that he wants to do to others

(יָשֻׁוב עֲמָלֹו בְּרֹאשֹׁו וְעַל קָדְקָדֹו חֲמָסֹו יֵרֵד)

Here, **trouble** and **violence** are spoken of as if they hit a person's head or fall down on it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression in your translation or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [His own destructive plans destroy him, for his violence attacks him] or [When he plans to trouble others, others trouble him; when he attacks others, others attack him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **His trouble returns on his head, and his violence comes down on the top of his head**

UST He experiences the bad things that he wants to cause to others, he hurts himself by the violent things that he wants to do to others

(יָשֻׁוב עֲמָלֹו בְּרֹאשֹׁו וְעַל קָדְקָדֹו חֲמָסֹו יֵרֵד)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **trouble** and **violence**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [His troubling others returns on his head, and his violently attacking others comes down on the top of his head]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| His trouble | He experiences the bad things that he wants to cause to others |

# Psalms 7:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will thank Yahweh according to his righteousness, and sing praise to the name of Yahweh, the Most High.* | *I thank Yahweh because he always acts justly, I sing to praise Yahweh, who is the highest judge, and to make him famous.* |

ULT **according to his righteousness, and sing praise to**
UST because he always acts justly, I sing to praise
(כְּצִדְקָ֑וֹ וַֽאֲזַמְּרָ֥ה)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **righteousness** and **praise**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [because he is righteous and sing a praise song to]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the name of Yahweh**
UST Yahweh … and to make him famous
(שֵׁ֖ם־יְהוָ֣ה)

Here, **name** represents reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh's reputation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| according to his righteousness | because he always acts justly |
| and sing praise to | I sing to praise |
| the Most High | who is the highest judge |

# Psalms 8

## Psalm 8 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

1. Superscription
2. Introduction (1–2)
3. Question (3–4)
4. Answer (5–8)
5. Closing (9)

### About the Psalm

1. Purpose: to praise Yahweh for his majesty throughout all the earth
2. Content: Your name is majestic in all the earth! You bestow your glory on the heavens above, and you bestow glory on weak humans below.
3. Message: Yahweh’s majesty is revealed in weakness.

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

1. The psalm begins and ends with the exact same exclamation—this serves to point out the purpose of the psalm.
2. The psalm progresses from top to bottom several times.

A. In verse 1b–2 it goes from the heavens down to the weakest of humans.

B. Verses 3–4 again go down from the heavens to man.

C. Verses 5–8 move from the heavenly beings through man, who is exalted and crowned with glory as Yahweh’s representative ruler of all creation, and down and out into

creation, moving away from man's primary spheres of dominion (domestic animals) progressively outward.

1. There are many echoes of Genesis 1. References include: the heavens as created by Yahweh's fingers (3), the animals as made by his hands (6), the dominion of man over creation (6–8, see also Genesis 1:26).

2. Magnificent, Majesty, Splendor, Glory: Yahweh gives his weak representative (humans) many of his glorious attributes, and humans rule for Yahweh.

See: Poetry

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Portions of the ULT, UST, and TNs for this psalm are derivative from "Psalms, Layer by Layer" (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Welcome), "Psalm 8" (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Psalm_8) by Cambridge Digital Bible Research, Katie Frost, Meaghan Smith, Nikki Mustin et al, used under CC BY

See their top three exegetical issues in Psalm 8 video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L5-NpONilOs) for discussion of verses 1, 2, and 5 and their top three poetic features of Psalm 8 video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcRob_g2g2Q) on YouTube.

# Psalms 8:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on Gittith. A psalm of David.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: Accompany the song with a stringed instrument. David wrote this psalm.* |

**ULT For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**ULT on Gittith**
UST Accompany the song with a stringed instrument
(עַל־הַגִּתִּית)

The exact meaning of the term **Gittith** is uncertain. The word could be related to the name of the Philistine city of Gath or to a term relating to wine production, which was accompanied by singing. It could refer to: (1) a musical instrument. Alternate translation: [accompany with a Philistine lute] or (2) the tune. Alternate translation: [use the winepress tune]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm | this psalm |
| of David | David wrote |

# Psalms 8:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, our Lord, how magnificent is your name in all the earth, {you} whose splendor is bestowed on the heavens.* | *Our Lord Yahweh, people all over the world know how impressive you are! You have made the sky show {everyone} how grand you are {every time anyone looks at it}!* |

ULT **your name**
UST you are
(שִׁמְךָ)

Yahweh's **name** represents his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your reputation] or [your fame]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in all the earth**
UST people all over the world know
(בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ)

Here, **earth** represents all the people in the world. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to all people]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **{you} whose splendor is bestowed on the heavens**
UST You have made the sky show {everyone} how grand you are {every time anyone looks at it}
(אֲשֶׁר תְּנָה הוֹדְךָ עַל־הַשָּׁמָיִם)

The expression **whose splendor is bestowed on the heavens** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [you who bestow your splendor on the heavens]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **{you} whose splendor is bestowed on the heavens**
UST You have made the sky show {everyone} how grand you are {every time anyone looks at it}
(אֲשֶׁר תְּנָה֣ הוֹדְךָ֣ עַל־הַשָּׁמָֽיִם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **splendor**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [you show in the heavens how splendid you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| our Lord | Our Lord |
| the earth | the world |
| splendor | how grand you are |
| the heavens | the sky … every time anyone looks at it |

# Psalms 8:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Out of the mouth of children and nursing ones you have established strength because of your adversaries, to cause the enemy and avenger to end.* | *When {anyone who is weak cries for help like} nursing little children cry {for help}, you {listen and} protect them from your enemies, {the ones that want to hurt your people}. In order to protect them, you destroy enemies who want to harm them in return {for what you have justly done to them}.* |

ULT **Out of the mouth of children and nursing ones**
UST When {anyone who is weak cries for help like} nursing little children cry {for help}
(מִפִּ֤י עוֹלְלִ֨ים ׀ וְיוֹנְקִ֗ים)

**Out of the mouth of children and nursing ones** is placed at the front of the sentence here to help create a strong sense of surprise that this weak thing would be the means that Yahweh uses to establish **strength**. Consider using a poetic method in your language to make the connection of the weak and strong surprising.

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **Out of the mouth of children and nursing ones you have established strength because of your adversaries**
UST When {anyone who is weak cries for help like} nursing little children cry {for help}, you {listen and} protect them from your enemies, {the ones that want to hurt your people … }
(מִפִּ֤י עוֹלְלִ֨ים ׀ וְיוֹנְקִ֗ים יִסַּ֫דְתָּ֥ עֹ֭ז לְמַ֣עַן צוֹרְרֶ֑יךָ)

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 of your adversaries, you have established strength out of the mouth of children and nursing ones]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **Out of the mouth of**
UST When {anyone who is weak cries for help like} nursing little children cry {for help}
(מִפִּ֤י)

Here, **mouth** represents the babies' crying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [From the crying of]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **children and nursing ones**
UST When {anyone who is weak cries for help like} nursing little children cry {for help}
(עֹולְלִ֗ים ׀ וְיֹנְקִ֫ים)

The two words translated **children** and **nursing ones** expresses a single idea. The word **nursing** further describes the age of the **children**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [nursing babies]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

ULT **strength**
UST you {listen and} protect them
(עֹ֭ז)

The Hebrew reads **strength**. The ULT follows that reading. The ancient Greek translation reads "praise." The Greek version is quoted in Matthew 21:16. 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.

**Support Reference:** Textual Variants

ULT **strength**
UST you {listen and} protect them
(עֹ֭ז)

Because the word translated **established** is strongly associated with making a building, here, **strength** probably represents a fortress—a strong building that can be defended easily. Kings or Lords, as Yahweh is depicted in verse 1, often built fortresses to protect their domains and people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a building that is easy to defend]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **children and nursing ones**
UST When {anyone who is weak cries for help like} nursing little children cry {for help}
(עֹולְלִ֗ים ׀ וְיֹנְקִ֫ים)

Because of the parallelism between verse 2 and verse 4, **children and nursing ones** may represent all of humanity (as weak and helpless people needing Yahweh's protection). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [even the weakest humans]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **to cause the enemy and avenger to end**
UST In order to protect them, you destroy enemies who want to harm them in return {for what you have justly done to them}
(לְהַשְׁבִּית אוֹיֵב וּמִתְנַקֵּם)

Here, **to** marks **cause the enemy and avenger to end** as the goal or purpose of establishing **strength**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose.

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **the enemy and avenger**
UST enemies who want to harm them in return {for what you have justly done to them}
(אוֹיֵב וּמִתְנַקֵּם)

The two words **enemy** and **avenger** may express a single idea. The word **avenger** further describes the **enemy**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [the vengeful enemy]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| you have established | you {listen and} protect them |
| your adversaries | from your enemies, {the ones that want to hurt your people} |
| the enemy | enemies |
| and avenger | who want to harm them in return {for what you have justly done to them} |

# Psalms 8:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,* | *I look up at the sky {at night} and see the things that you have made— the moon and the stars that you have set in place.* |

ULT **the work of your fingers**
UST the things that you have made
(מַעֲשֵׂי אֶצְבְּעֹתֶיךָ)

Yahweh's **fingers** represent his capability. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the work of your power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the work of your fingers**
UST the things that you have made
(מַעֲשֵׂי אֶצְבְּעֹתֶיךָ)

Here, **work of your fingers** represents what Yahweh has created. Alternate translation: [the things that you made]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| at your heavens | at the sky {at night} |

# Psalms 8:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *what is mankind that you remember him, or the son of man that you pay attention to him?* | *It is amazing to me that you think about people, that you are concerned about humans!* |

ULT **what is mankind that you remember him, or the son of man that you pay attention to him**

UST It is amazing to me that you think about people, that you are concerned about humans
(מָה־אֱנוֹשׁ כִּי־תִזְכְּרֶנּוּ וּבֶן־אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֶנּוּ)

The psalmist is using the question form to express surprise. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. These remarks have been expressed in the form of a question to add emphasis. Alternate translation: [It is amazing that you are concerned for people and care about them!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **what is mankind that you remember him, or the son of man that you pay attention to him**

UST It is amazing to me that you think about people, that you are concerned about humans
(מָה־אֱנוֹשׁ כִּי־תִזְכְּרֶנּוּ וּבֶן־אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֶנּוּ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Translate them according to the decisions your team has made regarding translating parallelism in Hebrew poetry. See the Introduction to Psalms for more information. Alternate translation: [What is mankind that you remember him? I say again, what is the son of man that you pay attention to him] or [What difference does the things that happen to humans make to you, that you are concerned for them?]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **is mankind … or the son of man**

UST people … humans
(אֱנוֹשׁ & וּבֶן־אָדָם)

Here, **mankind** and **son of man** represent people in general and not a specific person. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use expressions that would be more natural in your language.

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| or the son of man | humans |

# Psalms 8:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yet you have made him to lack little from the heavenly beings, and {with} glory and majesty you have crowned him.* | *In fact though, you made humans to be just slightly lower than heavenly beings. You made humans to be glorious and majestic {like you}.* |

**ULT Yet you have made him to lack**
**UST** In fact though, you made humans to be … lower
(וַתְּחַסְּרֵהוּ)

It is not entirely clear in what way humans **lack little from the heavenly beings**. It could be in their status somehow or in their perceived glory and majesty. Because of this ambiguity, it would be best not to try to explain this **lack** in your translation.

**Support Reference:** When to Keep Information Implicit

**ULT from the heavenly beings**
**UST** than heavenly beings
(מֵאֱלֹהִים)

The Hebrew word here could mean: (1) **heavenly beings**. This generic term encompasses any sort of supernatural being in the heavens that humans are slightly less than (like the heavenly court in Job 1). (2) God. The most common translation for this word is God. However, the psalmist is speaking to Yahweh in this psalm, so if he meant God here, it would make more sense for him to say, ‘from you.’ (3) angels. The ancient Greek translation uses this option, but this Hebrew word does not seem to mean angels elsewhere. 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.

**ULT and {with} glory and majesty you have crowned him**
**UST** You made humans to be glorious and majestic {like you}
(וְכָבוֹד וְהָדָר תְּעַטְּרֵהוּ)

Here, **glory and majesty** are spoken of as if they were crowns. Because kings wear crowns this means Yahweh is sharing his glory and majesty with humans like they were lesser kings under him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and have given them glory and honor] or [and have caused them to be like kings]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and {with} glory and majesty**
UST glorious and majestic
(וְכָבוֹד וְהָדָר)

The terms **glory** and **majesty** mean similar things. The psalmist 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 with great majesty]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **and {with} glory and majesty**
UST glorious and majestic
(וְכָבוֹד וְהָדָר)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **glory** and **majesty**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [and gloriously and majestically]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| from the heavenly beings | than heavenly beings |
| and {with} glory | glorious |
| and majesty | and majestic |
| you have crowned him | You made humans to be … like you |

# Psalms 8:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You made him rule over the works of your hands, everything you have put under his feet:* | *You put humans in charge of everything that you made, you made them rule over all things —* |

ULT **You made him rule over the works of your hands, everything you have put under his feet**

UST You put humans in charge of everything that you made, you made them rule over all things

(תַּמְשִׁילֵהוּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ כֹּל שַׂתָּה תַחַת־רַגְלָיו)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Translate them according to the decisions your team has made regarding translating parallelism in Hebrew poetry. See the Introduction to Psalms for more information. Alternate translation: [You made him rule over the works of your hands; in fact, you have put everything under his feet] or [You made him the ruler over everything that you made]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **You made him rule over … his feet**

UST You put humans in charge of … over all things

(תַּמְשִׁילֵהוּ & רַגְלָיו)

The words **him** and **his** here refer to all of humanity and not to specific persons. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use expressions that would be more natural in your language.

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **the works of your hands**

UST everything that you made

(בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ)

Yahweh's **hands** represent his capability. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the works of your power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **everything you have put under his feet**
> UST you made them rule over all things
> (כֹּל שַׁתָּה תַּחַת־רַגְלָיו)

Having authority to rule others or control things is spoken of as having them **under** one's **feet**. This means Yahweh gave people authority over all that he created. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you have given him authority over all things]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You made him rule over | You put humans in charge of |

# Psalms 8:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *sheep and oxen—all of them, and also the animals of the field,* | *{over} all {the domestic animals like} sheep, goats, and cattle, the wild animals too,* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| sheep | over … sheep, goats |
| the animals of | wild animals |

# Psalms 8:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *birds of the sky, and the fish of the sea, the passers {on} the paths of the seas.* | *the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea, and everything else that swims in the ocean.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the sky | in the sky |

# Psalms 8:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, our Lord, how magnificent is your name in all the earth!* | *Our Lord Yahweh, people all over the world know how impressive you are!* |

**Note:**

This verse is exactly the same as the first half of Psalm 8:1. See how you translated it there.

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| our Lord | Our Lord |
| magnificent is | impressive |

# Psalms 9

## Psalm 9 Introduction

### Psalms 9–10 as One Psalm

This psalm has a superscription, but Psalm 10 does not. This fact and the acrostic nature of the two psalms (lines start with consecutive letters of the alphabet) has led many scholars to believe these two psalms may have originally been written as one psalm. The analysis of the structure of these psalms presented here will assume that. It is recommended that you follow the versification and chapter structure of other Bibles you are familiar with.

### Structure and Formatting

The outlines for psalms 9 and 10 are combined here and in the introduction to psalm 10 because they were probably originally one psalm. Your translation will probably be best if you translate them together.

1. Psalm 9:1–10 Praise of the King
2. Psalm 9:11–20 Petition the King
3. Psalm 10:1–11 Persecution of the Poor
4. Psalm 10:12–18 Proclamation of the King

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Order and chaos

The first letter of many of the lines of these two psalms follows an acrostic (alphabetic) pattern. In some places, however, this orderly pattern is interrupted. The places where it is interrupted are places where the wicked are mentioned or acting. It is as if the presence of the wicked disrupts the orderliness over even the poetry, but it is restored and kept by Yahweh. If your language has a poetic style which can indicate order and chaos, you may wish to translate:

1. 9:1–4 in an orderly style

2. 9:5–6 in a slightly chaotic style
3. 9:7–15 in an orderly style
4. 9:16–17 in a slightly chaotic style
5. 9:18 in neither
6. 9:19–20 in an orderly style
7. 10:1 in an orderly style
8. 10:2–11 in a very chaotic style
9. 10:12–18 in an orderly style

### The fortress and the pit

There are two chiasms in psalm 9. In the first half, Yahweh is compared to a fortress (9) and, poetically, his judgment forms a barrier between the enemies and the psalmist and the oppressed.

1. people trust Yahweh (1–2)
2. Yahweh is a judge (3–4)
3. The enemy (5–6)
4. Yahweh is a king and judge (7–8)
5. People trust Yahweh (9–10)

In the second half, people's prayers poetically encircle the wicked, causing them to fall into their own pit.

1. People pray to Yahweh for help (especially verse 13) (11–14)
2. The wicked are destroyed by their own pit (15–18)
3. People pray to Yahweh for help (19–20)

As you translate this psalm, you will probably have a structure that matches this which may or may not be meaningful in your language. You could also consider if

there is a way to poetically “surround” the wicked, with Yahweh as judge and the prayers of his people in the two sections.

### Adjectives used as generic nouns:

The adjectives “wicked, afflicted, innocent”, and “oppressed” are nominal adjectives used as generic nouns in these psalms. See Nominal Adjectives and Generic Noun Phrases. CCBYSA

Portions of the ULT, UST, and TNs for this psalm are derivative from “Psalms, Layer by Layer” (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Welcome), “Psalm 9” (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Psalm_9) by Cambridge Digital Bible Research, Katie Frost, Meaghan Smith, Nikki Mustin et al, used under CC BY

See their overview video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRQZ1eytMJ8) and top three exegetical issues in Psalm 9 video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MvT6YH3bkuI) and their top three poetic features of Psalms 9–10 video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=moXvQUAMudo) on YouTube.

exegetical 9 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MvT6YH3bkuI)

exegetical 10 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4w8G32hfyI)

poetic (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=moXvQUAMudo)

See: Poetry

# Psalms 9:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on "The Death of the Son." A psalm of David.* | *This is a note to the worship leader: David wrote this song to the tune of "The Death of the Son."* |

**ULT For the chief musician**
UST This is a note to the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm | this song |
| of David | David wrote |

# Psalms 9:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will thank Yahweh with all my heart, I will recount all your wonders.* | *Yahweh, I will praise you with all of my inner being. I will tell others about all the wonderful things that you have done.* |

**ULT with all my heart**
**UST** with all of my inner being
(בְּכָל־לִבִּי)

Here the speaker is using one part, the **heart**, to represent the whole person. If another body part represents this in your culture, you could use it or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with all my being] or [with my whole person]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT all your wonders**
**UST** all the wonderful things that you have done
(כָּל־נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wonders**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [all the marvelous things you do] or [all your marvelous actions]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I will recount | I will tell others about |
| your wonders | the wonderful things that you have done |

# Psalms 9:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will rejoice and exult in you, I will sing praise to your name, Most High!* | *You make me extremely happy, so I will sing to celebrate what you, who are much greater than all other spirit beings, have done.* |

**ULT I will rejoice and exult**
**UST** You make me extremely happy
(אֶשְׂמְחָה וְאֶעְלֻצָה)

The two words **rejoice** and **exult** may express a single idea. The word **exult** tells how the psalmist is rejoicing. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [I will rejoice exuberantly]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

**ULT I will sing praise to your name**
**UST** so I will sing to celebrate what you … have done
(אֲזַמְּרָה שִׁמְךָ)

Here, his **name** represents Yahweh: him, his reputation, and what he does. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I will sing praise to you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will rejoice | You make me extremely happy |
| and exult | You make me extremely happy |
| I will sing praise | so I will sing to celebrate |
| Most High | who are much greater than all other spirit beings |

# Psalms 9:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *When my enemies turn back, they stumble and perish from your face.* | *When my foes flee {from your righteous anger}, they trip and fall. You kill them just by being near them.* |

**ULT from your face … For**
**UST** just by being near them … You are angry because
(מִפָּנֶיךָ: כִּי) (9:3-4)

The last part of verse 3 (**from your face**) and the first line of verse 4 give the reason why the **enemies turn back, they stumble and perish**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is the reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because of your angry presence, and because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT from your face**
**UST** just by being near them
(מִפָּנֶיךָ)

Here, **face** represents the presence of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my enemies | my foes |
| they stumble | they trip and fall |
| and perish | You kill them |

# Psalms 9:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you have done my justice and my claim; you have sat on your throne, a judge of righteousness!* | *{You are angry because} you have found my legal case to be righteous {and my enemies' to be wicked}. You sit on a throne {like a king} judging {everything} rightly.* |

ULT **you have done**
UST you have found
(עָשִׂיתָ)

Alternate translation: [you have ruled on] or [you have declared] or [you have accomplished]

ULT **For you have done my justice and my claim … a judge of righteousness**
UST You are angry because} you have found my legal case to be righteous {and my enemies' to be wicked} … judging {everything} rightly
(כִּי־עָשִׂיתָ מִשְׁפָּטִי וְדִינִי & שׁוֹפֵט צֶדֶק)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **justice**, **claim**, and **righteousness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [For you have answered me justly when I petitioned in your court … a righteous judge]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **you have done my justice and my claim**
UST you have found my legal case to be righteous {and my enemies' to be wicked}
(עָשִׂיתָ מִשְׁפָּטִי וְדִינִי)

The two words **justice** and **claim** may express a single idea. The word **justice** tells how Yahweh views the author's legal **claim**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [you have ruled that my claim is just] or [you have answered my just claim]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

ULT **you have sat on your throne**
UST You sit on a throne {like a king}
(יָשַׁבְתָּ לְכִסֵּא)

Here, **throne** represents kingship. Kings had authority to judge people, and they would sit on their throne when they judged. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you are like a king who judged his people from his throne] or [you are a king]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **you have sat on your throne, a judge of righteousness**
UST You sit on a throne {like a king} judging {everything} rightly
(יָשַׁבְתָּ לְכִסֵּא שֹׁפֵט צֶדֶק)

Alternate translation: [you are like a royal judge who always issues correct judgments from his throne] or [you sit on your judgment throne and judge righteously]

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my justice | to be righteous |
| on your throne | on a throne {like a king} |
| a judge of | judging {everything} |
| righteousness | rightly |

# Psalms 9:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You rebuked nations; you destroyed the wicked; you blotted out their name forever and ever.* | *You reprimanded the people from other nations, and killed the wicked people; you eradicate them so thoroughly no one will ever remember their names.* |

ULT **you blotted out their name forever and ever**
UST you eradicate them so thoroughly no one will ever remember their names
(שְׁמָם מָחִיתָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד)

This could mean: (1) Yahweh caused these people to be forgotten. The end of verse 6 is parallel with this verse if you favor this interpretation. Alternate translation: [you have caused them to be forgotten as if their name was blotted out] or [no one will ever remember them again], (2) Yahweh will not give these people eternal life (other parts of the Bible speak of this as blotting them out from the Book of Life). Alternate translation: [you send them to eternal punishment]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the wicked**
UST the wicked people
(רָשָׁע)

See how you translated the phrase **the wicked** in 1:1.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **you blotted out**
UST you eradicate them so thoroughly no one will … remember
(מָחִיתָ)

Alternate translation: [you erased]

ULT **forever and ever**
UST ever
(לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד)

The terms **forever** and **ever** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [eternally]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You rebuked | You reprimanded |
| nations | the people from other nations |
| you destroyed | and killed |
| the wicked | the wicked people |
| you blotted out | you eradicate them so thoroughly no one will … remember |
| forever | ever |

# Psalms 9:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The enemy are finished—desolation forever, and you pulled up cities. {As for} them, their remembrance perished,* | *Nothing remains of our enemies except the ruins of their cities which you permanently destroyed. No one even remembers those enemies anymore.* |

**ULT The enemy are finished**
**UST** Nothing remains of our enemies except
(הָאוֹיֵב ו תַּמּוּ)

In this verse, the word **enemy** is singular in form, but it refers to all enemies as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the plural form to make this clear. Alternate translation: [The enemies are finished]

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

**ULT desolation forever**
**UST** the ruins of … permanently
(חֳרָבוֹת לָנֶצַח)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **desolation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [they are made desolate forever] or [you make them desolate forever]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and you pulled up cities**
**UST** their cities which you … destroyed
(וְעָרִים נָתַשְׁתָּ)

Here, **cities** is spoken of as if it were a plant that could be **pulled up**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when you destroyed their cities]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{As for} them, their remembrance perished**
UST No one even remembers those enemies anymore
(אָבַד זִכְרָם הֵמָּה)

Here, **remembrance** is spoken of as if it were a living being that could die. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [All remembrance of them has stopped] or [There is no longer any remembrance of them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{As for} them, their remembrance perished**
UST No one even remembers those enemies anymore
(אָבַד זִכְרָם הֵמָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **remembrance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [No one remembers them at all]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{As for} them**
UST No one even remembers those enemies anymore
(הֵמָּה)

The psalmist uses the words **As for them** here to indicate an emphatic contrast between what happens to the **enemy** and Yahweh. In your translation, indicate this strong contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Now speaking of the enemy]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The enemy | our enemies |
| desolation | the ruins of |
| forever | permanently |
| perished | No one even remembers those enemies anymore |

# Psalms 9:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *but Yahweh will sit forever. He has established his throne for justice,* | *But Yahweh rules forever. He is prepared to judge from his throne.* |

ULT **will sit**
UST rules
(יֵשֵׁב)

Here, to **sit** represents the authority of the king to judge. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [reigns] or [is king]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **He has established his throne for justice**
UST He is prepared to judge from his throne
(כּוֹנַן לַמִּשְׁפָּט כִּסְאוֹ)

The phrase **his throne** represents God's rule. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He rules in order to judge people] or [He rules over people justly]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **for justice**
UST to judge
(לַמִּשְׁפָּט)

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: [to do justly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| but Yahweh | But Yahweh |
| forever | forever |
| He has established | He is prepared |
| his throne | from his throne |
| for justice | to judge |

# Psalms 9:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *as for him, he will judge the world with righteousness, and he will adjudicate for the peoples with fairness.* | *He will judge all the people in the world justly; he will be fair when he judges the people of every nation.* |

ULT **as for him, he will judge the world with righteousness, and he will adjudicate for the peoples with fairness**

UST He will judge all the people in the world justly; he will be fair when he judges people of every nation

(וְהוּא יִשְׁפֹּט־תֵּבֵל בְּצֶדֶק יָדִין לְאֻמִּים בְּמֵישָׁרִים)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Translate them according to the decisions your team has made regarding translating parallelism in Hebrew poetry. See the Introduction to Psalms for more information. Alternate translation: [as for him, he will judge the world with righteousness, yes, he will adjudicate for the peoples with fairness] or [as for him, he will judge the people of the world with righteousness and fairness]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the world**

UST all the people in the world

(תֵּבֵל)

Here, **the world** refers to all the people in the world. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [everyone in the world]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **with righteousness … with fairness**

UST justly … fair

(בְּצֶדֶק & בְּמֵישָׁרִים)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **righteousness** and **fairness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [righteously … fairly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he will judge | will judge |
| the world | all the people in the world |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| with righteousness | justly |

# Psalms 9:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And may Yahweh be a secure height for the oppressed, a secure height for times with distress.* | *Let Yahweh be like a fortress for those whom oppressors oppress; like a strong fort for them when they have trouble.* |

ULT **And may Yahweh be a secure height for the oppressed, a secure height for times with distress**

UST Let Yahweh be like a fortress for those whom oppressors oppress; like a strong fort for them when they have trouble

(וַיְהִי יְהוָה מִשְׂגָּב לַדָּךְ מִשְׂגָּב לְעִתּוֹת בַּצָּרָה)

Here the psalmist is speaking of **Yahweh** as if he were a place that people could go to for safety. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And may Yahweh protect the oppressed, may he protect them in times with distress] or [And may Yahweh provide safety for those who are oppressed, making them safe in times with distress]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **for times with distress**

UST when they have trouble

(לְעִתּוֹת בַּצָּרָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distress**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [for distressing times]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| for times | when |
| with distress | they have trouble |

# Psalms 9:10

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And may the knowers of your name trust in you, because you have not abandoned the seekers of you, Yahweh.* | *Those who know your reputation should trust you; because you, Yahweh, never abandon those who come to you {for help}.* |

**ULT the knowers of your name**
**UST** Those who know your reputation
(יוֹדְעֵי שְׁמֶךָ)

Here, **your name** represents Yahweh and his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those who know you] or [those who have heard what you do]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT the knowers of … the seekers of you**
**UST** Those who know … those who come to you {for help}
(יוֹדְעֵי & דֹרְשֶׁיךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **knowers** and **seekers**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [people who know … people who seek you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And may … trust | should trust |
| the knowers of | Those who know |
| you have … abandoned | you … abandon |
| the seekers of you | those who come to you {for help} |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 9:11

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Sing praises to Yahweh, the sitter {in} Zion! Declare his deeds among the peoples* | *Yahweh rules on Mount Zion; praise him by singing to him! Tell people from every nation the marvelous things that he has done.* |

ULT **the sitter**
UST rules
(יֹשֵׁב)

Here, being **the sitter** represents sitting on the throne as king. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the king] or [the ruler]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Sing praises to Yahweh … his deeds**
UST Yahweh … praise him by singing to him … the marvelous things that he has done
(זַמְּרוּ לַיהוָה & עֲלִילוֹתָיו)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **praises** and **deeds**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Praise Yahweh with a song … what he has done] or [Sing to praise Yahweh … the things he does]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Sing praises | praise him by singing |
| to Yahweh | Yahweh … to him |
| {in} Zion | on Mount Zion |
| Declare | Tell |

# Psalms 9:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *for the seeker of {vengeance for} bloodshed remembered them; he does not forget the cry of the poor.* | *Do this because Yahweh always remembers to repay any person who murders another person. When someone's enemy has oppressed him, and when that person calls to Yahweh to help him, Yahweh does not forget to avenge him.* |

ULT **the seeker of {vengeance for} bloodshed**
UST Yahweh … to repay any person who murders another person
(דֹּרֵשׁ דָּמִים)

Here, **the seeker** refers to the avenger of blood, who hunts down and kills a murderer. Yahweh is the avenger in this case. See Numbers 35 for more information.

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **remembered them**
UST Yahweh always remembers to repay any person who murders another person
(אוֹתָם זָכַר)

The implication is that the **seeker of vengeance** will remember to avenge for the murder of **them** (the victims calling for justice). You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [remembered to avenge those who were murdered]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the seeker of {vengeance for} bloodshed … them**
UST Yahweh … to repay any person who murders another person
(דֹּרֵשׁ דָּמִים אוֹתָם)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **seeker**, **vengeance**, and **bloodshed**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [the one who seeks to avenge anyone who was murdered … them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **he does not forget**
UST Yahweh does not forget to avenge him
(לֹא־שָׁכַח)

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 idea of **forget**. Alternate translation: [he surely remembers]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

ULT **the poor**
UST When someone's enemy has oppressed him
(עניים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [poor people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the seeker of {vengeance for} | Yahweh … to repay any person who murders another person |
| the seeker of {vengeance for} | Yahweh … to repay any person who murders another person |
| bloodshed | Yahweh … to repay any person who murders another person |
| the cry of | and when that person calls to Yahweh to help him |

# Psalms 9:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Have mercy on me, Yahweh! See my affliction from my haters, O lifter of me from the gates of death,* | *Yahweh, act mercifully toward me! You who rescue me when I am almost dead, look at the ways that my enemies have oppressed me.* |

ULT **Have mercy on me … my affliction from my haters**
UST act mercifully toward me … at the ways that my enemies have oppressed me
(חָנֵּנִי & עָנְיִי מִשֹּׂנְאָי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **mercy**, **affliction**, and **haters**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Be merciful to me … how I am afflicted by those who hate me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **See**
UST look
(רְאֵה)

The implication is that Yahweh will act, not just **See**. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Take action because of]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **O lifter of me from the gates of death**
UST You who rescue me when I am almost dead
(מְרוֹמְמִי מִשַּׁעֲרֵי מָוֶת)

Here, **death** is spoken of as if it were a city that had **gates** through which people enter in. If someone is near the **gates of death**, it means that he will die soon. Keeping someone from dying is spoken of as lifting him away from the gates of death. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [O you who can rescue me from death] or [O you who can keep me from dying]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Have mercy on me | act mercifully toward me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my affliction | at the ways … have oppressed me |
| from my haters | that my enemies |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from the gates of | when I am almost |

# Psalms 9:14

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *in order that I might recount all your praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion. I will rejoice in your salvation!* | *{I want to live} in order to tell all your people at the entrance to Jerusalem all the reasons to praise you and to rejoice because you rescued me.* |

ULT **in the gates of**
UST at the entrance to
(בְּשַׁעֲרֵי)

The **gate** is the place of trade, business, and justice in the ancient city. If your readers would not be familiar with this, you could use the location where similar things happen in your area, or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [in the central market of] or [in the place of trade and settling legal disputes of]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **your praise … in your salvation**
UST to praise you … because you rescued me
(תְּהִלָּתֶיךָ & בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **praise** and **salvation**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [your praiseworthy deeds … because you saved me] or [the reasons to praise you … because you are a savior]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| I might recount | to tell all your people |
| your praise | to praise you |
| in the gates of | at the entrance to |
| Zion | Jerusalem |
| I will rejoice | and to rejoice |
| in your salvation | because you rescued me |

# Psalms 9:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The nations have sunk down into the pit they made; their foot is caught in the net that they hid.* | *{When you rescue me} it is like wicked people of many nations had dug a pit for me to fall into, but have fallen into that same pit, or like they hid a net to catch me, but their feet have been caught in that same net.* |

ULT **Yahweh has revealed himself, he has done justice; the wicked is ensnared**
UST wicked people … to trap them. Because of that, people can discover that you, Yahweh, are just
(נְוֹדַ֣ע ׀ יְהוָ֣ה מִשְׁפָּ֣ט עָשָׂ֑ה & נוֹקֵ֥שׁ רָ֝שָׁ֗ע) (9:15-16)

Both the cause and the result of everything else in verses 15–16 are in the sentence **Yahweh has revealed himself, he has done justice**. The cause of the wicked nations being trapped by their own traps is Yahweh doing justice; the result is that he is revealed as being just. In your translation, use a structure that makes these connections clear. Alternate translation: [This happens because Yahweh is acting justly toward them. Yahweh reveals himself by justly causing the wicked to be ensnared]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **The nations have sunk down into the pit they made; their foot is caught in the net that they hid**
UST { … When you rescue me} it is like wicked people of many nations had dug a pit for me to fall into, but have fallen into that same pit, or like they hid a net to catch me, but their feet have been caught in that same net
(טָבְע֣וּ גּוֹיִ֣ם בְּשַׁחַ֣ת עָשׂ֑וּ בְּרֶ֥שֶׁת־זּ֝֗וּ טָמָ֥נוּ נִלְכְּדָ֥ה רַגְלָֽם)

People dig pits so they can catch animals that fall into them. They also hide nets to catch animals. Here digging a **pit** or hiding a **net** represents making plans to destroy people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The nations are like people who dig a pit for others and then fall into it; like people who hide a net to catch people and then get caught in it] or [The nations get caught in their own traps.]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **The nations have sunk down into the pit they made; their foot is caught in the net that they hid**

UST { … When you rescue me} it is like wicked people of many nations had dug a pit for me to fall into, but have fallen into that same pit, or like they hid a net to catch me, but their feet have been caught in that same net

(טָבְעוּ גּוֹיִם בְּשַׁחַת עָשׂוּ בְּרֶשֶׁת־זוּ טָמָנוּ נִלְכְּדָה רַגְלָם)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Translate them according to the decisions your team has made regarding translating parallelism in Hebrew poetry. See the Introduction to Psalms for more information.

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The nations | {When you rescue me} it is like wicked people of many nations |
| into the pit | a pit for me to fall into |

# Psalms 9:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh has revealed himself, he has done justice; the wicked is ensnared by the work of his hands. Higgaion Selah* | *So you allow the traps that wicked people make to trap them. Because of that, people can discover that you, Yahweh, are just. Higgaion Selah* |

ULT **has revealed himself**
UST Because of that, people can discover that
(נָוֹדַע)

The word **himself** indicates that the object of the verb is the same as the subject of the verb. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate that the same person fills two roles in the sentence. Alternate translation: [has revealed Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Reflexive Pronouns

ULT **justice**
UST are just
(מִשְׁפָּט)

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: [things justly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רָשָׁע)

See how you translated the phrase **the wicked** in 1:1.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the wicked is ensnared by the work of his hands**
UST So you allow the traps that wicked people make to trap them
(בְּפֹעַל כַּפָּיו נוֹקֵשׁ רָשָׁע)

The expression **the wicked is ensnared** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [the wicked person harms himself by the wicked things he does]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **by the work of his hands**
UST So you allow the traps that … make
(בְּפֹעַל כַּפָּיו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **work**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [by what he does] or [by his own evil deeds]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | you, Yahweh |
| has revealed himself | Because of that, people can discover that |
| justice | are just |
| the wicked | wicked people |
| is ensnared | to trap them |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 9:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The wicked will turn back to Sheol; all nations are forgetful of God.* | *Wicked people will flee {from you} back to the place where dead people stay. {There are people there} from every nation, people who have forgotten {to worship the true} God.* |

**Note:** (9:17-18)

Verses 17–18 form a poetic device called a chiasm where the inner two lines parallel each other and the outer two lines also parallel each other. In this case this artistic device creates a strong contrast between the verses by contrasting people forgetting God with God not forgetting the needy and contrasts the death of the wicked with the hope of the afflicted which does not die. If your language has a poetic structure that can make contrasts stand out markedly like this, consider using it here.

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **will turn back**
UST will flee {from you} back
(יָשֻׁובוּ)

See how you translated the idea of "turn back" in verse 3, as this is likely connected.

ULT **are forgetful of God**
UST people who have forgotten {to worship the true} God
(שְׁכֵחֵי אֱלֹהִים)

Here, **are forgetful of God** is a common expression that means "they forget or ignore God." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [dismiss God] or [neglect to honor and worship God]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **all nations are forgetful of God**
UST {There are people there} from every nation, people who have forgotten {to worship the true} God
(כָּל־גּוֹיִם שְׁכֵחֵי אֱלֹהִים)

If the connection between **all nations** in this phrase and the **wicked** of the last phrase is not clear, you may want to show this connection. Alternate translation: [the wicked ones from all nations who are forgetful of God]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **all nations**
UST {There are people there} from every nation
(כָּל־גּוֹיִם)

Here, **nations** represents the people in the nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [people in every nation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The wicked | Wicked people |
| to Sheol | to the place where dead people stay |
| nations | nation |
| God | {to worship the true} God |

# Psalms 9:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But the needy will not be forgotten eternally, {nor} will the hope of the afflicted perish forever.* | *This all happens because there is a certain time when God will remember {to take care of} poor people. It is good for oppressed people to expect him to rescue them because he will do it one day.* |

ULT **the needy will not be forgotten eternally**
UST a certain time when God will remember {to take care of} poor people
(לֹא לָנֶצַח יִשָּׁכַח אֶבְיוֹן)

The expression **the needy will not be forgotten** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [God will not always forget the needy]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **the needy will not be forgotten eternally**
UST a certain time when God will remember {to take care of} poor people
(לֹא לָנֶצַח יִשָּׁכַח אֶבְיוֹן)

The figure of speech here expresses a strongly positive meaning by using a negative word, **not**, together with an expression that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If it would be helpful in your language, you could emphasize the positive meaning. Alternate translation: [the needy will be remembered eventually]

**Support Reference:** Litotes

ULT **{nor} will the hope of the afflicted perish forever**
UST It is good for oppressed people to expect him to rescue them because he will do it one day
(תִּקְוַת עֲנוִים תֹּאבֵד לָעַד)

The negation in the first clause of this verse carries over to the second half. Translate this in a way that both halves of the verse are negated (but making a positive statement as the previous note explains). Alternate translation: [indeed, the hope of the afflicted will not perish forever] or [neither will the hope of the afflicted perish forever] or (assuming the first half is translated positively) [the hope of the afflicted lives on]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **{nor} will the hope of the afflicted perish forever**
UST It is good for oppressed people to expect him to rescue them because he will do it one day
(תִּקְוַת עֲנוִים תֹּאבַד לָעַד)

Here, **hope** is spoken of as if it were something that could perish. This would mean that what they hope for does not happen. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [nor will the oppressed hope forever without results] or [someday what the afflicted hope for will happen]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| nor … the hope of | It is good for … to expect him to rescue them because he will do it |
| will … perish | It is good for … to expect him to rescue them because he will do it |
| the afflicted | oppressed people |
| forever | one day |

# Psalms 9:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Arise, Yahweh! Let not humanity prevail! On your face let nations be judged.* | *Yahweh, do something! Do not let {evil} people win! {Bring them} to your court and judge them!* |

**ULT** **Arise**
**UST** do something
(קוּמָה)

Here, **Arise** represents starting to act. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Take action]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT** **let nations be judged**
**UST** and judge them
(יִשָּׁפְטוּ גוֹיִם)

Here judging includes punishing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [let nations be judged and punished]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT** **On your face**
**UST** {Bring them} to your court
(עַל־פָּנֶיךָ)

Here, **on your face** represents being in Yahweh's presence, which can be considered in his courtroom (as in the UST). If it would be helpful, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [In your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT** **On your face let nations be judged**
**UST** {Bring them} to your court and judge them
(יִשָּׁפְטוּ גוֹיִם עַל־פָּנֶיךָ)

The expression **let nations be judged** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Judge the nations in your presence] or [Take the nations into your presence and punish them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| let … be judged | and judge |
| nations | them |

# Psalms 9:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Put terror to them, Yahweh! May nations know they are human. Selah* | *Yahweh, teach them that they must be afraid of you and honor you. Cause {the rulers of} nations to know that they are mortal. Selah* |

**ULT Put terror to them, Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh, teach them that they must be afraid of you and honor you
(שִׁיתָה יְהוָה ׀ מוֹרָה לָּהֶם)

Here, **terror** is spoken of as something that could be **put** to the wicked, meaning to cause them to feel terror. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Make them be terrified Yahweh!] or [Terrify them Yahweh!]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT May nations know they are human**
**UST** Cause {the rulers of} nations to know that they are mortal
(יֵדְעוּ גוֹיִם אֱנוֹשׁ הֵמָּה)

Here the psalmist is speaking of **nations** as if they were living humans. There are two points: (1) nations do not last forever; they pass away or are mortal like humans, and (2) the leaders of nations are not gods, but humans who die. In both instances, they need to recognize that Yahweh is the supreme, never-ending power. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May nations know they are temporary] or [May wicked human kings stop pretending to be eternal gods]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| terror | that they must be afraid of you and honor you |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| May … know | Cause … to know that |
| nations | {the rulers of} nations |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 10

## Psalm 10 Introduction

### Psalms 9–10 as One Psalm

Psalm 9 has a superscription but Psalm 10 does not. This fact and the acrostic nature of the two psalms (lines start with consecutive letters of the alphabet) has led many scholars to believe these two psalms may have originally been written as one psalm. The analysis of the structure of these psalms presented here will assume that. It is recommended that you follow the versification and chapter structure of other Bibles you are familiar with.

### Structure and Formatting

The outlines for psalms 9 and 10 are combined here and in the introduction to psalm 10 because they were probably originally one psalm. Your translation will probably be best if you translate them together.

1. Psalm 9:1–10 Praise of the King
2. Psalm 9:11–20 Petition the King
3. Psalm 10:1–11 Persecution of the poor
4. Psalm 10:12–18 Proclamation of the King

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Order and chaos

The first letter of many of the lines of these two psalms follows an acrostic (alphabetic) pattern. In some places, however, this orderly pattern is interrupted. The places where it is interrupted are places where the wicked are mentioned or acting. It is as if the presence of the wicked disrupts the orderliness over even the poetry, but it is restored and kept by Yahweh. If your language has a poetic style which can indicate order and chaos, you may wish to translate:

1. 9:1–4 in an orderly style

2. 9:5–6 in a slightly chaotic style
3. 9:7–15 in an orderly style
4. 9:16–17 in a slightly chaotic style
5. 9:18 in neither
6. 9:19–20 in an orderly style
7. 10:1 in an orderly style
8. 10:2–11 in a very chaotic style
9. 10:12–18 in an orderly style

### The fortress and the pit

There are two chiasms in psalm 9. In the first half, Yahweh is compared to a fortress (9) and, poetically, his judgment forms a barrier between the enemies and the psalmist and the oppressed.

1. People trust Yahweh (1–2)
2. Yahweh is a judge (3–4)
3. The enemy (5–6)
4. Yahweh is a king and judge (7–8)
5. People trust Yahweh (9–10)

In the second half, people's prayers poetically encircle the wicked, causing them to fall into their own pit.

1. People pray to Yahweh for help (especially verse 13) (11–14)
2. The wicked are destroyed by their own pit (15–18)
3. People pray to Yahweh for help (19–20)

As you translate this psalm, you will probably have a structure that matches this which may or may not be meaningful in your language. You could also consider if

there is a way to poetically “surround” the wicked with the prayers of Yahweh’s people and with Yahweh as judge, in the two sections.

### Adjectives used as generic nouns:

The adjectives “wicked, afflicted, innocent”, and “oppressed” are nominal adjectives used as generic nouns in these psalms. See Nominal Adjectives and Generic Noun Phrases.

See: Poetry

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Portions of the ULT, UST, and TNs for this psalm are derivative from “Psalms, Layer by Layer” (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Welcome), “Psalm 10” (https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/Psalm_10) by Cambridge Digital Bible Research, Katie Frost, Meaghan Smith, Nikki Mustin et al, used under CC BY

See their overview video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRQZ1eytMJ8) and top three exegetical issues in Psalm 10 video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4w8G32hfyI) and their top three poetic features of Psalms 9–10 video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=moXvQUAMudo) on YouTube.

# Psalms 10:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Why, Yahweh, do you stand far-off? {Why} do you hide in times of trouble?* | *Yahweh, please do not stay far away from us. Please let us find you when enemies threaten us.* |

**ULT { … Why, Yahweh, do you stand far-off? Why} do you hide in times of trouble**
UST Yahweh, please do not stay far away from us. Please let us find you when enemies threaten us
(לָמָה יְהוָה תַּעֲמֹד בְּרָחֹק תַּעְלִים לְעִתּוֹת בַּצָּרָה)

The speaker is using the question form to express his distress that Yahweh has not helped him. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, it seems as though you are far away from me and you hide from me whenever I am in trouble.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT in times of trouble**
UST when enemies threaten us
(לְעִתּוֹת בַּצָּרָה)

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: [when we are troubled]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| trouble | when enemies threaten us |

# Psalms 10:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In arrogance, the wicked hotly pursue the afflicted; may they be caught by the schemes that they have planned.* | *Wicked people proudly chase people until they can oppress them. Yahweh, please make the bad things they plan to do to others happen to them instead.* |

ULT **In arrogance**
UST proudly
(בְּגַאֲוַת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **arrogance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Arrogantly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the wicked**
UST Wicked people
(רָשָׁע)

See how you translated the phrase **the wicked** in 1:1.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **may they be caught by the schemes that they have planned**
UST Yahweh, please make the bad things they plan to do to others happen to them instead
(יִתָּפְשׂוּ ׀ בְּמִזְמֹות זָוּ חָשָׁבוּ)

It is not clear who **they** are. Options include: (1) that **they** are the wicked in both cases. In that case this would either be a prediction or a wish. This would fit with what is said in 9:15–16. Alternate translation: [the wicked are caught by the schemes that they themselves have planned] or [may the wicked be caught by the schemes that they themselves have planned] or (2) the first **they** is the **afflicted** and the second is the **wicked**. This would fit with the very negative outlook of 10:1–11. Alternate translation: [the afflicted are caught by the schemes that the wicked have planned]. You may wish to follow the choice that translations you are familiar with have made.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **may they be caught by the schemes that they have planned**
UST Yahweh, please make the bad things they plan to do to others happen to them instead
(יִתָּפְשׂוּ ׀ בְּמִזְמֹות זָּו חָשָׁבוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **schemes**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [they are caught in the traps they have planned] or [they are caught in their own scheming]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the wicked | Wicked people |
| the afflicted | people until they can oppress them |

# Psalms 10:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Indeed, the wicked boasts about the desires of his soul and he blesses the robber; he despises Yahweh.* | *A wicked person even brags about what he strongly wants to do. He praises people who unjustly take things from other people. He curses Yahweh.* |

ULT **Indeed**
UST even
(כִּי)

Alternate translation: [For]

ULT **the wicked**
UST A wicked person
(רָשָׁע)

See how you translated the phrase **the wicked** in 1:1.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the desires of his soul**
UST what he strongly wants to do
(תַּאֲוַת נַפְשׁוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **desires**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what his soul longs to do]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and he blesses the robber; he despises Yahweh**
UST He praises people who unjustly take things from other people. He curses Yahweh
(וּבֹצֵעַ בֵּרַךְ נִאֵץ ׀ יְהוָה)

It is difficult to discern who is the subject and object of both verbs in the second half of this verse. Additionally, some believe that **blesses** is an euphemism for “curses” here. The ULT seeks to offer a reasonable translation where **the wicked** is the subject throughout (occurrences of **he** in the ULT refer to **the wicked**). You may wish to follow the rendering of a translation in your region that you are familiar with. Alternate translation: [and the robber curses and disrespects Yahweh] or [and he blesses the robber whom Yahweh despises]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and … the robber**
**UST** people who unjustly take things from other people
(וּבֹצֵעַ)

Alternate translation: [and … the greedy]

**ULT he despises**
**UST** He curses
(נִנֵּאַץ)

Alternate translation: [he spurns] or [he rejects]

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the wicked | A wicked person |
| boasts | brags |
| his soul | what he strongly wants to do |
| and … the robber | people who unjustly take things from other people |
| he blesses | He praises |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 10:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *According to the haughtiness of his nose the wicked seeks not; All his thoughts {are}, "{There is} no God."* | *The wicked person is so proud that he does not care {about God}. He plans {to do evil things} as if there was no God.* |

ULT **According to the haughtiness of his nose**
UST is so proud
(כְּגֹבַהּ אַפּוֹ)

Here, **the haughtiness of his nose** is a common expression of the culture that means pride or arrogance. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [In his arrogant attitude] or [In his pride]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **seeks not**
UST that he does not care {about God}
(בַּל־יִדְרֹשׁ)

The psalmist is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. It is unclear **who** does not seek **what** here. It could be that (1) the wicked **seeks not** God. They do not fear him or obey him, or (2) the wicked think that God does not seek them out or notice them, to punish them. Alternate translation: [thinks God seeks not]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **All his thoughts {are}, "{There is} no God**
UST He plans {to do evil things} as if there was no God
(אֵין אֱלֹהִים כָּל־מְזִמֹּתָיו)

Alternate translation: [God is not in all his thoughts]

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the wicked | The wicked person |
| seeks | that he does … care {about God} |
| God | God |

# Psalms 10:5

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *His ways endure at every time; your judgments are high from in front of him; {as for} all his enemies, he snorts at them.* | *What he does always prospers. He ignores doing what you say is right. He makes a mocking noise at all his enemies.* |

ULT **His ways endure**
UST What he does … prospers
(יָחִילוּ דְרָכָיו)

Here a person's lifestyle is spoken of as if it was **ways**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [What he does endures]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **your judgments are high from in front of him**
UST He ignores doing what you say is right
(מָרוֹם מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ מִנֶּגְדּוֹ)

Yahweh's judgments are compared to something high above the wicked like a bird or mountain top. This could mean: (1) Yahweh's judgments are far from his thinking; he ignores them. Alternate translation: [he pays no attention to your judgments] or (2) he does not understand Yahweh's judgments. Alternate translation: [your judgments are beyond his comprehension]. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{as for} all his enemies, he snorts at them**
UST He makes a mocking noise at all his enemies
(כָּל־צוֹרְרָיו יָפִיחַ בָּהֶם)

Here, **snorts** (blowing air loudly out of the nose) is a symbolic action that expresses contempt and mocking. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [he shows that he thinks that all his enemies are weak and worthless] or [he sneers at all his enemies]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| endure | prospers |
| time | always |
| your judgments | He ignores doing what you say is right |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his enemies | his enemies |

# Psalms 10:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He says in his heart, "I will not be shaken; to generation and generation {it is I} who {will} not {be} in distress."* | *He thinks, "Nothing bad can happen to me! As long as I live, nothing will trouble me."* |

ULT **I will not be shaken**
UST Nothing bad can happen to me
(בַּל־אֶמּוֹט)

Here, **I will not be shaken** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Nothing can shake me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **to generation and generation**
UST As long as I live
(לְדֹר וָדֹר)

**To generation and generation** is an extreme statement used for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [at any possible time]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **{be} in distress**
UST will trouble me
(בְּרָע)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distress**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [be distressed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will … be shaken | Nothing bad can happen to me |
| to generation | As long as I live |
| and generation | As long as I live |
| {be} in distress | will trouble me |

# Psalms 10:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *His mouth is full of curses and lies and oppression; under his tongue are mischief and evil.* | *He constantly curses, lies, and threatens others. He is always talking about harming others and doing wrong.* |

ULT **His mouth is full of**
UST He constantly
(פִּיהוּ מָלֵא)

Here, **mouth** represents speaking. To say that the **mouth is full** means he is always speaking **curses and lies and oppression**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He is constantly speaking] or [His speech is characterized by]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **under his tongue are**
UST He is always talking about
(תַּחַת לְשׁוֹנוֹ)

Here the **tongue** represents speaking. To say that these things are **under his tongue** means they are always ready to come out when he talks. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what he says is always] or [his speech is characterized by]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **His mouth is full of curses and lies and oppression; under his tongue are mischief and evil**
UST He constantly curses, lies, and threatens others. He is always talking about harming others and doing wrong
(אָלָה פִּיהוּ מָלֵא וּמִרְמוֹת וְתַדְּ תַּחַת לְשׁוֹנוֹ עָמָל וָאָוֶן)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **curses and lies and oppression** and **mischief and evil**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Every word he speaks is harmful, false, or threatening; he always talks about mischievous plans for evil deeds]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| curses | curses |
| and lies | lies |
| his tongue are | He is always talking about |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and evil | and doing wrong |

# Psalms 10:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He sits in ambush near the villages; in the secret places he murders the innocent; his eyes stealthily watch for a helpless person.* | *He hides outside villages to surprise attack people. From his secret spot he kills people who have done nothing wrong. From there he sneakily watches for some unlucky person.* |

ULT **the innocent**
UST people who have done nothing wrong
(נָקִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **innocent**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [innocent people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **his eyes stealthily watch for a helpless person**
UST From there he sneakily watches for some unlucky person
(עֵינָיו לְחֵלְכָה יִצְפֹּנוּ)

The **eyes** represent him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he stealthily watches for a helpless person]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he murders | he kills |
| the innocent | people who have done nothing wrong |
| stealthily watch | From there he sneakily watches |

# Psalms 10:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He ambushes in a secret place like a lion in cover; he ambushes to seize the afflicted. He seizes the afflicted by pulling in his net.* | *He hides in a secret spot like a lion, {crouching} in the bushes, waiting for people to catch and oppress. He catches people and drags them away in a net to oppress them.* |

ULT **like a lion in cover**
UST like a lion, {crouching} in the bushes
(כְּאַרְיֵ֣ה בְּסֻכָּ֑ה)

This is saying that the wicked are **like a lion** because they hide, lying it wait to ambush their prey like a lion does. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [like a lion ambushes its prey from cover]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **He ambushes in a secret place like a lion in cover; he ambushes to seize the afflicted**
UST He hides in a secret spot like a lion, {crouching} in the bushes, waiting for people to catch and oppress
(יֶאֱרֹ֤ב בַּמִּסְתָּ֨ר ׀ כְּאַרְיֵ֬ה בְּסֻכָּ֗ה יֶאֱרֹ֥ב לַחֲטֹ֥ף עָנִ֑י)

In order to follow the original and highlight the parallelism with the previous verse, the ULT leaves out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. In English **ambushes** requires an object. You could supply these words or modify the sentence structure if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [He ambushes the afflicted in secret like a lion in cover; he ambushes them to seize them] or [He waits secretly in ambush like a lion in cover; he waits to ambush and seize the afflicted] or [He lies in wait in secret like a lion in cover; he lies in wait to seize the afflicted]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **He seizes the afflicted by pulling in his net**
UST He catches people and drags them away in a net to oppress them
(יַחְטֹ֣ף עָנִ֣י בְּמָשְׁכ֣וֹ בְרִשְׁתּ֑וֹ)

The writer speaks of the wicked person catching people as if he were a hunter using a **net** to catch animals. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He seizes the afflicted like a hunter that catches an animal in a net and drags it away]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| like a lion | like a lion |
| to seize | for people to catch and oppress |
| the afflicted | for people to catch and oppress |
| He seizes | He catches |

# Psalms 10:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He stoops, crouches, and unfortunate people fall by his power.* | *The wicked person makes sure everything is properly prepared so he can oppress his unlucky victim.* |

**ULT and unfortunate people fall by his power**
**UST** so he can oppress his unlucky victim
(וְנָפַל בַּעֲצוּמָיו חלכאים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **power**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and unfortunate people fall because he is powerful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and … fall | so he can oppress |

# Psalms 10:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He says in his heart, "God has forgotten; he has hidden his face; to perpetuity he sees not."* | *He convinces himself, "God is not recording what I do. He is not paying attention; he will never notice."* |

ULT **He says in his heart**
UST He convinces himself
(אָמַר בְּלִבּוֹ)

Here saying **in his heart** means that he thinks or believes something without necessarily speaking it out loud. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He thinks to himself] or [He believes deep down]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **God has forgotten; he has hidden his face; to perpetuity he sees not**
UST God is not recording what I do. He is not paying attention; he will never notice
(שָׁכַח אֵל הִסְתִּיר פָּנָיו בַּל־רָאָה לָנֶצַח)

The object of these sentences is unspoken. If it would be helpful in your language, you could supply these missing words from the context. Alternate translation: [God has forgotten my deeds; he has hidden his face from my deeds; to perpetuity he sees my deeds not.]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **God has forgotten**
UST God is not recording what I do
(שָׁכַח אֵל)

Here, **God has forgotten** is a common expression from the culture that means that God is not paying attention or does not care about what is happening. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [God will not make me pay] or [God does not notice]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **he has hidden his face**
UST He is not paying attention
(הִסְתִּיר פָּנָיו)

Here, **he has hidden his face** is a common expression that means that God is deliberately ignoring or not paying attention to what is happening. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he averts his eyes] or [he does not care]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **to perpetuity he sees not**
UST he will never notice
(בַּל־רָאָה לָנֶצַח)

This is an exaggeration to emphasize the wicked person's belief that God will never intervene or punish him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [what I do is completely invisible to him]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |

# Psalms 10:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Arise, Yahweh! God, lift up your hand! Do not forget the afflicted ones.* | *Do something, Yahweh! Prove that you are powerful, God! Pay attention to oppressed people!* |

**ULT Arise**
**UST** Do something
(קוּמָה)

Here, **Arise** represents doing something or taking action. If it would be helpful, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Take action]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT lift up your hand**
**UST** Prove that you are powerful
(נְשָׂא יָדְךָ)

Here the **hand** represents God's power. To **lift up** the hand means to use it. If it would be helpful, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [use your power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| God | God |
| the afflicted ones | to oppressed people |

# Psalms 10:13

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Why does the wicked despise God? He says in his heart, "You will not seek."* | *Do not let wicked people curse you, God! Do not let him believe that you do not care about his evil deeds!* |

**ULT** **He says in his heart, "You will not seek**
**UST** Do not let him believe that you do not care about his evil deeds
(אָמַר בְּלִבּוֹ לֹא תִדְרֹשׁ)

Here saying **in his heart** means that he thinks or believes something without necessarily speaking it out loud. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He thinks to himself, "You will not seek] or [He believes deep down, "You will not look]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT** **You will not seek**
**UST** that you do not care about his evil deeds
(לֹא תִדְרֹשׁ)

The psalmist 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 it would be clearer in your language. It is clearer here than in 10:3 who is seeking what. The wicked think that God does not seek them out, or notice them, to punish them. Alternate translation: [You, God, will not punish me]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the wicked | wicked people |
| God | God |
| You will … seek | that you do not care about his evil deeds |

# Psalms 10:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have seen! Indeed, you notice mischief and vexation to take {it} in your hand. The helpless person entrusts {himself} to you; as for the orphan you, {even} you, are {his} helper.* | *Surely you see everything! You pay attention to how wicked people hurt and frustrate other people so that you can punish those wicked people. Unlucky people trust that you will protect them. You help orphans.* |

ULT **You have seen**
UST you see everything
(רָאִֽתָה)

There is a strong contrast between what the wicked think in the previous verse and what the psalmist declares to be the truth in this verse. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [But you do seek, and you have seen] or [However you really do see]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **mischief and vexation**
UST hurt and frustrate other people
(עָמָ֥ל וָכַ֗עַס)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **mischief and vexation**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [the mischievous and vexing things they do]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to take {it} in your hand**
UST so that you can punish those wicked people
(לָתֵ֣ת בְּיָדֶ֑ךָ)

Here, **to take it in your hand** represents exercising power to take control of a situation. If it would be helpful, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to powerfully intervene]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| entrusts {himself} | trust that … will protect them |

# Psalms 10:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Break the arm of the wicked and the evil. May it seek his wickedness, {but} not find {it}.* | *Cause people who are always doing very evil things to become powerless! When someone tries to oppress other people may he discover he cannot do it.* |

ULT **Break the arm of the wicked and the evil**
UST Cause people who are always doing very evil things to become powerless
(שְׁבֹר זְרוֹעַ רָשָׁע וְרָע)

Here, **arm** represents power. If it would be helpful, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Destroy the power of wicked and evil people] or [Make wicked and evil people weak]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the wicked**
UST people who are always doing very evil things
(רָשָׁע)

See how you translated the phrase **the wicked** in 1:1.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and the evil**
UST people who are always doing very evil things
(וְרָע)

The psalmist is using the adjective **evil** 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: [and evil people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the wicked and the evil**
UST people who are always doing very evil things
(רָשָׁע וְרָע)

The terms **wicked** and **evil** mean similar things. The psalmist 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 very wicked] or [the very evil]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **May it seek his wickedness, {but} not find {it}**
UST When someone tries to oppress other people may he discover he cannot do it
(תִּדְרוֹשׁ־רִשְׁעוֹ בַל־תִּמְצָא)

There is significant debate about who or what may **seek** and **find**. The interpretation suggested here is that the wicked and evil people's arm (power for harm) is personified as looking to do the evil they have planned but is unable to because Yahweh has broken the arm (power). If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May the wicked, evil person try to use his power for harm but discover you have destroyed it]; or another common interpretation is that Yahweh will seek out (hunt down, punish) the wicked, evil person's wickedness until he can no longer find it (because it is eradicated). Alternate translation: [Hunt down his wickedness until no more can be found]. You may wish to follow the interpretation of a translation commonly used in your region. For more information, see the Psalms layer by layer exegetical discussion at https://psalms.cdbr.org/w/The_Division_of_Psalm_10:15.

**Support Reference:** Personification

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the wicked | people who are always doing very evil things |
| and the evil | people who are always doing very evil things |
| May it seek | When someone tries to oppress other people |
| his wickedness | When someone tries to oppress other people |

# Psalms 10:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh is king forever and ever; the nations have perished from his land.* | *Yahweh reigns eternally! Foreign people no longer occupy his land.* |

**ULT the nations have perished from his land**
**UST** Foreign people no longer occupy his land
(אָבְד֣וּ גוֹיִ֔ם מֵאַרְצֽוֹ)

The expression **the nations have perished** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Yahweh forces foreigners to leave his land]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| is king | reigns |
| forever | eternally |
| the nations | Foreign people |
| have perished | no longer occupy |
| from his land | his land |

# Psalms 10:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The desire of afflicted ones, you have heard, Yahweh; you strengthen their heart, you cause your ear to attend:* | *Yahweh, when oppressed people ask you to help, you listen and encourage them. You pay close attention,* |

**ULT The desire of afflicted ones, you have heard**
**UST** when oppressed people ask you to help, you listen
(תַּאֲוַת עֲנָוִים שָׁמַעְתָּ)

The implication is that the afflicted people expressed their desire for mercy to Yahweh. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [When afflicted people told you about their desire for mercy, you listened to them tell you what they needed]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT you strengthen their heart**
**UST** and encourage them
(תָּכִין לִבָּם)

Here, a strong **heart** represents courage and **you strengthen their heart** represents encouraging them. If it would be helpful, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you encourage them] or [you make them confident]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT you cause your ear to attend**
**UST** You pay close attention
(תַּקְשִׁיב אָזְנֶךָ)

Here the psalmist speaks of the **ear** as if it were a person who could attend to, listen, or pay attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your ear hears] or [you listen carefully]

**Support Reference:** Personification

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| afflicted ones | oppressed people |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 10:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to judge the orphan and oppressed; {that} mankind {who is} from the earth will never again terrify.* | *so you can act justly for the orphans and oppressed people. You will stop any mere human from ever terrifying them again.* |

**ULT to judge**
**UST** so you can act justly
(לִשְׁפֹּט)

The implication is that Yahweh will judge in favor of the orphan and oppressed. You could include this information in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [to administer justice for] or [to judge in favor of]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT terrify**
**UST** terrifying them
(לְעָרֵץ)

The psalmist 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 earlier in the sentence if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [terrify anyone] or [terrify the orphan and the oppressed]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to judge | so you can act justly |
| terrify | terrifying them |

# Psalms 11

## Psalm 11 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 11 is considered to be one of the "psalms of trust." (See the Introduction to Psalms.) He will judge the wicked and reward the righteous. (See: deliver, deliverer, deliverance, delivered and good, right, pleasant, better, best, goodness and evil, wicked, wickedness, unpleasant)

1. David asserts his trust in God (1a)
2. The words of David's advisors (1b–3)
3. David's response to the words of his advisors (4–5)
4. David asks God to judge righteously (6–7)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Justice

David says that wicked people try to destroy righteous people, but God knows everything that evil people try to do. David says that "Yahweh is righteous" (7) and "he hates those who love to do violence" (5). David asks God to judge the wicked (6) and says that "the upright" will be rewarded by seeing his face (7). (See: just, justice, unjust, injustice, justify, justification and save, saved, safe, salvation, rescue)

# Psalms 11:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the chief musician; of David. In Yahweh I take refuge. How can you say to my soul, "Flutter {like} a bird to your mountain.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: This is a psalm of David. I trust that Yahweh will protect me. So do not say to me, "You need to escape to the mountains like birds do,* |

ULT **How can you say to my soul, Flutter {like} a bird to your mountain … For behold, the wicked, they bend a bow; they have set their arrow on the string to shoot in the darkness at the upright of heart … If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do**

UST So do not say to me, "You need to escape to the mountains like birds do … because wicked people have hidden in the darkness. They have pulled back their bowstrings and aimed their arrows to shoot them at godly people {like you … } … When people are not punished for doing wrong things, there is nothing righteous people can do

(אֵיךְ תֹּאמְרוּ לְנַפְשִׁי נֻדִּי הַרְכֶם צִפּוֹר: כִּי הִנֵּה הָרְשָׁעִים יִדְרְכוּן קֶשֶׁת כּוֹנְנוּ חִצָּם עַל־יֶתֶר לִירוֹת בְּמוֹ־אֹפֶל לְיִשְׁרֵי־לֵב: כִּי הַשָּׁתוֹת יֻהֲרָסוּן צַדִּיק מַה־פָּעָל) (11:1-3)

Many Bible scholars think that David's quote of his advisors begins with the words **Flutter like a bird to your mountain** and ends at the end of verse three. Some Bible scholars think that **Flutter like a bird to your mountain** are the only words of his advisors that David is quoting and that verses 2–3 are his own words. The ULT and UST follow option one. If a translation exists in your region that follows option two, you may wish to follow that option.

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **To the chief musician**

UST This is a note for the worship leader

(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **In Yahweh I take refuge**
UST I trust that Yahweh will protect me
(בַּיהוָה ׀ חָסִיתִי)

Here David is speaking as if Yahweh were actually a physical place of safety or shelter. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I trust in Yahweh to keep me safe] or [I depend on Yahweh to protect me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **How can you say to my soul**
UST So do not say to me
(אֵיךְ תֹּאמְרוּ לְנַפְשִׁי)

David is using the question form to challenge what people are telling him. His question continues from this verse to the end of verse 3. 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: [You should not say to my soul]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **can you say to my soul**
UST say to me
(תֹּאמְרוּ לְנַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using **my soul** to represent all of himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [can you say to me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **Flutter {like} a bird to your mountain**
UST You need to escape to the mountains like birds do
(נֻדִּי הַרְכֶם צִפּוֹר)

Here the speaker's advisors are speaking of him as if he were actually a **bird** that should fly away to safety in the mountains. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Run away and hide in the mountains] or [Escape to safety in the mountains]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| of David | This is a psalm of David |
| In Yahweh | Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I take refuge<br>to my soul | I trust that … will protect me<br>to me |

# Psalms 11:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For behold, the wicked, they bend a bow; they have set their arrow on the string to shoot in the darkness at the upright of heart.* | *because wicked people have hidden in the darkness. They have pulled back their bowstrings and aimed their arrows to shoot them at godly people {like you}.* |

ULT **For behold**
UST because … They
(כִּ֤י הִנֵּ֨ה)

The psalmist is using the term **behold** to focus his listeners' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Listen carefully] or [Pay attention to this]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(הָרְשָׁעִ֗ים)

See how you translated the phrase **the wicked** in 1:1. Alternate translation: [wicked men]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **at the upright of heart**
UST at godly people {like you}
(לְיִשְׁרֵי־לֵֽב)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts and motives exist. The phrase **upright of heart** describes people whose thoughts and motives are morally straight and righteous. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [at those who think and act righteously] or [at those who live with pure motives]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the wicked | wicked people |
| bend … they | have pulled back |
| a bow | their bowstrings |
| at the upright of | at godly people {like you} |

# Psalms 11:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do”?* | *When people are not punished for doing wrong things, there is nothing righteous people can do.”* |

ULT **If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do**
UST When people are not punished for doing wrong things, there is nothing righteous people can do
(כִּ֤י הַשָּׁתוֹת֙ יֻהֲרָסֻ֔ון צַדִּ֖יק מַה־פָּעָֽל)

The speaker is using the question form to emphasize that the **righteous** cannot do anything if the foundations of society are destroyed. If your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement. [If the foundations are destroyed, the righteous can do nothing.] or [If the foundations are destroyed, there is nothing the righteous can do.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do**
UST When people are not punished for doing wrong things, there is nothing righteous people can do
(כִּ֤י הַשָּׁתוֹת֙ יֻהֲרָסֻ֔ון צַדִּ֖יק מַה־פָּעָֽל)

This question is the end of what people are saying to David, which he uses the question form in verses 1–3 to challenge. If you chose in verse 1 to represent his challenge as a statement or exclamation, end this with a period or exclamation point.

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **the foundations are destroyed**
UST people are not punished for doing wrong things
(הַשָּׁתוֹת֙ יֻהֲרָסֻ֔ון)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if the principles of justice and morality were actually **foundations** of a building. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the principles of justice and morality are destroyed] or [the moral order has broken down]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the righteous**
UST righteous people
(צַדִּיק)

See how you translated the phrase **the righteous** in 1:5. Alternate translation: [righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the foundations | people are not punished for doing wrong things |
| are destroyed | people are not punished for doing wrong things |
| the righteous | righteous people |

# Psalms 11:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh {is} in his holy temple; Yahweh {is} in the heavens, his throne. His eyes see, his eyelids test the sons of man.* | *But Yahweh is in his holy sanctuary, he reigns from heaven, and he watches and examines {everything that} people do.* |

**ULT Yahweh {is} in his holy temple; Yahweh {is} in the heavens, his throne**
**UST** But Yahweh is in his holy sanctuary, he reigns from heaven
(יְהוָה ׀ בְּהֵיכַל קָדְשׁוֹ יְהוָה֮ בַּשָּׁמַ֪יִם כִּסְאוֹ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of God's presence in heaven as if he were actually in a **temple** and as if **the heavens** were a place with a **throne**. You could translate the words literally or your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is present in his holy sanctuary and rules as king from heaven]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Yahweh {is} in his holy temple; Yahweh {is} in the heavens, his throne**
**UST** But Yahweh is in his holy sanctuary, he reigns from heaven
(יְהוָה ׀ בְּהֵיכַל קָדְשׁוֹ יְהוָה֮ בַּשָּׁמַ֪יִם כִּסְאוֹ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation, if possible. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is in his holy temple; yes, Yahweh is in the heavens, his throne] or [Yahweh is in his holy temple; indeed, Yahweh is in the heavens, his throne]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT Yahweh {is} in the heavens, his throne**
**UST** he reigns from heaven
(יְהוָה֮ בַּשָּׁמַ֪יִם כִּסְאוֹ)

The psalmist is not distinguishing this **throne** from another throne that is not in heaven. The psalmist is showing God's greatness compared to human rulers who rule from a throne on earth, by adding that **the heavens** are the place of God's **throne** (where he rules from). Be sure that this is clear in your translation. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is in the heavens, they are his throne] or [Yahweh's throne is in the heavens]

**Support Reference:** Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

ULT **Yahweh {is} in the heavens, his throne**
UST he reigns from heaven
(יְהוָה֮ בַּשָּׁמַ֪יִם כִּסְא֫וֹ)

Here, God's **throne** represents his "rule." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Yahweh rules from the heavens]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **His eyes see**
UST and he watches
(עֵינָ֤יו יֶחֱזָ֗וּ)

The psalmist 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: [His eyes see the sons of men] or [His eyes see everything that people do]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **His eyes see, his eyelids test**
UST and he watches and examines
(עֵינָ֤יו יֶחֱזָ֗וּ עַפְעַפָּ֥יו יִבְחָנוּ֮)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation, if possible. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [His eyes see, yes, his eyelids test] or [His eyes see, indeed, his eyelids test]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **His eyes see, his eyelids test**
UST and he watches and examines
(עֵינָ֤יו יֶחֱזָ֗וּ עַפְעַפָּ֥יו יִבְחָנוּ֮)

Here, **eyes** and **eyelids** represent God's ability to see and evaluate everything people do. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [He sees, he tests]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the sons of man**
UST {everything that} people do
(בְּנֵי אָדָם)

The psalmist is using **sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "all human beings." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the children of mankind] or [every human being]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | But Yahweh |
| {is} in … temple | is in … sanctuary |
| his holy | his holy |
| {is} in the heavens | from heaven |
| his throne | reigns |
| test | and examines |

# Psalms 11:5

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Yahweh tests the righteous and the wicked, and the one loving violence his soul hates.* | *Yahweh examines what righteous people do and what wicked people do, and he hates those who love to do violent things.* |

ULT **the righteous**
UST what righteous people do
(צַדִּיק)

See how you translated the phrase **the righteous** in 1:5. Alternate translation: [righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and the wicked**
UST and what wicked people do
(וְרָשָׁע)

See how you translated the phrase **the wicked** in 1:1. Alternate translation: [wicked men]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **his soul hates**
UST he hates
(שָׂנְאָה נַפְשׁוֹ)

The psalmist is using **soul** to represent all of Yahweh in the act of hating. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he hates]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| tests | examines |
| the righteous | what righteous people do |
| and the wicked | and what wicked people do |
| and the one loving | and … those who love |
| his soul | he |

# Psalms 11:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May he rain snares upon the wicked; fire and brimstone and a scorching wind the portion of their cup!* | *May he send down from the sky traps upon the wicked, and may Yahweh punish them with fire and burning sulfur and scorching hot winds.* |

ULT **the wicked**
UST the wicked
(רְשָׁעִים)

See how you translated the phrase **the wicked** in 1:1. Alternate translation: [wicked men]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **fire and brimstone and a scorching wind the portion of their cup**
UST and may Yahweh punish them with fire and burning sulfur and scorching hot winds
(אֵשׁ וְגָפְרִית וְרוּחַ זְלָעָפוֹת מְנָת כּוֹסָם)

The psalmist 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 fire and brimstone and a scorching wind be the portion of their cup]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **fire and brimstone and a scorching wind**
UST with fire and burning sulfur and scorching hot winds
(אֵשׁ וְגָפְרִית וְרוּחַ זְלָעָפוֹת)

The phrase **fire and brimstone and a scorching wind** could refer to: (1) an actual physical judgment of fire and brimstone such as what happened to the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19:24–25 (2) a judgment of some type, but not necessarily with fire and brimstone and a scorching wind. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language.

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the portion of their cup**
UST and may Yahweh punish them
(מְנָת כּוֹסָם)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if **the portion of their cup** is what the wicked would receive as their share, like a drink that had been poured into their cup. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what Yahweh will give them as their punishment]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| snares | traps |
| the wicked | the wicked |

# Psalms 11:7

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *For Yahweh is righteous, he loves righteousness; the upright will see his face.* | *Yahweh is completely righteous, and he loves when people do what is righteous. People who do what is right will be able to come into his presence.* |

**ULT he loves righteousness**
**UST** and he loves when people do what is righteous
(צְדָקוֹת אָהֵב)

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: [he loves those who do righteous things] or [he loves when people do what is righteous]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT the upright**
**UST** People who do what is right
(יָשָׁר)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [upright people] or [those who do what is right]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT will see his face**
**UST** will be able to come into his presence
(יֶחֱזוּ פָּנָיו)

David is using Yahweh's **face** to represent Yahweh himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [will see him]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| is righteous | is completely righteous |
| he loves | and he loves |
| righteousness | when people do what is righteous |
| the upright | People who do what is right |

# Psalms 12

## Psalm 12 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 12 has different types of themes in it. It has elements in it that belong to “lament psalms,” “psalms of trust,” and “imprecatory psalms.” See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about these types of psalms.

1. David laments that godly people seem to be no more (1)
2. The deceptive speech of wicked people (2)
3. David asks Yahweh to stop men who use their speech for evil purposes (3–4)
4. Yahweh’s response to the mistreatment of “the poor” and “the needy” (5)
5. Yahweh’s speech is perfect and trustworthy (6)
6. Yahweh’s “the poor” and “the needy” (7)
7. David observes the prideful boldness of wicked men as a result of society not condemning their evil actions (8)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh saves “the poor” and “the needy” from the oppressive acts of wicked people

Even though wicked people are temporarily succeeding in oppressing poor and needy people, Yahweh sees and will help “the poor” and “the needy” people who long for deliverance from their oppression (5). (See: save, saved, safe, salvation, rescue)

#### Words

A major focus of this psalm is the deceptive and prideful words that wicked people use (2–4). This psalm then shows that Yahweh’s speech, in contrast to the speech of wicked people, is morally perfect and trustworthy (6).

# Psalms 12:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on Sheminith; a psalm of David.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: David wrote this song. Perform it in a low range.* |

**ULT For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**ULT on Sheminith**
UST Perform it in a low range
(עַל־הַשְּׁמִינִית)

See how you translated the term **Sheminith** in the superscription to Psalm 6.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a psalm | this song |
| of David | David wrote |

# Psalms 12:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Help, Yahweh, for the faithful have come to an end; for the faithful have vanished from {among} the sons of man.* | *Yahweh, help us! {It seems like} people who honor you are no more.* |

ULT **the faithful**
UST people who honor you
(חָסִיד)

See how you translated the phrase **the godly** in 4:3. Alternate translation: [godly people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **from {among} the sons of man**
UST are no more
(מִבְּנֵי אָדָם)

The psalmist is using **the sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "all human beings." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the human race] or [from humanity]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Help | help us |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the faithful | people who honor you |
| the faithful | people who honor you |

# Psalms 12:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Man, they speak falsehood with his neighbor; they speak {with} lip of smoothness, with a heart and a heart.* | *Everyone tells lies to other people; they deceive others by saying good things about them that they know are not true and by speaking insincerely.* |

**ULT Man, they speak falsehood with his neighbor**
**UST** Everyone tells lies to other people
(שָׁוְא ׀ יְדַבְּרוּ֣ אִ֭ישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵ֑הוּ)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **Man**. He means all wicked people among mankind in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Mankind speaks with falsehood with their neighbors]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**ULT falsehood**
**UST** lies
(שָׁוְא)

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: [lies] or [what is untrue]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT his neighbor**
**UST** other people
(רֵעֵ֑הוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if anyone a person speaks to were actually their **neighbor**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [other people]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{ … with} lip of smoothness, with a heart and a heart**
UST deceive others … good things about them that they know are not true and by speaking insincerely
(שְׂפַת חֲלָקוֹת בְּלֵב וָלֵב)

These two phrases, **with lip of smoothness** and **with a heart and a heart**, mean very similar things. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating a similar idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [with deceptive flattery]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **{with} lip of smoothness**
UST deceive others … good things about them that they know are not true
(שְׂפַת חֲלָקוֹת)

The psalmist is using **lip of smoothness** as a common expression of his culture to mean "flattering speech." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with flattering words]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **with … with a heart and a heart**
UST to … and by speaking insincerely
(אֶת & בְּלֵב וָלֵב)

The psalmist is using **with a heart and a heart** as a common expression of his culture to mean "with divided loyalty" or "with deceitful intentions." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with deceitful hearts] or [speaking dishonestly]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his neighbor | other people |

# Psalms 12:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May Yahweh cut off all lips of smoothness, the tongue speaking great things,* | *Yahweh, we wish that you would cut off their tongues {so that} they cannot continue to boast.* |

**ULT May Yahweh cut off all lips of smoothness**
**UST** { … Yahweh, we wish that you would cut off their tongues so that} they cannot continue to boast
(יַכְרֵת יְהוָה כָּל־שִׂפְתֵי חֲלָקוֹת)

The psalmist is using **cut off** as a common expression of the culture to mean “destroy” or “bring to an end.” See how you translated the expression “with lip of smoothness” in the previous verse. So in this context, **cut off all lips of smoothness** means “bring to an end all those who speak with flattering lips.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May Yahweh bring to an end all people who speak with flattering words] or [May Yahweh stop all people who speak with flattering speech]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT the tongue speaking great things**
**UST** { … their tongues so that} they cannot continue to boast
(לָשׁוֹן מְדַבֶּרֶת גְּדֹלוֹת)

Here, **tongue** represents a person who speaks. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the person speaking great things]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT the tongue speaking great things**
**UST** { … their tongues so that} they cannot continue to boast
(לָשׁוֹן מְדַבֶּרֶת גְּדֹלוֹת)

The psalmist 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: [May Yahweh cut off the tongue speaking great things]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

> ULT **speaking great things**
> UST { … their tongues so that} they cannot continue to boast
> (מְדַבֶּרֶת גְּדֹלוֹת)

The implication is that the people who are **speaking great things** are bragging and making proud claims. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [that brags] or [that makes proud claims]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the tongue | { … their tongues so that} they cannot continue to boast |

# Psalms 12:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *which say, “With our tongue we will make strong. Our lips {are} with us, who {is} master over us?”* | *They say, “By speaking untruthfully we will get what we want; we control what we say, no one can tell us what we should do!”* |

**ULT which say**
**UST** They say
(אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ)

The psalmist 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: [lips which say]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT With our tongue we will make strong. Our lips {are} with us**
**UST** By speaking untruthfully we will get what we want; we control what we say
(לְלְשֹׁנֵנוּ נַגְבִּיר שְׂפָתֵינוּ אִתָּנוּ)

Here, **tongue** and **lips** represent speech and the ability to speak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [We will prevail through what we say. We can speak as we please]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT With our tongue we will make strong**
**UST** By speaking untruthfully we will get what we want
(לְלְשֹׁנֵנוּ נַגְבִּיר)

Here the wicked people are speaking of their **tongue** as if it were a weapon that could defeat others. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [By our speech we will defeat others] or [We will overpower others with our words]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Our lips {are} with us**
**UST** we control what we say
(שְׂפָתֵינוּ אִתָּנוּ)

The implication is that these speakers are claiming to be in complete control of what they say and do not need to answer to anyone else. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [We can say whatever we want]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **who {is} master over us**
UST no one can tell us what we should do
(מִי אֲדוֹן לָנוּ)

The speakers are using the question **who is master over us?** as a way of making a defiant statement. They are not expecting an answer but are expressing their belief that no one has authority over them. If a speaker of your language would not use a question form for this purpose, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: [no one will be master over us!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| With our tongue | By speaking untruthfully we |
| {is} master | can tell us what we should do |

# Psalms 12:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“Because of oppression of the poor, because of {the} groaning of the needy, Now I will arise,” says Yahweh. “I will place in {the} safety he pants for it.”* | *{But} Yahweh replies, “I have seen the oppressive things that they have done to helpless people; I have heard those people groaning, so I will take action and rescue the people who are wanting someone to help them.”* |

ULT **Because of oppression of the poor, because of {the} groaning of the needy**
UST I have seen the oppressive things that they have done to helpless people; I have heard those people groaning
(מִשֹּׁד עֲנִיִּים מֵאַנְקַת אֶבְיוֹנִים)

These two phrases **Because of oppression of the poor** and **because of the groaning of the needy** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation, if possible. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Because of how the poor are being cruelly oppressed and suffering]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the poor … of the needy**
UST to helpless people … those people
(עֲנִיִּים & אֶבְיוֹנִים)

The psalmist 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 adjectives with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [poor people … of needy people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **because of {the} groaning of the needy**
UST I have heard those people groaning
(מֵאַנְקַת אֶבְיוֹנִים)

Here, **groaning** represents the suffering of the needy. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [because the needy are suffering so severely that it causes them to groan] or [because of the suffering of the needy]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Now I will arise**
UST so I will take action
(עַתָּה אָקוּם)

Yahweh is using **Now I will arise** as a common expression of the culture to indicate that he is about to take action against those who oppress the poor and needy. He is not saying that he will get out of bed or stand up from a seated position. If this expression does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Now I will take action]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **I will place in {the} safety**
UST and rescue
(אָשִׁית בְּיֶשַׁע)

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: [I will keep safe]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **he pants for it**
UST the people who are wanting someone to help them
(יָפִיחַ לוֹ)

Here Yahweh is speaking as if someone were actually **panting** for safety like a thirsty person pants for water. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he longs for it]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **he pants for it**
UST the people who are wanting someone to help them
(יָפִיחַ לוֹ)

It might seem that the expression **he pants for** contains extra information that would not be natural to express in your language. If so, you could shorten it. Alternate translation: [he pants for] or [he longs for]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | {But} Yahweh |

# Psalms 12:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{The} words of Yahweh {are} pure words, silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven.* | *Yahweh, what you say is morally pure and you always do what you have said you will do. Your words are {as precious and pure as} silver that has been heated seven times in a furnace {to get rid of all the impure material}.* |

ULT **{ … are} pure words, silver**
UST what you say is morally pure and you always do what you have said you will do. Your words are {as precious and pure as} silver
(אֲמָרוֹת טְהֹרוֹת כֶּסֶף)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if Yahweh's **pure words** were actually refined **silver**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [are pure words, like silver]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven**
UST Your words are {as precious and pure as} silver that has been heated seven times in a furnace {to get rid of all the impure material … }
(כֶּסֶף צָרוּף בַּעֲלִיל לָאָרֶץ מְזֻקָּק שִׁבְעָתָיִם)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if God's promises were actually **silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven** times. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [like silver that is refined in a furnace on the ground seven times]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven**
UST Your words are {as precious and pure as} silver that has been heated seven times in a furnace {to get rid of all the impure material … }
(כֶּסֶף צָרוּף בַּעֲלִיל לָאָרֶץ מְזֻקָּק שִׁבְעָתָיִם)

The psalmist 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: [silver that is refined in a furnace on the ground seven times] or [pure like silver that is refined seven time in a furnace on the ground]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {are} pure | what you say is morally pure and you always do what you have said you will do |
| silver | Your words are {as precious and pure as} silver |
| in a furnace | that has been heated … in a furnace |

# Psalms 12:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You Yahweh, you will keep them. You will protect him from this generation for eternity.* | *Yahweh, we know that you will continually protect us who honor you from those wicked people.* |

**ULT You Yahweh, you will keep them**
**UST** Yahweh, we know that you will … protect us who honor you
(אַתָּה־יְהוָה תִּשְׁמְרֵם)

David is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you will keep them** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that it is Yahweh himself who will **keep** and **protect** "the poor" and "the needy" mentioned in verse 5. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [Indeed, it is you Yahweh who will keep them]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT You Yahweh, you will keep them. You will protect him**
**UST** Yahweh, we know that you will … protect us who honor you
(אַתָּה־יְהוָה תִּשְׁמְרֵם תִּצְּרֶנּוּ)

These two phrases **you will keep them** and **You will protect him** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [You yourself, Yahweh, will surely keep the poor and the needy safe]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT You Yahweh, you will keep them. You will protect him**
**UST** Yahweh, we know that you will … protect us who honor you
(אַתָּה־יְהוָה תִּשְׁמְרֵם תִּצְּרֶנּוּ)

The pronoun **them** refers to the poor and needy people, while the pronoun **him** also refers to these same people. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [You yourself Yahweh will keep the poor and needy. You will protect the poor and the needy]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **for eternity**
UST continually
(לְעוֹלָם)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that the phrase **for eternity** means "forever" or "continually." You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [forever]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| you will keep them | we know that you will … protect us who honor you |
| generation | those wicked people |
| for eternity | continually |

# Psalms 12:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The wicked walk about on every side when vileness is high among the sons of man.* | *When people praise wicked actions, wicked people strut around {proudly}.* |

ULT **The wicked walk about on every side when vileness is high among the sons of man**
UST When people praise wicked actions, wicked people strut around {proudly … }
(סָבִיב רְשָׁעִים יִתְהַלָּכוּן כְּרֹם זְלֻּוֹת לִבְנֵי אָדָם)

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 wicked walk about on every side** describes. Alternate translation: [When vileness is exalted among the sons of man, the wicked ones walk about on every side]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **The wicked**
UST wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

See how you translated the phrase **the wicked** in 1:1. Alternate translation: [The wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **walk about**
UST strut … proudly
(יִתְהַלָּכוּן)

By **walk about**, the psalmist means that the wicked walk around freely doing evil things without anyone stopping them and that they walk around proudly as a result of being able to do evil things. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [walk about freely] or [walk about proudly]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **when vileness is high**
UST When … praise wicked actions
(כְּרֹם זְלֻּוֹת)

The implication is that wicked people are the ones who are promoting or honoring vileness. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [when people exalt vileness]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **when vileness is high**
UST When … praise wicked actions
(כְּרֹ֣ם זְלֻל֑וּת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **vileness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [when what is vile is exalted]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **among the sons of man**
UST people
(לִבְנֵ֖י אָדָֽם)

The psalmist is using **sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "human beings" or "people." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [among people] or [among humanity]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The wicked | wicked people |

# Psalms 13

## Psalm 13 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 13 is considered to be one of the "lament psalms." See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about the lament psalms.

1. David calls out to Yahweh regarding Yahweh's seeming inattention to his troubles (1–2)
2. David asks Yahweh to "consider" and "answer" him and tells Yahweh what the result will be if Yahweh does not help him (3–4)
3. David expresses his trust in Yahweh's "covenant faithfulness" and the fact that he will "rejoice" because of his hope that Yahweh will save him (5)
4. David will sing to Yahweh because of Yahweh's kind actions towards him (6)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh's help

In this psalm David expresses to Yahweh that he desperately needs his help or else he will die (3) resulting in his enemies rejoicing at his downfall (4). David then affirms that he trusts that Yahweh's "covenant faithfulness" will cause Yahweh to save him from his enemies and he will "sing to Yahweh" and "rejoice" as a result of Yahweh saving him. The word "salvation" in 13:5 refers to help or deliverance from one's enemies. (See: save, saved, safe, salvation, rescue, deliver, deliverer, deliverance, delivered and call, called)

# Psalms 13:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the chief musician; a psalm of David.* | *This is a note to the worship leader: This is a psalm of David.* |

**ULT To the chief musician**

UST This is a note to the worship leader

(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a psalm | psalm |
| of David | This is a … of David |

# Psalms 13:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *How long, Yahweh? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?* | *Yahweh, how long will you continue to not answer me? How long will you hide yourself from me?* |

ULT **How long, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh, how long
(עַד־אָנָה יְהוָה)

David is probably implying the words “will you forget me,” but since the next two phrases in this verse indicates what David is asking Yahweh, you do not need to fill in the implied words in this phrase.

**Support Reference:** When to Keep Information Implicit

ULT **Will you forget me forever**
UST will you continue to not answer me
(תִּשְׁכָּחֵנִי נֶצַח)

The implication is that **forget** means “not help.” You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Will you not help me forever] or [Will you not ever answer me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **will you hide your face from me**
UST will you hide yourself from me
(תַּסְתִּיר אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי)

Here, **face** represents God’s attention and favor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [will you continue to ignore me] or [will you keep withdrawing your favor from me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| forever | continue to |

# Psalms 13:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *How long must I take counsel in my soul, sorrow in my heart by day? How long will the one being hostile to me be high over me?* | *How long must I think about my problems within myself? Must I be miserable every day? How long will my enemy defeat me?* |

ULT **in my soul**
UST within myself
(בְּנַפְשִׁי)

Here, **in my soul** represents David's whole self as he experiences emotions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **sorrow in my heart**
UST Must I be miserable
(יָגֹון בִּלְבָבִי)

The psalmist 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: [having sorrow in my heart]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **sorrow**
UST Must … be miserable
(יָגֹון)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **sorrow**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [feeling sorrowful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in my heart**
UST I
(בִּלְבָבִי)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts and feelings exist. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in my thoughts] or [in my inner being]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **by day**
UST every day
(יוֹמָם)

The implication is that David was distressed and in anguish throughout the entire daytime. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [daily] or [continually]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **will the one being hostile to me be high over me**
UST will my enemy defeat me
(יָרוּם אֹיְבִי עָלָי)

By **be high over me**, the psalmist means that his enemy will defeat him and triumph over him. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [will the one being hostile to me be exalted over me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| counsel | must I think about my problems |
| in my soul | within myself |
| by day | every day |
| the one being hostile to me | my enemy |

# Psalms 13:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Consider {and} answer me, Yahweh my God; give light to my eyes, lest I sleep the {sleep of} death,* | *Yahweh, my God, pay attention to me and respond to me. Restore my strength by giving me what I have hoped for, or I will die* |

ULT **give light to my eyes**
UST Restore my strength by giving me what I have hoped for
(הָאִירָה עֵינָי)

Here David is speaking of having energy and hope as if it were **light** coming into his eyes. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [restore my strength and hope] or [make me feel alive again]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **lest**
UST or
(פֶּן)

David is using the word translated as **lest** to introduce an outcome that he does not want to happen. Because of this, he first asks God to help him so that this will not happen. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that avoiding this outcome is the purpose of the request. Alternate translation: [otherwise] or [or else]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **I sleep the {sleep of} death**
UST I will die
(אִישַׁן הַמָּוֶת)

David 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 supply these words from the context, as in the ULT, which supplies **sleep of**.

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

> ULT **I sleep the {sleep of} death**
> UST I will die
> (אִישַׁן הַמָּוֶת)

The psalmist is referring to death in a polite way by using the phrase **sleep the sleep of death**. Depending on what is helpful in your language, you could use a polite way of referring to this in your language, or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [I die]

**Support Reference:** Euphemism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my God | my God |

# Psalms 13:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Lest the one being hostile to me say, "I have prevailed over him," {and} my adversaries rejoice when I am shaken.* | *and then my enemy would say, "I have defeated him," and those who are against me would celebrate when they had defeated me.* |

ULT **Lest the one being hostile to me say**
UST and then my enemy would say
(פֶּן־יֹאמַר אֹיְבִי)

David is using the word translated as **Lest** to introduce an outcome that he does not want to happen. Because of this, he first asks God to help him (3) so that this will not happen. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that avoiding this outcome is the purpose of the request. Alternate translation: [Otherwise the one being hostile to me will say] or [Or else the one being hostile to me will say]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **{and} my adversaries rejoice**
UST and those who are against me would celebrate
(צָרַי יָגִילוּ)

The psalmist is leaving out a word that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. Here the word is either "and" (which the ULT supplies) or "lest." You can supply the word or words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [lest my adversaries rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **when**
UST when
(כִּי)

The word the ULT translates as **when**, in this context, could mean: (1) "when" or (2) "because." Alternate translation: [because]

ULT **I am shaken**
UST they had defeated me
(אֶמּוֹט)

The expression **I am shaken** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [they shake me] or [they overcome me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **I am shaken**
UST they had defeated me
(אֲמּוֹט)

Here David is speaking of himself as if he were an object that could be **shaken**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am overcome] or [I am defeated]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the one being hostile to me | my enemy |
| {and} my adversaries | and those who are against me |
| rejoice | would celebrate |
| I am shaken | they had defeated me |

# Psalms 13:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But I have trusted in your covenant faithfulness; let my heart rejoice in your salvation.* | *But I trust that you will faithfully love me; may I rejoice when you rescue me.* |

**ULT But I**
**UST** But I
(וַאֲנִי)

The psalmist uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between the possibility of his enemies triumphing over him and his trust in Yahweh's faithfulness. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Nevertheless, I] or [However, I]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

**ULT in your covenant faithfulness**
**UST** that you will faithfully love me
(בְּחַסְדְּךָ)

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: [in all the ways you are faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT let my heart rejoice**
**UST** may I rejoice
(יָגֵל לִבִּי)

The word the ULT translates as **let my heart rejoice**, in this context, could mean: (1) "let my heart rejoice" or (2) "will rejoice." Alternate translation: [my heart will rejoice]

**ULT let my heart rejoice**
**UST** may I rejoice
(יָגֵל לִבִּי)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts and feelings exist. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [let everything in me rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in your salvation**
UST when you rescue me
(בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ)

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: [because of the way you have saved me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| have trusted | trust |
| in your covenant faithfulness | that you will faithfully love me |
| let … rejoice | may … rejoice |
| in your salvation | when you rescue me |

# Psalms 13:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will sing to Yahweh, because he has dealt bountifully with me.* | *Yahweh will do good things for me, so I will sing to him.* |

ULT **I will sing to Yahweh, because he has dealt bountifully with me**
UST Yahweh will do good things for me, so I will sing to him
(אָשִׁירָה לַיהוָה כִּי גָמַל עָלָי)

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 Yahweh has dealt bountifully with me, I will sing to him]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **he has dealt bountifully with me**
UST Yahweh will do good things for me
(גָמַל עָלָי)

David could be using the past tense **he has dealt bountifully**: (1) in order to describe something that is going to happen in the future to show that the event will certainly happen. Alternate translation: [he will deal bountifully with me] or (2) to refer to things Yahweh has done for him in the past, in which case you can translate this phrase as in the ULT.

**Support Reference:** Irregular Use of Tenses

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | to him |

# Psalms 14

## Psalm 14 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 14 is “wisdom psalm” that describes the difference between how righteous people and wicked people live and the difference between what happens to them. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the Introduction to Psalms.

1. A description of wicked people (1–4)
2. God punishes wicked people but helps his own people (5–7)

# Psalms 14:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; of David The fool says in his heart, "No God." They are corrupt, they do a deed abominably. {There is} none doing good.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: This is a psalm of David. {Only} foolish people say to themselves, "There is no God!" People who say those things do corrupt deeds; they do detestable deeds; hardly anyone does what is right.* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **The fool**
UST {Only} foolish people
(נָבָל)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **fool**. He means foolish people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [A foolish person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **in his heart**
UST to themselves
(בְּלִבּוֹ)

Here the **heart** represents a person's thoughts. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to himself] or [in his thoughts]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **No God**
UST There is no God
(אֵין אֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist 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 is no God]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **They are corrupt, they do a deed abominably**
UST People who say those things do corrupt deeds; they do detestable deeds
(הִשְׁחִיתוּ הִתְעִיבוּ עֲלִילָה)

These two phrases, **They are corrupt** and **they do a deed abominably**, mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [They behave in ways that are corrupt and terribly wicked]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **They are corrupt**
UST People who say those things do corrupt deeds
(הִשְׁחִיתוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to foolish people who deny God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Such foolish people are corrupt]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **they do a deed abominably**
UST they do detestable deeds
(הִתְעִיבוּ עֲלִילָה)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **deed**. He means the deeds of foolish people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [they do deeds abominably] or [what they do is abominable]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| of David | This is a psalm of David |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The fool | {Only} foolish people |
| God | God |
| They are corrupt | People who say those things do corrupt deeds |
| good | what is right |

# Psalms 14:2

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Yahweh looks down from the heavens on the sons of man to see whether there is one understanding, one seeking God.* | *Yahweh looks down from heaven and sees humans; {he looks} to see if there are any wise people, {with the result that they are} wise enough that they desire to know him.* |

**ULT the sons of man**
**UST** humans
(בְּנֵי־אָדָם)

The psalmist is using **sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "human beings." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [human beings]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT one seeking God**
**UST** {with the result that they are} wise enough that they desire to know him
(דֹּרֵשׁ אֶת־אֱלֹהִים)

Since the psalmist has already used the name God earlier in this sentence, it may be more natural in your language to use a pronoun here. Alternate translation: [one seeking him]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| from the heavens | from heaven |
| one understanding | any wise people |
| one seeking | {with the result that they are} wise enough that they desire to know |
| God | him |

# Psalms 14:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The whole has turned aside. Together they have corrupted themselves. {There is} none doing good, not even one.* | *But they all do evil and corrupt things; no one does what is right.* |

ULT **The whole has turned aside. Together they have corrupted themselves**
UST But they all do evil and corrupt things
(הַכֹּל סָר֥וּ יַחְדָּו֮ נֶאֱלָ֪חוּ)

These two phrases, **The whole has turned aside** and **Together they have corrupted themselves**, mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [All have rebelled, that is, they have all become completely corrupt]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **The whole**
UST But they all
(הַכֹּל)

The expression **The whole** refers back to the "sons of man" in the previous verse. It may be helpful to use a term in your translation that will clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [All of mankind has turned aside]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **The whole has turned aside**
UST But they all do evil
(הַכֹּל סָר֣וּ)

The psalmist is speaking of people abandoning God's ways as if they had literally **turned aside** from a path they had been walking on. He means that they stopped living in the manner in which God wants people to live. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [All people have rejected how God wants them to live] or [Everyone has stopped obeying God]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{There is} none doing good, not even one**
UST no one does what is right
(אֵין עֹשֵׂה־טֹוב אֵ֣ין גַּם־אֶחָֽד)

The psalmist is saying **none** and **not even one** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [All people are sinful]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **good**
UST what is right
(טֹֽוב)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [good things] or [what is good]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| they have corrupted themselves | and corrupt things |
| good | what is right |

# Psalms 14:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do they not know, all of the doers of iniquity, the ones eating my people {as} they eat bread? They do not call {upon} Yahweh.* | *All the people who make a practice of doing wicked things do not take seriously the fact that Yahweh is going to punish them! They act violently toward Yahweh's people and want to consume them like they consume bread. These evil people never pray to Yahweh.* |

ULT **Do they not know, all of the doers of iniquity, the ones eating my people {as} they eat bread**
UST All the people who make a practice of doing wicked things do not take seriously the fact that Yahweh is going to punish them! They act violently toward Yahweh's people and want to consume them like they consume bread
(הֲלֹא יָדְעוּ֨ כָל־פֹּ֪עֲלֵי אָ֡וֶן אֹכְלֵ֤י עַמִּ֨י אָכְל֬וּ לֶ֑חֶם)

The psalmist is using the question form to express amazement that wicked people oppress others without recognizing that God will judge and punish them for doing that. 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: [They ought to know better, the doers of iniquity, the ones eating my people as they eat bread!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **the ones eating my people {as} they eat bread**
UST They act violently toward Yahweh's people and want to consume them like they consume bread
(אֹכְלֵ֤י עַמִּ֨י אָכְל֬וּ לֶ֑חֶם)

The point of this comparison is that just as someone can **eat bread** easily and quickly, so these **doers of iniquity** readily oppress and exploit vulnerable people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [the ones eating my people as readily as they eat bread]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **the ones eating my people {as} they eat bread**
UST They act violently toward Yahweh's people and want to consume them like they consume bread
(אֹכְלֵ֤י עַמִּ֨י אָכְל֬וּ לֶ֑חֶם)

The psalmist is speaking as if these **doers of iniquity** were actually **eating** the **people** of his nation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the ones exploiting my people as readily as they eat bread]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they … know | take seriously the fact that Yahweh is going to punish them |
| iniquity | doing wicked things |
| the ones eating | They act violently toward … and want to consume |
| bread | like they consume bread |
| They do … call {upon} | These evil people … pray to |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 14:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *There they feared a fear, for God {is} with the generation of the righteous.* | *{But in the future,} at the place God will judge wicked people, they will become very terrified because God will help those who act righteously.* |

ULT **There**
UST {But in the future,} at the place God will judge wicked people
(שָׁם)

The word the ULT translates as **There** could refer to: (1) a place. Alternate translation: [At the place God will judge the wicked] or (2) a time. Alternate translation: [At the time God will judge the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **they feared a fear**
UST they will become very terrified
(פָּחֲדוּ פָּחַד)

The psalmist 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 another way of saying this. Alternate translation: [they feared greatly]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **{is} with the generation of the righteous**
UST will help those who act righteously
(בְּדוֹר צַדִּיק)

By **the generation of the righteous**, the psalmist means “the people who are righteous.” You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [is with righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **God {is} with the generation of the righteous**
UST God will help those who act righteously
(אֱלֹהִים בְּדוֹר צַדִּיק)

The psalmist is using **{is} with** as a common expression of his culture to mean "helps." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [God helps righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **the righteous**
UST act righteously
(צַדִּיק)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| they feared | they will become very terrified |
| a fear | they will become very terrified |
| God | God |
| {is} with the generation of | will help those who |
| the righteous | act righteously |

# Psalms 14:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You shame the counsel of the afflicted, but Yahweh {is} his refuge.* | *You evil people try to humiliate poor people, but Yahweh will protect them.* |

ULT **You shame the counsel of the afflicted**
UST You evil people try to humiliate poor people
(עֲצַת־עָנִי תָּבִישׁוּ)

The pronoun **You** refers to the wicked people who do the evil things that are described in the previous verses. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [You wicked people shame the counsel of the afflicted]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **You shame the counsel of the afflicted**
UST You evil people try to humiliate poor people
(עֲצַת־עָנִי תָּבִישׁוּ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form **the counsel of the afflicted** to mean the counsel that poor but godly people have decided to follow, that is, their decision to obey God. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [You wicked people try to humiliate the afflicted for deciding to obey God]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the afflicted**
UST poor people
(עָנִי)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [an afflicted person] or [people in humble circumstances]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **Yahweh {is} his refuge**
UST Yahweh will protect them
(יְהוָה מַחְסֵהוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were actually a **refuge**, that is, a place where someone can go to be safe from danger. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh protects him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| You shame | You evil people try to humiliate |
| the counsel of | You evil people try to humiliate |
| the afflicted | poor people |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} his refuge | will protect them |

# Psalms 14:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Who will give the salvation of Israel from Zion? When Yahweh restores the prosperity of his people, Jacob will be glad, Israel will rejoice.* | *I wish that Yahweh would come from where he dwells in Jerusalem and rescue us Israelite people! When Yahweh blesses us, his people again, then all of us Israelite people will rejoice.* |

ULT **Who will give the salvation of Israel from Zion**
UST I wish that Yahweh would come from where he dwells in Jerusalem and rescue us Israelite people
(מִ֤י יִתֵּ֣ן מִצִּ֣יּוֹן׀ יְשׁוּעַ֣ת יִשְׂרָאֵ֑ל)

The psalmist is using **Who will give** as a common expression of his culture to introduce a fervent wish. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [O that salvation for Israel would come from Zion!] or [I fervently wish that salvation for Israel would come from Zion!]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Who will give the salvation of Israel from Zion**
UST I wish that Yahweh would come from where he dwells in Jerusalem and rescue us Israelite people
(מִ֤י יִתֵּ֣ן מִצִּ֣יּוֹן׀ יְשׁוּעַ֣ת יִשְׂרָאֵ֑ל)

The psalmist is using Mount **Zion**, the location of God's sanctuary, to represent God himself in the act of providing **salvation** for **Israel**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [O that God would act from his sanctuary on Mount Zion to provide for the salvation of Israel!] or [I fervently wish that God would act from his sanctuary on Mount Zion to provide for the salvation of Israel!]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Who will give the salvation of Israel from Zion**
UST I wish that Yahweh would come from where he dwells in Jerusalem and rescue us Israelite people
(מִי יִתֵּן מִצִּיּוֹן יְשׁוּעַת יִשְׂרָאֵל)

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: [O that God would act from his sanctuary on Mount Zion to save Israel!] or [I fervently wish that God would act from his sanctuary on Mount Zion to save Israel!]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **When Yahweh restores the prosperity of his people**
UST When Yahweh blesses us, his people again
(בְּשׁוּב יְהוָה שְׁבוּת עַמּוֹ)

The word that the ULT translates as **prosperity** can also mean "captivity." If that is the meaning, then this verse could have been added to the psalm later, after the Israelites were conquered and taken into captivity. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to follow the translation 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: [When God restores the captivity of his people] or [When God brings his people back from captivity]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Jacob will be glad, Israel will rejoice**
UST then all of us Israelite people will rejoice
(יָגֵל יַעֲקֹב יִשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל)

These two phrases, **Jacob will be glad** and **Israel will rejoice**, mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Jacob will be glad, yes, Israel will rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Jacob will be glad, Israel will rejoice**
UST then all of us Israelite people will rejoice
(יָגֵל יַעֲקֹב יִשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist is using the two names of the ancestor of the Israelites, **Jacob** and **Israel**, to represent the Israelites themselves. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The descendants of Jacob will be glad; indeed, the Israelites will rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the salvation of | and rescue |
| Israel | us Israelite people |
| from Zion | from where he dwells in Jerusalem |
| When … restores | When … blesses … again |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the prosperity of | When … blesses … again |
| Jacob | all of us Israelite people |
| will be glad | then … will rejoice |
| rejoice | then … will rejoice |

# Psalms 15

## Psalm 15 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 15 is considered to be one of the "wisdom psalms." See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about the wisdom psalms. (See: wise, wisdom)

1. Two parallel rhetorical questions with the same meaning (1)
2. Ten character traits of the type of person Yahweh lets enter his presence (2–5b)
3. The promised reward for the person meeting Yahweh's requirements (5c)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### The type of person who may enter into God's presence

Verse one begins with two questions that are both asking the same thing (parallelism). They are both rhetorical questions that are meant to make the reader think intently about the type of behaviors and attitudes that God requires. Verses 2–5b provide the answer to the questions in verse one. They indicate ten character traits that God requires. The last sentence in verse five is the conclusion to this psalm and states the promised reward for meeting Yahweh's moral requirements. (See: godly, godliness, ungodly, godless, ungodliness, godlessness and good, right, pleasant, better, best, goodness and promise, promised)

#### Moral Conditions for Worship

Scholars have noted that this psalm contains a list of ten different conditions for those who want to participate in worship at the temple. The list consists of three positives in verse two, three negatives in verse three, two positives in verse four, followed by two negatives in verse five. (See: temple, house, house of God)

## Translation Issues in This Psalm

### Who do the pronouns “he,” “his,” and “him” refer to?

All occurrences of the pronouns “he,” “his,” and “him” refer to the same type of person. The person being described is not one particular person but rather anyone who exhibits the behaviors described in verses 2–5.

# Psalms 15:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A psalm of David Yahweh, who may sojourn in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy mountain?* | *A psalm of David. Yahweh, who is allowed to enter your sacred tent? Who is allowed to live on your sacred mountain?* |

ULT **who may sojourn in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy mountain**
UST who is allowed to enter your sacred tent? Who is allowed to live on your sacred mountain
(מִי־יָגוּר בְּאָהֳלֶךָ מִי־יִשְׁכֹּן בְּהַר קָדְשֶׁךָ)

These two phrases, **who may sojourn in your tent** and **Who may dwell on your holy mountain**, mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [who may sojourn in your tent, yes, who may dwell on your holy mountain]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **who may sojourn in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy mountain**
UST who is allowed to enter your sacred tent? Who is allowed to live on your sacred mountain
(מִי־יָגוּר בְּאָהֳלֶךָ מִי־יִשְׁכֹּן בְּהַר קָדְשֶׁךָ)

David uses these two questions to make the reader think deeply about how to live a righteous life. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for this purpose, you could translate these questions as statements or exclamations. Alternate translation: [this is the type of person who may sojourn in your tent. This is the type of person who may dwell on your holy mountain.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **may sojourn**
UST is allowed to enter
(יָגוּר)

The word **sojourn** means to be living somewhere, either temporarily or permanently, as a resident alien. By **may sojourn**, David means someone who is allowed to visit and come as a guest. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [may dwell as a guest] or [may be welcomed]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **in your tent**
UST your sacred tent
(בְּאָהֳלֶךָ)

By **your tent**, David means Yahweh's Temple that was in Jerusalem on Mount Zion. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [in your temple] or [in your dwelling place]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **on your holy mountain**
UST on your sacred mountain
(בְּהַר קָדְשֶׁךָ)

By **your holy mountain**, David means Mount Zion, the place where Yahweh's Temple was. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [on your holy mountain, Mount Zion]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **who may sojourn in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy mountain**
UST who is allowed to enter your sacred tent? Who is allowed to live on your sacred mountain
(מִי־יָגוּר בְּאָהֳלֶךָ מִי־יִשְׁכֹּן בְּהַר קָדְשֶׁךָ)

Here, **tent** and **holy mountain** represent Yahweh's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [who may sojourn in your presence? Who may dwell with you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| A psalm | A psalm |
| of David | of David |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| may sojourn | is allowed to enter |
| in your tent | your sacred tent |
| your holy | your sacred |

# Psalms 15:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one walking blamelessly, and doing righteousness and speaking truth in his heart.* | *Those whose behavior is faultless and who do righteous things, and who speak the truth.* |

**ULT The one walking blamelessly, and doing righteousness and speaking truth in his heart**

UST Those whose behavior is faultless and who do righteous things, and who speak the truth
(הוֹלֵךְ תָּמִים וּפֹעֵל צֶדֶק וְדֹבֵר אֱמֶת בִּלְבָבוֹ)

David 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 person who may enter your presence, Yahweh, is the one walking blamelessly, and doing righteousness, and speaking truth in his heart] or [The person who may sojourn in your house and dwell on your holy mountain is the one walking blamelessly, doing righteousness, and speaking truth in his heart]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT The one walking blamelessly**

UST Those whose behavior is faultless
(הוֹלֵךְ תָּמִים)

David 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 helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The one living blamelessly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT The one walking blamelessly, and doing righteousness and speaking truth in his heart**

UST Those whose behavior is faultless and who do righteous things, and who speak the truth
(הוֹלֵךְ תָּמִים וּפֹעֵל צֶדֶק וְדֹבֵר אֱמֶת בִּלְבָבוֹ)

David is not referring to a specific **one**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Those who walk blamelessly, do righteousness, and speak truth] or [Anyone who walks blamelessly, does righteousness, and speaks truth in his heart]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **righteousness**
UST righteous things
(צֶֽדֶק)

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: [what is right]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and speaking truth**
UST and who speak the truth
(וְדֹבֵ֖ר אֱמֶ֣ת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **truth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and speaking what is true]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and speaking truth in his heart**
UST and who speak the truth
(וְדֹבֵ֖ר אֱמֶ֣ת בִּלְבָבֽוֹ)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts and intentions exist. The phrase **speaking truth in his heart** means "speaking the truth within himself in his thoughts" and refers to a person thinking true thoughts within and then speaking out loud to others according to that truth. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| righteousness | righteous things |

# Psalms 15:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He does not slander with his tongue, he does not do evil to his neighbor, and an insult he does not raise up against one close to him.* | *They do not slander others. They do not do to others things that are wrong, and they do not say bad things about their friends.* |

ULT **with his tongue**
UST They do … slander others
(עַל־לְשֹׁנוֹ)

Here, **tongue** represents speech. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with his speech]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **he does not do evil**
UST They do not do … things that are wrong
(לֹא־עָשָׂה & רָעָה)

The psalmist is using the adjective **evil** as a noun to mean evil things. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [he does not do evil things]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and an insult he does not raise up against one close to him**
UST and they do not say bad things about their friends
(וְחֶרְפָּה לֹא־נָשָׂא עַל־קְרֹבוֹ)

By **an insult he does not raise up**, David means “an insult he does not speak.” You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [an insult he does not speak against one close to him] or [an insult he does not speak against his neighbor]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **one close to him**
UST their friends
(קְרֹבוֹ)

By **one close to him**, David could mean: (1) a person who has a close relationship with him. Alternate translation: [his friend] or (2) a person who lives within a close physical distance from him. Alternate translation: [his neighbor]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He does … slander | They do … slander others |
| his tongue | They do … slander others |
| evil | things that are wrong |
| to his neighbor | to others |
| and an insult | and they do … say bad things |

# Psalms 15:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In whose eyes one being rejected is despised, but those who fear Yahweh he honors. He swears to his own hurt, and does not change.* | *They despise the people God abhors, but they respect those who revere Yahweh. They do what they have promised to do, even if it causes them trouble to do that.* |

ULT **In whose eyes**
UST They
(בְּעֵינָיו)

The psalmist is using **In whose eyes** as a common expression meaning "in the judgment of" or "in the opinion of." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [In whose judgment] or [In whose opinion]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **one being rejected**
UST the people God abhors
(נִמְאָס)

By **one being rejected**, the psalmist means one whom God has rejected or despised. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [one whom God has rejected]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **In whose eyes one being rejected is despised**
UST They despise the people God abhors
(נִבְזֶה ׀ בְּעֵינָיו נִמְאָס)

The expression **one being rejected** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [He despises the person God rejects]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT He swears to his own hurt**

**UST** They do what they have promised to do, even if it causes them trouble to do that
(נִשְׁבַּע לְהָרַע)

The implication is that he keeps his promise even when doing so will cause him difficulty or loss. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [He keeps his promises even when it costs him]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT and does not change**

**UST** They do what they have promised to do, even if it causes them trouble to do that
(וְלֹא יָמֵר)

The implication is that the person does not change his oath or promise even when circumstances make it difficult or costly to keep. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and does not break his promise]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| one being rejected | the people God abhors |
| but those who fear | but … those who revere |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| he honors | they respect |
| He swears | They do what they have promised to do, even if it causes them trouble to do that |
| to his own hurt | They do what they have promised to do, even if it causes them trouble to do that |

# Psalms 15:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He does not put out his money at interest, and a bribe against the innocent he does not take. The one doing these {things} will not be shaken for eternity.* | *They lend money to others without charging interest, and they never accept bribes in order to lie about people who have not done anything wrong. Those who do those things will always live in safety.* |

ULT **He does … put out his money at interest**
UST They lend money to others … charging interest
(כַּסְפּוֹ֣ נָתַ֑ן בְּנֶ֥שֶׁךְ)

By **put out his money at interest**, the psalmist means charge interest when lending money. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [He does … charge interest when he lends his money]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the innocent**
UST wrong
(נָקִ֗י)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [innocent people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **The one doing these {things} will not be shaken for eternity**
UST without … done anything … Those who do those things will always live in safety
(עֹשֵׂ֣ה־אֵ֭לֶּה לֹ֣א יִמּ֑וֹט לְעוֹלָֽם)

David is speaking of the person God accepts as if he were an object that could be **shaken**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will ensure that the one doing these things will always live securely] or [Yahweh will protect and provide for the ones doing these things so that the circumstances of life do not overwhelm them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **will not be shaken for eternity**
UST without … will always live in safety
(לֹֽא־יִמּ֥וֹט לְעוֹלָֽם)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word **shaken**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [will remain secure for eternity]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

ULT **The one doing these {things} will not be shaken for eternity**
UST without … done anything … Those who do those things will always live in safety
(עֹשֵׂ֣ה־אֵ֑לֶּה לֹ֖א יִמּ֣וֹט לְעוֹלָֽם)

See how you translated the phrase “I will not be shaken” in 10:6 and the phrase “when I am shaken” in 13:4. Alternate translation: [Nothing will ever shake the one doing these things]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **will not be shaken for eternity**
UST without … will always live in safety
(לֹֽא־יִמּ֥וֹט לְעוֹלָֽם)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that the phrase **for eternity** means “forever.” You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [will never be shaken]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| his money | money to others |
| and a bribe | bribes |
| the innocent | wrong |
| will … be shaken | live in safety |
| for eternity | will always |

# Psalms 16

## Psalm 16 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 16 is considered to be one of the “psalms of trust.” See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about the psalms of trust.

1. David’s prayer (1)
2. David recalls what he said to Yahweh (2)
3. David’s delight in godly people (3)
4. The sorrows of those who pursue gods besides Yahweh and David’s refusal to participate in their idolatry (4)
5. David acknowledges that Yahweh is in control of his destiny and has greatly blessed him (5–6)
6. David blesses Yahweh for guiding him (7)
7. David’s resolve to continually focus on Yahweh (8a)
8. David’s trust that God will protect him from troubles (8b–c)
9. The result of David’s trust in God (9)
10. David’s trust that God will protect his life (10)
11. David’s acknowledgement that Yahweh has made him know “the path of life” and that an intimate relationship with Yahweh results in abundant and eternal joys (11)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a “miktam.” See the discussion of that term in the introduction to Psalms.

## Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

### Land and inheritance imagery in 16:5–6.

The historical and cultural background for 16:5–6 is the inheritance of land. 16:6 uses the imagery of measuring cords (lines) which were used to measure and distribute land. These verses probably also have as their background the distribution of the Promised Land to the tribes of Israel and Yahweh promising to be the inheritance of the tribe of Levi. If it would help you to better understand and translate these verses, you can read more about the inheritance of land in Joshua 18–19 and God providing for the Levites in Numbers 18:20–24.

### Messiah

In Peter's sermon (Acts 2:14–36), he quotes Psalm 16:8–11 in 2:25–28 and then explains that David was a prophet and was speaking of the resurrection of the Messiah.

(See: resurrection and anoint, anointed, anointing)

## Translation Issues in This Psalm

### What does David mean by "you will not abandon my soul to Sheol. You will not hand over your godly one to see the pit" in 16:10?

The word "Sheol" refers to the place or location of the dead (where dead people go). The word "pit" also refers to the grave. In this verse David is not saying that God will keep him from ever dying. 1 Kings 2:1–10 records that David died of old age. Here David is asserting his trust that God will save him from dying an unnatural death. In other words, he trusts that God will save him from being killed by evil men. Notice that this psalm begins with a prayer for protection. (See: Hades, Sheol)

# Psalms 16:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A miktam of David. Protect me, God, for I take refuge in you.* | *A song of David. God, protect me, because I go to you to keep me safe!* |

**ULT A miktam of David**
**UST** A song of David
(מִכְתָּם לְדָוִד)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **miktam**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

**ULT I take refuge in you**
**UST** I go to you to keep me safe
(חָסִיתִי בָּךְ)

See how you translated the phrase “I take refuge” in 11:1. Alternate translation: [I am safe because I trust in you] or [I depend on you to protect me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of David | of David |
| Protect me | protect me |
| God | God |
| I take refuge | I go … to keep me safe |

# Psalms 16:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You said to Yahweh, "You are my Lord; my good is not beyond you."* | *I said to Yahweh, "You are my Lord; all the good things that I have come from you."* |

ULT **You said to Yahweh**
UST I said to Yahweh
(אָמַרְתְּ לַיהוָה)

The pronoun **You** refers to David himself. If this is not clear for your readers, you could use David's name here. Alternate translation: [David said to Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **my good is not beyond you**
UST all the good things that I have come from you
(טוֹבָתִי בַּל־עָלֶיךָ)

By **my good is not beyond you**, David means that he does not experience happiness apart from Yahweh and does not experience material blessings or provision apart from Yahweh. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I have no good apart from you]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **my good is not beyond you**
UST all the good things that I have come from you
(טוֹבָתִי בַּל־עָלֶיךָ)

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: [both my happiness and material provision come from you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | to Yahweh |
| my Lord | my Lord |
| my good | all the good things that I have |

# Psalms 16:3

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *As for the holy {ones} who are on the earth, they are the majestic {ones}; all my delight is in them.* | *People who try to live holy lives, they are wonderful; I greatly delight in them.* |

ULT **As for the holy {ones}**
UST People who try to live holy lives
(לִקְדוֹשִׁים)

The term **holy ones** refers to godly people or faithful believers. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [As for the godly people] or [As for the people who are faithful to Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **As for the holy {ones} … the majestic {ones}**
UST People who try to live holy lives … wonderful
(לִקְדוֹשִׁים & וְאַדִּירֵי)

David is using the adjectives **holy** and **majestic** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these adjectives with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [As for the holy people … the majestic people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **all my delight is in them**
UST I greatly delight in them
(כָּל־חֶפְצִי־בָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **delight**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [I fully delight in them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| As for the holy {ones} | People who try to live holy lives |
| on the earth | People who try to live holy lives |
| the majestic {ones} | wonderful |
| my delight | I … delight |

# Psalms 16:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Their sorrows will be multiplied, they {who} hasten {after} another {god}. I will not pour out their drink offerings from blood, and I will not take up their names on my lips.* | *Those who choose to worship other gods will have many things that cause them to be sad. I will not join them when they make sacrifices {to their gods}, and I will not join them in speaking the names of their gods.* |

ULT **Their sorrows will be multiplied, they {who} hasten {after} another {god}**
UST Those who choose to worship other gods will have many things that cause them to be sad
(יִרְבּוּ עַצְּבוֹתָם אַחֵר מָהָרוּ׃)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **sorrows**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [They will suffer greatly, they who hasten after another god]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **they {who} hasten {after} another {god}**
UST Those who choose to worship other gods
(אַחֵר מָהָרוּ)

The psalmist 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, as in the ULT, if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [those who hasten after another god]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **they {who} hasten {after} another {god}**
UST Those who choose to worship other gods
(אַחֵר מָהָרוּ)

Here David is speaking as if those who seek out and eagerly worship other gods actually **hasten after** them. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they who worship another god]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **I will not pour out their drink offerings from blood**
UST I will not join them when they make sacrifices {to their gods}
(בַּל־אַסִּיךְ נְסָכֵיהֶם מִדָּם)

By **I will not pour out their drink offerings of blood**, the psalmist means that he will not participate in the pagan worship practices that involve offering drinks mixed with blood to false gods. You could include this information in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I will not participate in their blood offerings to other gods]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and I will not take up their names on my lips**
UST and I will not join them in speaking the names of their gods
(וּבַל־אֶשָּׂא אֶת־שְׁמוֹתָם עַל־שְׂפָתָי)

Here, **lips** represents speaking or saying something aloud. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I will not speak their names] or [and I will not say their names]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| will be multiplied | will have many things |
| another {god} | other gods |
| their drink offerings | I will … join them when they make sacrifices {to their gods} |

# Psalms 16:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, the portion of my inheritance and my cup. You are holding my lot.* | *Yahweh, you have granted to me that I would belong to you, and you supply all of my needs. You control what happens to me.* |

ULT **the portion of my inheritance and my cup. You are holding my lot**
UST you have granted to me that I would belong to you, and you supply all of my needs. You control what happens to me
(מְנָת־חֶלְקִי וְכוֹסִי אַתָּה תּוֹמִיךְ גּוֹרָלִי)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put the phrase **my cup** before the phrases **the portion of my inheritance** and **holding my lot**. Alternate translation: [my cup. You are the portion of my inheritance, and you are holding my lot] or [you are my cup. You are the portion of my inheritance, and you are holding my lot]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **and my cup**
UST and you supply all of my needs
(וְכוֹסִי)

By saying that Yahweh is **my cup** David could mean: (1) that Yahweh controls his destiny in which case he uses **cup** to refer to what one drinks and therefore, metaphorically, to what one receives in life. Alternate translation: [and the one who controls my future], or (2) [provision] in which case **cup** refers to physical provision. Alternate translation: [and the one who gives me great blessings]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the portion of my inheritance**
UST you have granted to me that I would belong to you
(מְנָת־חֶלְקִי)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were actually **the portion of my inheritance**. David is alluding to the inheritance of and distribution of land. (See the Introduction to this psalm for more information.) He means that Yahweh is his most valuable possession and the source of all his blessings and sustenance. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my most precious possession, my source of blessing]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **You are holding my lot**
UST You control what happens to me
(אַתָּה תּוֹמִיךְ גּוֹרָלִי)

Here David is speaking as if God were literally **holding** his lot, as if his destiny were a physical object that could be grasped in someone's hand. He means that God controls and secures his future. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You are maintaining my lot] or [You are maintaining my destiny]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my inheritance | you have granted to me that I would belong to you |
| my lot | what happens to me |

# Psalms 16:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{The} measuring cords have fallen for me in pleasant {places}; indeed, {the} inheritance is beautiful for me.* | *Yahweh has greatly blessed me; I am delighted with all the things that he has given me.* |

**ULT {The} measuring cords have fallen for me in pleasant {places}; indeed, {the} inheritance is beautiful for me**

**UST** Yahweh has greatly blessed me; I am delighted with all the things that he has given me
(חֲבָלִים נָפְלוּ־לִי בַּנְּעִמִים אַף־נַחֲלָת שָׁפְרָה עָלָי)

Here David is speaking as if his inheritance from God were actually **measuring cords** (used to divide land) that **have fallen** (were put) in **pleasant places**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state this as a comparison or in plain language. Alternate translation: [God has given me a delightful inheritance; indeed, what I have received is wonderful]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in pleasant {places} | Yahweh has greatly blessed me |
| {the} inheritance | all the things that |

# Psalms 16:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will bless Yahweh, who has given me counsel; even {in the} night my kidneys instruct me.* | *I will praise Yahweh, the one who teaches me; even during the night he puts in my mind the right things for me to do.* |

ULT **even**
UST even
(אַף)

Here the word the ULT translates as **even** could: (1) be adding an additional thought. Alternate translation: [also,] or (2) be functioning to emphasize or assert what follows it. Alternate translation: [indeed]

ULT **my kidneys instruct me**
UST he puts in my mind the right things for me to do
(יִסְּרוּנִי כִלְיוֹתָי)

Here the **kidneys** represent where a person's thoughts and conscience exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language that you could use, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my mind instructs me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my kidneys instruct me**
UST he puts in my mind the right things for me to do
(יִסְּרוּנִי כִלְיוֹתָי)

David is speaking of **my kidneys** as if they were a living thing that could **instruct** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh instructs my mind]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **my kidneys instruct me**
UST he puts in my mind the right things for me to do
(יִסְּרוּנִי כִלְיוֹתָי)

Here David assumes that readers will know that when he speaks of his mind instructing him, this happens as he thinks about Yahweh and what is pleasing to Yahweh, and probably also as he prays. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [my mind instructs me as I think about Yahweh] or [my mind instructs me as I pray and think about Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will bless | I will praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| has given me counsel | teaches me |
| instruct me | he puts in … the right things for me to do |

# Psalms 16:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have set Yahweh continually before me, because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.* | *I have chosen to always think about Yahweh. Because he is the one who strengthens and supports me, he will save me from anything that might trouble me.* |

ULT **I have set Yahweh continually before me, because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken … Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices. Also, my flesh will dwell in security**
UST I have chosen to always think about Yahweh. Because he is the one who strengthens and supports me, he will save me from anything that might trouble me … Therefore I am very glad, and I can rest securely
(שִׁוִּיתִי יְהוָה לְנֶגְדִּי תָמִיד כִּי מִימִינִי בַּל־אֶמּוֹט׃ לָכֵן ׀ שָׂמַח לִבִּי וַיָּגֶל כְּבוֹדִי אַף־בְּשָׂרִי יִשְׁכֹּן לָבֶטַח) (16:8-9)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of the content of these verses, since 16:8 gives the reason for the result that 16:9 describes. Alternate translation: [My heart is glad, and my glory rejoices. Also, my flesh will dwell in security. This is because I have set Yahweh before me continually, and because he is at my right hand and I know that I will not be shaken]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **I have set Yahweh continually before me**
UST I have chosen to always think about Yahweh
(שִׁוִּיתִי יְהוָה לְנֶגְדִּי תָמִיד)

The implication is that David is deliberately making Yahweh his constant focus and priority in life. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I constantly focus on Yahweh] or [In all that I do I am conscious of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **he is at my right hand**
UST he is the one who strengthens and supports me
(מִימִינִי)

David is using **he is at my right hand** as a common expression of his culture to mean “he is helping me” or “he is protecting me.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he is helping me] or [he is protecting me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **I will not be shaken**
UST he will save me from anything that might trouble me
(בַּל־אֶמּוֹט)

See how you translated the similar expression in 15:5.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **I will not be shaken**
UST he will save me from anything that might trouble me
(בַּל־אֶמּוֹט)

This is a double negative. David uses the negative particle **not**, with the negative word **shaken** to express a positive meaning strongly. The phrase **I will not be shaken** means that David will remain firm and secure. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [he makes me live securely]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I will … be shaken | he will save me from anything that might trouble me |

# Psalms 16:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices. Also, my flesh will dwell in security.* | *Therefore I am very glad, and I can rest securely,* |

**ULT my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices**
**UST** I am very glad
(שָׂמַח לִבִּי וַיָּגֶל כְּבוֹדִי)

These two phrases **my heart is glad** and **my glory rejoices** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [my heart is glad, yes, my whole being rejoices] or [my heart is glad, yes, my glory rejoices]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT my heart is glad**
**UST** I am very glad
(שָׂמַח לִבִּי)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's emotions exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am glad] or [I feel glad]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and my glory rejoices**
**UST** I am very glad
(וַיָּגֶל כְּבוֹדִי)

Here, **glory** represents David's "spirit" and by extension his feelings that come from his spirit (inner person). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **my flesh will dwell**
UST I can rest
(בְּשָׂרִי יִשְׁכֹּן)

Here, **flesh** represents David himself, specifically his body. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will dwell]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in security**
UST securely
(לָבֶטַח)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **security**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [securely]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| is glad | am very glad |
| and … rejoices | am very glad |
| my glory | I |

# Psalms 16:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol. You will not hand over your faithful one to see the pit.* | *because you, Yahweh, will save me from going to the place where dead people go, yes, you will save me, a godly person, from dying.* |

ULT **my soul**
UST me
(נַפְשִׁי)

David 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]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **you will not abandon my soul to Sheol. You will not hand over your faithful one to see the pit**
UST you, Yahweh, will save me from going to the place where dead people go, yes, you will save me, a godly person, from dying
(לֹא־תַעֲזֹב נַפְשִׁי לִשְׁאוֹל לֹא־תִתֵּן חֲסִידְךָ לִרְאוֹת שָׁחַת)

These two phrases **you will not abandon my soul to Sheol** and **You will not hand over your godly one to see the pit** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [you will save me, your faithful follower, from death] or [you will save me, a godly person, from the grave]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **you will not abandon my soul to Sheol. You will not hand over your faithful one to see the pit**
UST you, Yahweh, will save me from going to the place where dead people go, yes, you will save me, a godly person, from dying
(לֹא־תַעֲזֹב נַפְשִׁי לִשְׁאוֹל לֹא־תִתֵּן חֲסִידְךָ לִרְאוֹת שָׁחַת)

See the Introduction to this psalm for a discussion of this phrase. Here, David is referring to Yahweh saving him from evil men who might try to kill him. David is not saying that he will not die of old age. Avoid translating this verse in a way that might make it appear that David thinks he will not die of old age.

**Support Reference:** When to Keep Information Implicit

ULT **You will not hand over your faithful one to see the pit**
UST yes, you will save me, a godly person, from dying
(לֹֽא־תִתֵּ֣ן חֲסִידְךָ֣ לִרְאוֹת֮ שָׁחַת׀)

David assumes that readers will know that **the pit** refers to the grave or death. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [You will rescue your godly one from death] or [You will rescue your godly one from the grave]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **your faithful one**
UST me, a godly person
(חֲסִידְךָ֣)

Even though David is addressing Yahweh directly, he is speaking of himself in the third person as **your godly one** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person. Alternate translation: [me, your godly one]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| You will … hand over | yes, you will save |
| you will … abandon | you, Yahweh, will save … from going to the place where dead people go |
| my soul | me |
| to Sheol | you, Yahweh, will save … from going to the place where dead people go |
| your faithful one | me, a godly person |
| the pit | from dying |

# Psalms 16:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You make known to me the path of life; abundance of joys are before your face; in your right hand are delights forever!* | *You reveal to me how to live in a way that will make me joyful now and will result in receiving eternal life in the future. You make me joyful when I am with you. You give pleasures forever.* |

ULT **the path of life**
UST how to live in a way that will make me joyful now and will result in receiving eternal life in the future
(אֹרַח חַיִּים)

Here David is speaking of how to live as if it were actually **the path**. The phrase **of life** indicates he is speaking of living in a way that results in a joyful and blessed life in the present and in the future. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [how to live in a way that results in me being joyful and blessed, both now and in the future]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **are before your face … are delights**
UST You make me … when I am with you … pleasures
(אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ נְעִמוֹת)

Here, **before your face** represents being in Yahweh's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [are in your presence … are joys] or [are with you … are pleasures]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **are before … in your right hand are delights forever**
UST You make me … when I am with you. You give pleasures forever
(אֶת נְעִמוֹת בִּימִינְךָ נֶצַח)

Here, **right hand** represents God's power and ability to give something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [are before … with you are delights forever] or [are before … you give delights forever]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You make known to me | You reveal to me |
| joys | joyful |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| are delights | pleasures |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 17

## Psalm 17 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 17 is one of five psalms that are labeled as “prayers.” (See: deliver, deliverer, deliverance, delivered and innocent)

1. David asks Yahweh to heed his prayer and pleads his innocence (1–5)
2. David asserts his belief that God will listen to him and answer him and will save everyone who seeks refuge in God (6–7)
3. David asks Yahweh to protect him (8–9)
4. David describes his enemies (10–12)
5. David asks Yahweh to save him by defeating his enemies who are worldly men (13–14)
6. David’s hope (15)

# Psalms 17:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A prayer of David Listen, Yahweh {to} righteousness. Pay attention to my cry! Give ear to my prayer from lips without deceit.* | *A prayer of David Yahweh, listen to me while I plead with you to act justly toward me. Hear me while I call out to you to help me. Pay attention to what I say while I pray because I am speaking honestly.* |

ULT **Listen, Yahweh {to} righteousness. Pay attention to my cry! Give ear to my prayer**
UST Yahweh, listen to me while I plead with you to act justly toward me. Hear me while I call out to you to help me. Pay attention to what I say while I pray
(שִׁמְעָה יְהוָה ׀ צֶדֶק הַקְשִׁיבָה רִנָּתִי הַאֲזִינָה תְּפִלָּתִי)

These are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than commands. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates polite requests. It may be helpful to add an expression such as "please" to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please listen, Yahweh, to righteousness. Please pay attention to my cry! Please give ear to my prayer]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **{to} righteousness**
UST while I plead with you to act justly toward me
(צֶדֶק)

See how you translated this word in 11:7.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Give ear to my prayer**
UST Pay attention to what I say while I pray
(הַאֲזִינָה תְּפִלָּתִי)

David is using **Give ear** as a common expression of his culture to mean "listen" or "pay attention." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Listen to my prayer] or [Hear my prayer]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Give ear to my prayer from lips without deceit**
UST Pay attention to what I say while I pray because I am speaking honestly
(הַאֲזִינָה תְפִלָּתִי בְּלֹא שִׂפְתֵי מִרְמָה)

Here, **lips** represents the person who is speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Give ear to my prayer, since I speak without deceit] or [Give ear to my prayer, for I am not deceiving you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **from lips without deceit**
UST because I am speaking honestly
(בְּלֹא שִׂפְתֵי מִרְמָה)

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: [lips that do not deceive] or [lips that speak truthfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| A prayer | A prayer |
| of David | of David |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {to} righteousness | while I plead with you to act justly toward me |
| my cry | me while I call out to you to help me |
| to my prayer | what I say while I pray |

# Psalms 17:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let my vindication come from your face; let your eyes see rightly!* | *May you declare that I am innocent; may you decide what is right.* |

ULT **Let my vindication come from your face; let your eyes see rightly**
UST May you declare that I am innocent; may you decide what is right
(מִלְּפָנֶיךָ מִשְׁפָּטִי יֵצֵא עֵינֶיךָ תֶּחֱזֶינָה מֵישָׁרִים)

By using **let**, David is expressing what he desires or prays will happen. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [My vindication should come from your face; your eyes should see rightly]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **my vindication**
UST May … declare that I am innocent
(מִשְׁפָּטִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **vindication**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a declaration of my innocence]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **from your face**
UST you
(מִלְּפָנֶיךָ)

Here, **your face** represents God’s presence or his judgment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from your presence] or [from you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **let your eyes see rightly**
UST may you decide what is right
(עֵינֶיךָ תֶּחֱזֶינָה מֵישָׁרִים)

Here, **eyes** represents God’s ability to judge or evaluate. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [may you judge rightly]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my vindication | May … declare that I am innocent |

# Psalms 17:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have examined my heart, you have visited {me in the} night, you have tested me {and} have detected nothing. I have purposed that my mouth will not transgress.* | *You know what I think, {even} during the night. You have examined me and not found anything that grieves you. I have determined that I will not sin by what I say.* |

ULT **my heart**
UST what I think
(לִבִּי)

Here, **my heart** represents David's thoughts, feelings, and motives. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my thoughts] or [my inner being]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **you have visited {me in the} night**
UST {even} during the night
(פָּקַדְתָּ לַּיְלָה)

By **you have visited me in the night**, David means that God examines his heart and thoughts during the quiet hours when his true character is most evident. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [you have examined my heart at night]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **you have visited {me in the} night**
UST {even} during the night
(פָּקַדְתָּ לַּיְלָה)

David 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 (as in the ULT) if that would be clearer in your language.

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **you have tested me {and} have detected nothing**
UST You have examined me and not found anything that grieves you
(צָרַפְתָּנִי בַל־תִּמְצָא)

David 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 tested me and have detected nothing that displeases you]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **I have purposed that my mouth will not transgress**
UST I have determined that I will not sin by what I say
(זַמֹּתִי בַּל־יַעֲבָר־פִּי)

Here, **mouth** represents "speech." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I have purposed that I will not transgress with my speech]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| you have tested me | You have examined me |
| that … will … transgress | that I will … sin |

# Psalms 17:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *With regard to the actions of man, by the word of your lips I have kept myself away from the paths of the violent.* | *Regarding the actions of people, according to what you have commanded, I have carefully avoided living a violent life.* |

> ULT **man**
> UST people
> (אָדָם)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [mankind]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

> ULT **by the word of your lips I have kept myself away from the paths of the violent**
> UST according to what you have commanded, I have carefully avoided living a violent life
> (בִּדְבַר שְׂפָתֶיךָ אֲנִי שָׁמַרְתִּי אָרְחוֹת פָּרִיץ)

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: [I have kept myself away from the paths of the violent by the word of your lips]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

> ULT **by the word of your lips**
> UST according to what you have commanded
> (בִּדְבַר שְׂפָתֶיךָ)

Here, **word** represents God's oral or written communication. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [by your word] or [by what you have spoken]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the paths of the violent**
UST living a violent life
(אָרְחוֹת פָּרִיץ)

Here David is speaking of how people live as if they were actually **paths** that they walk on. The phrase **paths of the violent** refers to living in a way that is characterized by unjust violence against innocent people. (David performed violent actions in the context of war but this refers to non-military violence.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a violent way of life] or [a destructive lifestyle characterized by violence]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the violent**
UST a violent
(פָּרִיץ)

David is using the adjective **violent** 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: [violent people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| have kept myself away from | have carefully avoided |

# Psalms 17:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My steps hold firmly to your tracks; my footsteps have not slipped.* | *I have carefully obeyed what you told me to do; I have not failed to do those things.* |

ULT **My steps hold firmly to your tracks; my footsteps have not slipped**
UST I have carefully obeyed what you told me to do; I have not failed to do those things
(תָּמַךְ אֲשֻׁרַי בְּמַעְגְּלוֹתֶיךָ בַּל־נָמֹוטוּ פְּעָמָי)

Here David is speaking as if his obedience to God were actually **steps** that **hold firmly to** God's **tracks**. (God's **tracks** refer to the actions and lifestyle that God desires for people.) Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I have consistently obeyed your commands; I have not disobeyed you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 17:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have called upon you, for you will answer me, God; Incline your ear to me; listen to my speech.* | *O God, I am praying to you because I know that you will answer me; please listen to what I am saying.* |

**ULT I have called upon you, for you will answer me, God**
UST O God, I am praying to you because I know that you will answer me
(אֲנִי־קְרָאתִיךָ כִּי־תַעֲנֵנִי אֵל)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. 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 you will answer me God, I have called upon you]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT Incline**
UST please listen to
(הַטֵּה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please incline]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Incline your ear to me**
UST please listen to what I am saying
(הַט־אָזְנְךָ לִּי)

Here, **ear** represents hearing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Listen to me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT listen to my speech**
UST please listen to what I am saying
(שְׁמַע אִמְרָתִי)

By **my speech**, David means his prayer. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [listen to my prayer]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| have called upon you | am praying to you |
| God | O God |

# Psalms 17:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Set apart your covenant faithfulness, you, the one saving by your right hand the ones seeking refuge {in you} from those rising up!* | *Wonderfully show how you faithfully love me; you who rescue with your great power the people who trust you to protect them from their enemies.* |

ULT **Set apart your covenant faithfulness**
UST Wonderfully show how you faithfully love me
(הַפְלֵה חַסְדֶּיךָ)

The implication of **Set apart** is that David wants God to show his covenant faithfulness in a special or extraordinary way to help him in his current situation. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Show your covenant faithfulness in a special way] or [Display your covenant faithfulness remarkably]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **your covenant faithfulness**
UST how you faithfully love me
(חַסְדֶּיךָ)

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: [all the ways you are faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **by your right hand**
UST with your great power
(בִּימִינֶךָ)

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: [by your power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the ones seeking refuge {in you} from those rising up**
UST the people who trust you to protect them from their enemies
(חוֹסִים מִמִּתְקוֹמְמִים)

David 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 seeking refuge in you from those rising up against them]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **the ones seeking refuge {in you}**
UST the people who trust you to protect them
(חוֹסִים)

Here David is speaking of **the ones seeking refuge** in God as if they were literally seeking physical shelter or protection. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those who trust in you for protection]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **from those rising up**
UST from their enemies
(מִמִּתְקוֹמְמִים)

David is using **those rising up** as a common expression of his culture to mean "those who oppose" or "enemies." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from those taking action against them] or [from those trying to harm them]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your covenant faithfulness | how you faithfully love me |
| you, the one saving | you who rescue |
| the ones seeking refuge {in you} | the people who trust you to protect them |
| the ones seeking refuge {in you} | the people who trust you to protect them |

# Psalms 17:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Keep me as the pupil of your eye; hide me under the shadow of your wings,* | *Protect me as carefully as people protect their own eyes; protect me like mother birds protect their babies under their wings.* |

**ULT Keep me as the pupil of your eye**
**UST** Protect me as carefully as people protect their own eyes
(שָׁמְרֵנִי כְּאִישׁוֹן בַּת־עָיִן)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the pupil of your eye** is carefully protected, so David wants God to protect him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [Protect me carefully] or [Guard me protectively]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT hide me under the shadow of your wings**
**UST** protect me like mother birds protect their babies under their wings
(בְּצֵל כְּנָפֶיךָ תַּסְתִּירֵנִי)

David is speaking as if Yahweh were a bird and he were one of its chicks. Your language may have a comparable expression you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [protect me as a mother bird protects its chicks by covering them with its wings]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Keep me | Protect me |

# Psalms 17:9

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *from the faces of the wicked who deal violently with me, the ones being hostile against my soul, they surround me.* | *Do not allow wicked people to attack me, those enemies of mine who surround me, wanting to kill me.* |

ULT **from the faces of**
UST Do not allow
(מִפְּנֵי)

Here the phrase **from the faces of** was a common expression meaning "from the presence of" or "because of." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the presence of]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

David is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean wicked people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [wicked people] or [wicked men]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **against my soul**
UST of mine
(בְּנָפֶשׁ)

David is using the term **my soul** to mean his entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [to me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the wicked | wicked people |
| the ones being hostile | those enemies |
| against my soul | of mine |

# Psalms 17:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Their fat they have closed up; with their mouths they speak with pride.* | *They never pity anyone, and they are always speaking boastfully.* |

ULT **Their fat they have closed up**
UST They never pity anyone
(חֶלְבָּמוֹ סָגָרוּ)

Here, **fat** represents their hearts or inner beings that have become hardened and unfeeling. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They have hardened their hearts] or [Their hearts have become unfeeling]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **with their mouths they speak with pride**
UST and they are always speaking boastfully
(פִּימוֹ דִּבְּרוּ בְגֵאוּת)

It might seem that the expression **with their mouths they speak** contains extra information that would not be natural to express in your language. If so, you could shorten it. Alternate translation: [they speak with pride]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| with … pride | boastfully |

# Psalms 17:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They have surrounded me now {in} our steps. Their eyes they have set, crouching down to the earth.* | *They have searched for me and found me. They surround me, watching for an opportunity to attack and kill me.* |

**ULT They have surrounded me now {in} our steps**
UST They have searched for me and found me. They surround me
(אַשְּׁרֵינוּ עַתָּה סבבוני)

By **our steps**, David means the steps that both he and his enemies are taking as they move. The enemies are surrounding him at every point along their path. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [They have surrounded me now wherever we go] or [They have surrounded me at every point along our path]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT They have surrounded me**
UST They have searched for me and found me. They surround me
(סבבוני)

Some ancient manuscripts read **They have surrounded me**. The ULT follows that reading. Other ancient manuscripts read “They have surrounded us.” 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.

**Support Reference:** Textual Variants

**ULT Their eyes they have set, crouching down to the earth**
UST watching for an opportunity to attack and kill me
(עֵינֵיהֶם יָשִׁיתוּ לִנְטוֹת בָּאָרֶץ)

By **Their eyes they have set, crouching down to the earth**, the psalmist means that his enemies are watching him carefully and getting ready to attack him like wild animals that crouch low before they pounce on their prey. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [They stare at me intently, crouched low and ready to attack]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to the earth | to attack and kill me |

# Psalms 17:12

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *His likeness is as a lion, he longs to tear; and as a young lion he is dwelling in hiding places.* | *These wicked people are like lions that are ready to tear {apart their prey}. They are like young lions that are hiding, waiting {to pounce on their prey}.* |

ULT **His likeness is as a lion, he longs to tear; and as a young lion he is dwelling in hiding places**
UST These wicked people are like lions that are ready to tear {apart their prey}. They are like young lions that are hiding, waiting {to pounce on their prey … }
(דְּמ֭וֹנוֹ כָּאַרְיֵ֣ה יִכְסֹ֣וף לִטְרֹ֑וף וְ֝כִכְפִ֗יר יֹשֵׁ֥ב בְּמִסְתָּרִֽים)

The pronoun **His** refers to the wicked person described in the previous verses. The pronoun **he** refers to this same wicked person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The wicked person's likeness is as a lion, the wicked person longs to tear; and as a young lion the wicked person is dwelling in hiding places]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **His likeness is as a lion, he longs to tear; and as a young lion he is dwelling in hiding places**
UST These wicked people are like lions that are ready to tear {apart their prey}. They are like young lions that are hiding, waiting {to pounce on their prey … }
(דְּמ֭וֹנוֹ כָּאַרְיֵ֣ה יִכְסֹ֣וף לִטְרֹ֑וף וְ֝כִכְפִ֗יר יֹשֵׁ֥ב בְּמִסְתָּרִֽים)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a lion** longs to tear apart its prey, so the wicked person's **likeness** resembles a lion that longs to attack. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [He is like a lion that longs to tear apart its prey, and like a young lion hiding and waiting to attack]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **he longs to tear**
UST that are ready to tear {apart their prey}
(יִכְסֹ֣וף לִטְרֹ֑וף)

David 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 longs to tear his prey]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| His likeness | These wicked people |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| is as a lion<br>and as a young lion | are like lions<br>They are like young lions |

# Psalms 17:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Arise, Yahweh, confront his face, make him bow down! Rescue my soul from the wicked {with} your sword!* | *Yahweh, come and oppose my enemies and make them fall to the ground when you defeat them! Take violent action and deliver me from wicked men!* |

ULT **Arise, Yahweh, confront his face, make him bow down! Rescue my soul**
UST Yahweh, come and oppose my enemies and make them fall to the ground when you defeat them … and deliver me
(קוּמָה יְהוָֹה קַדְּמָה פָּנָיו הַכְרִיעֵהוּ פַּלְּטָה נַפְשִׁי)

Here David is using imperative forms **Arise**, **confront**, **make him bow down**, and **Rescue** to communicate polite requests to God rather than commands. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please arise, Yahweh, please confront his face, please make him bow down! Please rescue my soul]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **confront his face**
UST and oppose my enemies
(קַדְּמָה פָּנָיו)

Here, **his face** represents his presence or confronting him directly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [confront him directly] or [face him in battle]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **make him bow down**
UST and make them fall to the ground when you defeat them
(הַכְרִיעֵהוּ)

By **make him bow down** David means “throw him to the ground” or “cause him to fall to the ground” and probably means “fall to the ground dead.” You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [make him fall down dead] or [cause him to fall to the ground defeated]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **my soul**
UST me
(נַפְשִׁי)

David is using one part of a person, his **soul**, to mean all of him in the act of being rescued. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **from the wicked**
UST from wicked men
(מֵרָשָׁע)

David 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: [from wicked people] or [from wicked men]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **{with} your sword**
UST Take violent action
(חַרְבֶּךָ)

Here, **sword** represents power or strength used for powerful, violent action. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with your power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| make him bow down | and make them fall to the ground when you defeat them |
| Rescue | and deliver |
| my soul | me |
| from the wicked | from wicked men |
| {with} your sword | Take violent action |

# Psalms 17:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *From men {with} your hand Yahweh, from men from {the} world, their portion in life, and with your treasure you fill their belly. They are satisfied with sons, and they leave their abundance to their children.* | *Yahweh, by your power rescue me from those people who are interested {only} in things here in this world. You provide them with many good things. They have many children and {when they die,} they leave their wealth to their descendants.* |

ULT **From men {with} your hand Yahweh, from men from {the} world, their portion in life**

UST Yahweh, by your power rescue me from those people who are interested {only} in things here in this world

(מְמְתִים יָדְךָ ׀ יְהוָה מִמְתֵי מֵחֶלֶד חֶלְקָם בַּחַיִּים)

David 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: [Rescue me from men by your hand, Yahweh, from men of this world whose portion is in this life]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **From men {with} your hand Yahweh**

UST Yahweh, by your power rescue me from those people

(מְמְתִים יָדְךָ ׀ יְהוָה)

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: [Rescue me from evil men by your power Yahweh] or [From men, with your power Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and with your treasure you fill their belly**

UST You provide them with many good things

(וְצָפוּנְךָ֥ תְמַלֵּ֗א בִּטְנָם)

Here the psalmist is speaking of God providing abundantly for his people as if he would literally with his treasure **fill their belly**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and you abundantly provide for them from your riches]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **with sons**
UST many children
(בָּנִים)

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 sons and daughters. Alternate translation: [with children]

**Support Reference:** When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **their abundance**
UST their wealth
(יִתְרָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **abundance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [their abundant possessions] or [great wealth]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| from {the} world | are interested {only} in things here in this world |
| and they leave their abundance to their children | and {when they die,} they leave their wealth to their descendants |

# Psalms 17:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I, in righteousness, will see your face; when I awake, I will be satisfied {with} your manifestation.* | *{Yahweh}, because I act in the right way, I will see you. When I wake up I will see you, and then I will be happy.* |

ULT **in righteousness**
UST because … act in the right way
(בְּצֶדֶק)

David is using the adjective **righteousness** as a noun to mean a state or condition of being righteous. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **will see your face**
UST Yahweh … I will see you
(אֶחֱזֶה פָּנֶיךָ)

David is using **your face** to represent all of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [will see you]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **when I awake**
UST When I wake up
(בְּהָקִיץ)

Some Bible scholars think that the phrase **when I awake** is a reference to David's future bodily resurrection. If it would help your readers, you could include a footnote explaining this.

**Support Reference:** When to Keep Information Implicit

ULT **I will be satisfied {with} your manifestation**
UST I will see you, and then I will be happy
(אֶשְׂבְּעָה & תְּמוּנָתֶךָ)

The implication is that David will be satisfied when he sees God. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I will be satisfied with your presence]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in righteousness | because … act in the right way |

# Psalms 18

## Psalm 18 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

This is a song by David about Yahweh's deliverance. This song is also recorded in the Bible in 2 Samuel 22.

1. David sings to Yahweh that he loves him and calls Yahweh his "strength" (1)
2. David describes what Yahweh is to him (2)
3. David recounts that God has answered his prayer and saved him from his enemies when he was in a dangerous situation (3–6)
4. David compares Yahweh's act of saving him to three different natural disasters (7–14)
5. David recounts Yahweh delivering him (15–19)
6. David gives the reason Yahweh has delivered him (20–27)
7. David recounts the different things Yahweh has done for him (28–48)
8. David thanks and praises Yahweh (49)
9. Yahweh saves David his chosen king and shows covenant faithfulness to David and his descendants forever (50)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Hebrew poetry

The verses of this song by David continually present two phrases that mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases with a word other than "and" in order to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying

something additional. But you may find that in some cases it is appropriate to combine the two phrases. For example:

- both phrases

18:23 And I have been blameless with him,

and I have kept myself from my iniquity.

“And I have been blameless with him,

yes, I have kept myself from my iniquity.”

18:21 For I have kept the ways of Yahweh,

and I have not been wicked from my God.

“For I have kept the ways of Yahweh,

no, I have not been wicked from my God.”

- combined into one

18:6 In my distress I called {to} Yahweh,

and to my God I called

“In my distress I called out to Yahweh, my God”

## Extended metaphor

In 7–14, David describes Yahweh coming to help him as being like the greatest natural forces that people of his culture knew, which were an earthquake (7), a volcano (8), and a thunderstorm (9–14). He describes each of these forces in poetic language. In other words, after stating his topic, which is how Yahweh delivered him (6), David then depicts it with multiple images that communicate multiple ideas. Think about how you might show in your translation that 7–14, while describing three different things, all illustrate the same topic.

# Psalms 18:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the chief musician. Of David, {the} servant of Yahweh, who spoke to Yahweh the words of this song on the day that Yahweh delivered him from the palm of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul.* | *This is a note to the worship leader: David, God's servant, wrote this psalm. He sang this song to Yahweh after Yahweh had rescued him from Saul and his other enemies.* |

ULT **To the chief musician**
UST This is a note to the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **from the palm of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul**
UST from Saul and his other enemies
(מִכַּף כָּל־אֹיְבָיו וּמִיַּד שָׁאוּל)

Here **palm** and **hand** represent power or control. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the control of all his enemies]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Of David | David … wrote this psalm |
| {the} servant of | servant |
| Yahweh | God's |
| to Yahweh | to Yahweh |
| that … delivered | had rescued |
| his enemies | and his other enemies |
| Saul | Saul |

# Psalms 18:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he said, "I love you, Yahweh, my strength.* | *This is what he sang: "Yahweh, I love you, the one who enables me to be strong.* |

> ULT **my strength**
> UST the one who enables me to be strong
> (חִזְקִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the one who makes me strong]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I love you | I love you |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 18:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh is my rock and my stronghold and my deliverer; my God, my rock; I take refuge in him, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my high tower.* | *Yahweh, you are like a huge rock and like a fortress {where I can go to be safe}. I can be confident that you will rescue me when I am in trouble. You are my God. You protect me. I am as safe as I would be if I were hiding on top of a cliff. It is as if you are a shield that defends me. You are the powerful God who saves me. You are like a high place {where I am safe from my enemies}.* |

ULT **Yahweh is my rock … my rock**
UST Yahweh, you are like a huge rock … I am as safe as I would be if I were hiding on top of a cliff
(יְהוָה ו סַלְעִי & צוּרִי)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were actually a high **rock** that he could climb up to reach safety from danger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is like a rock that keeps me safe from danger … he is like a rock to me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and my stronghold**
UST and like a fortress {where I can go to be safe}
(וּמְצוּדָתִי)

Here David is speaking as if Yahweh were actually a **stronghold** or a strong structure where people go to be protected. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and my place of safety]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **I take refuge in him**
UST You protect me
(אֶחֱסֶה־בּוֹ)

Here David uses **take refuge in him** as if God were a place of safety in which he could hide. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I depend on him to keep me safe] or [I trust him to protect me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my shield**
UST It is as if you are a shield that defends me
(מָגִנִּי)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **shield** that protected him from attack. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my protector]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the horn of my salvation**
UST You are the powerful God who saves me
(וְקֶרֶן־יִשְׁעִי)

David is using the possessive form to describe a **horn** that is characterized by providing **salvation**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and the horn that saves me]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **and the horn of my salvation**
UST You are the powerful God who saves me
(וְקֶרֶן־יִשְׁעִי)

David is speaking of God's power to save him as if it were a powerful **horn** of an animal. A horn was a symbol of strength in ancient Israelite culture because animals use their horns as weapons. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the one who saves me by his power] or [and the one who powerfully saves me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and my stronghold | and like a fortress {where I can go to be safe} |
| and my deliverer | I can be confident that you will rescue me when I am in trouble |
| my God | You are my God |
| I take refuge | You protect me |
| my shield | It is as if you are a shield that defends me |
| and the horn of | You are the powerful God |
| my salvation | who saves me |
| my high tower | You are like a high place {where I am safe from my enemies} |

# Psalms 18:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{To} the one being praised I call, {to} Yahweh, and I am saved from my enemies.* | *You deserve for people to praise you, Yahweh. When I cry to you {for help}, you rescue me from my enemies.* |

**ULT {To} the one being praised I call, {to} Yahweh**
**UST** You deserve for people to praise you, Yahweh. When I cry to you {for help}
(מְהֻלָּל אֶקְרָא יְהוָה)

The expression **being praised** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I call to Yahweh, the one whom people praise] or [I call to Yahweh, the one whom I praise]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT I am saved**
**UST** you rescue me
(אִוָּשֵׁעַ)

The expression **I am saved** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [and he saves me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {To} the one being praised | You deserve for people to praise you, Yahweh |
| I call, {to} | When I cry … for help |
| Yahweh | to you |
| I am saved | you rescue me |
| my enemies | my enemies |

# Psalms 18:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The cords of death encompassed me, and the torrents of wickedness terrified me.* | *{Someone was trying to kill me, and} I was in such danger of dying that it was as if someone was trying to tie ropes around me. His wicked plans against me were like floodwaters that were carrying me away, and this made me very afraid.* |

ULT **The cords of death encompassed me**
UST {Someone was trying to kill me, and} I was in such danger of dying that it was as if someone was trying to tie ropes around me
(אֲפָפוּנִי חֶבְלֵי־מָוֶת)

Here David is speaking as if death were actually **cords** that could wrap around and bind a person. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [Death threatened to bind me like cords] or [I was in danger of dying]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the torrents of wickedness terrified me**
UST His wicked plans against me were like floodwaters that were carrying me away, and this made me very afraid
(וְנַחֲלֵי בְלִיַּעַל יְבַעֲתוּנִי)

David speaks here of **torrents of wickedness** as if wickedness were a flood of rushing water that could overwhelm and destroy him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a wicked person was pursuing me relentlessly, and that terrified me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| wickedness | His wicked plans against me |

# Psalms 18:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The cords of Sheol surrounded me; the snares of death confronted me.* | *I did not think I could escape going to the place where dead people go. It was as if that place had wrapped ropes around me and was pulling me down into it. It was as if the only direction I could walk was right into a trap where I would surely die.* |

ULT **The cords of Sheol surrounded me**
UST I did not think I could escape going to the place where dead people go. It was as if that place had wrapped ropes around me and was pulling me down into it
(חֶבְלֵי שְׁאוֹל סְבָבוּנִי)

Here, **Sheol**, the dwelling place of the dead according to Hebrew culture, represents death itself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [The cords of death surrounded me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **The cords of Sheol surrounded me**
UST I did not think I could escape going to the place where dead people go. It was as if that place had wrapped ropes around me and was pulling me down into it
(חֶבְלֵי שְׁאוֹל סְבָבוּנִי)

David is speaking as if Sheol or death actually had **cords** that it could use to bind him. This suggests he felt trapped in a situation where he thought he would die. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: [I thought I was bound to die]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the snares of death confronted me**
UST It was as if the only direction I could walk was right into a trap where I would surely die
(קִדְּמוּנִי מֹוקְשֵׁי מָוֶת)

David speaks here of **snares of death** as if death were a hunter that could set traps for people. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: [death had me in its clutches]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Sheol | |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| | going to the place where dead people go … that place |
| the snares of | a trap |

# Psalms 18:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In my distress, I called {to} Yahweh, and to my God I cried out for help. He heard my voice from his temple, and my cry to his face went in his ears.* | *But when I was very distressed, I cried out to you, Yahweh my God. From your temple in heaven you could hear me calling to you, and you listened to my prayer.* |

ULT **In my distress**
UST But when I was very distressed
(בַּצַּר־לִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distress**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [When I was distressed] or [When I felt distressed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and my cry to his face**
UST to you … to my prayer
(וְשַׁוְעָתִי לְפָנָיו)

Here, **to his face** represents being in God's presence or coming before him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and my call for help]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **He heard my voice**
UST you could hear me calling
(יִשְׁמַע קוֹלִי)

Here, **voice** represents the words David spoke in his prayer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [He heard my prayer]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **from his temple**
UST From your temple in heaven
(מֵהֵיכָלוֹ)

By **his temple**, David means God's temple in heaven. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [from his heavenly temple]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **went in his ears**
> UST and you listened
> (תָּבוֹא בְאָזְנָיו)

David is using the term **ears** to mean hearing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he heard]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| In … distress | But when … was very distressed |
| I called {to} | I cried out |
| Yahweh | to you, Yahweh |
| my God | my God |
| from his temple | From your temple in heaven |
| and my cry | to my prayer |

# Psalms 18:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then the earth shook and trembled, and the foundations of the mountains quaked and shook themselves because it burned to him.* | *It made you so angry {that someone was trying to kill me, and you responded so powerfully} that it was as if there was a great earthquake and as if you shook the foundations of the mountains.* |

ULT **Then the earth shook and trembled, and the foundations of the mountains quaked and shook themselves because it burned to him**

UST It made you so angry {that someone was trying to kill me, and you responded so powerfully} that it was as if there was a great earthquake and as if you shook the foundations of the mountains

(וַתִּתְגָּעַשׁ וַתִּרְעַשׁ ׀ הָאָ֫רֶץ וּמוֹסְדֵ֥י הָרִ֑ים יִרְגָּ֖זוּ וַ֝יִּתְגָּעֲשׁ֗וּ כִּֽי־חָרָ֥ה לֽוֹ)

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: [Then, because it burned to him, the earth shook and trembled. The foundations of the heavens quaked and shook themselves]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **Then the earth shook … and shook themselves**

UST { … and you responded so powerfully} that it was as if there was a great earthquake and as if you shook the foundations of the mountains

(וַתִּתְגָּעַשׁ & הָאָ֫רֶץ & וַ֝יִּתְגָּעֲשׁ֗וּ)

The terms that the ULT translates as **shook** and **shook themselves** represent two different verbs in the original. Hebrew had more synonyms for this idea than some other languages may have. David expresses some of these with the verbs translated as **trembled** and **quaked**. It may be necessary for you to use the same words rather than different ones. However, if you do have a variety of terms for this, it would be appropriate to use different words for **shook** and **shook themselves**.

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Then the earth shook and trembled**

UST { … and you responded so powerfully} that it was as if there was a great earthquake

(וַתִּתְגָּעַשׁ וַתִּרְעַשׁ ׀ הָאָ֫רֶץ)

The terms **shook** and **trembled** mean similar things. David 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: [Then the earth shook violently]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **Then the earth shook and trembled, and the foundations of the mountains quaked and shook themselves**
UST { … and you responded so powerfully} that it was as if there was a great earthquake and as if you shook the foundations of the mountains
(וַתִּגְעַשׁ וַתִּרְעַשׁ ׀ הָאָרֶץ וּמוֹסְדֵי הָרִים יִרְגָּזוּ וַיִּתְגָּעֲשׁוּ)

David is speaking as if the **earth** and the **foundations of the mountains** were actually a person who could shake and tremble. This expresses how powerfully God responded to David's prayer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Then it was as though a violent earthquake occurred and shook the earth and the foundations of the mountains]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **quaked and shook themselves**
UST and as if you shook the foundations of the mountains
(יִרְגָּזוּ וַיִּתְגָּעֲשׁוּ)

The terms **quaked** and **shook themselves** mean similar things. David 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: [quaked mightily]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **it burned to him**
UST It made you so angry {that someone was trying to kill me … }
(חָרָה לוֹ)

Here, **it burned to him** represents his anger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he was angry]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and trembled | { … and you responded so powerfully} that it was as if there was a great earthquake |
| and the foundations | and as if you shook the foundations of the mountains |
| quaked | and as if you shook the foundations of the mountains |

# Psalms 18:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Smoke went up from his nose, and fire from his mouth devoured. Coals from him burned.* | *{Your power was so great that} it was as if there was a volcano from which smoke was rising, a stream of fire was flowing out that burned up everything in its path, and hot coals were flying into the air that started fires where they landed.* |

**ULT Smoke went up from his nose, and fire from his mouth devoured. Coals from him burned**

UST {Your power was so great that} it was as if there was a volcano from which smoke was rising, a stream of fire was flowing out that burned up everything in its path, and hot coals were flying into the air that started fires where they landed

(עָלָה עָשָׁן ׀ בְּאַפּוֹ וְאֵשׁ־מִפִּיו תֹּאכֵל גֶּחָלִים בָּעֲרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ)

David is saying that when Yahweh came to help him, Yahweh's power was so great that it was like a volcano. David describes the opening at the top of a volcano, from which **Smoke** and **fire** and **Coals** come out, as if it were the **nose** and **mouth** of the volcano. If your readers would be familiar with what a volcano is, you could express in your translation how David is using a volcano as an image to describe Yahweh's power. If not, you could describe in more general terms how Yahweh's power is like fire and smoke.

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**ULT and fire from his mouth devoured**

UST {Your power was so great that} it was as if there was a volcano from which smoke was rising, a stream of fire was flowing out that burned up everything in its path

(וְאֵשׁ־מִפִּיו תֹּאכֵל)

David is speaking of the fire that comes from a volcano, which represents God here, as if it were a wild animal that **devoured** its prey. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and fire from his mouth completely destroyed everything] or [and fire from his mouth consumed everything]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| devoured | a stream of fire was flowing out that burned up everything in its path |

# Psalms 18:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he lowered the heavens, and he came down, and a dark cloud was under his feet.* | *{Your power was so great} when you came {to help me that} it was as if there was a great thunderstorm, with only a little sky visible below the low-hanging dark clouds.* |

**ULT And he lowered the heavens, and he came down, and a dark cloud was under his feet**

**UST** {Your power was so great} when you came {to help me that} it was as if there was a great thunderstorm, with only a little sky visible below the low-hanging dark clouds
(וַיֵּט שָׁמַיִם וַיֵּרֶד וַעֲרָפֶל תַּחַת רַגְלָיו)

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: [And he came standing on a dark cloud, and thus he lowered the heavens]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the heavens | { … that} it was as if there was a great thunderstorm |

# Psalms 18:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he rode on a cherub, and he flew, and he flew swiftly on the wings of the wind.* | *He flew, riding on the back of an angel traveling fast, which the wind was blowing along.* |

ULT **And he rode on a cherub, and he flew**
UST He flew, riding on the back … an angel
(וַיִּרְכַּ֣ב עַל־כְּר֣וּב וַיָּעָ֑ף)

The words **rode** and **flew** express a single idea. The word **flew** tells more about how he **rode**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [And he flew by riding on a cherub]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

ULT **And he rode on a cherub, and he flew**
UST He flew, riding on the back … an angel
(וַיִּרְכַּ֣ב עַל־כְּר֣וּב וַיָּעָ֑ף)

David is speaking as if God were actually riding on a **cherub** and flying through the sky. This is part of a poetic description of God's power and swift action to help David. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And he came very quickly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and he flew swiftly on the wings of the wind**
UST of … traveling fast, which the wind was blowing along
(וַיֵּ֣דָא עַל־כַּנְפֵי־רֽוּחַ)

David is speaking as if the wind actually had **wings** and that it could fly through the sky carrying Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and it appeared as if the wind were a great bird that was carrying him swiftly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a cherub | an angel |

# Psalms 18:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He set darkness his covering, the booth around him {was} a darkness of waters, clouds of the skies.* | *It was as if you had made the darkness of the storm a safe place for you to stay. Yes, it was as if you had a temporary shelter within the dark storm clouds that were full of moisture.* |

**ULT He set darkness his covering**
**UST** It was as if you had made the darkness of the storm a safe place for you to stay
(יָשֶׁת חֹשֶׁךְ ׀ סִתְרֹו)

David is speaking as if the darkness were actually **set** like a physical object that could be arranged in place. He means that God caused darkness to surround himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [It was as if he were dwelling within the darkness of the storm]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT He set darkness his covering, the booth around him {was} a darkness of waters**
**UST** It was as if you had made the darkness of the storm a safe place for you to stay. Yes, it was as if you had a temporary shelter … dark storm … that were full of moisture
(יָשֶׁת חֹשֶׁךְ ׀ סִתְרֹו סְבִיבוֹתָיו סֻכָּתוֹ חֶשְׁכַת־מָיִם)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [He set darkness as his covering—yes, the shelter around him was dark storm clouds]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the skies | within the … clouds |

# Psalms 18:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *From the brightness before him, hailstones and coals of fire broke through his thick clouds.* | *It was as if it became bright where you were within the clouds, and then hailstones and lightning bolts came from there.* |

**ULT before him**
**UST** where you were within the clouds
(עָבָ֗יו)

Here, **before him** represents being in God's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in his presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT and coals of fire**
**UST** and lightning bolts
(וְגַחֲלֵי־אֵֽשׁ)

David assumes that readers will know that **coals of fire** means "flashes of lightning." You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and flashes of lightning] of [and bolts of lightning]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| hailstones | and then hailstones |

# Psalms 18:13

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And Yahweh thundered in the heavens and the Most High uttered his voice, hailstones and coals of fire.* | *It was as if there was a loud sound of thunder in the sky because you, Yahweh, the God who is greater than all other spirit beings, had spoken {to announce that you were coming to rescue me}, and as if hailstones and coals of fire {continued to come}.* |

ULT **hailstones and coals of fire**
UST and as if hailstones and coals of fire {continued to come}
(בָּרָד וְגַחֲלֵי־אֵשׁ)

Some ancient manuscripts include the words **hailstones and coals of fire**. The ULT follows that reading. Other ancient manuscripts do not have these words. It is possible that during the process of copying, they were repeated here from the previous verse. The ancient Greek translation does not have them. 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.

**Support Reference:** Textual Variants

ULT **hailstones and coals of fire**
UST and as if hailstones and coals of fire {continued to come}
(בָּרָד וְגַחֲלֵי־אֵשׁ)

David 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 were hailstones and coals of fire]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | because you, Yahweh |
| in the heavens | in the sky |
| and the Most High | the God who is greater than all other spirit beings |
| hailstones | and as if hailstones |

# Psalms 18:14

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And he sent out his arrows and he scattered them and lightnings in abundance and he panicked them.* | *It was as if you sent many flashes of lightning that made my enemies so afraid that they ran away in different directions, as if you had shot arrows at them.* |

ULT **And he sent out his arrows and he scattered them and lightnings in abundance and he panicked them**

UST It was as if you sent many flashes of lightning that made my enemies so afraid that they ran away in different directions, as if you had shot arrows at them
(וַיִּשְׁלַח חִצָּיו וַיְפִיצֵם וּבְרָקִים רָב וַיְהֻמֵּם)

Here David is using an image within an image. Within the image of a thunderstorm that represents Yahweh coming powerfully to help him, David speaks of lightning bolts as if they were **arrows**. You might be able to clarify this by combining the two parts of this verse, which mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [And he sent out lightning bolts like arrows and panicked them so that they scattered]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **and he scattered them … and he panicked them**

UST that made my enemies so afraid that they ran away in different directions
(וַיְפִיצֵם & וַיְהֻמֵּם)

The pronoun **them** refers in each instance to David's enemies. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and he scattered my enemies … and he panicked those enemies]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and lightnings in abundance**

UST many flashes of lightning
(וּבְרָקִים רָב)

David 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, and he sent out lightnings in abundance]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and he scattered them | that they ran away in different directions |

# Psalms 18:15

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And the channels of the sea were seen, and the foundations of the world were uncovered, from your rebuke, Yahweh, from the blast of the breath of your nose.* | *The bottom of the ocean became visible, and the water uncovered the foundations of the earth when Yahweh rebuked his enemies with the breath that came in his anger!* |

ULT **And the channels of the sea were seen, and the foundations of the world were uncovered**

UST The bottom of the ocean became visible, and the water uncovered the foundations of the earth

(וַיֵּרָאוּ ׀ אֲפִיקֵי מַ֫יִם וַיִּגָּלוּ֥ מוֹסְדוֹת תֵּבֵ֑ל)

The expressions **were seen** and **were uncovered** are passive verbal forms. If your language would not use those forms, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [And the channels of the sea became visible; ground no longer covered the foundations of the world]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **And the channels of the sea were seen, and the foundations of the world were uncovered, from your rebuke, Yahweh, from the blast of the breath of your nose**

UST The bottom of the ocean became visible, and the water uncovered the foundations of the earth when Yahweh rebuked his enemies with the breath that came in his anger

(וַיֵּרָאוּ ׀ אֲפִיקֵי מַ֫יִם וַיִּגָּלוּ֥ מוֹסְדוֹת תֵּבֵ֑ל מִגַּעֲרָתְךָ֥ יְ֝הוָ֗ה מִנִּשְׁמַ֥ת רוּחַ־אַפֶּֽךָ׃)

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: [And at the rebuke of Yahweh, from the blast of the breath of his nose, the channels of the sea were seen, the foundations of the world were uncovered]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the foundations of | the foundations of |
| the world | the earth |
| from your rebuke | rebuked his enemies |
| Yahweh | when Yahweh |
| the breath of | with the breath that came |

# Psalms 18:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He stretched out from the height, he took hold of me. He drew me out of many waters.* | *It was as if you reached down from heaven and grabbed me so that you could pull me up out of the deep water of the ocean.* |

**ULT He stretched out**
**UST** It was as if you reached down
(יִּשְׁלַח)

David 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 stretched out his hand]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT from the height**
**UST** from heaven
(מָּרוֹם)

Here, **height** represents "heaven" as God's dwelling place. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from heaven]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT out of many waters**
**UST** out of the deep water of the ocean
(מַּיִם רַבִּים)

Here, **many waters** represents the sea. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [out of the sea]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT out of many waters**
**UST** out of the deep water of the ocean
(מַּיִם רַבִּים)

Here, **many waters**, meaning the sea, represents deep trouble or dangerous situations. David uses this image because he had earlier described his enemies as dangerous flood waters. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [out of great trouble]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 18:17

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *He delivered me from my strong enemy, from the ones hating me, for they were stronger than me.* | *There was a powerful man who wanted to harm me, and there were people who hated me. They were too strong for me to defeat, but you rescued me from them.* |

**ULT He delivered me from my strong enemy, from the ones hating me, for they were stronger than me**

UST There was a powerful man who wanted to harm me, and there were people who hated me. They were too strong for me to defeat, but you rescued me from them

(יַצִּילֵנִי מֵאֹיְבִי עָז וּמִשֹּׂנְאַי כִּי־אָמְצוּ מִמֶּנִּי)

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 they were stronger than me, he delivered me from my strong enemy, from the ones hating me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| He delivered me | you rescued me |
| from my … enemy | There was a … man who wanted to harm me … from them |
| strong | powerful |

# Psalms 18:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They confronted me on the day of my calamity, but Yahweh was my support!* | *They attacked me, and they would have destroyed me, but you, Yahweh, protected me.* |

ULT **on the day of my calamity**
UST and they would have destroyed me
(בְּיוֹם־אֵידִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **calamity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [on a day that would have been disastrous for me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my calamity | and they would have destroyed me |
| Yahweh | you, Yahweh |

# Psalms 18:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he brought me out to an open space; he delivered me because he delighted in me.* | *You brought me to a place where I was safe. You love me, and so you rescued me.* |

**ULT And he brought me out to an open space**
**UST** You brought me to a place where I was safe
(וַיּוֹצִיאֵנִי לַמֶּרְחָב)

Here David is speaking of being rescued as if he had been squeezed into a narrow space and God brought him out to an **open space**. The image suggests that David had been in a dangerous situation with no way to escape, but God enabled him to escape. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And he set me free from danger] or [And he rescued me from my desperate situation]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT he delivered me because he delighted in me**
**UST** You love me, and so you rescued me
(יְחַלְּצֵנִי כִּי חָפֵץ בִּי)

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 **delivered me** describes. Alternate translation: [because he delighted in me, he delivered me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he delivered me | you rescued me |
| he delighted | You love |

# Psalms 18:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh has rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands he has given back to me.* | *Yahweh, you did good things for me because I did what was right. I did not harm my enemies, so you made sure that they did not harm me.* |

ULT **Yahweh has rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands he has given back to me**
UST Yahweh, you did good things for me because I did what was right. I did not harm my enemies, so you made sure that they did not harm me
(יִגְמְלַנִי יְהוָה כְּצִדְקִי כְּבֹר יָדַי יָשִׁיב לִי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Yahweh has rewarded me according to my righteousness; yes, according to the cleanness of my hands he has given back to me]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **according to my righteousness**
UST because I did what was right
(כְּצִדְקִי)

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: [according to the right things I have done] or [because I have acted righteously]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **according to the cleanness of my hands**
UST I did not harm my enemies
(כְּבֹר יָדַי)

David is speaking of his actions as if they were his **hands**, which could be physically clean or dirty. He means that his behavior has been morally pure. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly here and in verse 25. Alternate translation: [according to the innocence of my actions]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **he has given back to me**
UST so you made sure that they did not harm me
(יָשֵׁב לִי)

David is using **he has given back to me** as a common expression of his culture to mean "he has treated me in the same way." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he has treated me in the same way]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| has rewarded me | you did good things for me |
| according to my righteousness | because I did what was right |
| he has given back | so you made sure that they did not harm |

# Psalms 18:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For I have kept the ways of Yahweh, and I have not been wicked from my God.* | *Yahweh, I have lived as you want people to live. I have not stopped obeying you, my God, and done wicked things instead.* |

**ULT For**
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [After all,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

**ULT I have kept the ways of Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh, I have lived as you want people to live
(שָׁמַרְתִּי דַּרְכֵי יְהוָה)

David 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 helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I have lived as Yahweh commands] or [I have obeyed Yahweh's commands]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and I have not been wicked from my God**
**UST** I have not stopped obeying you, my God, and done wicked things instead
(וְלֹא־רָשַׁעְתִּי מֵאֱלֹהָי)

David 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, specifically in the next verse, if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [and I have not been so wicked as to turn away from my God]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I have kept | I have lived |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I have … been wicked | I have … stopped obeying you … and done wicked things instead |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from my God | my God |

# Psalms 18:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For all of his judgments {are} before me, and his statutes, I have not turned away from them.* | *I have remained aware of what you have said people should do, and I have continued to obey all your laws.* |

**ULT For**
**UST** what you have said people should do
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation of why Yahweh has rewarded David according to his righteousness. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a word that introduces an explanation. Alternate translation: [Indeed,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

**ULT all of his judgments {are} before me**
**UST** I have remained aware of what you have said people should do
(כָּל־מִשְׁפָּטָיו לְנֶגְדִּי)

David is speaking of **judgments** as if they were objects that could be physically placed in front of him. This means that he constantly remembers and thinks about God's laws. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am always mindful of his judgments]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and his statutes, I have not turned away from them**
**UST** and I have continued to obey all your laws
(וְחֻקֹּתָיו לֹא־אָסִיר מֶנִּי)

David is speaking of God's **statutes** as if they were objects that he could physically turn away from. Your language may have a comparable expression you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I have not disobeyed his statutes]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his judgments | what you have said people should do |
| and his statutes | all your laws |

# Psalms 18:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I have been blameless with him, and I have kept myself from my iniquity.* | *I have not done anything for which you would blame me. I have been careful not to do anything for which you would punish me.* |

**ULT from my iniquity**
**UST** anything for which you would punish me
(מֵעֲוֹנִֽי)

David is using the possessive form to mean sin that he could have committed. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [from any iniquity that I might have committed]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| blameless | anything for which … would blame me |
| from my iniquity | anything for which you would punish me |

# Psalms 18:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And Yahweh has given back to me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands before his eyes.* | *You have done good things for me because I did what is right. You recognize that I am innocent.* |

ULT **according to my righteousness**
UST because I did what is right
(כְּצִדְקִי)

See how you translated the phrase **according to my righteousness** in 18:20.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **according to the cleanness of my hands**
UST because I did what is right … I am innocent
(כְּבֹר יָדַי)

See how you translated the phrase **according to the cleanness of my hands** in 18:20.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **before his eyes**
UST You recognize that
(לְנֶגֶד עֵינָיו)

Here, **before his eyes** represents how God sees and evaluates people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in his judgment] or [by his standards]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | You |
| according to my righteousness | because I did what is right |

# Psalms 18:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *With the faithful you show yourself faithful; with a blameless man, you show yourself blameless.* | *When people are loyal to you, you act loyally toward them; when people are careful to do what you want them to do, you do good things for them.* |

**ULT With the faithful**
**UST** When people are loyal to you
(עִם־חָסִיד)

David is using the adjective **faithful** 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: [To people who are faithful]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the faithful | people are loyal to you |
| you show yourself faithful | you act loyally toward them |
| blameless | are careful to do what you want them to do |
| you show yourself blameless | you do good things for them |

# Psalms 18:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *With the purified, you show yourself pure, but with the crooked, you show yourself cunning.* | *You allow sincere people to recognize how sincere you are. But when people try to trick others, you show that you are much more clever than they are.* |

ULT **the purified**
UST You allow sincere people
(נָבָר)

The expression **the purified** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [those who purify themselves] or [those who keep themselves pure]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **the crooked**
UST people try to trick others
(עִקֵּשׁ)

Here David is speaking of people who deliberately do what is wrong as if they were physically **crooked** or bent. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those who do evil] or [those who are dishonest]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| you show yourself pure | to recognize how sincere you are |
| you show yourself cunning | you show that you are much more clever than they are |

# Psalms 18:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you save a lowly people, but the eyes {of} the ones being high, you bring them down.* | *You rescue people whom others are afflicting, but you humiliate those who are proud.* |

**ULT a lowly people … the ones being high**
**UST** people whom others are afflicting … those who are proud
(עַם־עָנִי & רָמוֹת)

Here David is speaking as if oppressed or poor people were **lowly**, that is, in a physically low place, and as if proud people were physically **high**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [an oppressed people … prideful people] or [poor people … prideful people]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT but the eyes {of} the ones being high, you bring them down**
**UST** but you humiliate those who are proud
(וְעֵינַיִם רָמוֹת תַּשְׁפִּיל)

Here, **eyes** represents the proud looks or arrogant attitude of people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but the proud looks of the ones being high, you humble]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| save | rescue |
| lowly | whom others are afflicting |

# Psalms 18:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you light my lamp; Yahweh my God lightens my darkness.* | *Yahweh my God, it is as if you light my lamp so that I can see even when it is dark.* |

**ULT you light my lamp; Yahweh my God lightens my darkness**
UST Yahweh my God, it is as if you light my lamp so that I can see even when it is dark
(אַתָּה תָּאִיר נֵרִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהַי יַגִּיהַּ חָשְׁכִּי)

Here David is speaking as if his life were actually **a lamp** that God lights and as if his troubles were actually **darkness** that God brightens. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [you give me life like lighting a lamp; Yahweh my God helps me through troubles like someone who brightens darkness]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my lamp | my lamp |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my God | my God |

# Psalms 18:29

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For by you I run {after} a troop, and by my God I leap {over} a wall.* | *With your help I have caught and defeated a band of raiders. With your help I have captured a city that had walls around it, as if I had leaped over those walls.* |

**ULT I run {after} a troop**
**UST** I have caught and defeated a band of raiders
(אָרֶץ גְּדוּד)

This could mean: (1) that David is saying that by God's help, he can pursue and overtake a **troop**. He may be recalling how he and his men were able to overtake the Amalekite "troop" (1 Samuel 30:8) that had raided Ziklag and rescue their families and possessions. Alternate translation: [I can pursue and overtake a raiding band], or (2) that David is saying that by God's help, he can directly attack and disperse an opposing group of soldiers. Alternate translation: [I can run through a troop] or [I can attack and disperse an opposing troop]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT I leap {over} a wall**
**UST** I have captured a city that had walls around it, as if I had leaped over those walls
(אֲדַלֶּג־שׁוּר)

David is speaking of successfully leading troops to capture a fortified city as if he and they would **leap** over its walls. He may be recalling how he and his soldiers were able to capture the stronghold of Zion in Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:6–9). If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I can surmount the walls of a fortified city]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and by my God | With your help |

# Psalms 18:30

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *This God, his way {is} perfect. The word of Yahweh is refined. He {is} a shield to all of the ones taking refuge in him.* | *My God, everything that you do is perfect. Everything that you say is right. You protect everyone who depends on you, as if you are a shield that defends them.* |

ULT **his way {is} perfect**
UST everything that you do is perfect
(תָּמִים דַּרְכּוֹ)

Here David is speaking of how God acts and directs others as if it were a **way** or path that he was walking along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [everything he does is faultless] or [he always acts righteously]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **The word of Yahweh**
UST Everything that you say
(אִמְרַת־יְהוָה)

Here, **word of Yahweh** represents what Yahweh says by using words. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [What Yahweh says]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **is refined**
UST is right
(צְרוּפָה)

The expression **is refined** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [is pure]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT He {is} a shield to all of the ones taking refuge in him**
**UST** You protect everyone who depends on you, as if you are a shield that defends them
(מָגֵן הוּא לְכֹל ׀ הַחֹסִים בּוֹ)

David is speaking as if God were actually **a shield** behind which people take **refuge**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He protects everyone who trusts him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| This God | My God |
| {is} perfect | is perfect |
| The word of Yahweh | Everything that you say |
| {is} a shield | protect … as if you are a shield that defends them |
| the ones taking refuge | who depends on |

# Psalms 18:31

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For who is God except Yahweh? And who is a rock except our God?* | *Yahweh, you are the only real God. Only you are like a huge rock {where I can go to be safe}.* |

**ULT For who is God except Yahweh? And who is a rock except our God**
**UST** Yahweh, you are the only real God. Only you are like a huge rock {where I can go to be safe}
(כִּי מִי אֱלוֹהַּ מִבַּלְעֲדֵי יְהוָה וּמִי צוּר זוּלָתֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

David 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: [For Yahweh is the only God! And our God is the only rock!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT is a rock**
**UST** are like a huge rock {where I can go to be safe}
(צוּר)

David speaks of God here as if he were a **rock** that people can hide behind or stand on for safety. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [provides safety]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| is God | the … real God |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| our God | you |

# Psalms 18:32

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *This God is the one girding me {with} valor, and he makes my way perfect,* | *My God, you enable me to be strong like someone who equips me for war. You make sure that nothing prevents me from doing what you want me to do.* |

**ULT is the one girding me {with} valor**
UST you enable me to be strong like someone who equips me for war
(הַמְאַזְּרֵנִי חָיִל)

Here David is speaking of valor as if it were a piece of clothing with which God **is the one girding** him, like a belt or piece of armor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [makes me valiant]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and he makes my way perfect**
UST You make sure that nothing prevents me from doing what you want me to do
(וַיִּתֵּן תְּמִים דַּרְכִּי)

This could mean: (1) that God makes the **way** on which a person travels **perfect**, that is, free from obstacles. Alternate translation: [and he removes all the obstacles in my path] or [and he enables me to live the life he has chosen for me without hindrance], or (2) that David is speaking of how a person lives as if that were a **way** or path that the person is walking along. Alternate translation: [and he enables me to live in just the way that he wants people to live]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| This God | My God |
| is the one girding me | you enable me … like someone who equips me for war |
| {with} valor | to be strong |
| perfect | nothing prevents |

# Psalms 18:33

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *making my feet like a deer, and he makes me stand on my high places,* | *You enable me to walk about safely in the mountains, as a deer does, without falling.* |

**ULT making my feet like a deer**
**UST** You enable me to walk about safely … as a deer does
(מְשַׁוֶּה רַגְלַי כָּאַיָּלוֹת)

David 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: [making my feet like the feet of a deer]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT making my feet like a deer**
**UST** You enable me to walk about safely … as a deer does
(מְשַׁוֶּה רַגְלַי כָּאַיָּלוֹת)

Here David is comparing his ability to move quickly and surely with the way a deer moves in difficult terrain. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [making my feet secure] or [keeping me from stumbling]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and he makes me stand on my high places**
**UST** in the mountains … without falling
(וְעַל בָּמֹתַי יַעֲמִידֵנִי)

David may be using this possessive form, referring to these as **my high places**, because he is recalling how he had to hide among cliffs when Saul was trying to kill him. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning with a different form. Alternate translation: [and he keeps me from falling from any high places where I have to go]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| like a deer | as a deer does |

# Psalms 18:34

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *training my hands for war, and my arms bend a bow of bronze.* | *You teach me how to fight in a battle. You give me the strength to bend {and string} a bronze bow.* |

**ULT training my hands for war**
**UST** You teach me how to fight in a battle
(מְלַמֵּד יָדַי לַמִּלְחָמָה)

David is using his **hands** to represent all of him in the act of fighting in battle. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [training me for war]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and … bend | to bend {and string} |
| a bow | a … bow |
| of bronze | bronze |

# Psalms 18:35

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And you give to me the shield of your salvation, and your right hand supports me, and your humility makes me great.* | *You have saved me by protecting me like a shield, you are strong and therefore keep me safe. You humble yourself and answer my prayers and this is what has made me successful.* |

ULT **And you give to me the shield of your salvation**
UST You have saved me by protecting me like a shield
(וַתִּתֶּן־לִי֙ מָגֵ֣ן יִשְׁעֶ֔ךָ)

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: [And the shield you provide for me saves me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **And you give to me the shield of your salvation**
UST You have saved me by protecting me like a shield
(וַתִּתֶּן־לִי֙ מָגֵ֣ן יִשְׁעֶ֔ךָ)

Here David is speaking of God's power to save him as if it were a **shield** that could protect him from physical attacks. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And you protect me by saving me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and your right hand**
UST you are strong
(וְ֝יְמִינְךָ)

Here, **right 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: [and your power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and your humility**
UST You humble yourself and answer my prayers
(וְעַנְוָתְךָ)

By **your humility**, David means God's humbleness in responding to his prayers requesting help. Because God was much greater and more powerful than David, David views God's response to his prayers as an act of humility. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and your answer to my prayers] or [and your humble answer to my prayers]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the shield of | like a shield |
| your salvation | You have saved |
| and your humility | You humble yourself and answer my prayers |

# Psalms 18:36

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You enlarge my step under me, and my feet do not slip.* | *You have given me many ways to respond to each situation. As a result, I have been able to carry out my plans successfully.* |

**ULT You enlarge my step under me**
**UST** You have given me many ways to respond to each situation
(תַּרְחִיב צַעֲדִי תַּחְתָּי)

Here David's **step** represents the place where he would step. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [You enlarge the place where I step under me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT You enlarge my step under me**
**UST** You have given me many ways to respond to each situation
(תַּרְחִיב צַעֲדִי תַּחְתָּי)

David is speaking as if God had made the area where he needed to walk more spacious. This represents having freedom to move and act without being constrained by enemies. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: [You give me room to maneuver]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 18:37

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I pursue my enemies, and I destroy them, and I do not return until I have ended them.* | *I chased my enemies and defeated them. I did not stop fighting them until I had killed them all.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my enemies | my enemies |
| and I destroy them | and defeated them |
| I have ended them | I had killed them all |

# Psalms 18:38

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I severely wounded them so that they were not able to rise; they fell under my feet.* | *I wounded them so badly that the ones who fell to the ground never got up because they died of their wounds.* |

**ULT so that they were not able to rise; they fell under my feet**
**UST** that the ones who fell to the ground never got up because they died of their wounds
(וְלֹא־יָכְלוּ קוּם יִפְּלוּ תַּחַת רַגְלָי)

David is describing one event before describing another event that preceded it. If it would be helpful your language, you may wish to relate these events in the order in which they happened, as in the UST. Alternate translation: [so that they fall under my feet and were not able to arise]

**Support Reference:** Order of Events

**ULT they fell**
**UST** the ones who fell
(יִפְּלוּ)

The implication is that David's enemies fall and remain dead. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [they fall down dead]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

# Psalms 18:39

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And you gird me {with} valor for war; you make the ones rising up under me bow down.* | *You have given me the strength and courage to fight battles. When people revolted against me, you enabled me to subdue them.* |

ULT **And you gird me {with} valor**
UST You have given me the strength and courage
(וְתַאַזְרֵנִי חַיִל)

Here David is speaking as if God were actually girding him **with valor**, as if valor were a belt or sash that could be wrapped around him. David means that God gives him courage and strength for battle. See how you translated a similar expression in 18:32. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And you make me valiant]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **you make the ones rising up under me bow down**
UST When people revolted against me, you enabled me to subdue them
(תַּכְרִיעַ קָמַי תַּחְתָּי)

David means that people who try to rebel against him ultimately **bow down** as a symbolic action by which they show renewed submission to his authority. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [you make the ones rising up under me submit humbly to my authority]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **the ones rising up under me**
UST When people revolted against me
(קָמַי תַּחְתָּי)

David is using **the ones rising up under me** as a common expression of his culture to mean “those who rebel against my rule.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the ones revolting against my rule]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And you gird me | You have given me |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {with} valor | the strength and courage |
| you make … bow down | you enabled me to subdue them |

# Psalms 18:40

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And my enemies, you give to me the back of {their} neck; the ones hating me, I destroyed them.* | *You enabled me to defeat my enemies and step in triumph on their necks. You gave me power over those who hated me so that I was able to destroy them.* |

ULT **you give to me the back of {their} neck**
UST You enabled me to defeat … and step in triumph on their necks
(נָתַתָּה לִּי עֹרֶף)

David is describing a symbolic action in which victorious soldiers would make defeated enemies lie face down on the ground and then would step on their necks to demonstrate their complete triumph (as in Joshua 10:24, for example). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [you enable me to step in complete triumph on the back of their necks]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **the back of {their} neck**
UST and step in triumph on their necks
(עֹרֶף)

In this verse, the words **back** and **neck** are singular in form, but they refer to all the enemies as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use plural forms of "back" and "neck." Alternate translation: [the backs of their necks]

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

ULT **the ones hating me**
UST those who hated me
(וּמְשַׂנְאַי)

David 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 give to me the ones hating me]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And my enemies | my enemies |
| I destroyed them | You gave me power over … so that I was able to destroy them |

# Psalms 18:41

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They called out for help, but there was none saving; to Yahweh, but he did not answer them.* | *They called out for someone to rescue them, but no one did. They cried out {for help} to you, Yahweh, but you did not help them.* |

ULT **to Yahweh**
UST They cried out {for help} to you, Yahweh
(עַל־יְהוָה)

David 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: [they called to Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **but he did not answer them**
UST but you did not help them
(וְלֹא עָנָם)

By **he did not answer them**, David means that Yahweh did not help his enemies as they had asked. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [but he did not do what they asked]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| They called out for help | They called out for |
| saving | someone to rescue them |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 18:42

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I beat them fine as dust upon the face of the wind; like the mud of the streets I cast them out.* | *I defeated them so completely that they were no longer any threat to me, no more than tiny particles of dust that the wind blows away would be. It was as if they were dirt that I threw out into the street.* |

ULT **And I beat them fine as dust upon the face of the wind**
UST I defeated them so completely that they were no longer any threat to me, no more than tiny particles of dust that the wind blows away would be
(וְאֶשְׁחָקֵם כְּעָפָר עַל־פְּנֵי־רוּחַ)

Here David is making a comparison between his defeated enemies and **dust upon the face of the wind**. The point of this comparison is that just as dust upon the face of the wind is completely scattered and powerless, so his enemies became completely defeated and scattered. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [And I beat them so that they scattered completely like dust blown by the wind]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **And I beat them fine as dust upon the face of the wind**
UST I defeated them so completely that they were no longer any threat to me, no more than tiny particles of dust that the wind blows away would be
(וְאֶשְׁחָקֵם כְּעָפָר עַל־פְּנֵי־רוּחַ)

Here David is speaking as if he had literally beaten his enemies into **dust** that blows away in the wind. He means that he completely defeated and destroyed them. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And I completely destroyed them and scattered them] or [And I crushed them completely and scattered them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **like the mud of the streets I cast them out**
UST It was as if they were dirt that I threw out into the street
(כְּטִ֣יט חוּצ֔וֹת אֲרִיקֵֽם)

David is making a comparison between his enemies and **mud of the streets**. The point of this comparison is that just as **mud of the streets** is worthless and easily discarded, so are his defeated enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [I threw them out like worthless mud from the streets]

**Support Reference:** Simile

# Psalms 18:43

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You rescue me from the disputes of people. You made me as the head of nations. People I did not know serve me.* | *You rescued me from the Israelites who tried to rebel against me. You appointed me as the ruler of many nations. Foreign people are now my subjects.* |

**ULT You rescue me from the disputes of people**
**UST** You rescued me from the Israelites who tried to rebel against me
(תְּפַלְּטֵנִי֮ מֵרִיבֵי עָם)

By **people**, David most likely means means "my people" as in the parallel passage in (2 Samuel 22:44). You could indicate this explicitly in your translation, as in the UST, if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [You rescue me from the disputes of my people]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT as the head of nations**
**UST** as the ruler of many nations
(לְרֹאשׁ גּוֹיִם)

Here David is speaking of his leadership role as if he were the **head** of a body. Just as the head directs the rest of the body, David ruled over other nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [as the ruler of nations] or [to govern the nations]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You rescue me | You rescued me |
| from the disputes of | from … who tried to rebel against me |
| nations | many nations |
| I did … know | Foreign |
| serve me | are now my subjects |

# Psalms 18:44

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *At the hearing of an ear, they hear me; sons of the foreigner cringe to me.* | *When they heard about what Yahweh enabled me to do, they obeyed me. Foreign rulers fearfully bow down in front of me {to show their submission}.* |

ULT **At the hearing of an ear**
UST When they heard about what Yahweh enabled me to do
(לְשֵׁמַע אֹזֶן)

David is using one part of a person, the **ear** to represent entire people in the act of hearing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [When they listen]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **At the hearing of an ear**
UST When they heard about what Yahweh enabled me to do
(לְשֵׁמַע אֹזֶן)

David means that these people hear specifically about him. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [When they hear about me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **they hear me**
UST they obeyed me
(יִשָּׁמְעוּ לִי)

By **they hear me**, David means that they obey him. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [they obey me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **sons of the foreigner**
UST Foreign rulers
(בְּנֵי־נֵכָר)

David is not referring to a specific **foreigner**. He means foreigners in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [sons of foreigners]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **sons of the foreigner**
UST Foreign rulers
(בְּנֵי־נֵכָר)

In certain contexts, biblical authors and characters use the common expression of their culture **sons of** to indicate that a person has a certain characteristic. In this case, these people have the characteristic of being foreigners or people from other nations. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly, here and in the next verse. Alternate translation: [foreigners]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **cringe to me**
UST fearfully bow down in front of me {to show their submission}
(יְכַחֲשׁוּ־לִי)

By **cringe to me**, David means that foreigners will submit to him and show him respect out of fear. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [cringe before me] or [came cringing before me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the foreigner | Foreign |
| cringe | fearfully bow down … to show their submission |

# Psalms 18:45

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sons of the foreigner fade away, and they come trembling from their fortresses.* | *I defeat foreign armies that resist me so that they become weak, like a plant that dries up in the sun. They surrender and come out of their walled cities shaking with weakness and fear.* |

ULT **Sons of the foreigner**
UST I defeat foreign armies that resist me
(בְּנֵי־נֵכָר)

In certain contexts, biblical authors and characters use the expression **Sons of** to indicate that a person has a certain characteristic. In this case, the people whom David is describing have the characteristic of being soldiers of foreign countries that are resisting his rule. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Foreign soldiers]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **fade away**
UST so that they become weak, like a plant that dries up in the sun
(יִבֹּלוּ)

Here David is speaking of foreign armies as if they were plants that **fade away** and lose their vitality. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [lose strength]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the foreigner | I defeat foreign armies that resist me |
| and they come trembling | shaking with weakness and fear |
| from their fortresses | They surrender and come out of their walled cities |

# Psalms 18:46

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh is alive! And blessed be my rock, and may the God of my salvation be exalted,* | *Yahweh, you are the only real God! I praise you! You are like a huge rock {where I can go to be safe}! You are the God who rescues me. Everyone should exalt you.* |

**ULT Yahweh is alive**
**UST** Yahweh, you are the only real God
(חַי־יְהוָה)

David is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling, joy. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [I rejoice that Yahweh is alive] or [How wonderful that Yahweh lives]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

**ULT And blessed be my rock**
**UST** I praise you! You are like a huge rock {where I can go to be safe}
(וּבָרוּךְ צוּרִי)

The expression **blessed be** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [And I bless my rock]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT my rock**
**UST** You are like a huge rock {where I can go to be safe}
(צוּרִי)

See how you translated a similar phrase in 18:31.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and may the God of my salvation be exalted**
**UST** You are the God who rescues me. Everyone should exalt you
(וְיָרוּם אֱלוֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי)

The expression **be exalted** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and I exalt the God of my salvation]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

> ULT **the God of my salvation**
> UST You are the God who rescues me
> (אֱלוֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי)

David is using this possessive form to describe **the God** who provides salvation to him. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the God who saves me]

**Support Reference:** Possession

> ULT **the God of my salvation**
> UST You are the God who rescues me
> (אֱלוֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי)

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: [the God who is the rock that saves me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| And blessed be | I praise you |
| and may … be exalted | Everyone should exalt you |
| the God of | You are the God |
| my salvation | who rescues me |

# Psalms 18:47

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the God giving vengeance to me, and he subdues peoples under me,* | *You are the God who enables me to conquer enemies who have attacked me. You cause the people of other nations to be subject to my rule.* |

**ULT and he subdues peoples under me**
**UST** You cause the people of other nations to be subject to my rule
(וַיַּדְבֵּר עַמִּים תַּחְתָּי)

Here David is speaking of conquering **peoples** as if they were being brought down physically **under** his feet. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he defeats peoples before me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the God | You are the God |
| vengeance | to conquer enemies who have attacked me |

# Psalms 18:48

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the one delivering me from my enemies. Also, from the ones arising {against} me you lift me up, from a man of violence, you deliver me.* | *You kept my enemies from capturing me. People rebelled against me, but it as if their armies had been floodwaters and you lifted me out of them to safety. You rescued me from men who tried to harm me.* |

ULT **from the ones arising {against} me you lift me up**
UST People rebelled against me, but it as if their armies had been floodwaters and you lifted me out of them to safety
(מִן־קָמַי תְּרוֹמְמֵנִי)

Here David is speaking of his enemies as if they were physically **arising** upward to attack him, and he speaks of God as One who will physically **lift me up** above them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you make me prevail over those who attack me] or [you protect me from those who oppose me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **from a man of violence**
UST from men who tried to harm me
(מֵאִישׁ חָמָס)

David is not referring to a specific **man of violence**. He means violent people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [from violent men]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the one delivering me | You kept … from capturing me |
| from my enemies | my enemies |
| you deliver me | You rescued me |

# Psalms 18:49

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Therefore, I thank you among the nations, Yahweh; and I will sing praise to your name,* | *Because of all this, I thank you, Yahweh, so that all people groups will know that you are the one who has helped me. I will sing to praise you for what you have done that has made you famous.* |

ULT **and I will sing praise to your name**

UST I will sing to praise you for what you have done that has made you famous

(וּלְשִׁמְךָ אֲזַמְּרָה)

Here, **name** represents Yahweh himself, in light of his fame and reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and I will sing praise to you] or [and I will sing praise to you, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| among the nations | so that all people groups will know that you are the one who has helped me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I will sing praise | I will sing to praise |

# Psalms 18:50

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the one magnifying the salvation of his king and doing covenant faithfulness to his anointed, to David, and to his seed until forever.”* | *You chose me to be king, and you have done great things to save me from my enemies. You faithfully show kindness to me, David, whom you anointed as king, as well as to my descendants forever.”* |

ULT **the one magnifying the salvation of his king**
UST You chose me to be king, and you have done great things to save me from my enemies
(מַגְדִּיל֤ יְשׁוּעֹות֙ מַלְכּ֔וֹ)

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: [the one saving his king by great deeds]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and doing covenant faithfulness**
UST You faithfully show kindness
(וְעֹשֶׂ֣ה חֶ֭סֶד)

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: [and being faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to his anointed**
UST whom you anointed as king
(לִמְשִׁיחֹ֑ו)

The expression **his anointed** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [to the one he anointed]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and to his seed**
UST to my descendants
(וּלְזַרְעֹו)

Here David is speaking of his offspring as if they were actually **seed**. Just as a seed can grow into a plant that produces more seeds, David's descendants would continue to come from his family line. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and to all who descend from him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the salvation of | to save me from my enemies |
| his king | You chose me to be king |
| covenant faithfulness | faithfully … kindness |
| to his anointed | whom you anointed as king |
| to David | to me, David |
| and to his seed | to my descendants |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 19

## Psalm 19 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 19 is a psalm about how God has revealed himself and glorifies himself through his physical creation, and how he reveals himself through his written revelation which he gave to the Israelites through Moses.

1. The heavens declare God's glory (1–4b)
2. The sun in the heavens (4c–6)
3. The greatness and worth of God's word and its effect (7–9)
4. The desirableness of God's word (10)
5. The benefit of God's word (11–12a)
6. Closing prayer (12b–14)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Terms for God's commands and instructions

The psalmist uses many different words to refer to God's message to us. You could decide to use a different word for each term, but most languages will not have that many, so just use the words that your language has. In verses 7–9 there are six different terms used for things that God commanded and taught his people.

1. "The law of Yahweh" in 19:7a. (See: law, law of Moses, law of Yahweh, law of God)
2. "The testimony of Yahweh" in 19:7b. Here the word "testimony" has a similar meaning to the word "law" in 19:7a, making the phrases "The law of Yahweh" and "the testimony of Yahweh" complementary. The phrase "the testimony of Yahweh" refers either to God's entire law as a whole that he gave to the Israelites or more specifically to his law that he gave them through Moses on Mount Sinai.

3. “The precepts of Yahweh” in verse 19:8a. The word that is translated as “precepts” refers to something that is appointed or mandated so the phrase “the precepts of Yahweh” refers to the things that Yahweh mandated.

4. “The commandment of Yahweh” in 19:8b. See the note on this phrase in 19:8.

5. “The fear of Yahweh” in 19:9a. See the note on this phrase in 19:9.

6. “The judgments of Yahweh” in 19:9b. The word translated as “judgments” could also be translated as “ordinances” or “decisions” here and refers to decisions or judgments that are made. Here the phrase “the judgments of Yahweh” refers to the judicial instructions that Yahweh gave the Israelites for handling different types of situations involving people.

# Psalms 19:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the chief musician; a psalm of David* | *This is a note to the worship leader: This is a psalm of David.* |

**ULT To the chief musician**
UST This is a note to the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a psalm | This is a psalm |
| of David | of David |

# Psalms 19:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The heavens are declaring the glory of God, and the sky is proclaiming the work of his hands.* | *{When people look at everything that} God {has placed} in the skies, they can see that he is very great. Yes, the way God made the sky shows people that he is powerful.* |

ULT **The heavens are declaring the glory of God, and the sky is proclaiming the work of his hands**

UST { … When people look at everything that} God {has placed} in the skies, they can see that he is very great. Yes, the way God made the sky shows people that he is powerful
(הַשָּׁמַיִם מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד־אֵל וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו מַגִּיד הָרָקִיעַ)

David is speaking of **the heavens** and **the sky** as if they were living things that could declare and proclaim God's glory and works. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [What people see in the heavens shows them the glory of God, and what they see in the sky tells them about the work of his hands]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **the glory of God**

UST God … that he is very great
(כְּבוֹד־אֵל)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [that God is glorious]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **The heavens are declaring the glory of God, and the sky is proclaiming the work of his hands**

UST { … When people look at everything that} God {has placed} in the skies, they can see that he is very great. Yes, the way God made the sky shows people that he is powerful
(הַשָּׁמַיִם מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד־אֵל וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו מַגִּיד הָרָקִיעַ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [The heavens are declaring the glory of God, yes, the sky is proclaiming the work of his hands]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **and the sky is proclaiming the work of his hands**
UST Yes, the way God made the sky shows people that he is powerful
(וּמַעֲשֵׂ֖ה יָדָ֣יו מַגִּ֣יד הָרָקִֽיעַ)

Here, **hands** represents the power and creative ability of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the sky is proclaiming what he has powerfully made] or [and the sky is proclaiming his mighty works]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The heavens | everything that … {has placed} in the skies |
| are declaring | When people look at … they can see |
| the glory of | that … is very great |
| God | God … he |
| and … the work of | Yes, the way God made … that he is powerful |
| the sky | the sky |
| is proclaiming | shows people |

# Psalms 19:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Day to day makes flow forth a word, and night to night declares knowledge.* | *Day after day {it is as though the sun} proclaims the glory of God, and night after night {it is as though the moon and stars} say that God made them.* |

ULT **Day to day makes flow forth a word, and night to night declares knowledge**
UST Day after day {it is as though the sun} proclaims the glory of God, and night after night {it is as though the moon and stars} say that God made them
(יוֹם לְיוֹם יַבִּיעַ אֹמֶר וְלַיְלָה לְּלַיְלָה יְחַוֶּה־דָּעַת)

David is speaking of **Day to day** and **night to night** as if they were living things that could speak and declare knowledge. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Each day it is as if the daytime is speaking, and each night it is as if the nighttime is declaring knowledge]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **Day to day makes flow forth a word**
UST Day after day {it is as though the sun} proclaims the glory of God
(יוֹם לְיוֹם יַבִּיעַ אֹמֶר)

Within the image of the day speaking, David is speaking of the day as if it were a spring that flows or bubbles forth water. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [It is as if each day is a spring that pours out words declaring God's glory]

**Support Reference:** Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

ULT **a word**
UST the glory of God
(אֹמֶר)

David is not referring to a specific **word**. He means words in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [words]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **Day to day … and night to night**
UST Day after day … and night after night
(יוֹם לְיוֹם & וְלַיְלָה לְלַיְלָה)

David assumes that readers will understand that **Day to day** means that each successive day continues to proclaim God's glory, and **night to night** means that each successive night continues to declare knowledge about God. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Each day … and each night]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Day to day | Day after day |
| declares | {it is as though the moon and stars} say |
| knowledge | that God made them |

# Psalms 19:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{There} is no speech and {there} are no words, their voice is not being heard.* | *They do not really speak; they do not say any words. There is no sound from them for anyone to hear.* |

**ULT their voice is not being heard**
**UST** There is no sound from them for anyone to hear
(בְּלִי נִשְׁמָע קוֹלָם)

The pronoun **their** refers to the heavens. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [where the voice of the heavens is not being heard]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT their voice is not being heard**
**UST** There is no sound from them for anyone to hear
(בְּלִי נִשְׁמָע קוֹלָם)

The expression **their voice is not being heard** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [where people do not hear their voice]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT their voice is not being heard**
**UST** There is no sound from them for anyone to hear
(בְּלִי נִשְׁמָע קוֹלָם)

Here David speaks of the “heavens” as if they were a living thing that could speak and have their **voice** heard but remains silent. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they do not have a voice to speak]

**Support Reference:** Personification

# Psalms 19:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Their line has gone out through all of the earth, and their words to the end of the world. He has set in them a tent for the sun,* | *But what they declare {about God} goes throughout all the world, and {even people who live in} the most distant places on earth can know it. The sun is in the skies where God placed it;* |

**ULT Their line … their words … in them**
UST But what they declare {about God} … can know it … is in the skies where
(קַוָּם & מִלֵּיהֶם & בָּהֶם)

The pronouns **Their** and **them** refer to the heavens. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The heaven's line … the heaven's words … in the heavens] or [The line of the heaven's … the words of the heaven's … in the heavens]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT Their line has gone out through all of the earth**
UST But what they declare {about God} goes throughout all the world
(בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ ו יָצָא קַוָּם)

The Septuagint (an ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) and the Peshitta (the Syriac translation of the Bible) read "Their voice" instead of "their line." That may have been the original reading, particularly since it would then make this line a parallelism with the second line in the verse with "Their voice" and **their words** being parallel ideas. At one point in the process of transmission, scribes may have accidentally left out the additional Hebrew letter that would have spelled "Their voice" rather than **Their line**. 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.

**Support Reference:** Textual Variants

**ULT and their words to the end of the world**
UST and {even people who live in} the most distant places on earth can know it
(וּבִקְצֵה תֵבֵל מִלֵּיהֶם)

David is speaking of the heavens as if they were living things that could speak **words**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and they display God's glory to the end of the world]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **and their words to the end of the world**
UST and {even people who live in} the most distant places on earth can know it
(וּבִקְצֵה תֵבֵל מִלֵּיהֶם)

David assumes that readers will know that **their words to the end of the world** refers to the message that the heavens proclaim about God's glory and **to the end of the world** refers to the furthest extremities of the earth. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and their message to the furthest extremities of the earth] or [and their message to the most remote parts of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **He has set in them a tent for the sun**
UST The sun is in the skies where God placed it
(לַשֶּׁמֶשׁ שָׂם־אֹהֶל בָּהֶם)

David is speaking of the heavens as if they were **a tent for the sun**. He means that God has placed the sun in the skies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He has placed the sun in the heavens] or [He has put the sun in the skies]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the world | on earth |
| a tent | is in the skies where |

# Psalms 19:5

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *and that is like a bridegroom coming out from his chamber, it rejoices like a strong man to run its path.* | *it rises each morning like a bridegroom {who is happy} as he comes out of his bedroom after his wedding. It is like a strong athlete who is very eager to start running in a race.* |

**ULT and that … it rejoices … its path**
**UST** it rises each morning … who is very eager … in a race
(וְהוּא & יָשִׂישׂ & אֹרַח)

The demonstrative pronoun **that** and the pronouns **it** and **its** all refer to the sun. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and the sun … the sun rejoices … its path]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and that is like a bridegroom coming out from his chamber**
**UST** it rises each morning like a bridegroom {who is happy} as he comes out of his bedroom after his wedding
(וְהוּא כֶּחָתָן יֹצֵא מֵחֻפָּתוֹ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a bridegroom coming out from his chamber** is satisfied, joyful and radiant so is the sun as it rises. (Here the word **chamber** refers to a bedroom.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and that joyfully rises like a bridegroom coming out from his chamber] or [and it comes out joyfully and eagerly like a bridegroom leaving his bedroom]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT it rejoices like a strong man to run its path**
**UST** It is like a strong athlete who is very eager to start running in a race
(יָשִׂישׂ כְּגִבּוֹר לָרוּץ אֹרַח)

The point of this comparison is that just as a **strong man** is eager and enthusiastic to **run**, so is the sun eager and enthusiastic to travel across the sky. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [it moves eagerly across the sky like a strong man who is eager to run a race]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| is like a bridegroom | like a bridegroom |
| it rejoices | who is very eager |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| like a strong man | It is like a strong athlete |

# Psalms 19:6

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *From the end of the heavens is its going forth, and its circuit to the ends of them, and there is nothing hidden from its heat.* | *The sun rises at one side of the sky and goes across the sky and sets on the other side, and there is nothing that is unaffected by its heat.* |

ULT **From the end of the heavens is its going forth, and its circuit to the ends of them**
UST The sun rises at one side of the sky and goes across the sky and sets on the other side
(מִקְצֵה הַשָּׁמַיִם ׀ מְוֹצָאוֹ וּתְקוּפָתוֹ עַל־קְצוֹתָם)

David assumes that readers will know that **the end of the heavens** and **the ends of them** refer to opposite horizons where the sun appears to begin and complete its daily journey across the sky. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [From the furthest extremities of the heavens is its going forth, and its circuit to the furthest extremities of them]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **is its going forth, and its circuit … from its heat**
UST The sun rises … and goes across the sky … by its heat
(מְוֹצָאוֹ וּתְקוּפָתוֹ & מֵחַמָּתוֹ)

The pronouns **its** in the phrase **its going forth, and its circuit** and in the phrase **its heat** all refer to the sun. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [is the sun's going forth, and the sun's circuit … from the sun's heat]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and there is nothing hidden from its heat**
UST and there is nothing that is unaffected by its heat
(וְאֵין נִסְתָּר מֵחַמָּתוֹ)

The expression **nothing hidden** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and there is nothing that is able to escape from its heat]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the heavens | the sky |

# Psalms 19:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The law of Yahweh is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of Yahweh is sure, making wise the simple.* | *The instructions that Yahweh has given us are perfect; they keep us from living in a way that would cause God to condemn us. We can be sure that the things that Yahweh has told us are trustworthy, and by learning them people who have not been previously taught will become wise.* |

ULT **restoring the soul**
UST they keep us from living in a way that would cause God to condemn us
(מְשִׁיבַת נָפֶשׁ)

Here the word the ULT translates as **restoring** could mean: (1) "turning back" or "converting" and refer to changing one's mind leading them to turn from (stop) a wrong way of living and turn towards (obey) God. Alternate translation: [converting the soul] or [turning one back to God], or (2) [refreshing.] Alternate translation: [refreshing the soul] or [reviving the soul]

ULT **restoring the soul**
UST they keep us from living in a way that would cause God to condemn us
(מְשִׁיבַת נָפֶשׁ)

David is using the term **soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [restoring the person]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the simple**
UST people who have not been previously taught
(פֶּתִי)

David is using the adjective **simple** 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: [simple people] or [inexperienced people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The law of Yahweh | The instructions that Yahweh has given us |
| Yahweh | Yahweh has given us |
| is perfect | are perfect |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| restoring | they keep … from living in a way that would cause God to condemn |
| the soul | us … us |
| the testimony of | the things that … has told us |
| is sure | We can be sure that … are trustworthy |
| making wise | and by learning them … will become wise |

# Psalms 19:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The precepts of Yahweh are right, making the heart rejoice; the commandment of Yahweh is pure, enlightening the eyes.* | *Yahweh's laws are fair; {when we obey them,} we become joyful. The commands of Yahweh are morally perfect, and {by learning them} we start to understand {how God wants us to behave}.* |

ULT **making the heart rejoice**
UST {when we obey them,} we become joyful
(מְשַׂמְּחֵי־לֵב)

Here the **heart** represents a person's inner being, where emotions and desires exist. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [causing people to rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the commandment of Yahweh is pure**
UST The commands of Yahweh are morally perfect
(מִצְוַת יְהוָה בָּרָה)

David is not referring to a specific **commandment** of God. He means Yahweh's entire law as a whole, which includes all Yahweh's commandments. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [the commandments of Yahweh are pure]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **is pure**
UST are morally perfect
(בָּרָה)

David is speaking of **the commandment of Yahweh** as if it were physically **pure**, like something that contains no impurities or contaminants. He means that the commandment is morally perfect and completely right. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [is totally righteous]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **enlightening the eyes**
UST and {by learning them} we start to understand {how God wants us to behave}
(מְאִירַת עֵינָיִם)

Here, **eyes** represents the ability to see and understand. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [giving guidance for living] or [giving insight for how to live wisely]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh's |
| are right | are fair |
| making … rejoice | when we obey them … become joyful |
| is pure | are morally perfect |

# Psalms 19:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The fear of Yahweh is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of Yahweh are true, they are altogether righteous.* | *The law of Yahweh causes people to revere him and therefore live in a morally upright way; that is something that will endure forever. The things Yahweh has decreed are true, they are completely righteous.* |

ULT **The fear of Yahweh is clean**
UST The law of Yahweh causes people to revere him and therefore live in a morally upright way
(יִרְאַ֣ת יְהוָ֣ה ׀ טְהוֹרָ֣ה)

Here, **The fear of Yahweh** represents the obedience to his laws or commands that is the result of that reverence and that produces a clean life. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Carefully obeying the law of Yahweh keeps one clean] or [the reverence given to Yahweh that results in obedience to him produces a clean life]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **The fear of Yahweh is clean**
UST The law of Yahweh causes people to revere him and therefore live in a morally upright way
(יִרְאַ֣ת יְהוָ֣ה ׀ טְהוֹרָ֣ה)

David is speaking of the fear of Yahweh as if it were something that could be **clean**. He means that the fear of Yahweh causes people to obey him, which results in a life that is pure and without moral fault. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The fear of Yahweh results in a morally pure life] or [The fear of Yahweh results in obedience to him which produces a faultless life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The fear of | The law of … causes people to revere him |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| enduring | that is something that will endure |
| forever | forever |
| the judgments of | The things … has decreed |
| they are … righteous | they are … righteous |

# Psalms 19:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They are to be desired more than gold, and more than much fine gold, and they are more sweet than honey and nectar of honeycombs.* | *Yahweh's commandments are more valuable than gold, even great amounts of the purest gold. Learning the things Yahweh teaches us through them is more pleasurable than eating honey, than honey dripping from honeycombs.* |

ULT **They are to be desired more than gold, and more than much fine gold, and they are more sweet than honey and nectar of honeycombs**
UST Yahweh's commandments are more valuable than gold, even great amounts of the purest gold. Learning the things Yahweh teaches us through them is more pleasurable than eating honey, than honey dripping from honeycombs
(הַנֶּחֱמָדִים מִזָּהָב וּמִפָּז רָב וּמְתוּקִים מִדְּבַשׁ וְנֹפֶת צוּפִים)

The point of this comparison is that just as **gold** is valuable and therefore desirable, and as **honey** is sweet, so the commandments of Yahweh are valuable and pleasant. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [The commandments of Yahweh are extremely valuable and pleasant, like gold and honey]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **They are to be desired … and they are more sweet than honey**
UST Yahweh's commandments are … valuable … Learning the things Yahweh teaches us through them is more pleasurable than eating honey
(הַנֶּחֱמָדִים & וּמְתוּקִים מִדְּבַשׁ)

The pronoun **They** refers to the "commandments" of Yahweh mentioned in the preceding verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The commandments of Yahweh are worth … the commandments of Yahweh are sweeter than honey]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and nectar of**
UST than honey dripping from
(וְנֹפֶת)

The word translated as **nectar** refers specifically to honey which drips or flows from a honeycomb. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly by translating it as "honey." Alternate translation: [and honey of]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| more than gold | more … than gold |
| and more than … fine gold | even … of the purest gold |
| more … than honey | more … than eating honey |
| honeycombs | honeycombs |

# Psalms 19:11

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Also, by them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward.* | *Furthermore, by your commandments I am warned {about what things I should not do}. You greatly reward those who obey them.* |

ULT **by them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward**
UST by your commandments I am warned {about what things I should not do}. You greatly reward those who obey them
(עַבְדְּךָ נִזְהָר בָּהֶם בְּשָׁמְרָם עֵקֶב רָב)

Both occurrences of the pronoun **them** refer to the commandments and teachings of Yahweh described in verses 7–10. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [by Yahweh's commandments your servant is warned; in obeying his commandments there is great reward]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **your servant is warned**
UST I am warned {about what things I should not do} … them
(עַבְדְּךָ נִזְהָר)

David is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person. Alternate translation: [I, your servant, am warned] or [I am warned]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

ULT **by them your servant is warned**
UST by your commandments I am warned {about what things I should not do} … them
(עַבְדְּךָ נִזְהָר בָּהֶם)

The expression **by them your servant is warned** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [they warn your servant] or [Yahweh warns your servant by them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your servant | I |
| is warned | am warned {about what things I should not do} … them |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| there is … reward | You … reward |

# Psalms 19:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Who can discern {his} errors? Acquit me from hidden {faults}.* | *There is no one who can know all his sins; so Yahweh, forgive me for these things which I do that I do not realize are wrong.* |

**ULT Who can discern {his} errors**
**UST** There is no one who can know all his sins
(שְׁגִיאוֹת מִי־יָבִין)

David is using the question form to emphasize that no one can fully understand all of their own sins and mistakes. If you would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [No one can discern all his own errors!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT {his} errors … from hidden {faults}**
**UST** all his sins … for these things which I do that I do not realize are wrong
(שְׁגִיאוֹת & מִנִּסְתָּרוֹת)

David 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, as in the ULT, if that would be clearer in your language.

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT Acquit me from hidden {faults}**
**UST** so Yahweh, forgive me for these things which I do that I do not realize are wrong
(מִנִּסְתָּרוֹת נַקֵּנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. David is asking God to forgive him. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please acquit me from hidden faults]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| can discern | can know |

# Psalms 19:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Also, keep back your servant from presumptuous ones; let them not rule over me. Then I will be blameless, and I will be innocent from great transgression.* | *Also, keep me from doing things that I know are wrong; do not let my sinful desires control me. If you do that, then I will be guiltless, and I will not be guilty of committing any great sin.* |

ULT **keep back your servant from presumptuous ones; let them not rule over me**
UST keep me from doing things that I know are wrong; do not let my sinful desires control me
(מִזֵּדִים ׀ חַשֹּׂךְ עַבְדְּךָ אַל־יִמְשְׁלוּ־בִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please keep back your servant from presumptuous ones; please do not let them rule over me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **keep back your servant**
UST keep me
(חַשֹּׂךְ עַבְדְּךָ)

David is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person. Alternate translation: [keep me back]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

ULT **from presumptuous ones**
UST from doing things that I know are wrong
(מִזֵּדִים)

David is using the adjective **presumptuous** as a noun to mean a certain kind of sin. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [presumptuous sins] or [deliberate sins]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **let them not rule over me**
UST do not let my sinful desires control me
(אַל־יִמְשְׁלוּ־בִי)

David assumes that readers will know that **them** refers to **presumptuous** sins. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [let presumptuous sins not rule over me] or [let these presumptuous sins not rule over me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **from great transgression**
UST of committing any great sin
(מִפֶּשַׁע רָב)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **transgression**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from doing something very wrong] or [from sinning greatly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| keep back | keep |
| your servant | me |
| from presumptuous ones | from doing things that I know are wrong |
| let them … rule | do … let my sinful desires control me |
| I will be blameless | I will be guiltless |
| and I will be innocent | and I will not be guilty |
| from … transgression | of committing any … sin |

# Psalms 19:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to your face, Yahweh, my strength and the one redeeming me.* | *I pray that both what I say, and what I think about, be pleasing to you, Yahweh, you who enable me to be strong and who redeem me.* |

ULT **Let the words of my mouth … be**
UST I pray that … what I say … be
(יִהְיוּ אִמְרֵי־פִ֥י &)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. David is using this form to make a humble petition to Yahweh. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [I ask that the words of my mouth … be] or [Please let the words of my mouth … be]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **the words of my mouth**
UST what I say
(אִמְרֵי־פִ֥י)

Here, **the words of my mouth** represent what David says by using words. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what I say]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and the meditation of my heart**
UST both … and what I think about
(וְהֶגְיוֹן לִבִּ֥י)

Here **my heart** represents where David’s thoughts and feelings exist. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and my inner thoughts] or [and what I think within myself]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to your face**
UST to you
(לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here God's **face** represents his presence and by extension his sight. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [to you] or [in your sight]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **my strength**
UST enable me to be strong
(צוּרִי)

See how you translated the phrase "my strength" in 18:1.

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and the meditation of | both … and what I think about |
| Yahweh | Yahweh, you who |
| and the one redeeming me | and who redeem me |

# Psalms 20

## Psalm 20 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 20 is considered to be one of the “royal psalms.” See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about the royal psalms.

1. Prayer for the king that Yahweh would protect and help him in battle (1–2)
2. Prayer that Yahweh would accept the king’s offerings (3)
3. Prayer that Yahweh would fulfill the king’s desires and plans (4)
4. Anticipation of Yahweh giving his king victory (5)
5. Expression of confidence in Yahweh (6–8)
6. Closing prayer (9)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Trust

In verse 7 David asserts that trusting in Yahweh is better than trusting in military might. (See: trust, trusted, trustworthy, trustworthiness)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### In verses 1–5 who do the pronouns “you” and “your” refer to?

In this psalm all occurrences of the pronouns “you” and “your” that occur in verses 1–5 are singular and refer to Yahweh’s anointed king mentioned in verse 6. Because verse 6 identifies who the pronouns “you” and “your” refer to, you do not need to make this explicit in your translation. Also, if your language has both singular and plural second person pronouns, you should use the singular forms each time you translate the pronouns “you” and “your” in verses 1–5.

# Psalms 20:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the chief musician; a psalm of David* | *This is a note to the worship leader: This is a psalm of David.* |

**ULT To the chief musician**
UST This is a note to the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a psalm | This is a psalm |
| of David | of David |

# Psalms 20:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May Yahweh answer you in the day of trouble; may the name of the God of Jacob set you on high.* | *I desire that Yahweh will answer you {when you call out to him} when you are in a crisis! I desire that Yahweh, the God whom {our ancestor} Jacob worshiped, will protect you {from your enemies}.* |

ULT **in the day of trouble**
UST {when you call out to him} when you are in a crisis
(בְּיוֹם צָרָה)

David 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: [when you experience trouble] or [in time of trouble]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the name of the God of Jacob**
UST Yahweh, the God whom {our ancestor} Jacob worshiped
(שֵׁם ׀ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב)

David is using the term **name** to represent the person and character of God himself, including his attributes and covenant faithfulness to deliver his people when they call on him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the God of Jacob]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **may … set you on high**
UST I desire that … will protect you {from your enemies}
(יְשַׂגֶּבְךָ)

David is speaking of Yahweh protecting his anointed king as if Yahweh would **set** him up on a **high** place where his enemies could not reach and harm him. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [may … keep you safe] or [may … keep you from being harmed by your enemies]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| trouble | when you are in a crisis |
| the God of | the God |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Jacob | whom {our ancestor} Jacob worshiped |

# Psalms 20:2

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *May he send you help from the sanctuary and support you from Zion.* | *I desire that he may come from his sacred temple and help you, and aid you from {where he lives} on Mount Zion.* |

**ULT May he send you help**
**UST** I desire that he may come … and help you
(יְשַׁלַּח־עֶזְרְךָ)

David assumes that readers will know that **help** means military assistance or deliverance from enemies. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [May he help you prevail against your adversaries with aid]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT May he send you help from the sanctuary**
**UST** I desire that he may come from his sacred temple and help you
(יְשַׁלַּח־עֶזְרְךָ מִקֹּדֶשׁ)

David assumes that readers will know that **the sanctuary** refers to the temple in Jerusalem, the place where God's presence dwells. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [May he send you help from his sanctuary, the Temple]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT May he send you help from the sanctuary and support you from Zion**
**UST** I desire that he may come from his sacred temple and help you, and aid you from {where he lives} on Mount Zion
(יְשַׁלַּח־עֶזְרְךָ מִקֹּדֶשׁ וּמִצִּיּוֹן יִסְעָדֶךָּ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [May he send you help from the sanctuary, yes, may he support you from Zion]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| from the sanctuary | from his sacred temple |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and … from Zion | and … from {where he lives} on Mount Zion |

# Psalms 20:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May he remember all of your grain offerings and regard as fat your burnt offering. Selah* | *I desire that he may accept all your grain offerings and accept all your {other} offerings that you give him to be burned {on the altar}. Selah* |

ULT **May he remember all of your grain offerings**
UST I desire that he may accept all your grain offerings
(יִזְכֹּר כָּל־מִנְחֹתֶיךָ)

David assumes that readers will know that when God remembers someone's offerings, he acts favorably toward that person based on those offerings. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [May he take notice of all of your offerings and act accordingly]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and regard as fat your burnt offering**
UST and accept all your {other} offerings that you give him to be burned {on the altar}
(וְעוֹלָתְךָ יְדַשְּׁנֶה)

David is using **regard as fat** as a common expression of his culture to mean "accept" or "be pleased with." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your grain offerings | your grain offerings |
| and … your burnt offering | and … all your {other} offerings that you give him to be burned {on the altar} |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 20:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May he grant you according to your heart, and may he fulfill all of your plans.* | *I want him to give you what you desire, and I want him to allow you to be able to accomplish everything that you have planned to do.* |

> ULT **according to your heart**
> UST what you desire
> (כִּלְבָבֶךָ)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's desires exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what you desire] or [the desires of your heart]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **according to your heart**
> UST what you desire
> (כִּלְבָבֶךָ)

David assumes that readers will understand that **your heart** refers to the king's desires or wishes. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [according to your heart's desire]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| may he fulfill | to allow you to be able to accomplish |

# Psalms 20:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *We will shout for joy over your salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up {our} banners. May Yahweh fulfill all of your petitions.* | *When you defeat your enemies, we will shout joyfully. We will lift up a banner proclaiming that it is Yahweh our God {who helps us}. I desire Yahweh to do everything that you have requested him to do.* |

**ULT We will shout for joy … we will set up {our} banners**
**UST** we will shout joyfully. We will lift up a banner proclaiming
(נְרַנְּנָה & נִדְגְּלָ֗)

In this context, the forms of the two verbs the ULT translates as **We will shout for joy** and **we will set up our banners** could indicate: (1) a resolution of the will and therefore be translated as in the ULT, or (2) a request. Alternate translation: [May we shout for joy … may we set up our banners]

**ULT We will shout for joy over your salvation**
**UST** When you defeat your enemies, we will shout joyfully
(נְרַנְּנָה ׀ בִּֽישׁוּעָתֶ֑ךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **joy** and **salvation**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [When you save us, then we will joyfully shout]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and in the name of our God**
**UST** that it is Yahweh our God {who helps us}
(וּבְשֵׁם־אֱלֹהֵ֥ינוּ)

Here David is using the term **name** to represent who God is or to refer to his reputation. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and for the glory of our God]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **we will set up {our} banners**
UST We will lift up a banner proclaiming
(נְדַגֶּל)

A **banner** is a flag made from a large piece of cloth that is attached to a long pole. People, groups, and kings had their own unique banners by which they identified themselves. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of flag, you could use the name of something similar in your area, or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [we will set up our flags]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **and in the name of our God we will set up {our} banners**
UST We will lift up a banner proclaiming that it is Yahweh our God {who helps us}
(וּבְשֵׁם־אֱלֹהֵינוּ נְדַגֶּל)

Raising banners was a symbolic action by which armies showed victory. In this context it was done in order to give God the glory for helping the soldiers of the Israelite army defeat their enemies. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [and in the name of our God we will raise our banners to celebrate the victory Yahweh has given us]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| We will shout for joy | we will shout joyfully |
| over your salvation | When you defeat your enemies |
| our God | that it is Yahweh our God {who helps us} |
| May … fulfill | I desire … to do |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 20:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Now I know that Yahweh saves his anointed; he will answer him from his holy heaven with mighty deeds of salvation of his right hand.* | *I know now that Yahweh rescues the one whom he has chosen {to be king}. From his holy place in heaven he will answer him, and he will save him by his great power.* |

> ULT **his anointed**
> UST the one whom he has chosen {to be king}
> (מְשִׁיחוֹ)

You may be used to indicating when David is referring to himself in the third person by saying something such as “me, his anointed.” However, we recommend that you not do that in this instance, since the term **anointed** here refers to others besides David.

**Support Reference:** When to Keep Information Implicit

> ULT **his anointed**
> UST the one whom he has chosen {to be king}
> (מְשִׁיחוֹ)

David assumes that readers will know that **his anointed** refers to the king of Israel, whom God had chosen and set apart by anointing with oil. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [his anointed king]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **his anointed**
> UST the one whom he has chosen {to be king}
> (מְשִׁיחוֹ)

The expression **his anointed** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [the one whom he had anointed]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **with mighty deeds of salvation of his right hand**
UST and he will save him by his great power
(בִּגְבֻרוֹת יֶשַׁע יְמִינוֹ)

Here, **right hand** represents the power of Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with mighty deeds by his great power to save]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **with mighty deeds of salvation of his right hand**
UST and he will save him by his great power
(בִּגְבֻרוֹת יֶשַׁע יְמִינוֹ)

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: [with mighty deeds of his saving right hand]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| I know | I know |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| saves | rescues |
| his anointed | the one whom he has chosen {to be king} |
| from … heaven | From … in heaven |
| his holy | his holy place |
| with mighty deeds of | and he will … him by his great power |
| salvation of | save |

# Psalms 20:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *These in chariots and these in horses, but we will remember the name of Yahweh our God.* | *Some {kings} trust that because they have chariots {they will be able to defeat their enemies}, and some trust that their horses {will enable them to defeat their enemies}, but we will trust in the power of Yahweh our God.* |

ULT **These in chariots and these in horses**
UST Some {kings} trust that because they have chariots {they will be able to defeat their enemies}, and some trust that their horses {will enable them to defeat their enemies … }
(אֵ֭לֶּה בָּרֶ֣כֶב וְאֵ֑לֶּה בַּסּוּסִ֥ים)

David is using **These in chariots and these in horses** as a common expression of his culture to mean "Some trust in chariots and some in horses" or "Some trust in chariots and others in horses." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Some in chariots and some in horses] or [Some trust in chariots and others trust in horses]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **These in chariots and these in horses**
UST Some {kings} trust that because they have chariots {they will be able to defeat their enemies}, and some trust that their horses {will enable them to defeat their enemies … }
(אֵ֭לֶּה בָּרֶ֣כֶב וְאֵ֑לֶּה בַּסּוּסִ֥ים)

David 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: [These trust in chariots and these trust in horses]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **These in chariots and these in horses**
UST Some {kings} trust that because they have chariots {they will be able to defeat their enemies}, and some trust that their horses {will enable them to defeat their enemies … }
(אֵ֭לֶּה בָּרֶ֣כֶב וְאֵ֑לֶּה בַּסּוּסִ֥ים)

David assumes that readers will know that chariots and horses were military equipment that symbolized military power and strength. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [These trust in their military chariots and these in their war horses]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **but we**
UST but we
(וַאֲנַ֗חְנוּ)

David uses the word **but** here to indicate a contrast between those who trust in military power and those who trust in Yahweh. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [however, we] or [in contrast, we]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **will remember**
UST will trust
(נַזְכִּ֥יר)

David assumes that readers will know that remembering the name of Yahweh means trusting in him and calling on him for help. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [will keep in mind] or [will be confident in]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the name of Yahweh our God**
UST in the power of Yahweh our God
(בְּשֵׁ֖ם־יְהוָ֣ה אֱלֹהֵ֑ינוּ)

David is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is and his character which includes being very powerful. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh our God] or [Yahweh our powerful God]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| in chariots | that because they have chariots {they will be able to defeat their enemies} |
| in horses | that their horses {will enable them to defeat their enemies} |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| our God | our God |

# Psalms 20:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They bow down and fall, but we rise and stand upright!* | *Some will stumble and fall down, but we will be strong and not be moved.* |

> ULT **They … but we**
> UST and … but we
> (הֵמָּה & וַאֲנַחְנוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to those who trust in chariots and horses (mentioned in the previous verse), while the pronoun **we** refers to David and those who trust in Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Those who trust in those things … but we who trust in Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **They bow down and fall**
> UST Some will stumble and fall down
> (הֵמָּה כָּרְעוּ וְנָפָֽלוּ)

David assumes that readers will know that **bow down and fall** refers to being defeated in battle. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [They collapse and fall in battle]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **and fall**
> UST fall down
> (וְנָפָֽלוּ)

Here, **fall** represents dying in battle. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and fall dead]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| bow down | Some will stumble |
| and stand upright | will be strong |

# Psalms 20:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Save, Yahweh; may the king answer us on the day we call.* | *Yahweh, enable your king {to defeat our enemies}! We desire that the king answer us when we cry out {for help}.* |

**ULT Save, Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh, enable your king {to defeat our enemies}
(יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Yahweh, please save]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Save, Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh, enable your king {to defeat our enemies}
(יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה)

David 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: [Yahweh, save the king] or [Yahweh, save us, your people]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT Save, Yahweh; may the king answer us**
**UST** Yahweh, enable your king {to defeat our enemies}! We desire that the king answer us
(יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה ׀ הַמֶּלֶךְ יַעֲנֵנוּ)

The word the ULT translates as **the king** could belong: (1) with the second line, as in the ULT, or (2) with the first line. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, save the king! May he answer us]

**ULT on the day**
**UST** when
(בְּיוֹם)

David 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] or [when]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Save | enable your king {to defeat our enemies} |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the king | the king |
| we call | we cry out {for help} |

# Psalms 21

## Psalm 21 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 21 is considered to be one of the "royal psalms." See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about the royal psalms.

1. The king rejoices in Yahweh's strength (1)
2. Yahweh's blessing of his chosen king (2–6)
3. The king's trust in Yahweh (7)
4. The king will defeat his enemies with Yahweh's help (8–12)
5. Final words regarding Yahweh's strength and power (13)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Pronouns

There is a shift in how Yahweh is referred to in this psalm. In verses 1–6 David uses second person pronouns when Yahweh is addressed. In verse 7 Yahweh is referred to in the third person as "Yahweh" and as "the Most High." In verses 8–13 David shifts back to using second person pronouns when Yahweh is being addressed. (See: First, Second or Third Person)

In this psalm, when the pronouns "you," "we," "them," "their," and "they" are used, it may at times be unclear to whom these pronouns are referring to. For help translating these pronouns, see the notes in the individual verses where these pronouns occur. (See: Pronouns — When to Use Them)

# Psalms 21:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the chief musician; a psalm of David.* | *This is a note to the worship leader: This is a psalm of David.* |

**ULT To the chief musician**
UST This is a note to the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a psalm | This is a psalm |
| of David | of David |

# Psalms 21:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, in your strength the king rejoices, and in your salvation how greatly he exults!* | *Yahweh, {your} king is glad because you have enabled him to be strong and because you have rescued him {from his enemies}; indeed, how exceedingly he rejoices.* |

ULT **in your strength … and in your salvation**
UST because you have enabled him to be strong and because you have rescued him {from his enemies … }
(בְּעֻזְּךָ & וִּישׁוּעָתְךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **strength** and **salvation**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [because you are strong … and because you save me] or [because you are powerful … and because you save those who trust in you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the king rejoices … he exults**
UST {your} king is glad … he rejoices
(יִשְׂמַח־מֶלֶךְ יגיל)

You may be used to indicating when David is referring to himself in the third person by saying something such as “I, the king rejoice … I exult.” However, we recommend that you not do that in this instance, since **the king** here, while including David, refers to others besides him.

**Support Reference:** When to Keep Information Implicit

ULT **how greatly he exults**
UST indeed, how exceedingly he rejoices
(מַה־יגיל מְאֹד)

David is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of joy. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [he rejoices so very much] or [he is extremely glad]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the king | {your} king |
| rejoices | is glad |
| and in your salvation | |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| | and because you have rescued him {from his enemies} |
| he exults | he rejoices |

# Psalms 21:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have given to him the desire of his heart, and the request of his lips you have not withheld. Selah* | *You have given {your} king the things he desired, and you have not refused to do what he requested you to do. Selah* |

ULT **the desire of his heart**
UST the things he desired
(תַּאֲוַת לִבּוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **desire**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what he desired]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the desire of his heart**
UST the things he desired
(תַּאֲוַת לִבּוֹ)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's desires exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what he desired] or [what he desired in his inmost being]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the request of his lips**
UST and … to do what he requested you to do
(וַאֲרֶשֶׁת שְׂפָתָיו)

Here, **the request of his lips** represents what the king asked for by using his lips to speak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and what he asked for]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 21:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you meet him with blessings of good; you place on his head a crown of refined gold.* | *In answer to his prayer, you bless him with many good things. You place a gold crown on his head.* |

ULT **you meet him with blessings of good**
UST In answer to his prayer, you bless him with many good things
(תְּקַדְּמֶנּוּ בִּרְכוֹת טוֹב)

Here the phrase **you meet him** could mean: (1) that Yahweh met the king. Alternate translation: [you come to him with good blessings] or [you greet him with excellent blessings], or (2) that Yahweh anticipated what the king needed and was already working ahead of time before the king prayed in order to meet his needs. Alternate translation: [you anticipated his needs and came to him with blessings of good] or [you knew what he needed and met him with blessings of good]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **with blessings of good**
UST bless … good things
(בִּרְכוֹת טוֹב)

The implication is that God blesses the king with good things. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [with good blessings] or [with excellent blessings]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **with blessings of good**
UST bless … good things
(בִּרְכוֹת טוֹב)

This is poetic language. If your language has a way to indicate poetry, you could use it here. Alternate translation: [with rich blessings]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **you place**
UST You place
(תָּשִׁית)

David assumes that readers will know that Yahweh himself did not physically **place** a crown on David's head but rather chose him to be king and had people crown him as king by placing a crown on his head. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [you cause to be placed]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **you place on his head a crown of refined gold**
UST You place a gold crown on his head
(תָּשִׁית לְרֹאשׁוֹ עֲטֶרֶת פָּז)

Placing **a crown** on the king's **head** was a symbolic action by which God showed that he was establishing the king in his royal authority and giving him honor. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [you place on his head a crown of refined gold, showing that you have established him as king]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| with blessings of | bless |
| good | good things |
| a crown of | a … crown |
| refined gold | gold |

# Psalms 21:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He asked life from you; you gave {it} to him, length of days, forever and ever.* | *He asked you to let him live for a long time, and you have enabled him to live for a long time.* |

**ULT He asked life from you**
(חַיִּים ׀ שָׁאַל מִמְּךָ)

Because the following line in this verse explains what **life** refers to, there is no need to explain this further here.

**Support Reference:** When to Keep Information Implicit

**ULT He asked life from you; you gave {it} to him, length of days, forever and ever**
(חַיִּים ׀ שָׁאַל מִמְּךָ נָתַתָּה לּוֹ אֹרֶךְ יָמִים עוֹלָם וָעֶד)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **life**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [He asked you that he might live, and you granted his request and gave him length of days, forever and ever]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT length of days**
(אֹרֶךְ יָמִים)

David assumes that readers will know that **length of days** means to live for many years. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [a long life] or [a lengthy life]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| forever | עוֹלָם (ORIG QUOTE) |

# Psalms 21:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *His glory is great through your salvation; splendor and majesty you place on him.* | *People honor him greatly because you have helped him defeat his enemies. You have made him famous.* |

ULT **His glory is great through your salvation; splendor and majesty you place on him**
UST People honor him greatly because you have helped him defeat his enemies. You have made him famous
(גָּדֹול כְּבודֹו בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ הוֹד וְהָדָר תְּשַׁוֶּה עָלָיו)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **salvation**, **splendor**, and **majesty**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [You glorify him greatly by saving him; you make him splendorous and majestic]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **splendor and majesty you place on him**
UST You have made him famous
(הוֹד וְהָדָר תְּשַׁוֶּה עָלָיו)

The terms **splendor** and **majesty** mean similar things. David 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 honor you place on him] or [magnificent glory you place on him]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **you place on him**
UST You have made him
(תְּשַׁוֶּה עָלָיו)

David assumes that readers will know that **place on him** here means “give to him.” You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [you bestow on him] or [you give to him]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| His glory is | People honor him |
| through your salvation | because you have helped him defeat his enemies |
| splendor | famous |
| and majesty | famous |

# Psalms 21:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you place on him eternal blessings; you make him glad with joy with your face.* | *You bless him forever, and you cause him to be joyful in your presence.* |

**ULT you place on him**
**UST** You … him
(תְּשִׁיתֵהוּ)

David assumes that readers will know that **him** refers to the king mentioned in the superscription and throughout the psalm. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [you bestow on the king] or [you grant the king]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT you place on him eternal blessings; you make him glad with joy with your face**
**UST** You bless him forever, and you cause him to be joyful in your presence
(תְּשִׁיתֵהוּ בְרָכוֹת לָעַד תְּחַדֵּהוּ בְשִׂמְחָה אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ)

The implication is that the king will rejoice in the presence of God, that is, he will rejoice because God is with him. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [you make him glad with joy because you are present with him] or [you make him rejoice because he is in your presence]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT you place on him eternal blessings**
**UST** You bless him forever
(תְּשִׁיתֵהוּ בְרָכוֹת לָעַד)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **blessings**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [you bless him eternally]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT you make him glad with joy**
**UST** and you cause him to be joyful
(תְּחַדֵּהוּ בְשִׂמְחָה)

This is poetic language. If your language has a way to indicate poetry, you could use it here. Alternate translation: [you make him very glad] or [you make him exceedingly glad]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **with your face**
UST in your presence
(אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ)

Here, **with your face** represents being in Yahweh's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in your presence] or [with your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| eternal | forever |
| blessings | bless |
| you make him glad | and you cause him to be joyful |
| with joy | and you cause him to be joyful |

# Psalms 21:7

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *For the king is trusting in Yahweh, and through the covenant faithfulness of the Most High, he will not be shaken.* | *The king trusts in you, Yahweh, and because you, who are much greater than all other spirit beings, faithfully love him, you will protect him.* |

ULT **the king**
UST The king
(הַמֶּלֶךְ)

Translate the phrase **the king** as you did in verse one of this Psalm.

**Support Reference:** When to Keep Information Implicit

ULT **and through the covenant faithfulness of**
UST and because you … faithfully love him
(וּבְחֶסֶד)

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: [and because he is faithful to the covenant of]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the Most High**
UST who are much greater than all other spirit beings
(עֶלְיוֹן)

See how you translated the similar expression in 9:2.

ULT **he will not be shaken**
UST you will protect him
(בַּל־יִמּוֹט)

See how you translated the similar phrase “I will not be shaken” in 15:5.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the king | The king |
| is trusting | trusts |
| in Yahweh | in you, Yahweh |
| and through the covenant faithfulness of | and because you … faithfully love him |
| the Most High | who are much greater than all other spirit beings |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he will … be shaken | you will protect him |

# Psalms 21:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your hand will find all of your enemies; your right hand will find the ones hating you.* | *You, the king, will defeat all your enemies; yes, you will surely defeat all those who hate you.* |

ULT **Your hand will find all of your enemies; your right hand will find the ones hating you**
UST You, the king, will defeat all your enemies; yes, you will surely defeat all those who hate you
(תִּמְצָא֣וְ יָדְךָ֣ לְכָל־אֹיְבֶ֑יךָ יְמִינְךָ֥ תִמְצָ֗א שֹׂנְאֶֽיךָ׃)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Your hand will find all of your enemies, indeed, your right hand will find those who hate you]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Your hand**
UST You, the king
(יָדְךָ֣)

The pronoun **Your** refers to the king. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [You, the king's hand] or [The king's hand]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Your hand will find … your right hand will find**
UST You, the king, will defeat … yes, you will surely defeat
(תִּמְצָא֣וְ יָדְךָ֣ & יְמִינְךָ֥ תִמְצָ֗א)

David is using **Your hand will find** as a common expression of his culture to mean "You will reach" or "You will overtake." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You will reach … you will overtake]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your enemies | your enemies |

# Psalms 21:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You will make them as an oven of fire at the time of your face. In his nose Yahweh will swallow them and will consume them {with} fire.* | *When you, the king, appear, you will so completely destroy them that it will be as if you threw them into a fiery furnace. Because Yahweh is angry with them, he will decimate them so completely that it will be as if he swallowed them whole or burned them up.* |

ULT **You will make them**
UST you, the king … will so completely destroy them
(תְּשִׁיתֵֽמוֹ)

The pronoun **them** refers to the king's enemies. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [You, the king, will make your enemies]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **You will make them as an oven of fire**
UST you, the king … will so completely destroy them that it will be as if you threw them into a fiery furnace
(תְּשִׁיתֵֽמוֹ ׀ כְּתַנּ֣וּר אֵ֑שׁ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **an oven of fire** completely consumes what is placed in it, so David is saying that God will completely destroy his enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [You will completely consume them like fire in an oven]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **You will make them as an oven of fire**
UST you, the king … will so completely destroy them that it will be as if you threw them into a fiery furnace
(תְּשִׁיתֵֽמוֹ ׀ כְּתַנּ֣וּר אֵ֑שׁ)

David 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 will make them as something that is burned in an oven of fire]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **at the time of your face**
UST When … appear, you
(לְעֵת פָּנֶיךָ)

Here, **your face** represents your presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [at the time of your appearing]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **In his nose**
UST Because … is angry with them
(בְּאַפּוֹ)

David is using the phrase **In his nose** as a common expression of the culture to mean that Yahweh is angry. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [In his anger] or [In his wrath]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Yahweh will swallow them and will consume them {with} fire**
UST Yahweh … he will decimate them so completely that it will be as if he swallowed them whole or burned them up
(יְהוָה & יְבַלְּעֵם וְתֹאכְלֵם אֵשׁ)

David is speaking of Yahweh destroying his enemies as if Yahweh will literally **swallow** them and burn them up with **fire**. If these images communicate well in your language, please use them. If not, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will destroy them completely, as if swallowing them or consuming them with fire]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Yahweh will swallow them and will consume them {with} fire**
UST Yahweh … he will decimate them so completely that it will be as if he swallowed them whole or burned them up
(יְהוָה & יְבַלְּעֵם וְתֹאכְלֵם אֵשׁ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will completely destroy them as if he was swallowing them; yes, he will consume them as if he was burning them with fire]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and will consume them | or burned them up |

# Psalms 21:10

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *You will destroy their fruit from the earth and their seed from {among} the sons of man.* | *You, the king, will remove their children from this earth; their descendants will all disappear.* |

**ULT You will destroy**
**UST** You, the king, will remove
(תְּאַבֵּד)

The pronoun **You** refers to the king. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [You, God's king, will destroy]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT their fruit … and their seed**
**UST** their children … their descendants
(פִּרְיָמוֹ & זַרְעָם)

David is speaking of **their fruit** and **their seed** as if his enemies' descendants were literal **fruit** and literal **seed** that could be destroyed. If this image does not communicate well in your language, you could express this as a comparison or use plain language. Alternate translation: [their descendants … and their offspring]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT from {among} the sons of man**
**UST** will all disappear
(מִבְּנֵי אָדָם)

David is using **from among the sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "from among humanity" or "from the human race." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from among the human race] or [from among humanity]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| You will destroy | You, the king, will remove |
| their fruit | their children |
| from the earth | from this earth |
| and their seed | their descendants |

# Psalms 21:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Though they stretch out evil against you, they plan a plot they will not be able.* | *They want to harm you, but what they plan will never succeed.* |

ULT **Though they stretch out evil against you, they plan a plot they will not be able**
UST They want to harm you, but what they plan will never succeed
(כִּי־נָטוּ עָלֶיךָ רָעָה חָשְׁבוּ מְזִמָּה בַּל־יוּכָלוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to David's enemies. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Though his enemies stretch out evil against you; his enemies plan a plot they will not be able]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **they stretch out evil against you**
UST They want to harm you
(נָטוּ עָלֶיךָ רָעָה)

Here David is speaking of the king's enemies' plans to harm him as if they would physically **stretch out evil** like a net or trap. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they plan to harm you] or [they devise evil schemes against you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **they stretch out evil against you**
UST They want to harm you
(נָטוּ עָלֶיךָ רָעָה)

David is using the adjective **evil** 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. Alternate translation: [they stretch out evil things against you]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **they plan a plot they will not be able**
UST what they plan will never succeed
(חָשְׁבוּ מְזִמָּה בַּל־יוּכָלוּ)

David 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: [they plan a plot they will not be able to accomplish]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| evil | They want to harm you |

# Psalms 21:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you will make them shoulder; on your strings you will set {your arrows} toward their faces.* | *You will cause them to run away by shooting arrows at them.* |

ULT **you will make them shoulder**
UST You will cause them to run away
(תְּשִׁיתֵמוֹ שֶׁכֶם)

David is using **you will make them shoulder** as a common expression of his culture to mean "you will make them turn and flee." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you will make them turn their backs to you] or [you will put them to flight]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **on your strings you will set {your arrows}**
UST by shooting arrows
(בְּמֵיתָרֶיךָ תְּכוֹנֵן)

David 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 as the ULT has done by supplying the phrase **your arrows**. Alternate translation: [on your bow strings you will set your arrows]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **toward their faces**
UST at them
(עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם)

David is using **their faces** to represent all of them in the act of fleeing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [toward them]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

# Psalms 21:13

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Be exalted, Yahweh, in your strength; we will sing and we will praise your power.* | *Yahweh, show everyone how very strong you are! {When you do that,} we will sing and praise you because you are very powerful.* |

ULT **Be exalted, Yahweh, in your strength … and we will praise your power**
UST Yahweh, show everyone how very strong you are … and praise you because you are very powerful
(רוּמָה יְהוָה בְּעֻזֶּךָ & נְזַמְּרָה גְּבוּרָתֶךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **strength** and **power**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Be exalted, Yahweh, because you are strong … and we will praise you because of how powerful you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **we will sing and we will praise your power**
UST {When you do that,} we will sing and praise you because you are very powerful
(נָשִׁירָה וְנְזַמְּרָה גְּבוּרָתֶךָ)

The implication is that this singing and praising will happen after Yahweh shows his strength by defeating the enemies. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [then we will sing and we will praise your power]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **we will sing and we will praise your power**
UST {When you do that,} we will sing and praise you because you are very powerful
(נָשִׁירָה וְנְזַמְּרָה גְּבוּרָתֶךָ)

The pronoun **we** refers to David and the people of Israel. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [we, your people, will sing and we will praise you because of your power]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Be exalted | show everyone how very strong you are |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and we will praise | and praise |

# Psalms 22

## Psalm 22 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 22 contains several different but related themes of lament, prayer, trust, and hope for the future. Verses 1–21 are a lament. See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about psalms of lament. Verses 22–31 praise Yahweh for his deliverance and kingship over the nations, and the worship he will receive in the future. Many Bible scholars consider Psalm 22 to be one of the "messianic psalms" because different New Testament authors quote parts of this psalm in relation to Jesus and because Jesus quotes the first line of verse 1 while on the cross. See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about the messianic psalms. (See: Christ, Messiah and crucify, crucified and lament, lamentation)

1. An anguished call to God (1–2)
2. An affirmation of God's holiness and past deliverance of the Israelites (3–5)
3. David describes his situation (6–18)
4. A prayer for help (19–21)
5. Yahweh's deliverance of David results in Yahweh being praised (22–26)
6. People from all parts of the world, all people groups, and rich and poor people will turn to Yahweh and worship him as king (27–29)
7. Future generations will praise Yahweh and will be told about his saving acts (30–31)

# Psalms 22:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on “The Doe of the Dawn.” A psalm of David.* | *This is a note to the worship leader: David wrote this song. The tune is “The Doe of the Dawn.”* |

**ULT For the chief musician**

**UST** This is a note to the worship leader

(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The Doe of | The Doe of |
| A psalm | this song |
| of David | David wrote |

# Psalms 22:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? {Why are you} far from the salvation of me, {far from} the words of my groaning?* | *My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Why do you not come and help me? Why do you not respond to me when {I am suffering so severely that} I am groaning?* |

ULT **from the salvation of me**
UST come and help me
(מֵ֝יׇשׁוּעָתִֽי)

David is using this possessive form to mean salvation that would come to him or rescue that he would receive. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [from saving me] or [from rescuing me]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **from the salvation of me**
UST come and help me
(מֵ֝יׇשׁוּעָתִֽי)

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: [from saving me] or [from helping me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{far from} the words of my groaning**
UST Why do you not respond to me when {I am suffering so severely that} I am groaning
(דִּבְרֵ֥י שַׁאֲגָתִֽי)

David is using this possessive form to mean words that express his groaning or words spoken while groaning. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [far from my groaning words] or [far from the words I speak while groaning]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My God | My God |
| have you forsaken me | have you abandoned me |
| from the salvation of me | come and help me |

# Psalms 22:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My God, I call by day, but you do not answer, and {in} the night, and there is no silence for me.* | *My God, every day I call to you during the daytime and during the night, but you do not answer me, so I am not able to sleep.* |

ULT **I call by day, but you do not answer, and {in} the night**
UST every day I call to you during the daytime and during the night, but you do not answer me
(אֶקְרָא יוֹמָם וְלֹא תַעֲנֶה וְלַיְלָה)

David 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 call to you by day, but you do not answer, and I call to you in the night]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and there is no silence for me**
UST so I am not able to sleep
(וְלֹא־דוּמִיָּה לִי)

By **there is no silence for me**, David means that he cannot rest or find peace because he is crying out to God throughout the night. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and I cannot rest] or [and I find no peace]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My God | My God |
| I call | I call to you |

# Psalms 22:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yet you are holy, sitting {in} the praises of Israel.* | *But you are holy. You sit on your throne as king, and receive praise in your sacred tent from your people Israel.* |

**ULT sitting {in} the praises of Israel**
**UST** You sit on your throne as king, and receive praise in your sacred tent from your people Israel
(יוֹשֵׁב תְּהִלּוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here the phrase **the praises of Israel** could (1) be using the word **praises** to represent the Tabernacle where the Israelite people offered God their praises. Alternate translation: [sitting in the praises of us Israelite people, that we give to you in your Tabernacle] or [sitting in your Tabernacle] (2) mean that Yahweh is the object of Israel's praises. Alternate translation: [sitting as the object of the praises of Israel] or [ruling as the one whom Israel praises]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| are holy | are holy |
| {in} the praises of | and receive praise in your sacred tent |
| Israel | from your people Israel |

# Psalms 22:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In you our fathers trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them.* | *Our ancestors trusted in you. They trusted in you and you rescued them.* |

**ULT our fathers**
**UST** Our ancestors
(אֲבֹתֵ֥ינוּ)

David is using the term **fathers** to mean "ancestors." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [our forefathers]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT they trusted**
**UST** They trusted in you
(בָּטָ֑חוּ)

David 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: [they trusted in you]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| trusted | trusted |
| and you delivered them | and you rescued them |

# Psalms 22:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To you they cried and they were rescued. In you they trusted and they were not ashamed.* | *When they cried out to you for help, you saved them. They trusted in you, and they were not disappointed.* |

**ULT and they were rescued**
**UST** you saved them
(וַיְמַלְּטוּ)

The expression **they were rescued** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form, as in the UST, or in another way that is natural in your language.

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and they were rescued | you saved them |
| they trusted | They trusted |
| they were … ashamed | they were … disappointed |

# Psalms 22:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But I am a worm and not a man, a reproach of mankind and despised by the people.* | *But you have not rescued me! People despise me and consider that I am not a man; they think that I am a worm! Everyone scorns me and despises me.* |

ULT **But I am a worm and not a man**
UST But you have not rescued me … and consider that I am not a man … a worm
(וְאָנֹכִי תוֹלַעַת וְלֹא־אִישׁ)

Here David is speaking of himself as if he were a **worm**. He means that other people treat him as if he were worthless and do not care if he lives or not. If it would be helpful, you could use a comparable expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [But I am treated as if I were a worthless worm and not a human]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **a reproach of mankind**
UST they think that I am … scorns me and despises me
(חֶרְפַּת אָדָם)

By **a reproach of mankind**, David means that he has become someone whom all people mock and shame. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [someone whom people mock] or [an object of shame to everyone]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and despised by the people**
UST People despise me … Everyone
(וּבְזוּי עָם)

The expression **despised by the people** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and the people despise me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a reproach of | scorns me and despises me |

# Psalms 22:7

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *All of the ones seeing me mock me; they open wide with the lip. They shake the head,* | *Everyone who sees me makes fun of me. They sneer at me and {insult me by} shaking their heads {at me}.* |

**ULT they open wide with the lip**
**UST** They sneer at me
(יַפְטִירוּ בָשָׂפָה)

Here, **the lip** represents the mouth or speech. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they open their mouths wide] or [they sneer at me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT They shake the head**
**UST** and {insult me by} shaking their heads {at me}
(יָנִיעוּ רֹאשׁ)

To **shake the head** was a symbolic action by which people showed contempt or mockery. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [They shake the head in mockery] or [They shake the head to show contempt]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| mock | makes fun of |
| They shake | and {insult me by} shaking |

# Psalms 22:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“Roll to Yahweh; let him deliver him. Let him rescue him, since he delights in him.”* | *{My enemies say,} “He trusts in Yahweh, so Yahweh should save him! {He says that} Yahweh is very pleased with him; if that is so, Yahweh should rescue him!”* |

ULT **Roll to Yahweh; let him deliver him. Let him rescue him, since he delights in him**
UST { … My enemies say,} “He trusts in Yahweh, so Yahweh should save him! He says that} Yahweh is very pleased with him; if that is so, Yahweh should rescue him
(גֹּ֤ל אֶל־יְהוָ֨ה יְפַלְּטֵ֪הוּ יַצִּילֵ֡הוּ כִּ֤י חָפֵ֬ץ בּֽוֹ)

This is the beginning of what David’s enemies said. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could mark that this is a direct quote of these enemies. Alternate translation: [saying “Roll to Yahweh; let him deliver him. Let him rescue him, since he delights in him]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **Roll to Yahweh**
UST {My enemies say,} “He trusts in Yahweh
(גֹּ֤ל אֶל־יְהוָ֨ה)

The enemies are using **Roll to** as a common expression of their culture to mean “commit your cause to” or “trust completely in.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Commit yourself to Yahweh] or [Trust completely in Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **let him deliver him. Let him rescue him, since he delights in him**
UST { … so Yahweh should save him! He says that} Yahweh is very pleased with him; if that is so, Yahweh should rescue him
(יְפַלְּטֵ֪הוּ יַצִּילֵ֡הוּ כִּ֤י חָפֵ֬ץ בּֽוֹ)

In this verse, the first and third occurrence of the pronoun **him**, and the pronoun **he** refer to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [let Yahweh deliver him. Let Yahweh rescue him, since Yahweh delights in him]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **let him deliver him. Let him rescue him**
UST so Yahweh should save him … Yahweh should rescue him
(יְפַלְּטֵהוּ יַצִּילֵהוּ)

The terms **deliver** and **rescue** mean similar things. David 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: [let him save him]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| let him deliver him | so Yahweh should save him |
| Let him rescue him | Yahweh should rescue him |
| he delights | {He says that} Yahweh is very pleased |

# Psalms 22:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yet you are the one pulling me out from the womb, making me trust upon the breasts of my mother.* | *You, God, have been with me since I was in my mother's womb, and you taught me to trust you when I was at my mother's breasts.* |

**ULT you are the one pulling me out from the womb**
**UST** You, God … my mother's womb … to trust you
(אַתָּה גֹחִי מִבֶּטֶן)

The implication is that God was the one who brought David safely into the world at birth. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [you are the one who brought me safely into the world]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT making me trust upon the breasts of my mother**
**UST** have been with me since I was in … when I was at my mother's breasts
(מַבְטִיחִי עַל־שְׁדֵי אִמִּי)

By **making me trust upon the breasts of my mother**, David means that God caused him to trust in God even when he was a nursing infant dependent on his mother. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [causing me to trust in you while I nursed at my mother's breasts]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from the womb | to trust you |
| making me trust | have been with me since I was |

# Psalms 22:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Upon you I was cast from the womb; from the womb of my mother, you {have been} my God.* | *It was as though you had adopted me right when I was born. You have been my God ever since I was born.* |

**ULT Upon you I was cast from the womb**
**UST** It was as though … had adopted me right when I was born
(עָלֶיךָ הָשְׁלַכְתִּי מֵרָחֶם)

Here David is speaking as if he were literally **cast** upon God. He means that he has been made to rely on God from the moment of his birth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You have been caring for me from the womb] or [I have depended on you from birth]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Upon you I was cast**
**UST** It was as though … had adopted me
(עָלֶיךָ הָשְׁלַכְתִּי)

The expression **I was cast** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [You took me as your own] or [Yahweh, you took care of me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from the womb | right when I was born |
| from the womb of | you |
| my God | ever since I |

# Psalms 22:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You {do} not be far away from me, for trouble is near, for {there is} no one helping {me}.* | *Come near to me {and help me,} because my enemies are near me and there is no one who is helping me.* |

**ULT You {do} not be far away from me**
**UST** Come near to me {and help me … }
(אַל־תִּרְחַק מֶמֶּנִּי)

Here David is giving a command, **do not be far away from me**, but he intends it to communicate 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: [I ask you, please do not be far away from me] or [Yahweh, please do not be far away from me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT for trouble is near**
**UST** because my enemies are near me
(כִּי־צָרָה קְרוֹבָה)

The implication is that David’s enemies or persecutors are approaching to harm him. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [for my enemies are approaching] or [for those who want to harm me are near]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| trouble | my enemies |

# Psalms 22:12

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Many bulls surround me; strong ones of Bashan encircle me.* | *My enemies surround me {like} a group of wild bulls. {Fierce people, like those} strong bulls that {graze on the hills} in {the region of} Bashan, surround me.* |

**ULT Many bulls surround me; strong ones of Bashan encircle me**
**UST** My enemies surround me {like} a group of wild bulls. Fierce people, like those} strong bulls that {graze on the hills} in {the region of} Bashan, surround me
(סָבָבוּנִי פָּרִים רַבִּים אַבִּירֵי בָשָׁן כִּתְּרוּנִי)

Here David is speaking of his enemies as if they were **bulls** that **surround** and **encircle** him. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [Many enemies surround me like bulls; strong ones like those of Bashan encircle me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT strong ones of Bashan**
**UST** {Fierce people, like those} strong bulls that {graze on the hills} in {the region of} Bashan
(אַבִּירֵי בָשָׁן)

The phrase **strong ones of Bashan** gives further information about the **Many bulls**. (David refers to **Bashan** because it was known for its rich pasturelands and so the bulls there would have been well fed and strong.) David is not distinguishing these **strong ones** from other bulls that are not strong. Be sure that this is clear in your translation. Alternate translation: [the powerful bulls of Bashan] or [the mighty bulls of Bashan]

**Support Reference:** Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| bulls | of wild bulls |
| Bashan | that {graze on the hills} in {the region of} Bashan |

# Psalms 22:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They open their mouths against me, a tearing and roaring lion.* | *{They are like} roaring lions that are attacking the animals that they want to kill. They rush toward me to kill me; they {are like lions that} have their mouths open, ready to tear their victims to pieces.* |

**ULT They open their mouths against me, a tearing and roaring lion**

**UST** { … They are like} roaring lions that are attacking the animals that they want to kill. They rush toward me to kill me; they {are like lions that} have their mouths open, ready to tear their victims to pieces

(פָּצוּ עָלַי פִּיהֶם אַרְיֵה טֹרֵף וְשֹׁאֵג)

Here David is speaking of his enemies as if they were **a tearing and roaring lion**. He means that they are fierce and dangerous and want to destroy him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They open their mouths against me, like a fierce, roaring lion that tears apart its prey]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a … lion | They are like … lions … they {are like lions … } |

# Psalms 22:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I am poured out like water, and all of my bones are dislocated. My heart is like wax; it has melted within my inner parts.* | *I am completely exhausted, and am in much pain! I feel greatly discouraged!* |

ULT **I am poured out like water**
UST I am completely exhausted
(כַּמַּ֥יִם נִשְׁפַּכְתִּ֑י)

The point of this comparison is that just as **water** flows away and cannot be gathered back, so David feels completely drained of strength and energy. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [I am completely drained of strength like spilled water]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **I am poured out like water**
UST I am completely exhausted
(כַּמַּ֥יִם נִשְׁפַּכְתִּ֑י)

The expression **I am poured out** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the same idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I pour out like water] or [I flow away like water]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and all of my bones are dislocated**
UST and am in much pain
(וְהִתְפָּרְד֥וּ כָל־עַצְמוֹתָ֑י)

David says **all of my bones are dislocated** as an extreme statement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [and my whole body is in pain] or [and I feel like my bones are coming apart]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **My heart is like wax; it has melted within my inner parts**
UST I feel greatly discouraged
(הָיָה לִבִּי כַּדּוֹנָג נָמַס בְּתוֹךְ מֵעָי)

The point of this comparison is that just as **wax** melts and becomes soft when heated, so David's **heart** has become weak and soft from fear and distress. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [My heart has become weak like melted wax within me]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **My heart is like wax**
UST I feel greatly discouraged
(הָיָה לִבִּי כַּדּוֹנָג)

Here David is speaking of his **heart** as if it were **wax** that has melted. This image emphasizes how completely weak and helpless he feels in his distress. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [My courage has completely failed me] or [I feel completely weak inside]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **like wax**
UST I feel greatly discouraged
(כַּדּוֹנָג)

**Wax** is a soft, fatty substance that becomes liquid when heated and is used to make candles. If your readers would not be familiar with what wax is, you could use the name of a similar substance that your readers would recognize, or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [like soft fat] or [like something soft that melts]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

# Psalms 22:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My strength is dried up like a shard, and my tongue is being made to cling to my gums, and to the dust of death you lay me.* | *My strength is all dried up like a broken piece of a clay jar that has dried {in the sun}. You have allowed {me to become so thirsty that} my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth. {Oh God, I think that you are about to let} my body die and become dust!* |

ULT **My strength is dried up like a shard**
UST My strength is all dried up like a broken piece of a clay jar that has dried {in the sun … }
(יָבֵשׁ כַּחֶרֶשׂ ו כֹּחִי)

David is making a comparison between his strength and **a shard**. The point of this comparison is that just as a shard is completely dried out and brittle, so is his strength. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [My strength is completely dried up] or [I have lost my strength]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **like a shard**
UST like a broken piece of a clay jar that has dried {in the sun}
(כַּחֶרֶשׂ)

A **shard** was a piece of broken pottery. If your readers would not be familiar with what a shard is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable object that your readers would recognize, or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [like a broken piece of pottery]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **and my tongue is being made to cling to my gums**
UST You have allowed {me to become so thirsty that} my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth
(וּלְשׁוֹנִי מֻדְבָּק מַלְקוֹחָי)

The expression **my tongue is being made to cling to my gums** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [my tongue clings to my gums] or [and you, Yahweh, allow me to suffer so that my tongue clings to my gums]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and to the dust of death you lay me**
UST {Oh God, I think that you are about to let} my body die and become dust
(וְלַעֲפַר־מָוֶת תִּשְׁפְּתֵנִי)

Here, **dust of death** represents the grave or dying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and you lay me in the grave] or [and you bring me to death]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and my tongue | You have allowed {me to become so thirsty that} my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth |

# Psalms 22:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For dogs have surrounded me; a company of ones doing evil have encircled me, like the lion, my hands and my feet.* | *My enemies surround me like a pack of wild dogs. A group of evil men has encircled me{, ready to attack me}. They have pierced my hands and my feet.* |

ULT **For dogs have surrounded me**
UST My enemies surround me like a pack of wild dogs
(כִּי סְבָבֻונִי כְּלָבִים)

Here David is speaking of his enemies as if they were **dogs** that hunt in packs. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [For my enemies have surrounded me like dogs]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **like the lion**
UST They have pierced
(כָּאֲרִי)

The Hebrew text that the ULT is translated from reads **like the lion**. Other ancient manuscripts have a verb (instead of the noun translated as **like the lion**). At one point in the process of transmission, scribes may have mistakenly changed the last letter of the verb with the meaning “they have pierced” to a different (and similar looking) letter, resulting in the word **like the lion**. All the ancient versions of the Old Testament, as well as the early Jewish sources have verb forms instead of the noun form **like the lion**. The original text probably had the verb meaning “they have pierced” instead of the noun form translated **like the lion**. For this reason, you may wish to use the verb “they have pierced.” If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to use whatever form it uses.

**Support Reference:** Textual Variants

ULT **like the lion, my hands and my feet**
UST They have pierced my hands and my feet
(כָּאֲרִי יָדַי וְרַגְלָי)

David 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: [like the lion tears my hands and my feet] or [like the lion attacks my hands and my feet]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **like the lion, my hands and my feet**
UST They have pierced my hands and my feet
(כָּאֲרִי יָדַי וְרַגְלָי)

David is speaking of his enemies as if they were a **lion** tearing at his hands and feet. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [like a lion, they have mangled my hands and my feet]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| ones doing evil | evil men |
| like the lion | They have pierced |

# Psalms 22:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I can count all of my bones. They look {and} they stare at me.* | *{I am so weak and thin that} I can see and count my bones. My enemies stare at me and gloat {about what has happened to} me.* |

**ULT I can count all of my bones**
**UST** {I am so weak and thin that} I can see and count my bones
(אֲסַפֵּר כָּל־עַצְמוֹתָי)

David says **I can count all my bones** as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [I am so thin and emaciated that I can count many of my bones] or [I am so thin and emaciated that people can see many of my bones]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

**ULT They look {and} they stare at me**
**UST** My enemies stare at me and gloat {about what has happened to} me
(הֵמָּה יַבִּיטוּ יִרְאוּ־בִי)

The pronoun **They** refers to David's enemies who have surrounded him (mentioned in the previous verses as "dogs" and "a company of ones doing evil"). It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [My enemies look and they stare at me]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT They look {and} they stare at me**
**UST** My enemies stare at me and gloat {about what has happened to} me
(הֵמָּה יַבִּיטוּ יִרְאוּ־בִי)

The implication is that David's enemies stare at him and gloat. You could include this information, as in the UST, if that would be helpful to your readers.

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

# Psalms 22:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They divide my garments among them, and they cast lots for my clothing.* | *{They looked at} the clothes that I {was wearing} and gambled to determine which piece each of them would get.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| lots | and gambled to determine which piece each of them would get |
| my clothing | and gambled to determine which piece each of them would get |

# Psalms 22:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But you, Yahweh, {do} not be far away. My strength, hurry to help me.* | *Yahweh, do not be like my enemies; rather be concerned for me. You who are the one who strengthens me, come quickly and help me.* |

ULT **But you**
UST do not be like my enemies; rather
(וְאַתָּה)

David uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between his enemies who surround and torment him and Yahweh whom he calls upon for help. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [However, you] or [As for you]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **But you, Yahweh, {do} not be far away. My strength, hurry to help me**
UST Yahweh, do not be like my enemies; rather be concerned for me. You who are the one who strengthens me, come quickly and help me
(וְאַתָּה יְהוָה אַל־תִּרְחָק אֱיָלוּתִי לְעֶזְרָתִי חוּשָׁה)

The phrases **do not be far away** and **hurry to help me** are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than a commands. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [But you, Yahweh, please do not be far away. My strength, please hurry to help me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **{do} not be far away**
UST be concerned for me
(אַל־תִּרְחָק)

The implication is that David wants Yahweh to come near to help him in his time of great distress. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [come near to help me] or [be close and help me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **{do} not be far away**
UST be concerned for me
(אַל־תִּרְחָֽק)

David is emphasizing a positive meaning by using a negative word, **not**, together with a mild expression that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If it would be helpful in your language, you could emphasize the positive meaning in a strong way. Alternate translation: [be very near] or [stay close to me]

**Support Reference:** Litotes

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 22:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Deliver my life from the sword, my only one from the hand of the dog.* | *Rescue me from {those who want to} kill me with their swords. Save me from those who are {like wild} dogs.* |

ULT **Deliver**
UST Rescue
(הַצִּילָה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please deliver]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **from the sword**
UST from {those who want to} kill me with their swords
(מֵחֶרֶב)

Here, **sword** represents "death by violence." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from death]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **my only one from the hand of**
UST Save me from
(מִיַּד & יְחִידָתִי)

David 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: [deliver my only one from the hand of]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **my only one**
UST me
(יְחִידָתִי)

David is using **my only one** as a common expression of his culture to mean "my precious life" or "my dear life." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my precious life]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **from the hand of**
UST Save … from
(מִ֣יַּד)

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: [from the power of]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the dog**
UST those who are {like wild} dogs
(כֶּ֝לֶב)

Here David is speaking of his enemies as if they were **the dog**. This continues the imagery from verse 16 where enemies are described as dogs that have surrounded him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my enemies]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Deliver | Rescue |
| from the sword | from {those who want to} kill me with their swords |

# Psalms 22:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Save me from the mouth of the lion, and from the horns of wild oxen, answer me.* | *Snatch me away from my enemies who are like lions whose jaws {are already open}, ready to chew me up! Grab me away from those men who are like wild oxen {that attack other animals with} their horns!* |

ULT **Save me**
UST Snatch me away
(הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please save me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **from the mouth of the lion, and from the horns of wild oxen**
UST from my enemies who are like lions whose jaws {are already open}, ready to chew me up … from those men who are like wild oxen {that attack other animals with} their horns
(מִפִּי אַרְיֵה וּמִקַּרְנֵי רֵמִים)

Here David is speaking as if his enemies were dangerous animals with **mouths** and **horns** that could attack and kill him. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [from my enemies who attack me like lions and wild oxen]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Save me | Snatch me away |
| the lion | my enemies who are like lions |
| and from the horns of | from … {that attack other animals with} their horns |

# Psalms 22:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will declare your name to my brothers; in the midst of the assembly I will praise you.* | *{Because you have saved me,} I will proclaim to my fellow Israelites how great you are. I will praise you among the group of your people gathered together {to worship you}.* |

**ULT I will declare your name**
**UST** {Because you have saved me,} I will proclaim … how great you are
(אֲסַפְּרָה שִׁמְךָ)

Here David is using the term **name** to represent who God is or to refer to God's reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I will declare how wonderful you are] or [I will proclaim your character]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT to my brothers**
**UST** to my fellow Israelites
(לְאֶחָי)

David is using the term **brothers** to describe people who are descended from the same ancestor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to my fellow Israelites]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will declare | {Because you have saved me,} I will proclaim |
| the assembly | the group of your people gathered together {to worship you} |
| I will praise you | I will praise you |

# Psalms 22:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You who fear Yahweh, praise him! All of the seed of Jacob, honor him, and be terrified from him, all of the seed of Israel!* | *You people who have an awesome respect for Yahweh, praise him! All you who are descended from Jacob, honor Yahweh! All you Israelite people, revere him!* |

ULT **All of the seed of Jacob, honor him, and be terrified from him, all of the seed of Israel**

UST All you who are descended from Jacob, honor Yahweh! All you Israelite people, revere him

(כָּל־זֶרַע יַעֲקֹב כַּבְּדוּהוּ וְגוּרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ כָּל־זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here David is speaking of the descendants of Jacob, who Yahweh later renamed Israel, as if they were his **seed**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. See how you translated the term “seed” in 18:50. Alternate translation: [All of the descendants of Jacob, honor him, and be terrified from him, all of you descendants of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You who fear | You people who have an awesome respect for |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| praise him | praise him |
| the seed of | you who are descended from |
| Jacob | Jacob |
| honor him | honor Yahweh |
| Israel | you Israelite people |

# Psalms 22:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For he has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but when he cried to him, he heard.* | *Yahweh does not despise or ignore those who are suffering. He pays attention to them, and he responds when they call out to him {for help}.* |

ULT **the affliction of the afflicted**
UST those who are suffering
(עֳנּוּת עָנִי)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the affliction of the afflicted person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and he has not hidden his face from him**
UST He pays attention to them
(וְלֹא־הִסְתִּיר פָּנָיו מִמֶּנּוּ)

David is emphasizing a positive meaning by using a negative word, **not**, together with a mild expression that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If it would be helpful in your language, you could emphasize the positive meaning in a strong way. Alternate translation: [and he has shown his face to him] or [and he has listened to him]

**Support Reference:** Litotes

ULT **and he has not hidden his face from him**
UST He pays attention to them
(וְלֹא־הִסְתִּיר פָּנָיו מִמֶּנּוּ)

David is using **hidden his face from him** as a common expression of his culture to mean "ignored him" or "refused to help him." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he has not ignored him]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **he heard**
UST he responds
(שָׁמַע)

David assumes that readers will know that **he heard** means God heard his prayer and responded favorably to it. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [he responded]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the affliction of | those who are suffering |
| the afflicted | those who are suffering |

# Psalms 22:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *From with you my praise in the great assembly; I will fulfill my vows before those who fear him.* | *Yahweh, in the great gathering {of your people,} I will praise you for what you have done. In the presence of those who revere Yahweh, I will offer {the sacrifice} that I promised {to make to you because you delivered me}.* |

ULT **From with you my praise**
UST Yahweh … I will praise you for what you have done
(מֵאִתְּךָ תְהִלָּתִי)

Here, **with you** represents "because of what you have done." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Because you have delivered me I praise you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my praise | I will praise |
| in the … assembly | in the … gathering {of your people … } |
| I will fulfill | I will offer |
| my vows | the that I promised {to make to you because you delivered me … } |
| those who fear him | those who revere Yahweh |

# Psalms 22:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The poor will eat and be satisfied. The ones seeking Yahweh will praise. May your heart live forever.* | *The poor people {whom I have invited to the meal} will eat as much as they want. All who come to worship Yahweh will praise him. I pray that {God will enable} you all to live a long and happy life!* |

ULT **The poor**
UST The poor people {whom I have invited to the meal}
(עֲנָוִים)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [The poor ones] or [Poor people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **will praise**
UST will praise him
(יְהַלְלוּ)

David 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 praise him]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **May your heart live forever**
UST I pray that {God will enable} you all to live a long and happy life
(יְחִי לְבַבְכֶם לָעַד)

David is using **May your heart live forever** as a common expression of his culture to mean “May you live a long and prosperous life.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May you live long and prosper] or [May you have a long and blessed life]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **your heart**
UST I pray that {God will enable} you all to live a long and happy life
(לְבַבְכֶם)

The word **your** is plural here because David is addressing all the worshipers, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. Alternate translation: [your hearts]

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The ones seeking | All who come to worship |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| will praise | will praise him |
| forever | I pray that {God will enable} you all to live a long and happy life |

# Psalms 22:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *All of the ends of the earth will remember and turn to Yahweh, and all of the families of the nations will bow down to your face.* | *People in all nations, even in the remote areas, will think about Yahweh and turn to him. People from all the clans in the world will bow down before you,* |

ULT **All of the ends of the earth**
UST People in all nations, even in the remote areas
(כָּל־אַפְסֵי־אֶרֶץ)

Here the phrase, **the ends of the earth**, represents the people who live in the most distant places on earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [People everywhere on earth] or [People who live in the most distant places of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **will remember**
UST will think about
(יִזְכְּרוּ)

The implication is that the people **will remember** Yahweh and what he has done. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [will remember Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and turn to Yahweh**
UST Yahweh and turn to him
(וְיָשֻׁבוּ אֶל־יְהוָה)

David is speaking as if people had been walking in one direction but then **turned** to walk toward Yahweh. He means that they will start worshiping and obeying Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and worship Yahweh] or [and start following Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **all of the families of the nations**
UST People from all the clans in the world
(כָּל־מִשְׁפְּחוֹת גּוֹיִם)

The implication is that all people groups or clans throughout the world will worship Yahweh. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [all the people groups of the world]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and all of the families of the nations will bow down to your face**
UST People from all the clans in the world will bow down before you
(וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְפָנֶיךָ כָּל־מִשְׁפְּחוֹת גּוֹיִם)

To **bow down** was a symbolic action by which people showed reverence and submission. Sometimes it was also done as an act of worship. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation. Alternate translation: [and all the families of the nations will bow down in worship]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **to your face**
UST before you
(לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here Yahweh's **face** represents being in front of him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the earth | People in … nations |
| Yahweh | Yahweh … him |
| and … will bow down | will bow down |
| the families of | People from … the clans |
| the nations | in the world |

# Psalms 22:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For to Yahweh the kingdom, and he is ruling over the nations.* | *because Yahweh is the king! He rules the people of all nations.* |

> **ULT For to Yahweh the kingdom**
> **UST** because Yahweh is the king
> (כִּֽי לַֽיהוָ֥ה הַמְּלוּכָ֑ה)

David assumes that readers will know that here the word **to** means "belongs" and that the word **kingdom** refers to Yahweh's "reign." You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [For the kingship belongs to Yahweh] or [For Yahweh reigns as king]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the kingdom | is the king |
| and he is ruling | He rules |
| over the nations | the people of all nations |

# Psalms 22:29

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *All of the fat of the earth will eat and will bow down; to his face will kneel all of the ones going down to the dust, even his self he kept not alive.* | *All the rich people on the earth will celebrate and bow before him. All those who are close to dying will kneel in worship {before him}, yes, those who are not able to keep themselves alive.* |

ULT **All of the fat of the earth will eat and will bow down; to his face will kneel all of the ones going down to the dust**
UST All the rich people on the earth will celebrate and bow before him. All those who are close to dying will kneel in worship {before him … }
(אָכְלוּ֥ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ֑וּ ׀ כָּל־דִּשְׁנֵי־אֶ֥רֶץ לְפָנָ֗יו יִכְרְעוּ֮ כָּל־יוֹרְדֵ֪י עָפָ֫ר)

David is referring to all people by naming two extremes, **the fat of the earth** (the wealthy and prosperous who were well-fed and healthy), and **the ones going down to the dust** (the dying). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [All people will eat and will bow down; to his face will kneel every person]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **and will bow down**
UST and bow
(וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ֑וּ)

See how you translated this expression in 22:27.

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **the fat of the earth**
UST the rich people on the earth
(דִּשְׁנֵי־אֶ֥רֶץ)

David is using the adjective **fat** 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: [the fat ones of the earth] or [the fat people of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the fat of the earth**
UST the rich people on the earth
(דִּשְׁנֵי־אֶ֫רֶץ)

Here, **the fat of the earth** represents the wealthy and prosperous people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the wealthy people of the earth] or [the prosperous people of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to his face**
UST before him
(לְפָנָיו)

Here Yahweh's **face** represents being in front of him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in his presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **will kneel**
UST will kneel in worship {before him}
(יִכְרְעוּ)

To **kneel** was a symbolic action by which people showed reverence and submission to God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [will kneel down in worship]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **all of the ones going down to the dust, even his self he kept not alive**
UST All those who are close to dying … yes, those who are not able to keep themselves alive
(כָּל־יוֹרְדֵי עָפָר וְנַפְשׁוֹ לֹא חִיָּה)

These two phrases **all of the ones going down to the dust** and **even his self he kept not alive** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [all of the ones going down to the dust, that is, those who cannot keep themselves alive]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the ones going down to the dust**
UST those who are close to dying
(יוֹרְדֵי עָפָר)

Here the phrase **the ones going down to the dust** represents people who are dying or close to death. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the ones going down to the grave] or [the ones who are dying]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **even his self he kept not alive**
UST yes, those who are not able to keep themselves alive
(וְנַפְשׁוֹ לֹא חִיָּה)

The implication is that they were not able to keep themselves alive. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [even him who could not keep himself alive]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **even his self he kept not alive**
> UST yes, those who are not able to keep themselves alive
> (וְנַפְשׁוֹ לֹא חִיָּה)

In this verse, the words **his** and **he** are singular in form, but they refer to all humans as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the plural forms of "his" and "he" or plural forms that include both men and women since this phrase refers to all people, as no one is able to keep themselves from eventually dying. Alternate translation: [even those who could not keep themselves alive]

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the earth | the earth |
| and will bow down | and bow |
| will kneel | will kneel in worship {before him} |
| even his self | yes, those … themselves |

# Psalms 22:30

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Seed will serve him; it will be told of the Lord to the generation.* | *People who have not been born yet will {also} serve Yahweh. We will tell our descendants what Yahweh {has done}.* |

**ULT Seed will serve him**
**UST** People who have not been born yet will {also} serve Yahweh
(זֶרַע יַעַבְדֶנּוּ)

See how you translated the similar expression in 22:23. Alternate translation: [Descendants will serve him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT it will be told of the Lord to the generation**
**UST** We will tell our descendants what Yahweh {has done}
(יְסֻפַּר לַאדֹנָי לַדּוֹר)

The expression **it will be told** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [people will tell of the Lord to the next generation] or [people will tell the next generation about the Lord's works]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT it will be told of the Lord to the generation**
**UST** We will tell our descendants what Yahweh {has done}
(יְסֻפַּר לַאדֹנָי לַדּוֹר)

David assumes that readers will know that **it** refers to the great works of the Lord that have been described throughout the psalm. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the next generation will be told about the great works of the lord]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT to the generation**
**UST** our descendants
(לַדּוֹר)

David 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 future generations] or [to the next generation]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Seed | People who have not been born yet |
| will serve him | will {also} serve Yahweh |
| of the Lord | what Yahweh {has done} |
| to the generation | our descendants |

# Psalms 22:31

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They will come and will declare his righteousness to a people who will be born, that he has done {it}!* | *People will come and will proclaim to people not yet born, {who will live in future years,} that because Yahweh is righteous {he has delivered those who prayed to him for help}. {People will tell them} that, "Yahweh did {it}!"* |

ULT **and will declare his righteousness to a people who will be born, that he has done {it … }**
UST and will proclaim to people not yet born, {who will live in future years,} that because Yahweh is righteous {he has delivered those who prayed to him for help}. People will tell them} that, "Yahweh did {it … }
(וְיַגִּידוּ צִדְקָתָו לְעַם נּוֹלָד כִּי עָשָׂה)

David is using the adjective **his righteousness** as a noun to mean something that shows God is righteous. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [and will declare to a people who will be born, that because he is righteous, he has done it]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **that he has done {it}**
UST People will tell them} that, "Yahweh did {it}
(כִּי עָשָׂה)

David assumes that readers will know **that he has done it** refers to God's acts of deliverance and salvation described throughout the psalm. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [what he has done to save his people]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and will declare | and will proclaim |
| his righteousness | that because Yahweh is righteous {he has delivered those who prayed to him for help} |

# Psalms 23

## Psalm 23 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 23 is considered to be one of the "psalms of trust." See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about the "psalms of trust."

1. Yahweh depicted as a good and trustworthy shepherd (1–4)
2. Yahweh depicted as a good and generous banquet host (5)
3. David affirms his trust in Yahweh's faithful goodness and love and asserts that he will dwell with him forever (6)

### Translation Issues in this Psalm

#### Metaphor

Psalm 23:1–4 is an extended metaphor in which David speaks of Yahweh as if he were a shepherd, and of himself as a sheep. Psalm 23:5 is a metaphor in which David depicts himself as a guest at a banquet at which Yahweh is the host. (See: Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors and Metaphor)

#### Referring to Yahweh in the first person and second person

In verses 1–3 and 6, David writes about Yahweh in the second person. In verses 4–5, David addresses Yahweh directly, in the first person. Yahweh's name is used in verses 1 and 6, but in verses 2–5 pronouns are used. Second person pronouns are used in verses 2–3 when referring to Yahweh, and David addresses God directly in verses 4–5 and therefore uses first person pronouns. If your language uses pronouns, use the appropriate pronouns in verses 2–5. (See: First, Second or Third Person)

# Psalms 23:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A psalm of David Yahweh is my shepherd; I will lack nothing.* | *A psalm of David Yahweh {cares for} me {like} a shepherd {cares for his sheep}, {so} I {know that I} will have everything that I need.* |

**ULT Yahweh is my shepherd**
**UST** Yahweh {cares for} me {like} a shepherd {cares for his sheep}
(יְהוָה רֹעִי)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **shepherd** who cares for and protects his sheep. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT I will lack nothing**
**UST** {so} I {know that I} will have everything that I need
(לֹא אֶחְסָר)

David is emphasizing a positive meaning by using a negative word, **nothing**, together with a mild expression, **I will lack**, that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If it would be helpful in your language, you could emphasize the positive meaning in a strong way. Alternate translation: [I will have everything I need] or [I will be completely satisfied]

**Support Reference:** Litotes

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm of | A psalm |
| David | of David |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| is my shepherd | cares for} me {like} a shepherd {cares for his sheep} |

# Psalms 23:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me to waters of rest.* | *Yahweh nourishes and encourages my inner person and enables me to rest in peace, like a shepherd who leads {his sheep} to places where there is plenty of green grass {for them to eat} and leads them to streams where the water is flowing slowly.* |

ULT **He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me to waters of rest**
UST Yahweh nourishes and encourages my inner person and enables me to rest in peace, like a shepherd who leads {his sheep} to places where there is plenty of green grass {for them to eat} and leads them to streams where the water is flowing slowly
(בִּנְאוֹת דֶּשֶׁא יַרְבִּיצֵנִי עַל־מֵי מְנֻחוֹת יְנַהֲלֵנִי)

David continues to draw an extended comparison between Yahweh's care for him and a shepherd caring for his sheep. Here David compares Yahweh's care for him to a shepherd who brings his sheep to **green pastures** and **waters of rest**. If it would be helpful for your readers, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [He gives me what I need to be satisfied and at peace, like a shepherd who provides pasture and water for his sheep]

**Support Reference:** Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

ULT **He makes me lie down in green pastures**
UST Yahweh nourishes and encourages my inner person and enables me to rest in peace, like a shepherd who leads {his sheep} to places where there is plenty of green grass {for them to eat} and leads them
(בִּנְאוֹת דֶּשֶׁא יַרְבִּיצֵנִי)

By **He makes me lie down**, David means "He takes me to where I can lie down" or "He lets me lie down." You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [He takes me to green pastures where I can lie down] or [He lets me lie down in green pastures]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **to**
UST to
(עַל)

Here the word **to** could mean: (1) "to" as in the ULT or (2) "alongside." Alternate translation: [alongside]

ULT **waters of rest**
UST streams where the water is flowing slowly
(מֵי מְנֻחוֹת)

The phrase **waters of rest** could refer to: (1) still or calm bodies of water. Alternate translation: [calm waters] or [quiet waters] or (2) the location of the water and refer to bodies of water that were located at resting places. Alternate translation: [waters at resting places]

**Support Reference:** Possession

# Psalms 23:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for the sake of his name.* | *Yahweh renews my strength. He gives me good guidance for how I should live, in order that I, and others, will honor him.* |

ULT **He restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for the sake of his name**
UST Yahweh renews my strength. He gives me good guidance for how I should live, in order that I, and others, will honor him
(נַפְשִׁי יְשׁוֹבֵב יַנְחֵנִי בְמַעְגְּלֵי־צֶדֶק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a shepherd who **restores** his **soul** and **leads** him **in right paths**. David means that Yahweh renews his spiritual and emotional strength and guides him to live in a way that pleases Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He renews my spiritual strength. He guides me to live righteously for the sake of his name] or [He renews my spiritual strength. He guides me regarding how to live in the right way, for the sake of name]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my soul**
UST my strength
(נַפְשִׁי)

Here David is using the term **my soul** to mean himself from the perspective of his spiritual or emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [me] or [my spiritual strength]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **for the sake of his name**
UST in order that I, and others, will honor him
(לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ)

Here David is using the term **name** to represent who God is or to refer to God's reputation. Alternate translation: [for the sake of his reputation] or [to bring honor to himself]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He restores | Yahweh renews |
| my soul | my strength |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| right | good |

# Psalms 23:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Even though I walk through {the} valley of deep darkness, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.* | *Even when I am in dangerous and scary circumstances in which evil men might kill or hurt me, I will fear nothing, because you are with me. I feel comforted and reassured because you protect and care for me like a shepherd protects his sheep by using his club and his walking stick to protect them from being attacked by wild animals.* |

ULT **Even though I walk through {the} valley of deep darkness, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me**

UST Even when I am in dangerous and scary circumstances in which evil men might kill or hurt me, I will fear nothing, because you are with me. I feel comforted and reassured because you protect and care for me like a shepherd protects his sheep by using his club and his walking stick to protect them from being attacked by wild animals

(גַּם כִּי־אֵלֵךְ בְּגֵיא צַלְמָוֶת לֹא־אִירָא רָע כִּי־אַתָּה עִמָּדִי שִׁבְטְךָ וּמִשְׁעַנְתֶּךָ הֵמָּה יְנַחֲמֻנִי)

David continues to draw an extended comparison between his relationship with God and a shepherd caring for his sheep. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the comparison. Alternate translation: [Even though I experience great danger or hardship, I will not be afraid because you protect and guide me like a shepherd protects and guides his sheep with his rod and staff]

**Support Reference:** Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

ULT **through {the} valley of deep darkness**

UST in dangerous and scary circumstances

(בְּגֵיא צַלְמָוֶת)

The phrase the ULT translates as **the valley of deep darkness** could be translated: (1) as the ULT does and refer to a dark valley or ravine. Alternate translation: [through a dark valley] or (2) as [the valley of the shadow of death.] Alternate translation: [through the valley of the shadow of death]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **I will fear no evil**
UST in which evil men might kill or hurt me, I will fear nothing
(לֹא־אִירָא רָֽע)

David is using the adjective **evil** as a noun to mean things that people might do to harm him. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [I will fear no harm] or [I will fear no danger]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **I will fear no evil, for you are with me**
UST in which evil men might kill or hurt me, I will fear nothing, because you are with me
(לֹא־אִירָא רָֽע כִּי־אַתָּה עִמָּדִי)

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 you are with me, I will fear no evil]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **your rod and your staff, they comfort me**
UST I feel comforted and reassured because you protect and care for me like a shepherd protects his sheep by using his club and his walking stick to protect them from being attacked by wild animals
(שִׁבְטְךָ֥ וּמִשְׁעַנְתֶּ֑ךָ הֵ֖מָּה יְנַחֲמֻֽנִי)

Here, **rod** and **staff** represent the shepherd's protection and guidance. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your protection and guidance comfort me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| I will fear | I will fear |
| evil | in which evil men might kill or hurt me |
| your rod | because you protect and care for me like a shepherd protects his sheep by using his club and his walking stick to protect them from being attacked by wild animals |
| and your staff | because you protect and care for me like a shepherd protects his sheep by using his club and his walking stick to protect them from being attacked by wild animals |

# Psalms 23:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You arrange a table before my face in front of my enemies; you have anointed my head with oil; my cup overflows.* | *You {richly} provide food for me and protect me from my enemies. You joyfully welcome me and honor me as people joyfully receive the guests they have invited by pouring olive oil over their heads. You have given me very many blessings!* |

ULT **You arrange a table before my face in front of my enemies; you have anointed my head with oil; my cup overflows**
UST You {richly} provide food for me and protect me from my enemies. You joyfully welcome me and honor me as people joyfully receive the guests they have invited by pouring olive oil over their heads. You have given me very many blessings
(תַּעֲרֹךְ לְפָנַי ׀ שֻׁלְחָן נֶגֶד צֹרְרָי דִּשַּׁנְתָּ בַשֶּׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי כּוֹסִי רְוָיָה)

David is speaking of God's care and provision as if God were a host preparing a feast for an honored guest. The image includes arranging a table with food, anointing the guest's head with oil as a sign of welcome and honor, and filling the guest's cup to overflowing. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [In front of my enemies you provide for me and honor me like a host preparing a feast for a special guest]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **before my face**
UST You {richly} provide food for me
(לְפָנַי)

Here, **before my face** represents being in David's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in my presence] or [for me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in front of my enemies**
UST and protect me from my enemies
(נֶגֶד צֹרְרָי)

The implication is that God provides for and protects David even when he is surrounded by those who wish to harm him. This demonstrates God's protection and care in dangerous situations. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [while my enemies watch] or [even though my enemies are present]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT you have anointed my head with oil**
**UST** You joyfully welcome me and honor me as people joyfully receive the guests they have invited by pouring olive oil over their heads
(דִּשַּׁנְתָּ בַשֶּׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי)

In that culture, putting scented **oil** on a guest's head was a symbolic action by which a host showed honor to and welcomed a guest. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [you have honored me by anointing my head with oil] or [you have honored and welcomed me by anointing my head with oil]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

**ULT my cup overflows**
**UST** You have given me very many blessings
(כּוֹסִי רְוָיָה)

In that culture, filling a guest's wine cup to overflowing was a symbolic action by which a host showed that they intended to abundantly and liberally provide for their guest. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [you have blessed me abundantly]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my enemies | my enemies |
| you have anointed | You joyfully welcome me and honor me as people joyfully receive the guests they have invited by pouring olive oil over their heads |
| with oil | You joyfully welcome me and honor me as people joyfully receive the guests they have invited by pouring olive oil over their heads |

# Psalms 23:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Surely goodness and covenant faithfulness will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of Yahweh for length of days!* | *I am certain that Yahweh will be good to me and will continue to love me faithfully as long as I live. I will worship Yahweh in his sanctuary throughout my life.* |

ULT **goodness and covenant faithfulness will pursue me**
UST Yahweh will be good to me and will continue to love me faithfully
(טֹוב וָחֶסֶד יִרְדְּפוּנִי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **goodness** and **covenant faithfulness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will continually show me how good he is and how faithful he is to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and I will dwell**
UST I will worship
(וְשַׁבְתִּי)

The Hebrew word that the ULT translates as **and I will dwell** could be: (1) a contracted form of the Hebrew word that means “dwell,” in which case it should be translated as the ULT does, or (2) a form of the Hebrew word meaning “return.” Alternate translation: [and I will return and go]

ULT **and I will dwell in the house of Yahweh**
UST I will worship Yahweh in his sanctuary
(וְשַׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית־יְהוָה)

David is using the phrase **the house of Yahweh** to refer to Yahweh’s tabernacle (tent of meeting), where Yahweh was worshiped, as if it were a **house** in which Yahweh lived. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I will dwell in the tabernacle of Yahweh] or [and I will dwell in Yahweh’s sanctuary]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **for length of days**
UST throughout my life
(לְאֹרֶךְ יָמִים)

The implication is that David will dwell with God for his entire life. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [for my whole life] or [as long as I live]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| goodness | Yahweh will be good to me |
| and covenant faithfulness | love me faithfully |
| in the house of Yahweh | Yahweh in his sanctuary |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 24

## Psalm 24 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 24 is a “royal psalm.” See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about the royal psalms. It is also a psalm that the Israelites used for their processional liturgy as they entered Jerusalem or as they proceeded to Yahweh’s Tabernacle on Mount Zion in Jerusalem. In this psalm there is a clear call-and-response pattern in which someone leading the procession would have called out parts of this psalm (verse 3, 8a, 10a), and those in the procession would have responded and answered with the words in verses 4–6, 8b, and 10b–c.

Among Bible scholars there are different opinions about the exact setting and context of this psalm. Because this psalm begins with “of David” the events in this psalm are most likely during David’s lifetime.

1. Yahweh created the world and it belongs to him (1–2)
2. Yahweh requires righteousness to enter his presence and rewards and vindicates those who are righteous (3–6)
3. Yahweh is the glorious and victorious king (7–10)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Righteous people

“Clean hands” and a “pure heart” (being morally pure in action and in thought and intention) are required to enter Yahweh’s presence. (See: righteous, righteousness, unrighteous, unrighteousness, upright, uprightness)

## Translation Issues in This Psalm

### Rhetorical Questions

David uses three rhetorical questions in this psalm. Each rhetorical question forms a unit with a response. The three rhetorical questions are found in verses 3, 8, and 10. (See: Rhetorical Question)

# Psalms 24:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A psalm of David To Yahweh {is} the earth and its fullness, the world and the ones dwelling in it.* | *A psalm of David The earth and everything in it belongs to Yahweh. All the people in the world belong to him too,* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm | A psalm |
| of David | of David |
| To Yahweh | belongs to Yahweh |
| {is} the earth | The earth |
| the world | The earth |

# Psalms 24:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.* | *because he caused the ground to be above the water, above the water that was deep below the surface of the earth.* |

ULT **For**
UST because
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **For he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers**
UST because he caused the ground to be above the water, above the water that was deep below the surface of the earth
(כִּי־הוּא עַל־יַמִּים יְסָדָהּ וְעַל־נְהָרוֹת יְכוֹנְנֶהָ)

By **the seas** and **the rivers** David means the waters that existed before God created the dry land. David, and people in his culture, thought of the world as being founded and placed by God upon subterannean waters. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [For he has founded it upon the waters that were there before creation] or [For he has founded it upon the deep waters under the earth]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| has founded it | caused the ground |
| established it | caused the ground |

# Psalms 24:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Who may ascend on the mountain of Yahweh? And who may stand in his holy place?* | *This is the type of person who Yahweh will allow to go up onto his mountain, Mount Zion {in Jerusalem}, in order to stand {and worship} him in his sacred tent.* |

ULT **Who may ascend on the mountain of Yahweh? And who may stand in his holy place**
UST This is the type of person who Yahweh will allow to go up onto his mountain, Mount Zion {in Jerusalem}, in order to stand {and worship} him in his sacred tent
(מִֽי־יַעֲלֶ֥ה בְהַר־יְהוָ֑ה וּמִי־יָ֝קוּם בִּמְק֥וֹם קָדְשֽׁוֹ)

David is using questions to cause his readers to think deeply about who is qualified to approach God. David is not asking for information, but is emphasizing that only people who meet certain requirements can approach God. If you would not use rhetorical questions for this purpose in your language, you could translate his questions as statements or exclamations. Alternate translation: [Only certain people may ascend on the mountain of Yahweh! Only certain people may stand in his holy place!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Who may ascend on the mountain of Yahweh? And who may stand in his holy place**
UST This is the type of person who Yahweh will allow to go up onto his mountain, Mount Zion {in Jerusalem}, in order to stand {and worship} him in his sacred tent
(מִֽי־יַעֲלֶ֥ה בְהַר־יְהוָ֑ה וּמִי־יָ֝קוּם בִּמְק֥וֹם קָדְשֽׁוֹ)

David assumes that readers will know that **the mountain of Yahweh** and **his holy place** refer to Mount Zion in Jerusalem, where the Tabernacle of Yahweh was located. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Who may ascend Mount Zion, the mountain of Yahweh? And who may stand in his holy Tabernacle]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh … his |
| in his holy place | in his sacred tent |

# Psalms 24:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{The} one clean of hands and pure of heart, who has not lifted up his soul to what is false, and has not sworn deceitfully.* | *Only those whose actions and thoughts are pure, who have not worshiped idols, and who do not tell lies when they have solemnly promised to speak truthfully.* |

ULT **{The} one clean of hands and pure of heart**
UST Only those whose actions and thoughts are pure
(נְקִי כַפַּיִם וּבַר־לֵבָב)

David is using the possessive form to describe **one** that is characterized by **clean of hands and pure of heart**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [The one who has clean hands and a pure heart]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **{The} one clean of hands and pure of heart**
UST Only those whose actions and thoughts are pure
(נְקִי כַפַּיִם וּבַר־לֵבָב)

Here, **hands** represents a person's actions or conduct. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The one whose actions are clean and whose heart is pure] or [The one who acts righteously]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and pure of heart**
UST Only those whose … and thoughts are pure
(וּבַר־לֵבָב)

In this image, the **heart** represents a person's thoughts, feelings, and motives, and David speaks of them as if they could be physically clean. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and whose thoughts are pure] or [and whose motives are pure]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **who has not lifted up his soul to what is false**
UST who have not worshiped idols
(אֲשֶׁר ׀ לֹא־נָשָׂא לַשָּׁוְא נַפְשִׁי)

David is using the term **soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [who has not devoted himself to falsehood] or [who has not set his heart to worship idols] or [who has not set his heart to worship what is false]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to what is false**
UST have … worshiped idols
(לַשָּׁוְא)

David assumes that readers will know that **what is false** refers to idol worship. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [to idols]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {The} one clean of | Only those whose … and … are pure |
| and pure of | Only those whose … and … are pure |
| his soul | have … worshiped idols |
| has … sworn | who do … tell lies when they have solemnly promised to speak truthfully |

# Psalms 24:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He will take up a blessing from Yahweh and righteousness from the God of his salvation.* | *Yahweh will bless this type of person. When Yahweh {judges them,} he who has saved them, he will say that they are righteous.* |

ULT **He will take up**
UST will … this type of person
(יִשָּׂא)

The implication is that the person described in the previous verse will receive these things from God. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [He will receive]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **He will take up a blessing from Yahweh and righteousness from the God of his salvation**
UST Yahweh will bless this type of person. When Yahweh {judges them,} he who has saved them, he will say that they are righteous
(יִשָּׂא בְרָכָה מֵאֵת יְהוָה וּצְדָקָה מֵאֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעוֹ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **blessing** and **righteousness** and **salvation**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will bless him and act righteously toward him; this is what the God who saves him will do for him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and righteousness from the God of his salvation**
UST When Yahweh {judges them,} he who has saved them, he will say that they are righteous
(וּצְדָקָה מֵאֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעוֹ)

By **and righteousness from the God of his salvation**, David means that God will vindicate this type of person by declaring that they are righteous. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and vindication from the God of his salvation] or [and God will vindicate this person by declaring him righteous]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **from the God of his salvation**
UST When Yahweh {judges them,} he who has saved them, he will say that they are righteous
(מֵאֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעוֹ)

See how you translated the similar phrase “the God of my salvation” in 18:46. Alternate translation: [from the God who saves him]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| a blessing | bless |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and righteousness | When Yahweh {judges them,} he who … he will say that they are righteous |
| from the God of | When Yahweh {judges them,} he who … he will say that they are righteous |
| his salvation | has saved them |

# Psalms 24:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *This {is} the generation of the ones seeking him, the ones seeking your face, Jacob. Selah* | *Such are the ones who seek Yahweh, the descendants of Jacob, who seek you, Yahweh. Selah* |

**ULT This {is} the generation of the ones seeking him**
UST Such are the ones who seek Yahweh
(זֶה דּוֹר דֹּרְשָׁיו)

Here, **generation** represents a type or class of people who have something in common. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [This is the kind of people who seek him] or [These are the people who seek him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT the ones seeking him, the ones seeking your face**
UST who seek Yahweh … who seek you, Yahweh
(דֹּרְשָׁיו מְבַקְשֵׁי פָנֶיךָ)

These two phrases **the ones seeking him** and **the ones seeking your face** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [the ones seeking him, yes, the ones seeking your face]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT the ones seeking your face**
UST who seek you, Yahweh
(מְבַקְשֵׁי פָנֶיךָ)

Here, **face** represents God's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the ones seeking to be in your presence] or [the ones seeking to know you intimately]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Jacob**
UST the descendants of Jacob
(יַעֲקֹב)

Here, **Jacob** represents the people of Israel, who are the descendants of Jacob and who sought God's favor like Jacob did. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people of Israel] or [the descendants of Jacob]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {is} the generation of | are the ones |
| the ones seeking him | who seek Yahweh |
| the ones seeking | who seek |
| Jacob | the descendants of Jacob |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 24:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Lift up your heads, {you} gates, and be lifted up, {you} ancient doors, so that the King of Glory may come in.* | *Open up the gates {of the sacred tent}, in order that our glorious king may enter!* |

ULT **Lift up your heads, {you} gates, and be lifted up, {you} ancient doors**
UST Open up the gates {of the sacred tent}
(שְׂאֵ֣ו שְׁעָרִ֣ים ׀ רָאשֵׁיכֶ֗ם וְהִנָּשְׂא֥ו פִתְחֵי־עֹ֑לָם)

These two phrases **Lift up your heads, you gates** and **be lifted up, you ancient doors** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Lift up your heads, you gates, yes, be lifted up, you ancient doors]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Lift up your heads, {you} gates, and be lifted up, {you} ancient doors**
UST Open up the gates {of the sacred tent}
(שְׂאֵ֣ו שְׁעָרִ֣ים ׀ רָאשֵׁיכֶ֗ם וְהִנָּשְׂא֥ו פִתְחֵי־עֹ֑לָם)

Here the words **gates** and **doors** could refer to: (1) the gates leading into Yahweh's Tabernacle on Mount Zion. Alternate translation: [Lift up your heads, you Tabernacle gates, and be lifted up, you ancient doors], or (2) the gates leading into the city of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [Lift up your heads, you city gates, and be lifted up, you ancient doors]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Lift up your heads, {you} gates, and be lifted up, {you} ancient doors**
UST Open up the gates {of the sacred tent}
(שְׂאֵ֣ו שְׁעָרִ֣ים ׀ רָאשֵׁיכֶ֗ם וְהִנָּשְׂא֥ו פִתְחֵי־עֹ֑לָם)

David is speaking of the **gates** and **doors** that led into Yahweh's Tabernacle as if they were living things that could lift up their heads. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Open wide the Tabernacle gates]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **and be lifted up, {you} ancient doors**
UST Open up the gates {of the sacred tent}
(וְהִנָּשְׂאוּ פִּתְחֵי עוֹלָם)

The expression **be lifted up** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and lift yourselves up, you ancient doors] or [and you gatekeepers, lift up the ancient doors]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **so that the King of Glory may come in**
UST in order that our glorious king may enter
(וְיָבֹוא מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד)

David is using this possessive form to mean a king who has glory or a king who is glorious. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [so that the glorious king may come in]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **so that the King of Glory may come in**
UST in order that our glorious king may enter
(וְיָבֹוא מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד)

In a context such as this, your language might say “go” instead of **come**. Alternate translation: [so that the King of glory may go in]

**Support Reference:** Go and Come

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {you} gates | the gates {of the sacred tent} |
| the King of | king |
| Glory | our glorious |

# Psalms 24:8

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Who {is} this King of Glory? Yahweh, strong and mighty; Yahweh, mighty in battle.* | *I will tell you who this glorious king is. {He is} Yahweh, the one who is very strong; {He is} Yahweh, who conquers {all his enemies} in battles!* |

**ULT Who {is} this King of Glory**
**UST** I will tell you who this glorious king is
(מִי זֶה֥ מֶֽלֶךְ הַכָּבֽוֹד)

David is using the question **Who is this King of glory?** to introduce and emphasize the answer that follows. This is not a request for information, but a way to draw attention to Yahweh's identity and attributes. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could express this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [This is the King of glory] or [I will tell you who this King of glory is]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT Who {is} this King of Glory**
**UST** I will tell you who this glorious king is
(מִי זֶה֥ מֶֽלֶךְ הַכָּבֽוֹד)

See how you translated the phrase **King of glory** in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [Who is this glorious king]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT Yahweh, strong and mighty**
**UST** {He is} Yahweh, the one who is very strong
(יְהוָ֖ה עִזּ֣וּז וְגִבּ֑וֹר)

The terms **strong** and **mighty** mean similar things. David 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. [Yahweh, who is very strong] or [Yahweh, the powerful one]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| King of | king |
| Glory | glorious |
| Yahweh | {He is} Yahweh |
| and mighty | the one who is very strong |
| mighty | who conquers {all his enemies} |

# Psalms 24:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Lift up your heads, {you} gates, and lift up, {you} ancient doors, so that the King of Glory may come in.* | *Open up the gates {of the sacred tent}, in order that our glorious king may enter!* |

**ULT Lift up your heads, {you} gates, and lift up, {you} ancient doors, so that the King of Glory may come in**

UST Open up the gates {of the sacred tent}, in order that our glorious king may enter
(שְׂאֵ֣ו שְׁעָרִ֣ים ׀ רָאשֵׁיכֶ֗ם וְשָׂא֥ו פִתְחֵי־עוֹלָ֑ם וְיָבֹ֥א מֶ֝לֶךְ הַכָּבֽוֹד)

Here David is speaking of **gates** and **doors** as if they were people who could lift up their heads. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Open wide, you gates, and open wide, you ancient doors, so that the King of glory may come in]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {you} gates | the gates {of the sacred tent} |
| the King of | king |
| Glory | our glorious |

# Psalms 24:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Who {is} he, this King of Glory? Yahweh of Armies, he {is} the King of Glory. Selah* | *I will tell you who he, this glorious king, is. {He is} Yahweh, who commands armies; he is our glorious king! Selah* |

**ULT Who {is} he, this King of Glory**
**UST** I will tell you who he, this glorious king, is
(מִי הוּא זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד)

See how you translated the similar expression in 24:8.

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT Yahweh of Armies**
**UST** {He is} Yahweh, who commands armies
(יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת)

David is using this possessive form to mean that Yahweh is the commander of **armies** (the army of Israel and the army of heaven made of up angels). It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, the commander of armies] or [Yahweh, who commands armies]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| King of | king |
| Glory | glorious |
| Yahweh of Armies | {He is} Yahweh, who commands armies |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 25

## Psalm 25 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 25 has several different themes or topics within it. These include assertions of trust in Yahweh, lament (complaints about the present situation), and asking Yahweh for forgiveness of sin, deliverance from enemies and troubles, and for guidance. This psalm is an acrostic poem which follows the order of the Hebrew alphabet, with a few exceptions.

1. David's first prayer (1–7)
2. Yahweh guides humble people in the right way to live (8–9)
3. Yahweh's positive response to "the ones keeping his covenant and his testimonies" (10)
4. David's second prayer (11)
5. Ways that Yahweh blesses those who fear him (12–14)
6. David looks to Yahweh for deliverance from his enemies (15)
7. David's third prayer (16–22)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh's guidance of David described using the metaphor of "path" and a "way"

In verses 4–5, 8–9, and 12 David describes the right way to live, the way that Yahweh desires a person to live, as a "path" and a "way." David asks Yahweh to lead him in this proper way of living (4–5), says that Yahweh will teach humble people his "way" (8–9), and will teach those who fear him the proper "way" (12). See the individual notes in these verses for specific translation guidance. (Because David uses a parallelism in verse 4, we know that the words "ways/way" and "paths" have the same meaning in these particular verses.)

## Translation Issues in This Psalm

### Singular forms of “you” and “your.”

In verses 1–7, 11, and 16–22 David prays directly to Yahweh. Each time David uses the pronouns “you” and “your” in these verses they are the singular form (in the language he wrote in, Hebrew) because they refer to Yahweh. If your language has singular and plural forms of the pronouns “you” and “your,” make sure you use the singular forms in these verses. (See: Forms of ‘You’ — Singular)

# Psalms 25:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Of David To you, Yahweh, I lift up my soul.* | *A psalm of David Yahweh, I come to you in prayer and tell you all that I need.* |

**ULT I lift up my soul**
**UST** I come … in prayer and tell you all that I need
(נַפְשִׁי אֶשָּׂא)

David is speaking of his earnest prayer and worship as if he were to physically **lift up** his **soul** to Yahweh. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I pour out my heart] or [I come in prayer]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Of David | A psalm of David |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my soul | I … I |

# Psalms 25:2

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *My God, in you I trust; do not let me have shame; do not let my enemies exult over me.* | *I trust in you, my God. Do not allow my enemies {to defeat me}, with the result that they would rejoice and I would be ashamed.* |

ULT **My God**
UST my God
(אֱלֹהַ֗י)

David is not using the phrase **My God** to mean that he is the only one who worships Yahweh nor that he possesses or controls Yahweh. Rather he uses these words to emphasize that Yahweh is the God that he worships. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [You God, whom I worship,]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **do not let me have shame; do not let my enemies exult over me**
UST Do not allow my enemies {to defeat me}, with the result that they would rejoice and I would be ashamed
(אַל־אֵבֹ֣שָׁה אַל־יַעְלְצ֣וּ אֹיְבַ֣י לִ֑י)

David is using imperative forms, **do not let me be ashamed** and **do not let my enemies exult over me**, but he intends these as polite requests rather than commands. If the imperative forms do not communicate polite requests in your language, you could use forms that communicate polite requests. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [please do not let me have shame; please do not let my enemies exult over me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| My God | my God |
| I trust | I trust |
| do … let me have shame | and I would be ashamed |
| do … let … exult | Do … allow … { … to defeat me}, with the result that … would rejoice |
| my enemies | my enemies … they |

# Psalms 25:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Indeed, all the ones waiting on you will not have shame; the ones acting treacherously without cause will have shame.* | *Truly, you will not allow any of those who trust in you to be ashamed. You will cause those who act treacherously toward others to be ashamed.* |

ULT **all the ones waiting on you**
UST any of those who trust in you
(כָּל־קַוֶּיךָ)

By **the ones waiting on you**, David means people who trust in Yahweh and depend on him for help. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [all those who trust in you] or [all the ones trusting in you]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **all the ones waiting on you will not have shame**
UST you will not allow any of those who trust in you to be ashamed
(כָּל־קַוֶּיךָ לֹא יֵבֹשׁוּ)

David is using a double negative that consists of **not** and the negative meaning contained in the word **ashamed**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [all the ones waiting on you, you will help]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| will … have shame | you will … allow … to be ashamed |

# Psalms 25:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Make me know your ways, Yahweh; teach me your paths.* | *Yahweh, show me how I should conduct my life as you want me to. Teach me how to act in the manner that is pleasing to you.* |

**ULT Make me know your ways, Yahweh; teach me your paths**
UST Yahweh, show me how I should conduct my life as you want me to. Teach me how to act in the manner that is pleasing to you
(דְּרָכֶיךָ יְהוָה הוֹדִיעֵנִי אֹרְחוֹתֶיךָ לַמְּדֵנִי)

These are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than commands. If the imperative forms do not communicate polite requests for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates polite requests. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please make me know your ways, Yahweh; please teach me your paths]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Make me know your ways, Yahweh; teach me your paths**
UST Yahweh, show me how I should conduct my life as you want me to. Teach me how to act in the manner that is pleasing to you
(דְּרָכֶיךָ יְהוָה הוֹדִיעֵנִי אֹרְחוֹתֶיךָ לַמְּדֵנִי)

These two phrases **Make me know your ways, Yahweh** and **teach me your paths** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Make me know your ways, Yahweh, yes, teach me your paths]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT teach me your paths**
UST Teach me how to act in the manner that is pleasing to you
(אֹרְחוֹתֶיךָ לַמְּדֵנִי)

David is speaking of how to live as if it were **paths** that he could walk along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [teach me how to live according to your will] or [teach me how I should live]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Make me know | show me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 25:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; on you I wait all the day.* | *Teach me to conduct my life by obeying your truth, because you are my God, the one who saves me. I trust in you at all times.* |

ULT **Lead me in your truth**
UST Teach me to conduct my life by obeying your truth
(הַדְרִיכֵנִי בַאֲמִתֶּךָ)

David is speaking of God's **truth** as if it were a path that he could walk on. He means that he wants God to help him live according to God's truth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Help me to live according to your truth]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Lead me in your truth**
UST Teach me to conduct my life by obeying your truth
(הַדְרִיכֵנִי בַאֲמִתֶּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **truth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Lead me according to what is true] or [Lead me by your true teaching]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Lead me in your truth and teach me**
UST Teach me to conduct my life by obeying your truth
(הַדְרִיכֵנִי בַאֲמִתֶּךָ וְ וְלַמְּדֵנִי)

The expressions **Lead me in your truth** and **teach me** mean similar things. David 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: [Instruct me in your truth]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **Lead me in your truth and teach me**
UST Teach me to conduct my life by obeying your truth
(הַדְרִיכֵנִי בַאֲמִתֶּךָ ו וְלַמְּדֵנִי)

The verbs **Lead** and **teach** are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than commands. David is humbly asking God to guide and instruct him. If the imperative form does not communicate a polite request in your language, you could use a form that communicates a polite request. It may be helpful to add an expression such as "please" to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please lead me in your truth and teach me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **the God of my salvation**
UST my God, the one who saves me
(אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי)

See how you translated the similar phrase "the God of his salvation" in 24:5.

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **for you are the God of my salvation**
UST because you are my God, the one who saves me
(כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי)

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: [for you are the God who saves me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **on you I wait all the day**
UST I trust in you at all times
(אוֹתְךָ קִוִּיתִי כָּל־הַיּוֹם)

The implication is that David waits on God to help him. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I continually wait for you to help me] or [I wait on you to help me all the day]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the God of | my God |
| my salvation | the one who saves me |

# Psalms 25:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Remember your compassion, Yahweh, and your covenant faithfulness, for they are from ancient times.* | *Yahweh, please act mercifully to me and faithfully love me, because that is the way that you have acted since long ago.* |

ULT **Remember your compassion, Yahweh, and your covenant faithfulness**
UST Yahweh, please act mercifully to me and faithfully love me
(זְכֹר־רַחֲמֶיךָ יְהוָה וַחֲסָדֶיךָ)

David assumes that readers will know that when he asks God to **Remember** his compassion and covenant faithfulness, he is asking God to act according to these qualities, not simply to recall them mentally. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Act according to your compassion, Yahweh, and your covenant faithfulness]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Remember your compassion, Yahweh, and your covenant faithfulness**
UST Yahweh, please act mercifully to me and faithfully love me
(זְכֹר־רַחֲמֶיךָ יְהוָה וַחֲסָדֶיךָ)

The word translated as **Remember** is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please remember your compassion, Yahweh, and your covenant faithfulness]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Remember your compassion, Yahweh, and your covenant faithfulness**
UST Yahweh, please act mercifully to me and faithfully love me
(זְכֹר־רַחֲמֶיךָ יְהוָה וַחֲסָדֶיךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **compassion** and **covenant faithfulness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Remember how you are compassionate, Yahweh, and how you are faithful to your covenant] or [Remember to be compassionate, Yahweh, and to be faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **they are from ancient times**
UST that is the way that you have acted since long ago
(מֵעוֹלָם הֵמָּה)

The implication is that God has always been compassionate and faithful, not just recently. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [you have acted with compassion and covenant faithfulness since ancient times]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your compassion | mercifully to me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and your covenant faithfulness | and faithfully love me |
| from ancient times | since long ago |

# Psalms 25:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your covenant faithfulness remember me, for the sake of your goodness, Yahweh!* | *Forgive me for the sinful things I did when I was young and for my rebellious actions {as an adult}. I ask that, because you faithfully love your people, you treat me kindly and forgive me. Yahweh, I ask that you do this because you are good!* |

ULT **the sins of my youth**
UST the sinful things I did when I was young
(חַטֹּאות נְעוּרַי)

David is using the possessive form to describe **sins** that were committed during his **youth**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the sins I committed when I was young] or [the sinful things I did in my youth]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **according to your covenant faithfulness remember me**
UST I ask that, because you faithfully love your people, you treat me kindly and forgive me
(כְּחַסְדְּךָ זְכָר־לִי)

By **according to your covenant faithfulness remember me**, David means that he wants God to remember him with favor and blessing, not with judgment. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [because of your covenant faithfulness remember me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **or my transgressions**
UST and for my rebellious actions {as an adult}
(וּפְשָׁעַי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **transgressions**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [or the ways I have disobeyed your instructions]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **according to your covenant faithfulness**
UST I ask that, because you faithfully love your people
(כְּחַסְדֶּךָ)

See how you translated the phrase **covenant faithfulness** in the previous verse.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **for the sake of your goodness, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh, I ask that you do this because you are good
(לְמַעַן טוּבְךָ יְהוָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **goodness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [for the sake of the fact that you are good, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the sins of | the sinful things I did |
| or my transgressions | and for my rebellious actions {as an adult} |
| according to your covenant faithfulness | I ask that, because you faithfully love your people |
| your goodness | you are |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 25:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Good and upright is Yahweh, therefore he teaches the sinful in the way.* | *Yahweh is good and acts righteously, so he shows sinful people the right way to conduct their lives.* |

**ULT Good and upright is Yahweh, therefore he teaches the sinful in the way**
**UST** Yahweh is good and acts righteously, so he shows sinful people the right way to conduct their lives
(טוֹב־וְיָשָׁר יְהוָה עַל־כֵּן יוֹרֶה חַטָּאִים בַּדָּרֶךְ׃)

David is using **therefore** to introduce a result clause that explains what follows from Yahweh being good and upright. 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 Yahweh teaches sinners the way, he is good and upright]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT the sinful**
**UST** sinful people
(חַטָּאִים)

David is using the adjective **sinful** 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: [sinners]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT in the way**
**UST** the right way to conduct their lives
(בַּדָּרֶךְ׃)

Here David is speaking of how a person lives as if that were a **way** or path for a person to walk on. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [how to live] or [how they should conduct their lives]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Good | is good |
| and upright | and acts righteously |
| is Yahweh | Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the sinful | sinful people |

# Psalms 25:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He leads the humble in justice, and he teaches the humble his way.* | *He shows humble people what is right for them to do and teaches them what he wants them to do.* |

ULT **He leads the humble in justice, and he teaches the humble his way**
UST He shows humble people what is right for them to do and teaches them what he wants them to do
(יַדְרֵךְ עֲנָוִים בַּמִּשְׁפָּט וְיִלַּמֵּד עֲנָוִים דַּרְכּוֹ)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a guide who **leads** people along paths and a teacher who **teaches** them the right way to take. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He guides the humble to do what is just and he shows the humble how he wants them to live]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **He leads the humble in justice, and he teaches the humble his way**
UST He shows humble people what is right for them to do and teaches them what he wants them to do
(יַדְרֵךְ עֲנָוִים בַּמִּשְׁפָּט וְיִלַּמֵּד עֲנָוִים דַּרְכּוֹ)

David is using the adjective **humble** 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: [He leads humble people in justice and he teaches humble people his way]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **He leads the humble in justice**
UST He shows humble people what is right for them to do
(יַדְרֵךְ עֲנָוִים בַּמִּשְׁפָּט)

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: [He leads the humble to do what is just] or [He guides the humble to act justly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the humble | humble people |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in justice | what is right for them to do |

# Psalms 25:10

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *All the paths of Yahweh are covenant love and faithfulness for the ones keeping his covenant and his testimonies.* | *Yahweh always faithfully loves and does what he has promised to those who obey his covenant and who do what he requires.* |

**ULT All the paths of Yahweh are covenant love and faithfulness**
**UST** Yahweh always faithfully loves and does what he has promised
(כָּל־אָרְחוֹת יְהוָה חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh's actions as if they were **paths** that a person could walk along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [All the actions of Yahweh are covenant love and faithfulness]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT All the paths of Yahweh are covenant love and faithfulness**
**UST** Yahweh always faithfully loves and does what he has promised
(כָּל־אָרְחוֹת יְהוָה חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant love** and **faithfulness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [All the paths of Yahweh are loving and faithful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| of Yahweh | Yahweh |
| are covenant love | faithfully loves |
| are covenant love | faithfully loves |
| and faithfulness | and does what he has promised |
| his covenant | his covenant |
| and his testimonies | and who do what he requires |

# Psalms 25:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the sake of your name, Yahweh, forgive my iniquity, for it is great.* | *Yahweh, forgive me for all my sins, which are many, in order that I and others may honor you.* |

**ULT For the sake of your name**
**UST** in order that I and others may honor you
(לְמַעַן־שִׁמְךָ)

David is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is or to refer to Yahweh's reputation. Alternate translation: [For your sake] or [For the sake of your reputation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT forgive my iniquity**
**UST** forgive me for all my sins
(וְסָלַחְתָּ לַעֲוֹנִי)

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: [forgive me for the wrong things I have done]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| forgive | forgive me |
| my iniquity | for all my sins |

# Psalms 25:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Who is the man fearing Yahweh? He will teach him in the way he is to choose.* | *To all those who revere Yahweh, he shows them the right way to conduct their lives.* |

ULT **Who is the man fearing Yahweh? He will teach him in the way he is to choose**
UST To all those who revere Yahweh, he shows them the right way to conduct their lives
(מִי־זֶה הָאִישׁ יְרֵא יְהוָה יוֹרֶנּוּ בְּדֶרֶךְ יִבְחָר)

David is using a rhetorical question **Who is the man fearing Yahweh?** to emphasize that God is faithful to guide those who revere him. If a speaker of your language would not use a question for this purpose, you could translate this as a statement or exclamation. Alternate translation: [The man who fears Yahweh—God will teach him in the way he is to choose]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Who is the man fearing Yahweh? He will teach him in the way he is to choose**
UST To all those who revere Yahweh, he shows them the right way to conduct their lives
(מִי־זֶה הָאִישׁ יְרֵא יְהוָה יוֹרֶנּוּ בְּדֶרֶךְ יִבְחָר)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Who are the people fearing Yahweh? He will teach them in the way they are to choose]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **the man**
UST To all those who
(זֶה הָאִישׁ)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [anyone]

ULT **He will teach him in the way he is to choose**
UST he shows them the right way to conduct their lives
(יוֹרֶנּוּ בְּדֶרֶךְ יִבְחָר)

David is speaking of how a person conducts themselves as if that were **the way** or path for a person to walk on. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He will teach him how he should live]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| fearing | revere |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 25:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *His soul will remain in good, and his seed will inherit the earth.* | *They will always be prosperous, and their descendants will continue to live in {this} land.* |

**ULT** **His soul**
**UST** They
(נַפְשׁוֹ)

David is using the term **soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [He]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT** **His soul will remain in good**
**UST** They will always be prosperous
(נַפְשׁוֹ בְּטוֹב תָּלִין)

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: [His soul will remain prosperous] or [He will continue to be blessed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT** **in good**
**UST** prosperous
(בְּטוֹב)

By **in good**, David means in prosperity or in favorable circumstances. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [in prosperity]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT** **and his seed**
**UST** and their descendants
(וְזַרְעוֹ)

See how you translated the term “seed” in 18:50. Alternate translation: [and his descendants]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **will inherit the earth**
UST will continue to live in {this} land
(יִֽירַשׁ אֶֽרֶץ)

By **will inherit the earth**, David means that their descendants will continue to live in the promised land of Israel. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [will inherit the land]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| His soul | They |
| in good | prosperous |
| and his seed | and their descendants |
| will inherit | will continue to live in |
| the earth | {this} land |

# Psalms 25:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The secret of Yahweh is for the ones fearing him and his covenant, to cause them to know it.* | *Yahweh is a friend of those who revere him, and he teaches them the covenant that he made {with them}.* |

**ULT The secret of Yahweh is for the ones fearing him**
**UST** Yahweh is a friend of those who revere him
(סֹוד יְהוָה לִירֵאָיו)

David assumes that readers will know that **the secret of Yahweh** refers to an intimate relationship with Yahweh. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh's intimate friendship is for the ones fearing him] or [Yahweh shares his plans with the ones fearing him]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| is for the ones fearing him | those who revere him |
| and his covenant | the covenant that he made {with them} |
| to cause them to know it | and he teaches them |

# Psalms 25:15

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *My eyes are continually toward Yahweh, for he will make my feet go out of the net.* | *I always ask Yahweh to help me, because he will rescue me when my enemies attempt to hurt me.* |

ULT **My eyes are continually toward Yahweh, for he will make my feet go out of the net**
UST I always ask Yahweh to help me, because he will rescue me when my enemies attempt to hurt me
(עֵינַי תָּמִיד אֶל־יְהוָה כִּי הוּא־יוֹצִיא מֵרֶשֶׁת רַגְלָי)

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 Yahweh will make my feet go out of the net, my eyes are continually toward him]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **My eyes are continually toward Yahweh**
UST I always ask Yahweh to help me
(עֵינַי תָּמִיד אֶל־יְהוָה)

Here, **eyes** represents David's attention and focus. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am continually focused on Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **he will make my feet go out of the net**
UST he will rescue me when my enemies attempt to hurt me
(הוּא־יוֹצִיא מֵרֶשֶׁת רַגְלָי)

Here David is speaking as if his troubles were a **net** that had trapped his feet and as if Yahweh could free his feet from that trap. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he will free me from my troubles like feet freed from a net] or [he will rescue me from my troubles]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 25:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Turn toward me and be gracious to me, for I am alone and afflicted.* | *{Yahweh,} pay attention to me and be merciful to me, because I have no one to help me and I am suffering.* |

**ULT Turn toward me and be gracious to me**
**UST** {Yahweh,} pay attention to me and be merciful to me
(פְּנֵה־אֵלַי וְחָנֵּנִי)

David is using imperative forms, but he is communicating polite requests rather than commands. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please turn toward me and be gracious to me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Turn toward me**
**UST** {Yahweh,} pay attention to me
(פְּנֵה־אֵלַי)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a person who could physically **Turn toward** him to give attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Pay attention to me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Turn toward me and be gracious to me, for I am alone and afflicted**
**UST** { … Yahweh,} pay attention to me and be merciful to me, because I have no one to help me and I am suffering
(פְּנֵה־אֵלַי וְחָנֵּנִי כִּי־יָחִיד וְעָנִי אָנִי)

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 am alone and afflicted, turn toward me and be gracious to me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **and afflicted**
UST and … am suffering
(וְעָנִ֥י)

The expression **afflicted** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and experiencing hardship]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and be gracious to me | and be merciful to me |
| and afflicted | and … am suffering |

# Psalms 25:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The troubles of my heart are enlarged; bring me out of my distresses.* | *{Because of my present circumstances} there are many things that cause me to worry. Rescue me from the things that are causing me to be distressed.* |

**ULT The troubles of my heart are enlarged**
**UST** {Because of my present circumstances} there are many things that cause me to worry
(צָרוֹת לְבָבִי הִרְחִיבוּ)

Here David is speaking of **The troubles of my heart** as if they were physical objects that could become larger in size. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [My heart is filled with many troubles] or [The troubles I feel have become very great]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT bring me out of my distresses**
**UST** Rescue me from the things that are causing me to be distressed
(מִמְּצוּקוֹתַי הוֹצִיאֵנִי)

Here David is speaking as if his distresses were a place from which he could be brought **out**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [free me from my distresses] or [rescue me from my distresses]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT bring me out of my distresses**
**UST** Rescue me from the things that are causing me to be distressed
(מִמְּצוּקוֹתַי הוֹצִיאֵנִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distresses**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [deliver me from the things that distress me] or [bring me out of the circumstances that distress me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The troubles of | Because of … { … present circumstances} there are … things that cause … to worry |
| out of my distresses | from the things that are causing me to be distressed |

# Psalms 25:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *See my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all of my sins.* | *Take notice that I am in difficult circumstances and troubled, and forgive me for every sinful thing I have done.* |

ULT **See**
UST Take notice
(רְאֵֽה)

By **See**, David means "take notice of" or "pay attention to." David is asking God to consider his difficult situation with compassion. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Consider]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **See my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all of my sins**
UST Take notice that I am in difficult circumstances and troubled, and forgive me for every sinful thing I have done
(רְאֵה עָנְיִי וַעֲמָלִי וְשָׂא לְכָל־חַטֹּאותָֽי)

The words **See** and **forgive** are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than commands. If the imperative form does not communicate polite requests in your language, you could use a form that communicates polite requests. It may be helpful to add an expression such as "please" to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please see my affliction and my trouble, and please forgive all of my sins]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **See my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all of my sins**
UST Take notice that I am in difficult circumstances and troubled, and forgive me for every sinful thing I have done
(רְאֵה עָנְיִי וַעֲמָלִי וְשָׂא לְכָל־חַטֹּאותָֽי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **affliction** and **trouble**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [See how I am afflicted and troubled, and forgive all of the sinful things that I have done]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my affliction | that I am in difficult circumstances |
| and my trouble | and troubled |
| and forgive | and forgive me |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my sins | sinful thing I have done |

# Psalms 25:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *See my enemies, for they are many, and with hatred of violence they hate me.* | *Take notice that I have many enemies, and that they hate me very much.* |

**ULT See**
**UST** Take notice
(רְאֵה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please look at] or [Please consider]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT and with hatred of violence they hate me**
**UST** and that they hate me very much
(וְשִׂנְאַת חָמָס שָׂנְאוּנִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **hatred**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and they violently hate me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and with hatred of violence**
**UST** and that they hate me very much
(וְשִׂנְאַת חָמָס)

David is using this possessive form **hatred of violence** to mean violent hatred. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and with violent hatred] or [and with brutal hatred]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my enemies | that I have … enemies |

# Psalms 25:20

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Guard my life and deliver me; do not let me have shame, for I take refuge in you!* | *Protect me and rescue me {from them}; do not allow {them to defeat me with the result that} I would be ashamed, because I go to you to keep me safe.* |

ULT **Guard my life and deliver me; do not let me have shame**
UST Protect me and rescue me {from them}; do not allow {them to defeat me with the result that} I would be ashamed
(שָׁמְרָה־נַפְשִׁי וְהַצִּילֵנִי אַל־אֵבוֹשׁ)

These are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than commands. If the imperatives do not communicate polite requests for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates polite requests. It may be helpful to add an expression such as "please" to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please guard my life and deliver me; please do not let me have shame]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Guard my life**
UST Protect me
(שָׁמְרָה־נַפְשִׁי)

By **Guard my life**, David means protect him from his enemies who want to harm or kill him. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Protect my life]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **for I take refuge in you**
UST because I go to you to keep me safe
(כִּי־חָסִיתִי בָךְ)

See how you translated the phrase **for I take refuge in you** in 16:1.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Guard | Protect |
| and deliver me | and rescue me {from them} |
| do … let me have shame | do … allow {them to defeat me with the result that} I would be ashamed |
| I take refuge | I go … to keep me safe |

# Psalms 25:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for you.* | *Protect me because I do what is good and honest, and because I trust in you.* |

ULT **May integrity and uprightness**
UST because I do what is good and honest
(תֹּם־וְיֹשֶׁר)

The terms **integrity** and **uprightness** mean similar things. David 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 complete righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **May integrity and uprightness preserve me**
UST Protect me because I do what is good and honest
(תֹּם־וְיֹשֶׁר יִצְּרוּנִי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **integrity** and **uprightness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [May my honest and upright character preserve me] or [May I be preserved because I am honest and do what is right]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **May integrity and uprightness preserve me**
UST Protect me because I do what is good and honest
(תֹּם־וְיֹשֶׁר יִצְּרוּנִי)

Here David speaks of **integrity and uprightness** as if they were people who could **preserve** or protect him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May my integrity and uprightness be the means by which you preserve me]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **for I wait for you**
UST and because I trust in you
(כִּי קִוִּיתִיךָ)

See how you translated the phrases “the ones waiting on you” in 25:3 and “on you I wait” in 25:5 where the words “waiting” and “wait” are used with the same meaning as the word **wait** in this verse.

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May integrity<br>and uprightness | because I do what is good<br>and honest |

# Psalms 25:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God, redeem Israel from all of his troubles!* | *God, rescue {us} Israelite people from all of our troubles!* |

**ULT redeem**
**UST** rescue
(פְּדֵה)

The word **redeem** is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please redeem]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Israel from all of his troubles**
**UST** {us} Israelite people from all of our troubles
(אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכֹּל צָרוֹתָיו)

Here, **Israel** represents the Israelite people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [us Israelite people from all our troubles]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| redeem | rescue |
| Israel | {us} Israelite people |
| his troubles | our troubles |

# Psalms 26

## Psalm 26 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

1. David asks Yahweh to give him justice because of his righteous lifestyle (1–6a)
2. David vows to thank Yahweh and recount all his wondrous deeds (6b–7)
3. David proclaims that he loves to be in Yahweh's presence in the Tabernacle (8)
4. David asks Yahweh not to punish him with the wicked (9–10)
5. David vows to live with integrity and asks Yahweh to redeem him and be gracious to him as a result (11)
6. David's closing words (12)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Praise

The psalmist delights in praising God and doing good deeds. It is striking how this psalm uses the first person pronoun. This is an individual psalm of petition. Each of the four petitions are accompanied with various claims. (See: good, right, pleasant, better, best, goodness)

# Psalms 26:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Of David Vindicate me, Yahweh, for I have walked in my integrity, and in Yahweh I have trusted without wavering.* | *A psalm of David Yahweh, show that I am innocent. I have done what is right, and I have trusted in Yahweh without doubting him.* |

ULT **Vindicate me**
UST show that I am innocent
(שָׁפְטֵנִי)

By **Vindicate me**, David means that he wants God to prove to others that he is innocent of wrongdoing. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Prove that I am righteous] or [Show others that I am innocent]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Vindicate me**
UST show that I am innocent
(שָׁפְטֵנִי)

Here David is using an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please vindicate me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **for I have walked in my integrity**
UST I have done what is right, and
(כִּי־אֲנִי בְתֻמִּי הָלַכְתִּי)

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: [for I have done what is right] or [for I have lived uprightly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **for I have walked in my integrity**
UST I have done what is right, and
(כִּי־אֲנִי בְתֻמִּי הָלַכְתִּי)

Here David is speaking of his manner of living and conducting himself as if it were a path he **walked**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for I have lived with integrity] or [for I have acted with integrity]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Of David | A psalm of David |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| in my integrity | what is right |
| and in Yahweh | in Yahweh |
| I have trusted | I have trusted |

# Psalms 26:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Examine me, Yahweh, and test me; try my kidneys and my heart.* | *Yahweh, examine what I have done and test me; thoroughly evaluate what I think in my inner being.* |

**ULT Examine me, Yahweh, and test me; try**
**UST** Yahweh, examine what I have done and test me; thoroughly evaluate
(בְּחָנֵנִי יְהוָה וְנַסֵּנִי צרופה)

David is using imperatives to make polite requests rather than to give commands. If the imperatives do not communicate polite requests in your language, you could use a form that communicates a polite request. Alternate translation: [Please examine me, Yahweh, and test me; please try]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Examine me, Yahweh, and test me**
**UST** Yahweh, examine what I have done and test me; thoroughly
(בְּחָנֵנִי יְהוָה וְנַסֵּנִי)

These two phrases, **Examine me** and **test me**, mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, examine and test me]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT try my kidneys and my heart**
**UST** evaluate what I think in my inner being
(צרופה כִלְיוֹתַי וְלִבִּי)

See how you translated the similar phrase “The righteous God examines hearts and kidneys” in 7:9. Alternate translation: [try my motives and my thoughts]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and test me | and test me; thoroughly |

# Psalms 26:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For your covenant faithfulness is before my eyes, and I walk about in your truth.* | *I never forget that you faithfully love me. I conduct my life according to what you say is right.* |

**ULT For your covenant faithfulness is before my eyes**
**UST** I never forget that you faithfully love me
(כִּי־חַסְדְּךָ לְנֶגֶד עֵינָי)

David is using **before my eyes** as a common expression of his culture to mean "constantly in my thoughts" or "always in my awareness." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am always mindful of your covenant faithfulness] or [I constantly remember your covenant faithfulness]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT For your covenant faithfulness**
**UST** you faithfully love me
(כִּי־חַסְדְּךָ)

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: [For the way you are faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and I walk about in your truth**
**UST** I conduct my life according to what you say is right
(וְהִתְהַלַּכְתִּי בַּאֲמִתֶּךָ)

David is speaking of living according to God's truth as if it were a path he could **walk about** on. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I live according to your truth]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **in your truth**
> UST according to what you say is right
> (בַּאֲמִתֶּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **truth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in what is true]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your covenant faithfulness | you faithfully love me |

# Psalms 26:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I do not sit with men of falsehood, and I will not go with the ones concealing themselves.* | *I do not spend my time with liars, and I stay away from hypocrites.* |

ULT **I do not sit with men of falsehood**
UST I do not spend my time with liars
(לֹא־יָשַׁבְתִּי עִם־מְתֵי־שָׁוְא)

Here, **sit** represents associating with or spending time with people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I do not associate with men of falsehood]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **men of falsehood**
UST liars
(מְתֵי־שָׁוְא)

The phrase **men of falsehood** refers to people who are characterized by dishonesty, deception, or lies. David is describing those who habitually speak or act falsely. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [deceitful people] or [dishonest men]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **men of falsehood**
UST liars
(מְתֵי־שָׁוְא)

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: [lying men] or [men who lie]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

> ULT **and I will not go with the ones concealing themselves**
> UST and I stay away from hypocrites
> (וְעִם נֶעֱלָמִים לֹא אָבוֹא)

The implication is that these people are concealing their evil intentions or dishonest behavior. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and I will not go with those who hide their evil deeds] or [and I will not go with those who hide their evil deeds and intentions]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

# Psalms 26:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I hate the assembly of the ones doing evil, and I will not sit with the wicked.* | *I do not like to be with evil people, and I avoid wicked people.* |

ULT **the ones doing evil**
UST evil people
(מְרֵעִים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evil**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the ones who do evil things] or [the ones who act wickedly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and I will not sit with**
UST and I avoid
(וְעִם & לֹא אֵשֵׁב)

See how you translated the similar phrase “I do not sit with” in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [and I will not associate with]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

See how you translated the phrase “the wicked” in 1:1.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the assembly of | to be with |
| the ones doing evil | evil people |
| the wicked | wicked people |

# Psalms 26:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I wash my hands in innocence, so I will go around your altar, Yahweh,* | *Yahweh, I wash my hands to show that I have not done what was wrong. As I join with others marching around your altar,* |

ULT **I wash my hands in innocence**
UST I wash my hands to show that I have not done what was wrong
(אֶרְחַ֣ץ בְּנִקָּיוֹן כַּפָּ֑י)

Washing hands **in innocence** was a symbolic action by which David showed that he had not done anything wrong. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [I demonstrate my innocence by washing my hands]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **in innocence**
UST to show that I have not done what was wrong
(בְּנִקָּיוֹן)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **innocence**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [as an innocent person] or [because I am innocent]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your altar | your altar |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 26:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to cause to be heard the sound of thanksgiving and recount all of your wonderful acts.* | *we sing songs to thank you, and we tell others the wonderful things that you have done.* |

**ULT to cause to be heard**
**UST** we sing
(לַשְׁמִיעַ)

The expression **to cause to be heard** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [to proclaim] or [to make known]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and recount | and we tell others |
| your wonderful acts | the wonderful things that you have done |

# Psalms 26:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, I love the habitation of your house, and the place of the dwelling place of your glory.* | *Yahweh, I love {to be in} the sanctuary where you dwell, in the place where your glory appears.* |

ULT **the habitation of your house**
UST {to be in} the sanctuary where you dwell
(מְעוֹן בֵּיתֶךָ)

David is speaking of the tabernacle of Yahweh as if it were a **house**, which Yahweh makes his **habitation** or dwelling place. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your tabernacle] or [the tabernacle where you are present in a special way]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the habitation of your house**
UST {to be in} the sanctuary where you dwell
(מְעוֹן בֵּיתֶךָ)

David is using this possessive form, **habitation of your house**, to mean the place where Yahweh has made his special **habitation** (dwelling place). It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the house where you dwell]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I love | I love |
| your house | where you dwell |
| the dwelling place of | appears |
| your glory | your glory |

# Psalms 26:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not gather my soul with the sinful, nor my life with men of blood,* | *Do not get rid of me like you get rid of sinners. Do not cause me to die like you cause those who murder people to die,* |

ULT **Do not gather**
UST Do not get rid of
(אַל־תֶּאֱסֹף)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please do not gather]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Do not gather my soul with the sinful, nor my life with men of blood**
UST Do not get rid of me like you get rid of sinners. Do not cause me to die like you cause those who murder people to die
(אַל־תֶּאֱסֹף עִם־חַטָּאִים נַפְשִׁי וְעִם־אַנְשֵׁי דָמִים חַיָּי)

David assumes that readers will know that **gather** refers to God gathering wicked people to judge them. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Do not cause me to die and be judged along with the sinful, nor let me perish in judgment with men of blood] or [Do not take me away to be judged along with the sinful, nor let me perish in judgment with men of blood]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **my soul**
UST me
(נַפְשִׁי)

Here David is using the term **my soul** to mean himself, his very life. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the sinful**
UST like you get rid of sinners
(חַטָּאִים)

David is using the adjective **sinful** 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: [sinful people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **men of blood**
UST like you cause those who murder people
(אַנְשֵׁי דָמִים)

David is using the possessive form to describe **men** that are characterized by violence and bloodshed. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [violent men] or [murderers]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Do … gather | Do … get rid of |
| my soul | me |
| the sinful | like you get rid of sinners |

# Psalms 26:10

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *who {have} in their hands an evil scheme and their right hand is full of bribes.* | *and people who are ready to do wicked things, and people who are always taking bribes.* |

**ULT who {have} in their hands an evil scheme**
**UST** and people who are ready to do wicked things
(אֲשֶׁר־בִּידֵיהֶם זִמָּה)

Here, **hands** represents what these evil men do (their actions) or plan to do. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [who plan an evil scheme]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT and their right hand is full of bribes**
**UST** and people who are always taking bribes
(וִימִינָם מָלְאָה שֹׁחַד)

The phrase **their right hand is full of bribes** could mean: (1) that these wicked men are in positions of authority and they accept bribes and make unjust decisions or rulings as a result. Alternate translation: [and their right hand is full of bribes which they have accepted] or (2) that these evil men give bribes to those in positions of authority in order to influence them to make wrong and unjust decisions. Alternate translation: [and they give bribes] or [and they pervert justice by giving bribes]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| an evil scheme | wicked things |
| bribes | bribes |

# Psalms 26:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But I will walk in my integrity; redeem me and be gracious to me.* | *But as for me, I always try to do what is right. So rescue me and act kindly toward me.* |

ULT **But I will walk in my integrity**
UST But as for me, I always try to do what is right
(וַאֲנִי בְּתֻמִּי אֵלֵךְ)

See how you translated the similar phrase “for I have walked in my integrity” in verse 1.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **redeem me and be gracious to me**
UST So rescue me and act kindly toward me
(פְּדֵנִי וְחָנֵּנִי)

In this context, David is using imperative forms to make polite requests to God rather than to give commands. The words **redeem me and be gracious to me** are requests for God’s help and mercy. If the imperative forms do not communicate polite requests in your language, use a form that communicates a polite request. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [please redeem me and be gracious to me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in my integrity | always try to do what is right |
| redeem me | So rescue me |
| and be gracious to me | and act kindly toward me |

# Psalms 26:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My foot stands on level ground; among the assemblies will I bless Yahweh!* | *{Because I have conducted myself righteously} I am secure, and when all Yahweh's people gather together, I praise him among them.* |

**ULT My foot stands on level ground**
**UST** {Because I have conducted myself righteously} I am secure
(רַגְלִי עָמְדָה בְמִישׁוֹר)

Here David is speaking as if his **foot stands on level ground**. He means that he is in a stable and secure position because he has lived righteously. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am secure because I have lived righteously]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT among the assemblies will I bless Yahweh**
**UST** and when all Yahweh's people gather together, I praise him among them
(בַּמַּקְהֵלִים אֲבָרֵךְ יְהוָה)

David assumes that readers will know that **assemblies** refers to gatherings of God's people for worship. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [in the gatherings of God's people I will bless Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| among the assemblies | and when all Yahweh's people gather together … among them |
| will I bless | I praise |
| Yahweh | him |

# Psalms 27

## Psalm 27 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 27 is considered to be one of the “psalms of trust.” See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about the psalms of trust.

1. David declares his confidence in God (1–6)
2. David prays for help (7–12)
3. David affirms his faith in God and calls on others to patiently endure (13–14)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh’s help

Because of God’s help, he has nothing to fear, no matter what happens. The psalmist shows his confidence in God; he also asks God for help.

# Psalms 27:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Of David Yahweh is my light and my salvation; whom will I fear? Yahweh is the refuge of my life; whom will I dread?* | *A psalm of David Yahweh encourages me and nourishes my inner being. He is the one who saves me, so I will not fear anyone. Yahweh is the one to whom I go for refuge, so I will not dread anyone.* |

ULT **Yahweh is my light**
UST Yahweh encourages me and nourishes my inner being
(יְהוָה ׀ אוֹרִי)

David is speaking of **Yahweh** as if he were **light** that illuminates, guides, helps, and encourages him. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is like light to me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and my salvation**
UST He is the one who saves me
(וְיִשְׁעִי)

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: [and the one who saves me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **whom will I fear … whom will I dread**
UST so I will not fear anyone … so I will not dread anyone
(מִמִּי אִירָא & מִמִּי אֶפְחָד)

David is using two rhetorical questions, **whom will I fear** and **whom will I dread**, to emphasize that he does not fear anyone because Yahweh protects him. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate these questions as statements. Alternate translation: [there is no one I fear … there is no one I dread] or [there is no one I need to fear … there is no one I need to dread]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Yahweh is the refuge of my life**
UST Yahweh is the one to whom I go for refuge
(יְהוָה מָעוֹז־חַיַּי)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a physical location, a **refuge**, that could provide safety and protection. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [Yahweh protects my life like a place of refuge] or [Yahweh is like a safe place for me where I can go to be safe]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Of David | A psalm of David |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and my salvation | He is the one who saves me |
| will I fear | I will … fear |
| is the refuge of | is the one to whom I go for refuge |
| will I dread | I will … dread |

# Psalms 27:2

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *When the ones doing evil advance against me to devour my flesh, my enemies and the ones being hostile to me, they stumbled and fell.* | *When those who do evil things come near me to attack and destroy me, Yahweh enables me to defeat them so that they fall down.* |

ULT **to devour my flesh**
UST me to attack and destroy me
(לֶֽאֱכֹל֥ אֶת־בְּשָׂרִ֑י)

David is speaking of his enemies' attacks as if they were wild animals trying **to devour** his **flesh**. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly or express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [to destroy me completely] or [to attack me like wild beasts]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my enemies and the ones being hostile to me**
UST those who do evil things
(צָרַ֖י וְאֹיְבַ֣י)

The terms **enemies** and **the ones being hostile to me** mean similar things. David 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: [my fierce enemies]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **they stumbled and fell**
UST Yahweh enables me to defeat them so that they fall down
(הֵ֣מָּה כָ֭שְׁלוּ וְנָפָֽלוּ)

Here, **they stumbled and fell** represents being defeated. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they were defeated] or [they failed in their attack]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the ones doing evil | those who do evil things |
| to devour | me to attack and destroy me |
| my enemies | those who do evil things |
| stumbled | Yahweh enables me to defeat them so that they fall down |

# Psalms 27:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Though an army encamps against me, my heart will not fear; though war arises against me, in this I will be confident.* | *Even if an army sets up their tents in order to attack me, I will not be afraid. Even if they attack me, I will trust {in God}.* |

ULT **Though an army encamps against me, my heart will not fear; though war arises against me, in this I will be confident**

UST Even if an army sets up their tents in order to attack me, I will not be afraid. Even if they attack me, I will trust {in God … }

(אִם־תַּחֲנָה עָלַי ׀ מַחֲנֶה לֹא־יִירָא לִבִּי אִם־תָּקוּם עָלַי מִלְחָמָה בְּזֹאת אֲנִי בוֹטֵחַ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Though an army encamps against me and war arises against me, my heart will not fear but will be confident]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Though an army encamps against me**

UST Even if an army sets up their tents in order to attack me

(אִם־תַּחֲנָה עָלַי ׀ מַחֲנֶה)

In this verse, the word **army** is singular in form, but it refers to all soldiers as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning of "army" in another way. Alternate translation: [Though enemy troops encamp against me]

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

ULT **my heart will not fear**

UST I will not be afraid

(לֹא־יִירָא לִבִּי)

Here David is speaking of **my heart** as if it were the part of him that experiences fear. In your language, it may be more natural to say that David himself will not fear. Alternate translation: [I will not fear]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **though war arises against me**
UST Even if they attack me
(אִם־תָּקוּם עָלַי מִלְחָמָה)

David is using **war arises against me** as a common expression of his culture to mean "when enemies attack me" or "when I am attacked in battle." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [though enemies attack me] or [though I am under attack]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| will … fear | will … be afraid |

# Psalms 27:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *One {thing} I have asked from Yahweh, that I will seek: that I may dwell in the house of Yahweh all the days of my life, to look upon the beauty of Yahweh and to inquire in his temple.* | *There is one thing that I have requested from Yahweh, and that one thing I will repeatedly ask Yahweh for. {This is the one thing I ask of Yahweh}: that I may worship in Yahweh's sanctuary every day during my life, in order to experience how wonderful Yahweh is. When I am in his sanctuary then I will ask him {for guidance}.* |

ULT **One {thing} I have asked from Yahweh, that I will seek**
UST There is one thing that I have requested from Yahweh, and that one thing I will repeatedly ask Yahweh for
(אַחַת ׀ שָׁאַלְתִּי מֵאֵת־יְהוָה אוֹתָהּ אֲבַקֵּשׁ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [One thing I have asked from Yahweh, yes, this is what I will seek]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **that I will seek**
UST and that one thing I will repeatedly ask Yahweh for
(אוֹתָהּ אֲבַקֵּשׁ)

Here David is speaking of the object of his desire (dwelling in God's tabernacle) as if it were something he could physically pursue or chase after. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that I long for] or [that I desire]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **that I may dwell in the house of Yahweh all the days of my life**
UST {This is the one thing I ask of Yahweh}: that I may worship in Yahweh's sanctuary every day during my life
(שִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית־יְהוָה כָּל־יְמֵי חַיָּי)

See how you translated the similar phrase "and I will dwell in the house of Yahweh for length of days" in 23:6.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to look upon the beauty of Yahweh**
UST in order to experience how wonderful Yahweh is
(לַחֲזוֹת בְּנֹעַם־יְהוָה)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were actually looking at the physical **beauty** of Yahweh with his eyes. He means that he wants to experience and appreciate Yahweh's wonderful character and presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to experience Yahweh's wonderful presence] or [to appreciate Yahweh's glorious character]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in his temple**
UST When I am in his sanctuary
(בְּהֵיכָלוֹ)

David is speaking of the **temple** of Yahweh as if it were a **house** in which he lived. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in his tabernacle]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I will seek | I will repeatedly ask Yahweh for |
| in the house of Yahweh | in Yahweh's sanctuary |
| and to inquire | then I will ask him {for guidance} |
| in his temple | When I am in his sanctuary |

# Psalms 27:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For in the day of trouble he will hide me in his hut; he will hide me in the hiding-place of his tent. He will lift me high upon a rock.* | *When I have troubles he will protect me in his tabernacle; yes, he will keep me safe in his sacred tent. He will keep me safe as if he were setting me high upon a rock {where my enemies cannot reach me}.* |

ULT **For in the day of trouble he will hide me in his hut; he will hide me in the hiding-place of his tent**

UST When I have troubles he will protect me in his tabernacle; yes, he will keep me safe in his sacred tent

(כִּי יִצְפְּנֵנִי ׀ בְּסֻכֹּה֮ בְּיוֹם רָ֫עָה֥ יַסְתִּרֵ֥נִי בְּסֵ֣תֶר אָ֭הֳלֹו)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [For in the day of trouble he will hide me in his hut, yes, he will conceal me in his tent]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **he will hide me in his hut; he will hide me in the hiding-place of his tent**

UST he will protect me in his tabernacle; yes, he will keep me safe in his sacred tent

(יִצְפְּנֵנִי ׀ בְּסֻכֹּה֮ &יַסְתִּרֵ֥נִי בְּסֵ֣תֶר אָ֭הֳלֹו)

David assumes that readers will know that **his hut** and **his tent** refer to God's tabernacle. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [he will hide me in his tabernacle; he will hide me in the hiding-place of his sacred tent] or [he will hide me in his tabernacle; he will hide me in the hiding-place of his tabernacle]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **he will hide me in his hut; he will hide me in the hiding-place of his tent**
UST he will protect me in his tabernacle; yes, he will keep me safe in his sacred tent
(יִצְפְּנֵנִי ׀ בְּסֻכֹּה֮ & יַסְתִּרֵנִי בְּסֵתֶר אָהֳלֹו)

Here David is referring to Yahweh's tabernacle as a **hut** and **tent** and is speaking as if Yahweh was actually hiding him from his enemies there. David means that by his being in Yahweh's tabernacle, Yahweh will protect him from his enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he will protect me and keep me safe in his tabernacle]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the day of trouble**
UST When I have troubles
(בְּיֹום רָעָה)

David is using the term **day** to refer to a specific time of distress or difficulty. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when I have trouble] or [in times of trouble]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in the day of trouble**
UST When I have troubles
(בְּיֹום רָעָה)

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: [when I am troubled]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **He will lift me high upon a rock**
UST He will keep me safe as if he were setting me high upon a rock {where my enemies cannot reach me}
(בְּצוּר יְרוֹמְמֵנִי)

David is speaking of Yahweh protecting him and keeping him safe as if Yahweh would literally lift him up and place him on a high **rock** where he would be safe from the attacks of his enemies. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| trouble | troubles |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his tent | his sacred tent |

# Psalms 27:6

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And now my head will be lifted up above the ones being hostile to me {who are} all around me, and I will sacrifice in his tent sacrifices of a shout of joy. I will sing and make music to Yahweh!* | *Then I will triumph over my enemies who surround me. I will shout joyfully as I offer sacrifices in his sacred tent, and I will praise Yahweh as I sing.* |

ULT **And now my head will be lifted up above**
UST Then I will triumph over
(וְעַתָּה יָרוּם רֹאשִׁי עַל)

David is using **my head will be lifted up** as a common expression of his culture to mean "I will be exalted" or "I will triumph." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And now I will be exalted above]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **in his tent**
UST in his sacred tent
(בְּאָהֳלוֹ)

See how you translated the phrase "his tent" in the previous verse where it is used with the same meaning. Alternate translation: [in his tabernacle]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and I will sacrifice in his tent sacrifices of a shout of joy**
UST I will shout joyfully as I offer sacrifices in his sacred tent
(וְאֶזְבְּחָה בְאָהֳלוֹ זִבְחֵי תְרוּעָה)

By **sacrifices of a shout of joy**, David means sacrifices that he offers while shouting joyfully to God. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and I will joyfully shout as I sacrifice in his tent]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the ones being hostile to me | my enemies |
| and I will sacrifice | as I offer sacrifices |
| in his tent | in his sacred tent |
| sacrifices of | I will shout joyfully |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a shout of joy<br>to Yahweh | I will shout joyfully<br>Yahweh |

# Psalms 27:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hear, Yahweh, my voice {when} I cry out, and be gracious to me, and answer me.* | *Yahweh, listen to me while I call {to you in prayer}. Act kindly toward me and answer my prayer.* |

ULT **Hear, Yahweh, my voice {when} I cry out, and be gracious to me, and answer me**
UST Yahweh, listen to me while I call {to you in prayer}. Act kindly toward me and answer my prayer
(שְׁמַע־יְהוָה קוֹלִי אֶקְרָא וְחָנֵּנִי וַעֲנֵנִי)

Here David is using the imperative forms **Hear**, **be gracious to me**, and **answer me**, but he intends to communicate polite requests rather than commands. If these imperative forms do not communicate polite requests for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates polite requests. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please hear, Yahweh, my voice when I cry out, and please be gracious to me, and answer me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **my voice {when} I cry out**
UST to me while I call {to you in prayer}
(קוֹלִי אֶקְרָא)

Here, **voice** represents David’s prayer or request. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my request when I cry out]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {when} I cry out | while I call {to you in prayer} |
| and be gracious to me | Act kindly toward me |

# Psalms 27:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“Seek my face.” My heart said to you, “Your face, Yahweh, I will seek.”* | *{I sensed that I heard you say,} “Seek me and my help,” {so,} Yahweh, I will respond by seeking you and your help.* |

**ULT Seek my face.” My heart said to you, Your face, Yahweh, I will seek**
**UST** { … I sensed that I heard you say,} “Seek me and my help,” so,} Yahweh, I will respond by seeking you and your help
(לְךָ ׀ אָמַר לִבִּי בַּקְּשׁוּ פָנָי אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֲבַקֵּשׁ)

David 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 you said, “Seek my face,” my heart said to you, “Your face, Yahweh, I will seek.”]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT Seek my face**
**UST** {I sensed that I heard you say,} “Seek me and my help
(בַּקְּשׁוּ פָנָי)

The Hebrew verb the ULT translates as **Seek** is plural here because Yahweh is addressing his people or people in general who are willing to seek and trust him, and not just David. So use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of ‘You’ — Singular

**ULT My heart**
**UST** I
(לִבִּי)

Here the **heart** represents where a person’s thoughts and desires exist. David is speaking of his inner self as if it were his physical heart that could speak. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [My inner self] or [I]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my face … Your face**
UST me and my help … you and your help
(פָּנַי אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ)

Here, **face** represents being in the presence of God and also God's favor and intervention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my presence and help … Your presence and help]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Seek | {I sensed that I heard you say,} "Seek |
| Yahweh | {so,} Yahweh |
| I will seek | seeking |

# Psalms 27:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not hide your face from me; do not turn your servant away in anger. You have been my help. Do not abandon me nor leave me, God of my salvation.* | *I am your servant; do not be angry with me, or turn away from me. You have always helped me. You are the one who has saved me, so do not abandon me now.* |

**ULT Do not hide your face from me; do not turn your servant away in anger … Do not abandon me nor leave me**

UST I am your servant; do not be angry with me, or turn away from me. You have always … so do not abandon me now

(אַל־תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ ׀ מִמֶּנִּי אַל־תַּט־בְּאַף עַבְדֶּךָ & אַל־תִּטְּשֵׁנִי וְאַל־תַּעַזְבֵנִי)

These are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than commands. If the imperatives do not communicate polite requests for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates polite requests. It may be helpful to add an expression such as "please" to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please do not hide your face from me; please do not turn your servant away in anger … Please do not abandon me or leave me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Do not hide your face from me**

UST do not … with me … turn away from me

(אַל־תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ ׀ מִמֶּנִּי)

David is using **hide your face** as a common expression of his culture to mean "reject me" or "turn away from me." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Do not reject me] or [Do not turn away from me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT Do not abandon me nor leave me**

UST or … so do not abandon me now

(אַל־תִּטְּשֵׁנִי וְאַל־תַּעַזְבֵנִי)

The terms **abandon** and **leave** mean similar things. David 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: [Do not forsake me]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

> **ULT God of my salvation**
> **UST** You … saved me
> (אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי)

See how you translated the phrase “God of my salvation” in 18:46 where it occurs with the same meaning. Alternate translation: [the God who saves me]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your servant | I am your servant |
| leave me | abandon me now |
| God of | You |
| my salvation | saved me |

# Psalms 27:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For my father and my mother have left me, but Yahweh will care for me.* | *My father and mother have left me, but Yahweh will take care of me.* |

**ULT For my father and my mother have left me**
UST My father and mother have left me
(כִּי־אָבִי וְאִמִּי עֲזָבֻנִי)

Because David does not explain in what way his father and mother have left him, it is best not to add any additional explanatory information to your translation to clarify how or why his parents might have left him. It is suggested that you simply translate this phrase as it is. It may be that David's father and mother had died by this time in his life and had not intentionally left him.

**Support Reference:** When to Keep Information Implicit

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| have left me | have left me |
| but Yahweh | but Yahweh |

# Psalms 27:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Teach me your way, Yahweh, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.* | *Yahweh, teach me to do what you want me to do, and guide me so that I remain safe because I have enemies {who want to hurt me}.* |

**ULT Teach me your way, Yahweh, and lead me on a level path**
**UST** Yahweh, teach me to do what you want me to do, and guide me so that I remain safe
(הֹורֵ֣נִי יְהוָ֣ה דַּרְכֶּ֑ךָ וּנְחֵ֥נִי בְּאֹ֝רַח מִישֹׁ֗ור)

Here David uses imperative forms, but he is making polite requests rather than giving commands. If the imperative form does not communicate a polite request in your language, then use a form that communicates polite requests. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please teach me your way, Yahweh, and please lead me on a level path]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Teach me your way**
**UST** teach me to do what you want me to do
(הֹורֵ֣נִי & דַּרְכֶּ֑ךָ)

See how you translated the similar phrase “make me know your ways” in 25:4.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and lead me on a level path**
**UST** and guide me so that I remain safe
(וּנְחֵ֥נִי בְּאֹ֝רַח מִישֹׁ֗ור)

Here David is speaking as if Yahweh would **lead** him **on a level path**. He is picturing his life as if it were a journey and asking Yahweh to guide him along a smooth, safe route. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and lead me on a level path because of my enemies**
UST and guide me so that I remain safe because I have enemies {who want to hurt me … }
(וְנַחֵנִי בְּאֹרַח מִישׁוֹר לְמַעַן שׁוֹרְרָי)

David is using **because of my enemies** to give the reason for the result that **lead me on a level path** describes. 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: [and because of my enemies, lead me on a level path]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my enemies | I have enemies {who want to hurt me} |

# Psalms 27:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not give me up to the desire of my adversaries, for false witnesses have risen against me, and a witness of violence.* | *Do not allow my enemies to do to me what they want, because they say false things about me and want violent things to happen to me.* |

ULT **Do not give me up to the desire of my adversaries, for false witnesses have risen against me, and a witness of violence**

UST Do not allow my enemies to do to me what they want, because they say false things about me and want violent things to happen to me

(אַל־תִּתְּנֵנִי בְּנֶפֶשׁ צָרָי כִּי קָמוּ־בִי עֵדֵי־שֶׁקֶר וְיִפַּח חָמָס)

David is giving the reason why God should not give him up to his enemies. If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second and third phrases give the reasons for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: [Because false witnesses have risen against me, and a witness of violence, do not give me up to the desire of my adversaries]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **Do not give me up**

UST Do not allow … me

(אַל־תִּתְּנֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. David is asking God not to hand him over to his enemies. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please do not give me up]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Do not give me up to the desire of my adversaries**

UST Do not allow my enemies to do to me what they want

(אַל־תִּתְּנֵנִי בְּנֶפֶשׁ צָרָי)

David is using **give me up to the desire of** as a common expression of his culture to mean “deliver me over to” or “hand me over to.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Do not deliver me over to the desire of my adversaries]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Do not give me up to the desire of my adversaries**
UST Do not allow my enemies to do to me what they want
(אַל־תִּתְּנֵנִי בְּנֶפֶשׁ צָרָי)

David assumes that readers will know that **the desire of my adversaries** refers to the harmful things that his enemies want to do to him. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Do not deliver me over to my adversaries so that they can do the harmful things they desire to do to me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **have risen against me**
UST they say … things about me
(קָמוּ־בִי)

David is using **have risen against me** as a common expression of his culture to mean "have taken action to oppose me." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [have opposed me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **and a witness of violence**
UST and want violent things to happen to me
(וְיֻפַּח חָמָס)

The Hebrew word that the ULT translates as **a witness of** could be either: (1) a noun that means "a testifier" or "a witness." Alternate translation: [and a testifier of violence] or [and a violent testifier who is violent] or (2) an adjective that means "one breathing out" or "one puffing out." Alternate translation: [and one who breathes out violence]

ULT **and a witness of violence**
UST and want violent things to happen to me
(וְיֻפַּח חָמָס)

David is using the possessive form to describe a **witness** that is characterized by **violence**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and a violent witness] or [and a witness who speaks violently]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **and a witness of violence**
UST and want violent things to happen to me
(וְיֹפֵחַ חָמָס)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **violence**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and a witness who plans violent things] or [and a witness who acts violently]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my adversaries | my enemies |
| witnesses | they say … things about me |
| and a witness of | and want violent things to happen to me |

# Psalms 27:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Unless I had believed that I would look on the goodness of Yahweh in the land of the living.* | *I would have died if I had not trusted you to be good to me as long as I live.* |

**ULT Unless I had believed that I would look on the goodness of Yahweh in the land of the living**
UST I would have died if I had not trusted you to be good to me as long as I live
(לוּלֵי֨ הֶאֱמַ֪נְתִּי לִרְא֡וֹת בְּטוּב־יְהוָ֬ה בְּאֶ֥רֶץ חַיִּֽים)

David 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: [Unless I had believed that I would look on the goodness of Yahweh in the land of the living, I would have grown discouraged] or [I am certain that I will see the goodness of Yahweh in the land of the living]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT Unless I had believed that I would look on the goodness of Yahweh**
UST I would have died if I had not trusted you to be good to me
(לוּלֵי֨ הֶאֱמַ֪נְתִּי לִרְא֡וֹת בְּטוּב־יְהוָ֬ה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **goodness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Unless I had believed that I would see Yahweh do good things for me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT in the land of the living**
UST as long as I live
(בְּאֶ֥רֶץ חַיִּֽים)

David is using **in the land of the living** as a common expression of his culture to mean "while I am still alive" or "during my lifetime." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [while I am still alive] or [during my lifetime]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I had believed | trusted you |
| on the goodness of | to be good |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | to me |

# Psalms 27:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Wait on Yahweh. Be strong, and let your heart be courageous, and wait on Yahweh.* | *Trust in Yahweh. Have a strong and courageous attitude, and wait expectantly for Yahweh {to help you}.* |

ULT **Wait on Yahweh … and wait on Yahweh**
UST Trust in Yahweh … and wait expectantly for Yahweh {to help you}
(קַוֵּה אֶל־יְהוָה & וְקַוֵּה אֶל־יְהוָה)

See how you translated the similar expressions in 25:3, 25:5, and 25:21.

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Wait on Yahweh. Be strong, and let your heart be courageous, and wait on Yahweh**
UST Trust in Yahweh. Have a strong and courageous attitude, and wait expectantly for Yahweh {to help you … }
(קַוֵּה אֶל־יְהוָה חֲזַק וְיַאֲמֵץ לִבֶּךָ וְקַוֵּה אֶל־יְהוָה)

The words that the ULT translates as **wait**, **your**, and **be courageous** are all singular here. David is either speaking to himself or to some other individual, or he is speaking collectively to each individual person experiencing discouragement or fear who might hear or read this psalm. So use the singular forms in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

ULT **Be strong, and let your heart be courageous**
UST Have a strong and courageous attitude
(חֲזַק וְיַאֲמֵץ לִבֶּךָ)

The terms **Be strong** and **let your heart be courageous** mean similar things. David 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: [Be very courageous]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **and let your heart be courageous**
UST and courageous attitude
(וְיַאֲמֵץ לִבֶּךָ)

Here David is speaking of **heart** as if it were something that could be courageous. The heart represents a person's inner being or emotions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and be courageous within yourself] or [and be inwardly courageous]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and let … be courageous | and courageous |

# Psalms 28

## Psalm 28 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 28 begins as a lament psalm and then transitions into praise, thanksgiving, and affirmation of his trust in Yahweh.

1. David prays for deliverance (1–2)
2. David asks God to judge the wicked (3–5)
3. David praises God and affirms his goodness (6–9)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Trust

David trusted God completely and God rescued him. This is similar to Psalm 7 and 17 because it is an individual psalm of lament. (See: lament, lamentation)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Text variant in 28:8

In 28:8 some Hebrew manuscripts contain the Hebrew word that could be literally translated as “for them” while other Hebrew manuscripts contain the word that could be literally translated as “for his people.” The Hebrew manuscript that the ULT follows contains the word that reads “for them” but the ULT translates this word as “for his people” because this word is being considered an alternate spelling of the word “for his people.” For the reasoning behind this decision, see the portion on “The Text of v. 8a” in this video produced by the “Psalms: Layer by Layer” project titled “Psalm 28: Exegetical Issues.” See the video at (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QHlm_UCsX-A&t=1037s)

“The Psalms: Layer by Layer” videos are part of the “Psalms: Layer by Layer” project, which is run by Scriptura (formerly Cambridge Digital Bible Research).

To visit the Psalms: Layer by Layer website go to https://psalms.scriptura.org. These videos are used under CC BY

# Psalms 28:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Of David To you, Yahweh, I cry; my rock, do not be deaf to me, lest you be deaf to me, and I be equal with those going down to the pit.* | *A psalm of David Yahweh, I call out to you. You are like a huge rock {on top of which I am safe}. Do not refuse to answer me because if you refuse to answer me, I will soon be with those who are in their graves.* |

ULT **my rock**
UST You are like a huge rock {on top of which I am safe}
(צוּרִ֑י)

See how you translated this phrase in 18:2 where it is used with the same meaning.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **do not be deaf to me**
UST Do not refuse to answer me
(אַל־תֶּחֱרַ֣שׁ מִמֶּ֣נִּי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please do not be deaf to me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **do not be deaf to me**
UST Do not refuse to answer me
(אַל־תֶּחֱרַ֣שׁ מִמֶּ֣נִּי)

David is using **do not be deaf to me** as a common expression of his culture to mean “do not ignore me” or “do not refuse to answer me” (and here it specifically refers to Yahweh answering his prayers for help). If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [do not ignore my prayers]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **lest you be deaf to me, and I be equal with those going down to the pit**
UST because if you refuse to answer me, I will soon be with those who are in their graves
(פֶּן־תֶּחֱשֶׁה מִמֶּנִּי וְנִמְשַׁלְתִּי עִם־יֹרְדֵי בֽוֹר)

Here, **lest, if you are deaf to me, then I will be together with the ones going down to the pit** introduces a possible condition and its consequence. David is saying that if Yahweh does not respond to his prayer, then he will die. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that could happen. Alternate translation: [If you are silent, then I will join those who go down to the grave]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

ULT **the pit**
UST their graves
(בֽוֹר)

David is using **the pit** as a common expression of his culture to mean “the grave” or “death.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the grave]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Of David | A psalm of David |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I cry | I call out |
| the pit | their graves |

# Psalms 28:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hear the voice of my pleas when I cry to you for help, when I lift up my hands toward your inner sanctuary of holiness.* | *Pay attention to me and respond when I call out for you to help me when I pray, lifting up my hands as I face your very holy place in your sacred tent.* |

ULT **Hear**
UST Pay attention … and respond
(שְׁמַע)

David is using an imperative form, but **Hear** communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please hear]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Hear**
UST Pay attention … and respond
(שְׁמַע)

By **Hear**, David means pay attention to and respond favorably to his request. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Pay attention to]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Hear the voice of my pleas**
UST Pay attention to me and respond
(שְׁמַע קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנַי)

Here, **voice** represents what David is saying by using his voice. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Hear the words of my pleas]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **when I lift up my hands**
UST when I pray, lifting up my hands
(בְּנַשְׂאִ֣י יָדַ֑י)

Here, **when I lift up my hands** was a symbolic action by which David showed that he was appealing to God for help. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [when I raise my hands in prayer]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **your inner sanctuary of holiness**
UST your very holy place in your sacred tent
(דְּבִ֖יר קָדְשֶֽׁךָ)

By **your inner sanctuary of holiness**, David means the inner sanctuary of the Tabernacle where God dwelled with the Israelites in a special way. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the holy inner sanctuary in your Tabernacle]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **your inner sanctuary of holiness**
UST your very holy place in your sacred tent
(דְּבִ֖יר קָדְשֶֽׁךָ)

Here David uses the possessive form **inner sanctuary of holiness** to mean the inner sanctuary of the Tabernacle that was charachterized by holiness. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the most holy place where you dwell] or [your inner sanctuary that is very holy]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my pleas | to me |
| when I cry … for help | when I call out for … to help me |
| your … holiness | your very holy place in your sacred tent |
| inner sanctuary of | your very holy place in your sacred tent |

# Psalms 28:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not drag me away with the wicked and with the workers of iniquity, the ones speaking of peace with their neighbors while evil is in their hearts.* | *Do not get rid of me when you get rid of wicked people, those who do wicked deeds. Those people speak peacefully toward others, while in their inner beings, they hate them and devise evil plans.* |

ULT **Do not drag me away with the wicked**
UST Do not get rid of me when you get rid of wicked people
(אַל־תִּמְשְׁכֵנִי עִם־רְשָׁעִים)

Here **Do not drag me away** is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please do not drag me away with the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Do not drag me away with the wicked**
UST Do not get rid of me when you get rid of wicked people
(אַל־תִּמְשְׁכֵנִי עִם־רְשָׁעִים)

Here David is speaking of God taking his life as if God were someone who might **drag** him away by force in order to kill him or judge and punish him. See how you translated the similar phrase “Do not gather my soul with the sinful” in 26:9. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Do not bring me away and punish me with the wicked] or [Do not let me die with the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the wicked and with the workers of iniquity**
UST wicked people, those who do wicked deeds
(רְשָׁעִים֮ וְעִם־פֹּעֲלֵ֪י אָ֫וֶן)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [the wicked, that is, with the workers of iniquity] or [the wicked people who do evil deeds]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים֮)

David 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 as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and with the workers of iniquity**
UST those who do wicked deeds
(וְעִם־פֹּעֲלֵ֪י אָ֫וֶן)

David 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 do not drag me away with the workers of iniquity]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **the workers of iniquity, the ones speaking of peace with their neighbors**
UST those who do wicked deeds. Those people speak peacefully toward others
(פֹּעֲלֵ֪י אָ֫וֶן דֹּבְרֵ֣י שָׁל֣וֹם עִם־רֵעֵיהֶ֑ם)

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: [the ones who do wicked things, the ones speaking of peaceful things with their neighbors]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **while evil is in their hearts**
UST while in their inner beings, they hate them and devise evil plans
(וְרָעָה בִּלְבָבָם)

David is using the adjective **evil** as a noun to mean evil thoughts or evil intentions. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [while evil thoughts are in their hearts]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **while evil is in their hearts**
UST while in their inner beings, they hate them and devise evil plans
(וְרָעָה בִּלְבָבָם)

Here David is speaking of **evil** as if it were an object that could be located inside people's **hearts**. The "heart" represents the center of a person's thoughts and intentions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [while they intend to do evil] or [while they have evil intentions]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the wicked | wicked people |
| iniquity | wicked deeds |
| peace | peacefully |
| their neighbors | others |
| while evil | while … they hate them and devise evil plans |

# Psalms 28:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Give to them according to their work and according to the evil of their deeds; give to them according to the work of their hands; return to them their recompense.* | *Punish those people in the way that they deserve for what they have done; punish them for their evil deeds.* |

ULT **Give to them … give to them … return to them**
UST Punish those people … punish them
(תֵּן־לָהֶם & תֵּן לָהֶם הָשֵׁב & לָהֶם)

David is using the imperative form **Give** to make a polite request to God rather than to give a command. If the imperative form would not communicate a polite request in your language, you could use a different form that would communicate a polite request. [Please give them … please give to them … please return to them] or [I ask that you give them … I ask that you give to them … I ask that you return to them]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Give to them according to their work and according to the evil of their deeds; give to them according to the work of their hands**
UST Punish those people … for what they have done; punish them for their evil deeds
(תֵּן־לָהֶם כְּפָעָלָם וּכְרֹעַ מַעַלְלֵיהֶם כְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם תֵּן לָהֶם)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Give to them according to their work, yes, according to the evil of their deeds and the work of their hands]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **according to their work**
UST for their … deeds
(כְּפָעָלָם)

By **their work**, David means the evil deeds and wicked actions of his enemies that he mentioned in the previous verse. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [according to their evil actions] or [according to what their wicked deeds deserve]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **according to the work of their hands**
UST for what they have done
(כְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם)

Here, **work of their hands** represents the actions that they have done. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [according to their actions] or [according to what their evil deeds deserve]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **return to them their recompense**
UST Punish those people in the way that they deserve
(הָשֵׁב גְּמוּלָם לָהֶם)

By **return to them their recompense**, David means give them the punishment they deserve. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [give them the punishment they deserve]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and according to the evil of | evil |

# Psalms 28:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Because they do not give heed to the works of Yahweh or the action of his hands, he will tear them down and not build them up.* | *Yahweh will get rid of them permanently and not let them appear again. Yahweh {will do this} because these evil people do not pay attention to the righteous things he has taught his people and do not take notice that he always judges evil deeds.* |

ULT **they do not give heed to the works of Yahweh**
UST these evil people do not pay attention to the righteous things he has taught his people and do not take notice that he always judges evil deeds
(לֹא יָבִינוּ אֶל־פְּעֻלַּת יְהוָה)

The implication is that the wicked do not pay attention to or consider what God has done. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [they do not pay attention to the works of Yahweh] or [they do not consider the works of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **they do not give heed to the works of Yahweh or the action of his hands**
UST these evil people do not pay attention to the righteous things he has taught his people and do not take notice that he always judges evil deeds
(לֹא יָבִינוּ אֶל־פְּעֻלַּת יְהוָה וְאֶל־מַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו)

These two phrases **the works of Yahweh** and **the action of his hands** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [they do not give heed to what Yahweh has done]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **he will tear them down and not build them up**
UST Yahweh will get rid of them permanently and not let them appear again. Yahweh
(יְהָרְסֵם וְלֹא יִבְנֵם)

David is speaking of God's judgment as if it is a building **he will tear** down and **not build** up. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he will destroy them and not restore them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they do … give heed | these evil people do … pay attention |
| Yahweh | he |

# Psalms 28:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Blessed be Yahweh, because he has heard the voice of my pleas.* | *Praise Yahweh because he responded to me when I called out for him to help me.* |

ULT **Blessed be Yahweh**
UST Praise Yahweh
(בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה)

The expression **Blessed be** is a passive verbal form. The psalmist is expressing his desire to praise Yahweh. If it would be unnatural to use that form for this purpose, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I bless Yahweh] or [I will praise Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **Blessed be Yahweh, because he has heard the voice of my pleas**
UST Praise Yahweh because he responded to me when I called out for him to help me
(בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה כִּי־שָׁמַע קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי)

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 he has heard the voice of my pleas, blessed be Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **he has heard the voice of my pleas**
UST he responded to me when I called out for him to help me
(שָׁמַע קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי)

Here, **voice** represents the words that David spoke. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he has heard my pleas]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Blessed be | Praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my pleas | when I … for him to help me |

# Psalms 28:7

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Yahweh is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts, and I am helped; therefore my heart exults, and with my song I will praise him.* | *Yahweh strengthens me and he protects me like a shield; I trust in him, and he helps me. As a result I am glad in my inner being, and I will praise him with my songs {of praise}.* |

**ULT Yahweh is my strength**
**UST** Yahweh strengthens me
(יְהוָה ׀ עֻזִּ֥)

See how translated the similar phrase “Yahweh, my strength” in 18:1.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and my shield**
**UST** and he protects me like a shield
(וּמָגִנִּ֑י)

See how you translated the phrase “my shield” in 18:2 where it is used with the same meaning.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT in him my heart trusts … therefore my heart exults**
**UST** I trust in him … As a result I am glad in my inner being
(בּ֭וֹ בָּטַ֣ח לִבִּ֑י & וַיֵּעָ֥זַר לִ֝בִּ֗י)

Here David is speaking of his **heart** as if it were a person who **trusts** and **exults**. The heart represents the center of his emotions and will. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I trust in him with all my being … therefore I greatly rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and my shield | and he protects me like a shield |
| trusts | trust |
| therefore … exults | As a result … am glad |
| I will praise him | I will praise him |

# Psalms 28:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh is strength for his people, and he is a refuge of help {for} his anointed.* | *Yahweh strengthens and protects his people. Yahweh saves the one he appointed to be king.* |

**ULT Yahweh is strength for his people**
**UST** Yahweh strengthens and protects his people
(יְהוָה עֹז־לָמוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Yahweh makes his people strong] or [Yahweh strengthens his people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT for his people**
**UST** his people
(לָמוֹ)

Some ancient manuscripts read “for them” and some read **for his people**. For an explanation of the reason why the ULT reads **for his people** see the section in the Psalm 28 Introduction titled “Text variant in 28:8.”

**Support Reference:** Textual Variants

**ULT and he is a refuge of help {for} his anointed**
**UST** Yahweh saves the one he appointed to be king
(וּמָעוֹז יְשׁוּעוֹת מְשִׁיחוֹ הוּא)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **refuge** that provides protection and safety. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [and he protects his anointed one like a refuge] or [and he is the one who protects his anointed one]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and he is a refuge of help**
UST Yahweh saves
(וּמָעוֹז יְשׁוּעוֹת הוּא)

David is using this possessive form **refuge of help** to mean a place of protection and safety. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and a helpful refuge] or [and a refuge that provides help]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **{for} his anointed**
UST the one he appointed to be king
(מְשִׁיחוֹ)

David is using the adjective **anointed** 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: [for his anointed king]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and … is a refuge of | saves |
| {for} his anointed | the one he appointed to be king |

# Psalms 28:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Save your people and bless your inheritance, and shepherd them and carry them unto the eternity.* | *Yahweh, rescue your people and bless those who belong to you. Take care of them like a shepherd takes care of his sheep; take care of them forever.* |

**ULT Save your people and bless your inheritance, and shepherd them and carry them unto the eternity**

UST Yahweh, rescue your people and bless those who belong to you. Take care of them like a shepherd takes care of his sheep; take care of them forever

(הוֹשִׁיעָה ׀ אֶת־עַמֶּךָ וּבָרֵךְ אֶת־נַחֲלָתֶךָ וּרְעֵם וְנַשְּׂאֵם עַד־הָעוֹלָם)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Yahweh, please save your people and bless your inheritance; please be their shepherd and carry them forever]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT your inheritance**

UST those who belong to you

(אֶת־נַחֲלָתֶךָ)

Here David is speaking of God’s people as if they were his **inheritance**. David is picturing God’s people as something valuable that belongs to God, like property or possessions that are passed down in a family. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your own people]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and shepherd them and carry them**

UST Take care of them like a shepherd takes care of his sheep; take care of them

(וּרְעֵם וְנַשְּׂאֵם)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **shepherd** who would guide and protect his people as a shepherd would guide and protect his flock. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [guide and protect them like a shepherd does his flock]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **unto the eternity**
UST forever
(עַד־הָעוֹלָֽם)

David assumes that readers will know that **unto the eternity** means for all time without end. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [for all eternity]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Save | Yahweh, rescue |
| and bless | and bless |
| your inheritance | those who belong to you |
| and shepherd them | Take care of them like a shepherd takes care of his sheep |
| and carry them | take care of them |
| the eternity | forever |

# Psalms 29

## Psalm 29 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 29 is a “psalm of praise.” It tells how Yahweh rules all nature.

1. A call to worship (1–2)
2. Declarations of God’s voice over creation depict natural phenomena (3–9)
3. The Lord sovereignty (10–11)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### The Cultural and Religious Background of verses 3–10

The cultural and religious background of verses 3–10 is the worship of the false gods of the nations who lived around the Israelites. Verses 3–10 are a firm declaration of Yahweh’s power and rule over the entire universe and an implicit denunciation of putting trust in false gods such as the Canaanite god Baal.

Because David does not state the historical and religious background information explicitly in verses 3–10, it is recommended that you not include this information either but if you are using footnotes or chapter introductions in your translation, you may wish to include some of the background information there if it would help your readers.

#### Yahweh’s power

God is powerful. All he has to do is to speak in order to control nature.

For an overview of Psalm 29 and help understanding some of the important exegetical and poetical issues in this psalm, see the Psalms: Layer by Layer videos below. These videos are part of the Psalms: Layer by Layer project, which is run by Scriptura (formerly Cambridge Digital Bible Research).

See their overview video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_aoWN_yFa0E) and top three exegetical issues in Psalm 29 video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?

v=nnL109G57mg&t=452s) and their top three poetic features of Psalm 29 video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ygoKm9HWKQU&t=181s) on YouTube.

To visit the Psalms: Layer by Layer website go to https://psalms.scriptura.org. These videos are used under CC BY

# Psalms 29:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A psalm of David Ascribe to Yahweh, sons of God, ascribe to Yahweh glory and strength.* | *A psalm of David You heavenly beings, praise Yahweh! Declare that he is very glorious and powerful.* |

ULT **Ascribe to Yahweh, sons of God, ascribe to Yahweh glory and strength**
UST You heavenly beings, praise Yahweh! Declare that he is very glorious and powerful
(הָבוּ לַיהוָה בְּנֵי אֵלִים הָבוּ לַיהוָה כָּבוֹד וָעֹז)

David 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: [Ascribe these things to Yahweh, sons of God, ascribe to Yahweh glory and strength]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **sons of God**
UST You heavenly beings
(בְּנֵי אֵלִים)

David assumes that readers will know that **sons of God** refers to angels or heavenly beings. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [you angels]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **ascribe to Yahweh glory and strength**
UST Declare that he is very glorious and powerful
(הָבוּ לַיהוָה כָּבוֹד וָעֹז)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **glory** and **strength**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [acknowledge that Yahweh is glorious and strong] or [praise Yahweh because he is glorious and strong]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm | A psalm |
| of David | of David |
| to Yahweh | Yahweh |
| sons of God | You heavenly beings |
| glory | is very glorious |

# Psalms 29:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Ascribe to Yahweh the glory of his name; bow down to Yahweh in the adornment of holiness.* | *Proclaim that Yahweh is glorious. Bow down and worship Yahweh in holy attire.* |

ULT **Ascribe to Yahweh the glory of his name**
UST Proclaim that Yahweh is glorious
(הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Declare that Yahweh is glorious because of his name] or [Praise Yahweh for how glorious his name is]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the glory of his name**
UST that Yahweh is glorious
(כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ)

David is using this possessive form **the glory of his name** to mean the glory that his name deserves. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the glory his name deserves]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the glory of his name**
UST that Yahweh is glorious
(כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ)

David is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is or to refer to Yahweh's reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the glory due to Yahweh] or [the glory Yahweh's reputation deserves]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **bow down to Yahweh**
UST Bow down and worship Yahweh
(הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַיהוָה)

Here, **bow down** was a symbolic action by which people showed reverence and worship to Yahweh. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [bow down in worship to Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **in the adornment of holiness**
UST in holy attire
(בְּהַדְרַת־קֹדֶשׁ)

The phrase **adornment of holiness** refers to the garments the Levitical priests wore while serving in Yahweh's tabernacle. David is using the possessive form to describe **adornment** that is characterized by **holiness** because of the purpose for which it was made. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this purpose, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in holy adornment] or [in adornment that is holy]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **in the adornment of holiness**
UST in holy attire
(בְּהַדְרַת־קֹדֶשׁ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **holiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in holy clothing]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| to Yahweh | that Yahweh |
| the glory of | is glorious |
| bow down | Bow down and worship |
| holiness | holy |

# Psalms 29:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The voice of Yahweh over the waters, the God of glory thunders, Yahweh over many waters.* | *{People hear} Yahweh's voice above the sea; the glorious God thunders. Yahweh's {voice thunders} over the large sea.* |

**Note:**

See the Psalm 29 Introduction for more information regarding the historical and religious background of verses 3–10.

**Support Reference:** When to Keep Information Implicit

ULT **The voice of Yahweh over the waters**
UST {People hear} Yahweh's voice above the sea
(קוֹל יְהוָה עַל־הַמָּיִם)

The phrase **The voice of Yahweh** could: (1) refer to the actual voice of Yahweh or (2) this phrase could mean "The thunder of Yahweh" since this phrase sometimes had that meaning in Hebrew. Alternate translation: [The thunder of Yahweh is over the waters]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the waters**
UST the sea
(הַמָּיִם)

By **the waters**, David means the sea and here he probably specifically means the Mediterranean Sea. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use plain language as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **The voice of Yahweh over the waters … Yahweh over many waters**
UST {People hear} Yahweh's voice above the sea … Yahweh's {voice thunders} over the large sea
(קוֹל יְהוָה עַל־הַמָּיִם & יְהוָה עַל־מַיִם רַבִּים)

David 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 voice of Yahweh is heard over the waters … Yahweh's voice is heard over many waters]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **over … over**
UST above … { … thunders} over
(עַל & עַל)

Here the word the ULT translates as **over**, both times it occurs in this verse, could mean: (1) **over**, as in the ULT, or (2) "against." Alternate translation: [is against … is against]

ULT **the God of glory thunders**
UST the glorious God thunders
(אֵל־הַכָּבוֹד הִרְעִים)

The phrase **the God of glory thunders** could mean: (1) that Yahweh's powerful voice sounds like thunder. Alternate translation: [the glorious God speaks with a voice like thunder] or [the God of glory speaks powerfully], or (2) that Yahweh sends thunder. Alternate translation: [the God of glory sends thunder]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the God of glory**
UST the glorious God
(אֵל־הַכָּבוֹד)

David is using the possessive form to describe **the God** who is characterized by **glory**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the glorious God]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh's |
| the … glory | the glorious |
| God of | God |

# Psalms 29:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The voice of Yahweh is with power; the voice of Yahweh is with majesty.* | *Yahweh's voice is powerful and majestic.* |

> ULT **The voice of Yahweh is with power; the voice of Yahweh is with majesty**
> UST Yahweh's voice is powerful and majestic
> (קוֹל־יְהוָה בַּכֹּחַ קוֹל יְהוָה בֶּהָדָר)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **power** and **majesty**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [The voice of Yahweh is powerful; the voice of Yahweh is majestic]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

> ULT **The voice of Yahweh is with power; the voice of Yahweh is with majesty**
> UST Yahweh's voice is powerful and majestic
> (קוֹל־יְהוָה בַּכֹּחַ קוֹל יְהוָה בֶּהָדָר)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. David is emphasizing the awesome nature of Yahweh's voice by using both **power** and **majesty** to describe it. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [The voice of Yahweh is very powerful]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh's |
| is with majesty | and majestic |

# Psalms 29:5

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *The voice of Yahweh is breaking cedars, and Yahweh breaks the cedars of Lebanon.* | *The sound of Yahweh's voice breaks cedar trees, the cedars that grow in Lebanon.* |

**ULT The voice of Yahweh is breaking cedars**
UST The sound of Yahweh's voice breaks cedar trees
(קוֹל יְהוָה שֹׁבֵר אֲרָזִים)

Here, **voice** represents the sound of Yahweh's voice. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT The voice of Yahweh is breaking cedars, and Yahweh breaks the cedars of Lebanon**
UST The sound of Yahweh's voice breaks cedar trees, the cedars that grow in Lebanon
(קוֹל יְהוָה שֹׁבֵר אֲרָזִים וַיְשַׁבֵּר יְהוָה אֶת־אַרְזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [The voice of Yahweh is breaking cedars, yes, breaking the cedars of Lebanon]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the … Lebanon | that grow in Lebanon |
| Yahweh | Yahweh's |
| cedars | cedar trees |
| cedars of | the cedars |

# Psalms 29:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he makes Lebanon skip like a calf and Sirion like a son of wild oxen.* | *He causes {the mountains in} Lebanon to jump like calves jump, and he causes Mount Hermon to jump as a young wild bull jumps.* |

**ULT And he makes Lebanon skip like a calf and Sirion like a son of wild oxen**
**UST** He causes {the mountains in} Lebanon to jump like calves jump, and he causes Mount Hermon to jump as a young wild bull jumps
(וַיַּרְקִידֵם כְּמוֹ־עֵגֶל לְבָנוֹן וְשִׂרְיֹן כְּמוֹ בֶן־רְאֵמִים)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [And he makes Lebanon and Sirion skip like calves, like young wild oxen]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT And he makes Lebanon skip like a calf and Sirion like a son of wild oxen**
**UST** He causes {the mountains in} Lebanon to jump like calves jump, and he causes Mount Hermon to jump as a young wild bull jumps
(וַיַּרְקִידֵם כְּמוֹ־עֵגֶל לְבָנוֹן וְשִׂרְיֹן כְּמוֹ בֶן־רְאֵמִים)

David is comparing how Lebanon and Sirion shake to how young animals jump around. The point of this comparison is that just as **a calf** and **a son of wild oxen** skip and jump with energetic movement, so do these mountains shake when God's voice thunders. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [And he makes Lebanon shake with energetic movement like a calf, and Sirion like a son of wild oxen]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT and Sirion**
**UST** and he causes Mount Hermon to jump
(וְשִׂרְיֹן)

The word **Sirion** is the name of a mountain. It is another name for Mount Hermon. If it would help your readers, you could use that name instead as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **a son of wild oxen**
UST a young wild bull jumps
(בֶּן־רְאֵמִים)

David assumes that readers will know that **a son of wild oxen** means a young wild ox. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [a young wild ox]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Lebanon | {the mountains in} Lebanon |
| a calf | calves jump |

# Psalms 29:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The voice of Yahweh is hewing out with flames of fire.* | *Yahweh tells the lightning to flash {upon the mountains} and it hews out rocks.* |

**ULT The voice of Yahweh is hewing out with flames of fire**
UST Yahweh tells the lightning to flash {upon the mountains} and it hews out rocks
(קוֹל־יְהוָה חֹצֵב לַהֲבוֹת אֵשׁ)

The phrase **The voice of Yahweh** could: (1) refer to the actual voice of Yahweh, or (2) could mean “The thunder of Yahweh” since this phrase sometimes has that meaning in Hebrew. Alternate translation: [The thunder of Yahweh is hewing out with flames of fire] See how you translated the phrase **The voice of Yahweh** in verse 3.

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT is hewing out**
UST {upon the mountains} and it hews out rocks
(חֹצֵב)

David 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: [is hewing out stone] or [is hewing out rock]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT with flames of fire**
UST the lightning to flash
(לַהֲבוֹת אֵשׁ)

By **flames of fire**, David means lightning. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [with lightning] or [with flashes of lightning]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 29:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The voice of Yahweh shakes the wilderness; Yahweh shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.* | *The sound of Yahweh's voice causes the wilderness to shake; he shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.* |

**ULT The voice of Yahweh shakes the wilderness**
UST The sound of Yahweh's voice causes the wilderness to shake
(קוֹל יְהוָה יָחִיל מִדְבָּר)

Here, **voice** represents the sound of Yahweh's voice. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT the wilderness of Kadesh**
UST the wilderness of Kadesh
(מִדְבַּר קָדֵשׁ)

The word **Kadesh** is the name of a place.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh's |
| shakes | causes … to shake |
| the wilderness | the wilderness |
| Kadesh | Kadesh |

# Psalms 29:9

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *The voice of Yahweh causes the deer to give birth and strips the forests bare, and in his temple everyone is saying, "Glory!"* | *The sound of Yahweh's voice makes the deer give birth and strips the leaves from the trees, while the people in Yahweh's sacred tent say, "Praise Yahweh!"* |

ULT **The voice of Yahweh**
UST The sound of Yahweh's voice
(קוֹל יְהוָה)

Here, **voice** represents the sound of Yahweh's voice. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and in his temple**
UST while … in Yahweh's sacred tent
(וּבְהֵיכָלוֹ)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh's tabernacle in Jerusalem as if it were a **temple**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and in his tabernacle]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Glory**
UST Praise Yahweh
(כָּבוֹד)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **Glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [How glorious Yahweh is]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh's |
| the deer | the deer |
| and in his temple | while … in Yahweh's sacred tent |
| Glory | Praise Yahweh |

# Psalms 29:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh sits over the flood; Yahweh sits as king forever.* | *Yahweh rules as king over the waters that are above the sky; Yahweh rules as king forever.* |

**ULT Yahweh sits over the flood; Yahweh sits as king forever**
**UST** Yahweh rules as king over the waters that are above the sky; Yahweh rules as king forever
(יְהוָה לַמַּבּוּל יָשָׁב וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם)

Here both times the word **sits** is used, it represents "ruling" as king since at that time kings sat on a throne from which they ruled, made decisions, and gave commands. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT Yahweh sits … as**
**UST** Yahweh rules as king
(יְהוָה & יָשָׁב)

David assumes that readers will know that **sits** means "rules as king." You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh sits enthroned … as]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT over the flood**
**UST** over the waters that are above the sky
(לַמַּבּוּל)

The phrase **the flood** could refer to: (1) the water that is above the sky as in the UST, or (2) the great flood recorded in Genesis chapters 6–9 that God sent during the time of Noah. Alternate translation: [over the flood that covered the earth] or [over the Flood]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| over the flood | over the waters that are above the sky |
| king | rules |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 29:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh will give strength to his people; Yahweh will bless his people with peace.* | *Yahweh will strengthen his people, and he will bless them by giving them good things and causing them to be happy and peaceful.* |

ULT **Yahweh will give strength to his people; Yahweh will bless his people with peace**
UST Yahweh will strengthen his people, and he will bless them by giving them good things and causing them to be happy and peaceful
(יְהוָ֤ה עֹז֙ לְעַמּ֣וֹ יִתֵּ֔ן יְהוָ֥ה ׀ יְבָרֵ֖ךְ אֶת־עַמּ֥וֹ בַשָּׁלֽוֹם)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **strength** and **peace**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will make his people strong; Yahweh will bless his people so that they live peacefully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| will bless | and … will bless |
| with peace | by giving them good things and causing them to be happy and peaceful |

# Psalms 30

## Psalm 30 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 30 is a psalm of praise and thanksgiving to God. The psalmist was so sick that he was near death, but God healed him.

1. Call to praise and testimony (1–5)
2. The crisis remembered (6–7)
3. The prayer for help (8–10)
4. The deliverance and vow of praise (11–12)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### The possibility of David dying from sickness

In this psalm David recounts how he was close to death and then pleaded with God. David asked God to heal him and told God that if he died, it would not benefit God, since dead people do not praise God in this life. God healed David with the result that David sings praises to God and thanks him.

# Psalms 30:1

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *I will extol you, Yahweh, for you have drawn me up and have not let the ones being hostile to me rejoice over me.* | *Yahweh, I praise you because you rescued me. You did not allow {me to die with the result that} my enemies could gloat.* |

ULT **I will extol you, Yahweh, for you have drawn me up and have not let the ones being hostile to me rejoice over me**

UST Yahweh, I praise you because you rescued me. You did not allow {me to die with the result that} my enemies could gloat

(אֲרוֹמִמְךָ יְהוָה כִּי דִלִּיתָנִי וְלֹא־שִׂמַּחְתָּ אֹיְבַי לִי)

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 you have drawn me up and have not let the ones being hostile to me rejoice over me, I will extol you, Yahweh] or [Yahweh, because you have drawn me up and have not let the ones being hostile to me rejoice over me, I will extol you]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **I will extol you, Yahweh, for you have drawn me up**

UST Yahweh, I praise you because you rescued me

(אֲרוֹמִמְךָ יְהוָה כִּי דִלִּיתָנִי)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put **Yahweh** at the beginning of this verse. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, I will extol you for you have drawn me up]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **you have drawn me up**

UST you rescued me

(דִלִּיתָנִי)

Here David is speaking of God's help as if God had physically raised him up from a lower place to a higher place. The other times the word the ULT translates as **have drawn me up** occurs in the Old Testament, it refers to drawing water out of a well with a bucket. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you have helped me] or [you have delivered me me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| have … let … rejoice | |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| | You did … allow {me to die with the result that} … could gloat |
| the ones being hostile to me | my enemies |

# Psalms 30:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh my God, I cried out to you for help, and you healed me.* | *Yahweh my God, I called out for you to help me {when I was sick,} you healed me.* |

ULT **Yahweh my God**
UST Yahweh my God
(יְהוָה אֱלֹהָי)

David is not using the phrase **my God** to mean that he is the only one who worships Yahweh nor that he possesses or controls Yahweh, but rather to emphasize that Yahweh is the God that he worships. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [You, Yahweh, God whom I worship,]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my God | my God |

# Psalms 30:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, you have brought up my soul from Sheol; you have kept me alive from the ones going down to the pit.* | *Yahweh, when I was dying you restored me. I was nearly dead, but you caused me to get well.* |

ULT **you have brought up my soul from Sheol; you have kept me alive from the ones going down to the pit**
UST when I was dying you restored me. I was nearly dead, but you caused me to get well
(הֶעֱלִיתָ מִן־שְׁאוֹל נַפְשִׁי חִיִּיתַנִי מיורדי־בוֹר)

The word **Sheol** refers to the place of the dead, where dead people go, and the word **pit** also refers to the grave. These two phrases, **you have brought up my soul from Sheol** and **you have kept me alive from the ones going down to the pit**, mean basically the same thing. The second phrase emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [you have brought up my soul from Sheol, yes, you have kept me alive from the ones going down to the pit]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **you have brought up my soul**
UST when I was dying
(נַפְשִׁי & הֶעֱלִיתָ)

David 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: [you have brought me up]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **from the ones going down to the pit**
UST I was nearly dead
(מיורדי־בוֹר)

David assumes that readers will know that **the pit** refers to the grave or death. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [from the ones going down to death] or [from the ones going down to the grave]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my soul | I |
| Sheol | when … was dying |
| the pit | I was nearly dead |

# Psalms 30:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sing praise to Yahweh, {you} his faithful ones, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.* | *All you who are faithful to Yahweh, sing praise to him. Think about what Yahweh, the holy one, has done, and thank him.* |

ULT **Sing praise to Yahweh, {you} his faithful ones, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness … For his anger is {for} a moment, but} his favor is {for} a lifetime. In the evening weeping may come to lodge but rejoicing {comes} in the morning**

UST All you who are faithful to Yahweh, sing praise to him. Think about what Yahweh, the holy one, has done, and thank him … When he becomes angry, he is angry for only a very short time, but he is good {to us} all of our lives. We may cry during the night, but the next morning we will be joyful

(זַמְּרוּ לַיהוָה חֲסִידָיו וְהוֹדוּ לְזֵכֶר קָדְשׁוֹ׃ כִּי רֶגַע ׀ בְּאַפּוֹ חַיִּים בִּרְצוֹנוֹ בָּעֶרֶב יָלִין בֶּכִי וְלַבֹּקֶר רִנָּה׃) (30:4-5)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of verse 4 and the first half of verse 5, since the first half of verse 5 gives the reason for the result that verse 4 describes. Alternate translation: [Because his anger is {for} a moment, {but} his favor is {for} a lifetime, sing praise to Yahweh, {you} his faithful ones, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **at the remembrance of his holiness**

UST Think about what Yahweh, the holy one, has done

(לְזֵכֶר קָדְשׁוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the ideas of **remembrance** and **holiness**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Here the phrase **his holiness** refers to Yahweh's holy character and the actions that he had done in the past as a result of his holy character. Alternate translation: [when you remember how holy he is and the great things that he has done as a result]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Sing praise | sing praise |
| to Yahweh | to him |
| {you} his faithful ones | All you who are faithful to Yahweh |
| his holiness | Yahweh, the holy one, has done |

# Psalms 30:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For his anger is {for} a moment, {but} his favor is {for} a lifetime. In the evening weeping may come to lodge but rejoicing {comes} in the morning.* | *When he becomes angry, he is angry for only a very short time, but he is good {to us} all of our lives. We may cry during the night, but the next morning we will be joyful.* |

ULT **For his anger is {for} a moment, but} his favor is {for} a lifetime**
UST When he becomes angry, he is angry for only a very short time, but he is good {to us} all of our lives
(כִּי רֶגַע ׀ בְּאַפּוֹ חַיִּים בִּרְצוֹנוֹ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **anger** and **favor**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [For he is angry only for a moment, but he shows kindness for a lifetime]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **his anger is {for} a moment**
UST When he becomes angry, he is angry for only a very short time
(רֶגַע ׀ בְּאַפּוֹ)

David is using **a moment** as a common expression of the culture to mean “a very short time.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his anger is for a brief time] or [his anger is only temporary]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **In the evening weeping may come to lodge but rejoicing {comes} in the morning**
UST We may cry during the night, but the next morning we will be joyful
(בָּעֶרֶב יָלִין בֶּכִי וְלַבֹּקֶר רִנָּה)

David is speaking of **weeping** and **rejoicing** as if they were living things that could come to a place. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [In the evening people may weep, but in the morning people will rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a moment | only a very short time |
| but} his favor is {for} | but he is good {to us} |
| weeping | cry |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| rejoicing {comes} | we will be joyful |

# Psalms 30:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I, in my ease, said, "I will never be shaken."* | *As for me, when my life was going well, I said {to myself}, "Nothing will ever trouble me."* |

ULT **in my ease**
UST when my life was going well
(בְּשַׁלְוִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **ease**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [when my life was easy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **I will never be shaken**
UST Nothing will ever trouble me
(בַּל־אֶמּוֹט לְעוֹלָם)

The expression **I will never be shaken** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [nothing will ever shake me] or [I will always remain secure]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **I will never be shaken**
UST Nothing will ever trouble me
(בַּל־אֶמּוֹט לְעוֹלָם)

David is speaking of himself as if he were an object that could not be**shaken** (physically moved or disturbed). He means that he felt completely secure and believed nothing could threaten his stability or well-being. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will always be secure] or [nothing will ever threaten me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will … be shaken | will … trouble me |

# Psalms 30:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, by your favor you have made my mountain stand strong; you hid your face, {and} I was dismayed.* | *Yahweh, because you were good to me, at first you caused me to be secure as a mountain. {But then you let me become ill when} you stopped protecting me {from illness}, and I became greatly disturbed.* |

**ULT by your favor**
**UST** because you were good to me
(בִּרְצוֹנְךָ)

See how you translated the word **favor** in 30:5.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT you have made my mountain stand strong**
**UST** at first you caused me to be secure as a mountain
(הֶעֱמַדְתָּה לְהַרְרִי עֹז)

The phrase **you have made my mountain stand strong** could be: (1) David speaking of his security and strength as if they were **my mountain**. Alternate translation: [you have made me as secure as a mountain] or [you have given me great strength and security] (2) David using the phrase **my mountain** to refer to Mount Zion in which case David would be using Mount Zion to represent his rule as king which he would do from Mount Zion. Alternate translation: [you have made my reign secure] or [you have firmly established my rule]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT you hid your face**
**UST** But then you let me become ill when} you stopped protecting me {from illness … }
(הִסְתַּרְתָּ פָּנֶיךָ)

David 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: [then you hid your face from me]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **you hid your face**
UST But then you let me become ill when} you stopped protecting me {from illness … }
(הִסְתַּרְתָּ פָּנֶיךָ)

Here, **your face** represents Yahweh's presence or attention (and consequently also some of the help or protection that would have come as a result). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you withdrew your presence from me] or [you turned your attention away from me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| by your favor | because you were good to me |

# Psalms 30:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To you, Yahweh, I cried out, and to the Lord I pled for favor.* | *{Then} I called out to you, Yahweh, and I pleaded for you, the Lord, to help me.* |

**ULT I pled for favor**
UST I pleaded … to help me
(אֶתְחַנָּֽן)

See how you translated the word **favor** in 30:5.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I cried out | I called out |
| the Lord | you, the Lord |
| I pled for favor | I pleaded … to help me |
| I pled for favor | I pleaded … to help me |

# Psalms 30:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“What profit {is there} in my blood, in my descent to the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it declare your faithfulness?* | *{I said,} “{Yahweh,} you will gain nothing if I die. It will not benefit you at all if I go to the place where the dead people are. Dead people certainly are not able to praise you, and they are not able to tell others that you are faithful.* |

ULT **What profit {is there} in my blood, in my descent to the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it declare your faithfulness … Hear, Yahweh, and be gracious to me. Yahweh, be my helper**

UST { … I said,} “{Yahweh,} you will gain nothing if I die. It will not benefit you at all if I go to the place where the dead people are. Dead people certainly are not able to praise you, and they are not able to tell others that you are faithful … Yahweh, listen to me, and act mercifully to me. Yahweh, help me

(מַה־בֶּצַע בְּדָמִי בְּרִדְתִּי אֶל־שָׁחַת הֲיוֹדְךָ עָפָר הֲיַגִּיד אֲמִתֶּךָ׃ שְׁמַע־יְהוָה וְחָנֵּנִי יְהוָה הֱיֵה־עֹזֵר לִי׃) (30:9-10)

This is the beginning of what David said or prayed to Yahweh. The ULT indicates the beginning and end of David’s direct address of Yahweh with quotation marks and the UST introduces David’s words with the phrase “I said.” Consider natural ways of introducing direct quotations in your language. Alternate translation: [I prayed, “What profit is there…”]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **What profit {is there} in my blood, in my descent to the pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it declare your faithfulness**

UST { … I said,} “{Yahweh,} you will gain nothing if I die. It will not benefit you at all if I go to the place where the dead people are. Dead people certainly are not able to praise you, and they are not able to tell others that you are faithful

(מַה־בֶּצַע בְּדָמִי בְּרִדְתִּי אֶל־שָׁחַת הֲיוֹדְךָ עָפָר הֲיַגִּיד אֲמִתֶּךָ)

David is using a question to emphasize that his death would not benefit God and to make the point that dead people cannot praise God. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for this purpose, you could translate these questions as statements or exclamations. Alternate translation: [There is no profit in my blood, in my descent to the pit. The dust will not praise you! It will not declare your faithfulness!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **What profit {is there} in my blood, in my descent to the pit**
UST { … I said,} "{Yahweh,} you will gain nothing if I die. It will not benefit you at all if I go to the place where the dead people are
(מַה־בֶּצַע בְּדָמִי בְּרִדְתִּי אֶל־שָׁחַת)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. [What advantage is there in my death, yes, in my going down to the grave]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **in my blood**
UST I die
(בְּדָמִי)

Here, **blood** represents "death." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in my death]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to the pit**
UST to the place where the dead people are
(אֶל־שָׁחַת)

David assumes that readers will know that **the pit** refers to the dwelling place of the dead. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. (In 30:3 David uses a different Hebrew word for "pit," but there the word has the same meaning as it does here so you could see how you translated "pit" there.) Alternate translation: [to the place of the dead] or [to the abode of the dead]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Will the dust praise you**
UST Dead people certainly are not able to praise you
(הֲיוֹדְךָ עָפָר)

Here, **dust** represents those who are dead. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Will those who are dead praise you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **your faithfulness**
UST that you are faithful
(אֲמִתֶּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| profit {is there} | {I said,} "{Yahweh,} you will gain nothing if |
| the pit | the place where the dead people are |
| Will … praise you | certainly are not able to praise you |
| Will it declare | and they are not able to tell others |
| your faithfulness | that you are faithful |

# Psalms 30:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hear, Yahweh, and be gracious to me. Yahweh, be my helper.”* | *Yahweh, listen to me, and act mercifully to me. Yahweh, help me.”* |

ULT **Hear**
UST listen to me
(שְׁמַע)

Here, **Hear** represents “Listen and respond.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Listen to me and respond] or [Pay attention to me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Hear, Yahweh, and be gracious to me. Yahweh, be my helper**
UST Yahweh, listen to me, and act mercifully to me. Yahweh, help me
(שְׁמַע־יְהוָה וְחָנֵּנִי יְהוָה הֱיֵה־עֹזֵר לִי)

David is using imperative forms, but he is communicating polite requests rather than commands. If the imperative forms **Hear**, **be gracious to me**, and **be my helper** do not communicate polite requests in your language, then 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: [Please hear, Yahweh, and please be gracious to me. Yahweh, please be my helper]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and be gracious to me | and act mercifully to me |

# Psalms 30:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have turned for me my mourning to dancing; you have loosed my sackcloth and have clothed me with gladness* | *{But now} you have changed my circumstances and healed me, and as a result I have stopped grieving and now dance joyfully. You have caused me to change from the clothes that showed that I was very sad and to put on clothes that show that I am very joyful.* |

ULT **you have loosed my sackcloth and have clothed me with gladness**
UST You have caused me to change from the clothes that showed that I was very sad and to put on clothes that show that I am very joyful
(פִּתַּחְתָּ שַׂקִּי וַתְּאַזְּרֵנִי שִׂמְחָה)

David assumes that readers will know **sackcloth** was a coarse material worn as a sign of mourning or distress. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [you have removed my mourning clothes and have clothed me with gladness]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **with gladness**
UST that show that I am very joyful
(שִׂמְחָה)

Here, **gladness** represents clothing that was worn for joyous occasions that would express gladness. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [with celebratory clothes] or [with clothes worn to celebrate]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and have clothed me with gladness**
UST and to put on clothes that show that I am very joyful
(וַתְּאַזְּרֵנִי שִׂמְחָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **gladness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and have covered me with clothes that show that I am glad] or [and have clothed me with celebratory clothes]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my mourning | grieving |
| my sackcloth | the clothes that showed that I was very sad |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| with gladness | that show that I am very joyful |

# Psalms 30:12

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *in order that {my} glory may sing praise to you and not be silent. Yahweh my God, I will give thanks to you forever.* | *{You did that} so that I would not be silent but would sing out to praise you. Yahweh, you are my God, and I will thank you forever.* |

ULT **in order that**
UST {You did that} so that
(לְמַעַן)

Here, **so that** marks **my glory may sing praise to you and not be silent** as the goal or purpose of "You have turned for me, my mourning into dancing; you have loosed my sackcloth and have clothed me with gladness" in the previous verse. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [for the purpose that] or [to the end that]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **{my} glory may sing praise to you**
UST but would sing out to praise you
(יְזַמֶּרְךָ כָבוֹד)

By **my glory**, David probably means some part of his inner being that represented where his honor was. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [my soul may sing praise to you] or [I may sing praise to you]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Yahweh my God**
UST Yahweh, you are my God
(יְהוָה אֱלֹהַי)

David is not using this possessive form **my God** to indicate that he possesses or controls Yahweh. Rather, David is using these words to indicate that Yahweh is the God whom he worships. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, the God I worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {my} glory | כָּבוֹד (ORIG QUOTE) |
| may sing praise to you | but would sing out to praise you |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my God | you are my God |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 31

## Psalm 31 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 31 is considered to be one of the “psalms of deliverance.” See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about the psalms of deliverance.

1. Declaration of trust (1–8)
2. Lament over suffering (9–13)
3. Affirmation of faith (14–18)
4. Praise and thanksgiving (19–22)
5. Final Exhortation (23–24)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Abandonment

Even though everyone deserted and despised the psalmist, God did not abandon him.

# Psalms 31:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the chief musician; a psalm of David.* | *This is a note to the worship leader: This is a psalm of David.* |

**ULT To the chief musician**
UST This is a note to the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a psalm | This is a psalm |
| of David | of David |

# Psalms 31:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In you, Yahweh, I take refuge; do not ever let me have shame; in your righteousness deliver me.* | *Yahweh, I come to you to protect me. Never allow {them to defeat me, with the result that} I would be ashamed. Since you always do what is right and just, please rescue me.* |

**ULT In you, Yahweh, I take refuge**
**UST** Yahweh, I come to you to protect me
(בְּךָ יְהוָה חָסִיתִי)

Here David is speaking as if Yahweh were actually a physical place of safety or shelter. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I trust in you, Yahweh, to keep me safe] or [I depend on you, Yahweh, to protect me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT do not ever let me have shame; in your righteousness deliver me**
**UST** Never allow {them to defeat me, with the result that} I would be ashamed. Since you always do what is right and just, please rescue me
(אַל־אֵבוֹשָׁה לְעוֹלָם בְּצִדְקָתְךָ פַּלְּטֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please do not ever let me have shame; please deliver me in your righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT in your righteousness**
**UST** Since you always do what is right and just
(בְּצִדְקָתְךָ)

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: [because you are righteous]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I take refuge | to protect me |
| do … let me have shame | allow {them to defeat me, with the result that} I would be ashamed |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in your righteousness<br>deliver me | Since you always do what is right and just<br>please rescue me |

# Psalms 31:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Incline your ear to me; rescue me quickly; be for me a rocky summit of refuge, a dwelling place of strongholds to save me.* | *Respond to my prayers for help, and save me right now! Be {like} a huge rock where I can flee for refuge, and {like} a strong fortress in which my enemies cannot harm me.* |

ULT **Incline your ear to me; rescue me quickly; be for me a rocky summit of refuge**
UST Respond to my prayers for help, and save me right now! Be {like} a huge rock where I can flee for refuge
(הַטֵּה אֵלַי ׀ אָזְנְךָ֥ מְהֵרָה הַצִּילֵ֑נִי הֱיֵה־לִ֥י ׀ לְצ֥וּר־מָע֗וֹז)

David is using imperative forms, but these communicate a polite request rather than commands. If the imperative form does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then use forms in your language that communicate polite requests. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please incline your ear to me; please rescue me quickly; please be for me a rocky summit of refuge]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Incline your ear to me**
UST Respond to my prayers for help
(הַטֵּה אֵלַי ׀ אָזְנְךָ֥)

Here David is using the term **ear** to mean hearing or attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Listen and respond to me] or [Pay attention to me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **be for me a rocky summit of refuge, a dwelling place of strongholds**
UST Be {like} a huge rock where I can flee for refuge, and {like} a strong fortress
(הֱיֵה־לִ֥י ׀ לְצ֥וּר־מָע֗וֹז לְבֵ֥ית מְצוּדֹ֑ות)

Here David is speaking as if Yahweh were actually a **rocky summit** used as a **refuge** and as if he were actually a place that had **strongholds** where he could hide and be safe from his enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [be for me like a rocky summit of refuge, and like a dwelling place of strongholds]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **be for me a rocky summit of refuge, a dwelling place of strongholds**
UST Be {like} a huge rock where I can flee for refuge, and {like} a strong fortress
(וֱֽהְיֵה־לִ֤י ׀ לְצ֣וּר־מָעוֹז֮ לְבֵ֪ית מְצוּדֹ֫ות)

David is using these possessive forms, **a rocky summit of refuge** and **a dwelling place of strongholds**, to describe places that are characterized by providing refuge and strength. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive forms for this, you could express these ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [be for me a rocky summit that provides refuge, a stronghold in which to dwell]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| rescue me | and save me |
| refuge | where I can flee for refuge |
| strongholds | and {like} a strong fortress |
| to save me | in which my enemies cannot harm me |

# Psalms 31:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Indeed, you are my rock and my stronghold; therefore for the sake of your name you lead me and guide me.* | *{Yes,} you are {like} a huge rock and {like} a fortress {where I can go to be safe}. For the sake of your reputation you guide me {so that no harm comes to me}.* |

**ULT you are my rock and my stronghold**
**UST** you are {like} a huge rock and {like} a fortress {where I can go to be safe}
(סַלְעִי וּמְצוּדָתִי אָתָּה)

Here David is speaking as if Yahweh were actually a large **rock** and a **stronghold** to which he could flee to be safe from his enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [you are like a rock that I can flee to for safety and like a stronghold in which I can be safe]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT therefore for the sake of your name**
**UST** For the sake of your reputation
(וּלְמַעַן שִׁמְךָ)

David is using the term **name** to refer to God's reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT you lead me and guide me**
**UST** you guide me {so that no harm comes to me}
(תַּנְחֵנִי וְתְנַהֲלֵנִי)

The terms **lead** and **guide** mean similar things. David 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: [direct me]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **you lead me and guide me**
UST you guide me {so that no harm comes to me}
(תַּנְחֵנִי וּתְנַהֲלֵנִי)

Here the Hebrew verbs that the ULT translates as **you lead me and guide me** could be: (1) expressing a general truth that has been part of David's ongoing experience. If you decide this is the meaning, then you can translate the two verbs in this phrase in a similar way to the ULT. (2) expressing something that will happen in the future. Alternate translation: [you will lead me and guide me] or (3) a request that is a prayer to Yahweh. (This option is less likely since David does not use the imperative forms of these verbs as would be expected if these verbs were meant to be requests.) Alternate translation: [lead me and guide me] or [please lead me and guide me]

ULT **you lead me and guide me**
UST you guide me {so that no harm comes to me}
(תַּנְחֵנִי וּתְנַהֲלֵנִי)

The implication is that David wants God to lead and guide him so that his enemies do not harm him. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [you lead me and guide me so that my enemies do not harm me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and my stronghold | and {like} a fortress {where I can go to be safe} |

# Psalms 31:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You will pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me, for you are my refuge.* | *You are the one who protects me, so you will rescue me from the evil plans my enemies have secretly made to hurt me.* |

**ULT You will pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me**
**UST** you will rescue me from the evil plans my enemies have secretly made to hurt me
(תּוֹצִיאֵנִי מֵרֶשֶׁת זוּ טָמְנוּ לִי)

Here David is speaking as if his enemies' plans to harm him were a **net** that they had hidden to trap him. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Rescue me from being harmed by the plans that they have secretly made to harm me] or [Rescue me from the ambush that they have secretly set for me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**Note:**

Here the Hebrew verb that the ULT translates as **You will pull me** could be: (1) expressing something that will happen in the future as in the ULT or (2) a request that is a prayer to Yahweh. (This option is less likely since David does not use the imperative form of this verb as would be expected if this was a request.) Alternate translation: [Please pull me] or [Pull me]

**ULT you are my refuge**
**UST** You are the one who protects me
(אַתָּה מָעוּזִּי)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **refuge**, a physical place of safety and protection from danger. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you are my protector] or [you keep me safe]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my refuge | the one who protects me |

# Psalms 31:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, Yahweh, God of faithfulness.* | *I put myself into your care. You have rescued me. Yahweh, you are faithful.* |

**ULT Into your hand**
**UST** into your care
(בְּיָדְךָ֣)

Here, **hand** represents God's power, control and care. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Into your care] or [Into your control]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT I commit my spirit**
**UST** I put myself
(אַפְקִ֥יד רוּחִ֑י)

David is using the term **spirit** to mean his enlivening spirit that causes him to be physically alive. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I commit myself]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT God of faithfulness**
**UST** you are faithful
(אֵ֣ל אֱמֶ֑ת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [God who is faithful to me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I commit | I put |
| my spirit | myself |
| you have redeemed | You have rescued |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| God of | you are |
| faithfulness | faithful |

# Psalms 31:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I hate the ones keeping idols of worthlessness, but I trust in Yahweh.* | *I hate those who worship useless idols, but I trust in Yahweh.* |

**ULT I hate the ones keeping**
**UST** I hate those who worship
(שָׂנֵ֣אתִי הַשֹּׁמְרִ֣ים)

Here, **the ones keeping** represents those who worship idols. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I hate those who worship]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT idols of worthlessness**
**UST** useless idols
(הַבְלֵי־שָׁ֑וְא)

David is using the possessive form to describe **idols** that are characterized by **worthlessness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [worthless idols]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| idols of | idols |
| trust | trust |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 31:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will be glad and rejoice in your covenant faithfulness, for you have seen my affliction; you have known the troubles of my soul,* | *I will be very glad because you faithfully love me. You have noticed that I have suffered, and have known the troubling things I have experienced.* |

ULT **I will be glad and rejoice**
UST I will be very glad
(אָגִילָה וְאֶשְׂמְחָה)

The terms **be glad** and **rejoice** mean similar things. David 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: [I will rejoice greatly]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **in your covenant faithfulness, for you have seen my affliction; you have known the troubles of my soul**
UST because you faithfully love me. You have noticed that I have suffered, and have known the troubling things I have experienced
(בְּחַסְדֶּךָ אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתָ אֶת־עָנְיִי יָדַעְתָּ בְּצָרוֹת נַפְשִׁי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant faithfulness** and **affliction**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [because you are faithful to your covenant, for you have seen how I have suffered; you have known how my soul is troubled]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the troubles of my soul**
UST the troubling things I have experienced
(בְּצָרוֹת נַפְשִׁי)

David is using the term **soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the troubles I have experienced] or [my inner distress]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will be glad | I will be very glad |
| and rejoice | I will be very glad |
| in your covenant faithfulness | because you faithfully love me |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my affliction | that I have suffered |
| you have known | and have known |
| the troubles of | the troubling things … have experienced |
| my soul | I |

# Psalms 31:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *and you have not delivered me into the hand of the ones being hostile to me; you have set my feet in an open space.* | *You have not allowed my enemies to capture me; instead, you brought me to a place where I was safe.* |

**ULT into the hand of the ones being hostile to me**
**UST** You have … allowed my enemies to capture me
(בְּיַד־אוֹיֵב)

Here, **hand** represents the power or control of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [into the power of the ones being hostile to me] or [under the control of the ones being hostile to me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT you have set my feet in an open space**
**UST** instead, you brought me to a place where I was safe
(הֶעֱמַדְתָּ בַמֶּרְחָב רַגְלָי)

Here David is speaking of being rescued as if he had been squeezed into a narrow, dangerous space with no way to escape and God enabled him to escape into an **open space**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you have set me free from danger] or [you have rescued me from my desperate situation]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| you have … delivered me | You have … allowed … to capture me |
| the ones being hostile to me | my enemies |

# Psalms 31:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Be gracious to me, Yahweh, for I am in distress; my eye has wasted away from grief, my soul and my body.* | *Yahweh, act kindly toward me because I am distressed. Because I cry so much that my eyes are tired, and I am completely exhausted.* |

**ULT Be gracious to me**
**UST** act kindly toward me
(חָנֵּנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please be gracious to me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT for I am in distress; my eye has wasted away from grief**
**UST** because I am distressed. Because I cry so much that my eyes are tired
(כִּי צַר־לִי עָשְׁשָׁה בְכַעַס עֵינִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **grief**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [for I am distressed, because of my grieving my eye has wasted away]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT my eye has wasted away from grief**
**UST** Because I cry so much that my eyes are tired
(עָשְׁשָׁה בְכַעַס עֵינִי)

David says **my eye has wasted away from grief** as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [I cry so much that my eyes feel like they are wasting away] or [I am crying so much that my eyes hurt]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **from grief**
UST I cry
(בְּכַעַס)

Here, **grief** represents crying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from crying] or [because I cry so much]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **my soul and my body**
UST and I am completely exhausted
(נַפְשִׁי וּבִטְנִי)

David 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 soul and my body have wasted away from grief]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **my soul and my body**
UST and I am completely exhausted
(נַפְשִׁי וּבִטְנִי)

David is referring to all of himself by naming two major components, **my soul** and **my body**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all of me] or [my whole being]

**Support Reference:** Merism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Be gracious to me | act kindly toward me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I am in distress | I am distressed |
| has wasted away | Because … so much that my eyes are tired |
| my soul | and I am completely exhausted |

# Psalms 31:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For my life has come to an end with sorrow, and my years with groaning; my strength fails from my iniquity, and my bones waste away.* | *I have become very weak because I am so miserable; my life is getting shorter. I have become weak because of the sinful things that I have done. I am totally exhausted.* |

ULT **For my life has come to an end with sorrow, and my years with groaning; my strength fails from my iniquity, and my bones waste away**
UST I have become very weak because I am so miserable; my life is getting shorter. I have become weak because of the sinful things that I have done. I am totally exhausted
(כִּי כָלּוּ בְיָגוֹן חַיַּי וּשְׁנוֹתַי בַּאֲנָחָה כָּשַׁל בַּעֲוֹנִי כֹחִי וַעֲצָמַי עָשֵׁשׁוּ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [For my life comes to an end with sorrow, yes, my years with groaning; my strength fails from my iniquity, indeed, my bones waste away]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **For my life has come to an end with sorrow**
UST I have become very weak because I am so miserable; my life is getting shorter
(כִּי כָלּוּ בְיָגוֹן חַיַּי)

By **For my life has come to an end with sorrow**, David means that his life is being consumed or shortened by grief and distress. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [For my life is being consumed by sorrow] or [For sorrow is shortening my life]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **with sorrow**
UST I have become very weak because I am so miserable; my life is getting shorter
(בְיָגוֹן)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **sorrow**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [sorrowfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **from my iniquity**
UST because of the sinful things that I have done
(בַּעֲוֹנִי)

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: [because I have sinned] or [because of the wrong things I have done]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and my bones waste away**
UST I am totally exhausted
(וְעַצָמַי עָשְׁשׁוּ)

David is using one part of his body, his **bones**, to represent his entire physical being as it deteriorates. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and my entire body wastes away]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and my years | I have become very weak because I am so miserable; my life is getting shorter |
| from my iniquity | because of the sinful things that I have done |
| waste away | I am totally exhausted |

# Psalms 31:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Among all of the ones being hostile to me I have become a reproach, and especially to my neighbors, and dread to the ones knowing me; the ones seeing me outside flee from me.* | *All of my enemies make fun of me, and my neighbors, especially, despise me. My friends are afraid of me {because they think that you, God, are punishing me}. When they see me on the streets, they run away.* |

ULT **I have become a reproach**
UST make fun of me
(הָיִיתִי חֶרְפָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **reproach**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [I have become someone whom people reproach] or [I have become someone whom people despise]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and especially to my neighbors, and dread to the ones knowing me**
UST and my neighbors, especially, despise me. My friends are afraid of me {because they think that you, God, are punishing me … }
(וְלִשְׁכֵנַי ׀ מְאֹד֗ וּפַ֫חַד לְמַיְדָּעָי)

David 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 have become especially a reproach to my neighbors, and I have become a dread to the ones knowing me]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and dread to the ones knowing me**
UST My friends are afraid of me {because they think that you, God, are punishing me}
(וּפַ֫חַד לְמַיְדָּעָי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **dread**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and the ones knowing me are afraid of me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the ones being hostile to me | All of my enemies |
| a reproach | make fun of me |
| and … to my neighbors | and my neighbors … despise me |
| and dread | are afraid of me {because they think that you, God, are punishing me} |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to the ones knowing me | My friends |

# Psalms 31:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have been forgotten like a dead man out of mind; I am like a broken vessel.* | *People have forgotten me like they forget people who are dead. I am {as useless as} a broken pot.* |

ULT **I have been forgotten**
UST People have forgotten me
(נִשְׁכַּחְתִּי)

The expression **I have been forgotten** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [People have forgotten me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **I have been forgotten like a dead man out of mind**
UST People have forgotten me like they forget people who are dead
(נִשְׁכַּחְתִּי כְּמֵת מִלֵּב)

David is making a comparison between himself and **a dead man out of mind**. The point of this comparison is that just as a dead man is completely forgotten by people, so David feels that he has been completely forgotten. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [I have been completely forgotten, just as people forget about the dead]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **out of mind**
UST they forget
(מִלֵּב)

David is using **out of mind** as a common expression of the culture to mean “completely forgotten.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [is completely forgotten] or [whom people have completely forgotten]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

> ULT **I am like a broken vessel**
> UST I am {as useless as} a broken pot
> (הָיִיתִי כִּכְלִי אֹבֵד)

Here David is comparing himself to **a broken vessel** using the word **like**. The point of this comparison is that just as a broken vessel is useless and discarded, so David feels useless and discarded by others. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [I am useless like a broken vessel] or [I am discarded like a broken vessel]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| out of mind | they forget |

# Psalms 31:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For I hear the whispering of many— terror on every side!— while they conspire together against me; they plan to take my life.* | *There are terrifying things all around me. I hear people whispering {things about me}. My enemies are making plans to kill me.* |

ULT **For I hear the whispering of many— terror on every side**
UST There are terrifying things all around me. I hear people whispering {things about me … }
(כִּי שָׁמַעְתִּי ׀ דִּבַּת רַבִּים מָגֹור מִסָּבִיב)

David 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 I hear the whispering of many, and there is terror on every side]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **For I hear the whispering of many— terror on every side**
UST There are terrifying things all around me. I hear people whispering {things about me … }
(כִּי שָׁמַעְתִּי ׀ דִּבַּת רַבִּים מָגֹור מִסָּבִיב)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put the information about **terror on every side** with the information about **the whispering of many**. Alternate translation: [For I hear the whispering of many and there is terror on every side]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **terror on every side**
UST There are terrifying things all around me
(מָגֹור מִסָּבִיב)

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: [terrifying things on every side]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

> ULT **they plan to take my life**
> UST My enemies are making plans to kill me
> (לָקַחַת נַפְשִׁי זָמֵמוּ)

David is using **they plan to take my life** as a common expression of the culture to mean "they plan to kill me." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they plan to murder me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| terror | There are terrifying things |
| while they conspire together | My enemies are making plans |

# Psalms 31:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But I trust in you, Yahweh; I say, "You are my God."* | *But Yahweh, I trust in you. I say {confidently} that you are the God I worship.* |

ULT **But I**
UST But
(וַאֲנִי)

David uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between his distressing circumstances and his trust in Yahweh. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [However, I] or [Yet I]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **You are my God**
UST that you are the God I worship
(אֱלֹהַי אָתָּה)

David is not using this possessive form **my God** to indicate that he possesses or controls Yahweh. Rather he is using these words to indicate that Yahweh is the God whom he worships. If it would help your readers, you could indicate this explicitly as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| trust | I trust |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my God | the God I worship |

# Psalms 31:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of the ones being hostile to me and from the ones pursuing me.* | *You control the events and circumstances of my life. Save me from my enemies, from those who pursue me.* |

ULT **My times are in your hand; rescue me from the hand of**
UST You control the events and circumstances of my life. Save me from
(בְּיָדְךָ עִתֹּתָי הַצִּילֵנִי מִיַּד)

Here, **hand** represents the power or control of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [My times are in your control; rescue me from the power of]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **rescue me**
UST Save me
(הַצִּילֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please rescue me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **My times**
UST the events and circumstances of my life
(עִתֹּתָי)

David assumes that readers will know that **My times** refers to the events and circumstances of his life, including its duration. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [The events of my life] or [My life and circumstances]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the ones being hostile to me and from the ones pursuing me**
UST my enemies, from those who pursue me
(אוֹיְבַי וּמֵרֹדְפָי)

The terms **the ones being hostile to me** and **the ones pursuing me** mean similar things. David 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: [my relentless enemies]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My times | the events and circumstances of my life |
| rescue me | Save me |
| the ones being hostile to me | my enemies |

# Psalms 31:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Make your face shine upon your servant; save me in your covenant faithfulness.* | *Act kindly toward me and rescue me because you always faithfully love me.* |

ULT **Make your face shine upon your servant; save me**
UST Act kindly toward me and rescue me
(הָאִ֣ירָה פָנֶ֣יךָ עַל־עַבְדֶּ֑ךָ הוֹשִׁיעֵ֥נִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please make your face shine upon your servant; save me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Make your face shine upon**
UST Act kindly toward
(הָאִ֣ירָה פָנֶ֣יךָ עַל)

David is using **Make your face shine on** as a common expression of the culture to mean "show favor to" or "be gracious to." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Show favor to] or [Be gracious to]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **your servant**
UST me
(עַבְדֶּ֑ךָ)

David is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person. Alternate translation: [me, your servant]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

> ULT **in your covenant faithfulness**
> UST because you always faithfully love me
> (בְּחַסְדֶּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [because you are faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your servant | me |
| save me | and rescue me |
| in your covenant faithfulness | because you always faithfully love me |

# Psalms 31:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, do not let me have shame, for I have called upon you; let the wicked have shame; let them be silent in Sheol.* | *Yahweh, I call out to you, so do not allow others to shame me. I desire that you cause wicked people to be ashamed. I desire that they {soon die and} go down to the place where the dead people are.* |

ULT **let the wicked have shame; let them be silent in Sheol**
UST I desire that you cause wicked people to be ashamed. I desire that they {soon die and} go down to the place where the dead people are
(יֵבֹ֣שׁוּ רְ֭שָׁעִים יִדְּמ֣וּ לִשְׁאֽוֹל)

By using **let**, the psalmist is expressing what he thinks should happen. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [the wicked should have shame; they should be silent in Sheol]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **Yahweh, do not let me have shame, for I have called upon you**
UST Yahweh, I call out to you, so do not allow others to shame me
(יְהוָ֥ה אַל־אֵ֝בוֹשָׁ֗ה כִּ֣י קְרָאתִ֑יךָ)

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 have called upon you, Yahweh, do not let me have shame]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רְ֭שָׁעִים)

David 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: [those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT let them be silent in Sheol**
**UST** I desire that they {soon die and} go down to the place where the dead people are (יִדְמוּ לִשְׁאוֹל)

David assumes that readers will know that **Sheol** is the place of the dead. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [let them be silent in the place of the dead]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| do … let me have shame | do … allow others to shame me |
| I have called upon you | I call out to you |
| let … have shame | I desire that you cause … to be ashamed |
| the wicked | wicked people |
| in Sheol | { … and} go down to the place where the dead people are |

# Psalms 31:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let lying lips be silenced, the ones speaking insolent things against the righteous, in pride and contempt.* | *I desire that you will cause people who tell lies to be unable to speak. {Do that to} people who arrogantly say disrespectful things about righteous people.* |

ULT **Let lying lips be silenced**
UST I desire that you will cause people who tell lies to be unable to speak
(תֵּאָלַמְנָה שִׂפְתֵי שָׁקֶר)

The expression **Let lying lips be silenced** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [May God silence lying lips] or [May lying lips become silent]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **lying lips**
UST people who tell lies
(שִׂפְתֵי שָׁקֶר)

Here, **lying lips** represents people who tell lies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those who lie]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the righteous**
UST righteous people
(צַדִּיק)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

> ULT **in pride and contempt**
> UST disrespectful things
> (בְּגַאֲוָה וָבוּז)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **pride** and **contempt**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [proudly and contemptuously] or [in a proud and contemptuous manner]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

> ULT **in pride and contempt**
> UST disrespectful things
> (בְּגַאֲוָה וָבוּז)

The terms **pride** and **contempt** mean similar things. David 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: [with great arrogance]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the righteous | righteous people |
| in pride | disrespectful things |
| and contempt | disrespectful things |

# Psalms 31:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *How great is your goodness which you have stored up for the ones fearing you, {which} you have done for the ones taking refuge in you, before the sons of man!* | *Many indeed are the good things which you have prepared for the people who revere you! You do good things for those who go to you for protection. Everyone sees you protect them.* |

ULT **How great is your goodness**
UST Many indeed are the good things
(מָה־רַב־טוּבְךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **goodness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [How incredibly good you are] or [How abundant are the good things you do]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **you have stored up**
UST you have prepared
(צָפַנְתָּ)

David is speaking of God's goodness as if it were something physical that God had **stored up** like treasure in a storehouse. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express the meaning plainly as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **for the ones taking refuge in you**
UST for those who go to you for protection
(לַחֹסִים בָּךְ)

See how you translated the similar phrase "I take refuge" in 31:1.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the sons of man**
UST Everyone
(בְּנֵי אָדָם)

The psalmist is using **sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "human beings." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all people]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| is your goodness | are the good things |
| for the ones fearing you | for the people who revere you |
| for the ones taking refuge | for those who go … for protection |

# Psalms 31:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You hide them in the hiding-place of your presence from the plots of man; you hide them in a shelter from the strife of tongues.* | *You protect people {who trust in you} by being near to them and saving them from people who devise evil schemes {to harm them}. You keep them safe from their enemies who accuse them.* |

ULT **You hide them in the hiding-place of your presence from the plots of man; you hide them in a shelter from the strife of tongues**
UST You protect people {who trust in you} by being near to them and saving them from people who devise evil schemes {to harm them}. You keep them safe from their enemies who accuse them
(תַּסְתִּירֵם ׀ בְּסֵתֶר פָּנֶיךָ֥ מֵרַכְסֵי אִ֑ישׁ תִּצְפְּנֵ֖ם בְּסֻכָּ֣ה מֵרִ֣יב לְשֹׁנֽוֹת)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [You hide them in the safety of your presence, protecting them from those who plot against them and from cruel words]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **You hide them in the hiding-place of your presence from the plots of man**
UST You protect people {who trust in you} by being near to them and saving them from people who devise evil schemes {to harm them}
(תַּסְתִּירֵם ׀ בְּסֵתֶר פָּנֶיךָ֥ מֵרַכְסֵי אִ֑ישׁ)

Here David is speaking of **the hiding-place of your presence** as if it were a physical shelter where Yahweh could hide people from danger. David means that Yahweh protects people by his divine presence and power. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You protect them by your presence from the plots of man]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **man**
UST people
(אִישׁ)

David is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **you hide them in a shelter from the strife of tongues**
UST You keep them safe from their enemies who accuse them
(תִּצְפְּנֵם בְּסֵתֶר מֵרִיב לְשֹׁנוֹת)

Here David is speaking of God's protection and help as if it were a physical **shelter** in which God would hide righteous people from the accusatory words of evil people. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [you protect them from people who attack with their words as if you were hiding them in a shelter]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **from the strife of tongues**
UST from their enemies who accuse them
(מֵרִיב לְשֹׁנוֹת)

Here, **tongues** represents people speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from people who accuse them with their words] or [from verbal attacks]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| in a shelter | בְּסֵתֶר (ORIG QUOTE) |
| from the strife of | from their enemies |
| tongues | who accuse them |

# Psalms 31:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Blessed be Yahweh, for he has shown marvelously his covenant faithfulness to me in a besieged city.* | *Praise Yahweh! When my enemies surrounded the city {in which I was living,} he showed me in a wonderful way that he faithfully loves me.* |

ULT **Blessed be Yahweh**
UST Praise Yahweh
(בָּר֣וּךְ יְהוָ֑ה)

The expression **Blessed be** is a passive verbal form. The psalmist is expressing his desire to praise Yahweh. If it would be unnatural to use that form for this purpose, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I bless Yahweh] or [Let me praise Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **Blessed be Yahweh, for he has shown marvelously his covenant faithfulness to me in a besieged city**
UST Praise Yahweh! When my enemies surrounded the city {in which I was living,} he showed me in a wonderful way that he faithfully loves me
(בָּר֣וּךְ יְהוָ֑ה כִּ֥י הִפְלִ֖יא חַסְדּ֣וֹ לִ֣י בְּעִ֣יר מָצֽוֹר)

David is giving the reason that Yahweh should be blessed after stating that he should be blessed. 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 he has shown marvelously his covenant faithfulness to me in a besieged city, blessed be Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **his covenant faithfulness**
UST that he faithfully loves
(חַסְדּ֣וֹ)

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: [all the ways he is faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in a besieged city**
UST When my enemies surrounded the city {in which I was living … }
(בְּעִיר מָצוֹר)

The expression **in a besieged city** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is his enemies. Alternate translation: [in a city that my enemies had surrounded]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Blessed be | Praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| his covenant faithfulness | that he faithfully loves |
| besieged | When my enemies surrounded |

# Psalms 31:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For I said in my alarm, “I am cut off from your eyes.” But indeed you heard the voice of my pleas when I cried out to you.* | *I was alarmed and cried out, “I have been separated from Yahweh!” But in fact you heard me {and answered} my cry for help.* |

ULT **in my alarm**
UST I was alarmed
(בְּחָפְזִ֑י)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **alarm**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [when I was alarmed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **I am cut off from your eyes**
UST I have been separated from Yahweh
(נִגְרַזְתִּי֙ מִנֶּ֣גֶד עֵינֶ֔יךָ)

Here, **eyes** represents God’s attention or awareness. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I am cut off from your attention] or [you are no longer watching over me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **But indeed**
UST But in fact
(אָכֵ֗ן)

David uses the words **But indeed** here to indicate a contrast between his fearful thoughts and God’s actual response. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [However] or [Yet]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **the voice of my pleas**
UST me
(קוֹל֮ תַּחֲנוּנַ֒י)

Here, **voice** represents the pleas themselves. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **you heard the voice of my pleas when I cried out to you**
UST you heard me {and answered} my cry for help
(שָׁמַעְתָּ קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנַי בְּשַׁוְּעִי אֵלֶיךָ)

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: [when I cried out to you, you heard the voice of my pleas]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in my alarm | I was alarmed |
| my pleas | me |

# Psalms 31:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Love Yahweh, all {you} faithful ones! Yahweh preserves the faithful, but he pays back fully the proud person.* | *You people who belong to Yahweh, love him! Those who are loyal to him, he protects, but those who are proud, he punishes them severely like they deserve to be punished.* |

**ULT the faithful**

**UST** Those who are loyal to him

(אֱמוּנִים)

David is using the adjective **faithful** 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: [faithful people] or [those who are faithful]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Love | love |
| Yahweh | him |
| {you} faithful ones | You people who belong to Yahweh |
| Yahweh | he |
| the faithful | Those who are loyal to him |
| proud | who are proud |

# Psalms 31:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Be firm and let your heart be courageous, all the ones waiting for Yahweh.* | *You who confidently expect Yahweh {to do great things for you,} be strong and be courageous!* |

ULT **Be firm**
UST and be courageous
(חֲזָקוּ)

David is using **Be firm** as a common expression of the culture to mean "be strong." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **your heart**
UST confidently
(לְבַבְכֶם)

The word **your** is plural here because David is speaking to **all the ones waiting for Yahweh**. Use the plural form in your language if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

ULT **and let your heart be courageous**
UST confidently … be strong
(וְיַאֲמֵץ לְבַבְכֶם)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts and feelings exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **all the ones waiting for Yahweh**
UST You who … expect Yahweh {to do great things for you … }
(כָּל־הַמְיַחֲלִים לַיהוָה)

David assumes that readers will know that here **waiting** refers to waiting on Yahweh to help them. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [all the ones waiting for Yahweh to help you]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and let … be courageous | be strong |
| for Yahweh | You who … expect Yahweh |

# Psalms 32

## Psalm 32 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 32 is a psalm about confession of sin. It is considered to be one of the "penitential" psalms. See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about the penitential psalms. (See: confess, confession and sin, sinful, sinner, sinning)

1. The type of person who God says is blessed (1–2)
2. The results of concealing one's sin (3–4)
3. David confesses his sin to Yahweh and Yahweh forgives his sin (5)
4. David gives reasons for confessing one's sin to Yahweh (6–7)
5. David instructs his readers (8–9)
6. Conclusion (10–11)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a "maskil." See the discussion of that term in the introduction to Psalms.

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Confession of sin

This Psalm tells of the sorrow of unconfessed sin. It also tells of the blessing of confession and of receiving God's forgiveness. It is a blessing when God forgives sin. Trouble comes when sin is hidden and not confessed. (See: bless, blessed, blessing and forgive, forgiven, forgiveness, pardon, pardoned)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Who is speaking in verses 8–9?

Among Bible scholars there are several different views regarding who is speaking in verses 8 and 9. Some Bible scholars think that it is David speaking, and others think

that it is God speaking. Because these verses do not explicitly state who is speaking, you should not indicate who the speaker is in your translation.

# Psalms 32:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A maskil of David The happinesses of the one whose transgression is lifted up, the one covered from sin!* | *A song of David Those whom God has forgiven for rebelling against him, and those whose sin God has atoned for, these are the ones who will have a truly good life!* |

ULT **A maskil of David**
UST A song of David
(לְדָוִד מַשְׂכִּיל)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **maskil**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **The happinesses of**
UST these are the ones who will have a truly good life
(אַשְׁרֵי)

David is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling, what constitutes true happiness from God's perspective. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy is]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **the one whose transgression is lifted up, the one covered from sin**
UST Those whom God has forgiven for rebelling against him, and those whose sin God has atoned for
(נְשׂוּי־פֶּשַׁע כְּסוּי חֲטָאָה)

The expressions **transgression is lifted up** and **covered from sin** are passive verbal forms. If your language would not use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [the one whose transgression God has lifted up, the one whose sin God has covered]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **the one whose transgression is lifted up, the one covered from sin**
UST Those whom God has forgiven for rebelling against him, and those whose sin God has atoned for
(נְשׂוּי־פֶּשַׁע כְּסוּי חֲטָאָה)

These two phrases **the one whose transgression is lifted up** and **the one covered from sin** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. It may be helpful in your language to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [the one whose transgression is lifted up, that is, whose sin is covered]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the one covered from sin**
UST and those whose sin God has atoned for
(כְּסוּי חֲטָאָה)

Here the phrase **the one covered from sin** means "the one whose sin is covered." David is speaking of sin as if it were an object that could be covered. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one whose sin Yahweh takes away]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the one whose transgression is lifted up, the one covered from sin**
UST Those whom God has forgiven for rebelling against him, and those whose sin God has atoned for
(נְשׂוּי־פֶּשַׁע כְּסוּי חֲטָאָה)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **transgression** and **sin**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [the one forgiven of the wrong things that one has done, forgiven for how that one has disobeyed you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the one whose transgression is lifted up, the one covered from sin**
UST Those whom God has forgiven for rebelling against him, and those whose sin God has atoned for
(נְשׂוּי־פֶּשַׁע כְּסוּי חֲטָאָה)

Here, **one whose transgression is lifted up** and **one covered from sin** represent people in general, not specific individuals. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use expressions that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [anyone whose transgression is lifted up, and anyone who is covered from sin]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| of David | of David |
| transgression | for rebelling against him |
| from sin | sin |

# Psalms 32:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The happinesses of the man to whom Yahweh reckons no guilt, and in whose spirit {there is} no deceit!* | *Those whose record of sins Yahweh no longer takes into account, and those who are not deceitful, these are the ones who will have a truly good life!* |

ULT **The happinesses of**
UST these are the ones who will have a truly good life
(אַשְׁרֵי)

David is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling, what constitutes true happiness from God's perspective. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy is]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **the man**
UST Those
(אָדָם)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [any person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **reckons no guilt, and in whose spirit {there is} no deceit**
UST whose record of sins … no longer takes into account, and those who are not deceitful
(לֹא יַחְשֹׁב & עָוֹן וְאֵין בְּרוּחוֹ רְמִיָּה)

The abstract nouns **guilt** and **deceit** express the ideas of being guilty and being deceitful. If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **guilt** and **deceit**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [does not reckon what he has done wrong and who is not deceitful] or [does not reckon to him what he is guilty of and who does not act deceitfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and in whose spirit {there is} no**
UST and those who are not
(וְאֵין בְּרוּחֹו)

Here, **spirit** represents the person's inner being or character. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and in whom there is no]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| guilt | sins |
| in whose spirit | those who |

# Psalms 32:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my screaming all of the day.* | *When I did not confess my sins, my body felt weak and sick, and I groaned all day long.* |

ULT **When I kept silent**
UST When I did not confess my sins
(כִּי־הֶחֱרַשְׁתִּי)

By **kept silent**, David means that he did not confess his sin to God. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [When I kept silent about my sin]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **my bones wasted away**
UST my body felt weak and sick
(בָּלוּ עַצְמָי)

Here David is speaking as if his **bones** were actually deteriorating. He means that his body was becoming weak, and he felt as if he was ill. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my vitality was depleted]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **through my screaming**
UST and I groaned
(בְּשַׁאֲגָתִי)

The word translated as **through** indicates that what follows is a result of what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a result of what came before. Alternate translation: [which caused me to scream]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **through my screaming**
UST and I groaned
(בְּשַׁאֲגָתִי)

David says **through my screaming** as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [through my groaning]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **all of the day**
UST all day long
(כָּל־הַיּוֹם)

David is using **all of the day** as a common expression of his culture to mean “continually.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [continually]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| wasted away | felt weak and sick |

# Psalms 32:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For by day and night your hand was heavy upon me. My vitality was changed {as} by the heat of summer. Selah* | *Day and night, Yahweh, you afflicted me. My strength was sapped like it would be on a hot summer day. Selah* |

ULT **by day and night**
UST Day and night
(יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה)

The psalmist is referring to all of time by naming two major components, **day** and **night**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [continually] or [all of the time]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **your hand was heavy upon me**
UST Yahweh, you afflicted me
(תִּכְבַּד עָלַי יָדֶךָ)

David is using **your hand was heavy upon me** as a common expression of his culture to mean that God afflicted or disciplined him severely. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **My vitality was changed**
UST My strength was sapped
(נֶהְפַּךְ לְשַׁדִּי)

The expression **My vitality was changed** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [God drained my strength] or [My strength dried up]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **My vitality was changed {as} by the heat of summer**
UST My strength was sapped like it would be on a hot summer day
(נֶהְפַּךְ לְשַׁדִּי בְּחַרְבֹנֵי קָיִץ)

The point of this comparison is that just as the **heat of summer** is extremely intense and withering, so David's **vitality was changed** due to his unconfessed sin. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [My strength was completely drained like something withered by intense heat]

**Support Reference:** Simile

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 32:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My sin I acknowledged to you, and my guilt I did not cover. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to Yahweh," and you lifted up the guilt of my sin. Selah* | *{Then} I confessed my sinful actions to you; I stopped trying to hide them. I said to myself, "I will tell Yahweh the wrong things that I have done." When I confessed them, you forgave me, so now I am no longer guilty for the sinful things I did. Selah* |

ULT **My sin I acknowledged to you, and my guilt I did not cover**
UST { … Then} I confessed my sinful actions to you; I stopped trying to hide them
(חַטָּאתִי אוֹדִיעֲךָ וַעֲוֹנִי לֹא־כִסִּיתִי)

These two phrases **My sin I acknowledged to you** and **my guilt I did not cover** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases with a word other than **and** in order to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [I confessed my sin to you—I did not hide my guilt]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **My sin … my sin**
UST my sinful actions … the sinful things I did
(חַטָּאתִי & חַטָּאתִי)

See how you translated the similar expression in 32:1.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and my guilt … the guilt of**
UST them … so now I am no longer guilty for
(וַעֲוֹנִי & עָוֹן)

See how you translated the similar expression in 32:2.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and my guilt I did not cover**
UST I stopped trying to hide them
(וַעֲוֹנִי לֹא־כִסִּיתִי)

Here David is speaking of **sin** and **guilt** as if they were something that could be covered. He means that he did not try to hide his sin from God. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and my guilt I did not refuse to confess]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my transgressions**
UST the wrong things that I have done
(פְּשָׁעַי)

See how you translated the similar expression in 32:1.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and you lifted up the guilt of my sin**
UST When I confessed them, you forgave me, so now I am no longer guilty for the sinful things I did
(וְאַתָּה נָּשָׂאתָ עֲוֹן חַטָּאתִי)

See how you translated the similar expression in 32:1. Alternate translation: [and you forgave the guilt of my sin] or [and you took away the guilt of my sin]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| My sin | my sinful actions |
| I acknowledged to you | {Then} I confessed … to you |
| and my guilt | them |
| I will confess | I will tell |
| my transgressions | the wrong things that I have done |
| to Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the guilt of | so now I am no longer guilty for |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 32:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For this {reason} let everyone who is faithful pray to you at a time of finding; surely in a flood of great waters, they will not reach to him.* | *Therefore all the people who are godly should pray to you when they realize they have sinned. {If they do that,} then it is certain that difficulties will not overwhelm them like a great flood.* |

ULT **at a time of finding**
UST when they realize they have sinned
(לְעֵת מְצֹא)

Here David is speaking of God's forgiveness as if it were something that could be found. He also indicates that there is a favorable time in which to seek forgiveness. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [while there is an opportunity]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in a flood of great waters, they will not reach to him**
UST that difficulties will not overwhelm them like a great flood
(לְשֵׁטֶף מַיִם רַבִּים אֵלָיו לֹא יַגִּיעוּ)

Here David is speaking as if troubles were actually a **flood of great waters** that could overwhelm someone. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when great trouble comes, God will rescue those who trust in him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to him**
UST overwhelm them
(אֵלָיו)

Here, **him** represents godly people in general, not a specific person. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [to them]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| let … pray | should pray |
| who is faithful | the people who are godly |
| at a time of | when |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in a flood of | that difficulties … like a … flood |

# Psalms 32:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from distress; you will surround me {with} shouts of deliverance. Selah* | *You are like a place where I can hide from my enemies; you protect me from troubles and surround me with people who are joyfully praising you for saving me from my enemies. Selah* |

ULT **You are a hiding place for me**
UST You are like a place where I can hide from my enemies
(אַתָּה ׀ סֵתֶר לִי)

Here David is speaking as if Yahweh were actually a **hiding place**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You are the one who causes me to be safe] or [You are like a hiding place for me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from distress**
UST You are like a place where I can hide from my enemies; you protect me from troubles
(אַתָּה ׀ סֵתֶר לִי מִצַּר תִּצְּרֵנִי)

These two phrases **You are a hiding place for me** and **you preserve me from distress** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. Alternate translation: [You protect me as my refuge; you keep me safe from trouble]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **from distress**
UST from troubles
(מִצַּר)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distress**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from things that cause me trouble] or [when others afflict me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **you will surround me {with} shouts of deliverance**
UST and surround me with people who are joyfully praising you for saving me from my enemies
(רָנֵּי פַלֵּט תְּסוֹבְבֵנִי)

The implication is that there will be people around the writer who will be shouting joyfully about how God has rescued him. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [You surround me with people who are celebrating your deliverance with joyful shouts]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| from distress | from troubles |
| deliverance | for saving me from my enemies |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 32:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you are to go. I will counsel you {with} my eye upon you.* | *I will teach you about how you should conduct your life. I will teach you personally.* |

**ULT I will instruct you and teach you**
**UST** I will teach you
(אַשְׂכִּֽילְךָ֥ ׀ וְאוֹרְךָ֑)

The terms **instruct** and **teach** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [I will carefully teach you]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT in the way which you are to go**
**UST** about how you should conduct your life
(בְּדֶ֣רֶךְ־זּ֣וּ תֵלֵ֑ךְ)

Here the psalmist 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 helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in how you should live] or [regarding how you should live]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT I will counsel you {with} my eye upon you**
**UST** I will teach you personally
(אִיעֲצָ֖ה עָלֶ֣יךָ עֵינִֽי)

Yahweh is using **with my eye upon you** as a common expression of the culture to mean "watching you closely and guiding you directly." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will teach you directly] or [I will look you in the eyes when I counsel you]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will instruct you | I will teach you |
| and teach you | I will teach you |
| I will counsel you | I will teach you |

# Psalms 32:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not be like a horse {or} like a mule {which are} without understanding; ornament of him to curb with bit and bridle, or else they will not come near to you.* | *Do not be like horses and mules that do not have understanding; they need pieces of metal put in their mouth and ropes fastened to their head so they will go in the direction you want them to go.* |

ULT **Do not be like a horse {or} like a mule**
UST Do not be like horses and mules
(אַל־תִּהְיוּ ׀ כְּסוּס כְּפֶרֶד)

The point of this comparison is that just as a **horse** and a **mule** are stubborn animals that must be controlled with bits and bridles, so are people who refuse to follow God's guidance. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [Do not be stubborn like horses and mules that must be controlled with bits and bridles]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **ornament of him to curb**
UST so they will go in the direction you want them to
(עֶדְיָו לִבְלוֹם)

The psalmist assumes that his readers will know that here **ornament** refers to "trappings", functional pieces that are used on horses and mules in order to guide and restrain them. The implication of the phrase **ornament of him to curb** is that a horse or mule must be controlled by these trappings in order to guide and restrain (or **curb**) them. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [his trappings must restrain him]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **ornament of him to curb**
UST so they will go in the direction you want them to
(עֶדְיָו לִבְלוֹם)

The psalmist 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: [ornament of him to curb his behavior]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **with bit and bridle**
UST they need pieces of metal put in their mouth and ropes fastened to their head
(בְּמֶתֶג־וָרֶסֶן)

A **bit and bridle** is a kind of harness that fits around a horse's head and includes a metal bar that goes in its mouth. If your readers would not be familiar with what a bit and bridle are, you could use more general terms as in the UST or explain them in a footnote.

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| like a horse | like horses |
| {or} like a mule | and mules |
| understanding | understanding |

# Psalms 32:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Many {are the} pains of the wicked, but the one trusting in Yahweh, covenant faithfulness surrounds him.* | *Wicked people will have many difficult things in their lives that will make them sad, but those who trust in Yahweh will experience him faithfully loving them all the time.* |

ULT **Many {are the} pains of the wicked**
UST Wicked people will have many difficult things in their lives that will make them sad
(רַבִּים מַכְאוֹבִים לָרָשָׁע)

The psalmist 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: [Many are the pains of those who do wicked things]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **covenant faithfulness surrounds him**
UST will experience him faithfully loving them all the time
(חֶסֶד יְסוֹבְבֶנּוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of **covenant faithfulness** as if it were a living thing that could protect someone by surrounding them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh's faithful love will protect him] or [Yahweh's covenant faithfulness will protect him]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **covenant faithfulness surrounds him**
UST will experience him faithfully loving them all the time
(חֶסֶד יְסוֹבְבֶנּוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [who acts faithfully toward him according to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of the wicked | Wicked people |
| but the one trusting | but those who trust |
| in Yahweh | in Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| covenant faithfulness | faithfully loving … all the time |

# Psalms 32:11

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Be glad in Yahweh and rejoice, righteous, and shout for joy, all {you} upright of heart.* | *{So, all} you righteous people, rejoice about {what} Yahweh {has done for you}! All you whose inner beings are pure, be glad and shout joyfully!* |

**ULT righteous**
**UST** {So, all} you righteous people
(צַדִּיקִים)

See how you translated the phrase **the righteous** in 1:5. Alternate translation: [righteous people] or [people who do what is right]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT and shout for joy**
**UST** and shout joyfully
(וְהַרְנִינוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **joy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and shout joyfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT all {you} upright of heart**
**UST** All you whose inner beings are pure
(כָּל־יִשְׁרֵי־לֵב)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts and motives exist. The phrase **upright of heart** describes people whose thoughts and motives are morally straight and righteous. Alternate translation: [all who think and act righteously] or [all who live with pure motives]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Be glad | be glad |
| in Yahweh | about {what} Yahweh {has done for you} |
| and rejoice | rejoice |
| righteous | {So, all} you righteous people |
| and shout for joy | and shout joyfully |
| and shout for joy | and shout joyfully |
| {you} upright of | you whose … are pure |

# Psalms 33

## Psalm 33 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 33 is a “psalm of praise” telling how great God is.

1. Call the righteous to praise Yahweh (1–3)
2. Yahweh’s word and works are true and powerful (4–9)
3. Yahweh rules over nations and cares for his people (10–19)
4. Trust and hope in Yahweh’s steadfast love (20–22)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh’s power

Yahweh is the creator and also the God of his people, Israel. Whatever he plans works out. He alone provides safety in battle.

# Psalms 33:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Shout for joy in Yahweh, righteous {ones}; praise {is} fitting for the upright.* | *You people who do what is right, shout joyfully because of Yahweh, because praising him is what upright people should do.* |

**ULT Shout for joy in Yahweh, righteous {ones}**
**UST** You people who do what is right, shout joyfully because of Yahweh
(רַנְּנוּ צַדִּיקִים בַּיהוָה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates an exhortation rather than a command. The psalmist is encouraging **righteous ones** to worship. If the imperative does not communicate an exhortation for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates an exhortation or invitation. Alternate translation: [You righteous ones should shout for joy in Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Shout for joy**
**UST** shout joyfully
(רַנְּנוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **joy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT righteous {ones}**
**UST** You people who do what is right
(צַדִּיקִים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT praise {is} fitting for the upright**
**UST** because praising him is what upright people should do
(לַיְשָׁרִים נָאוָה תְהִלָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [for the upright should praise him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **for the upright**
UST because … upright people
(לַיְשָׁרִים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [for those who are upright]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Shout for joy | shout joyfully |
| in Yahweh | because of Yahweh |
| righteous {ones} | You people who do what is right |
| praise | praising him |
| for the upright | because … upright people |

# Psalms 33:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Give thanks to Yahweh with the harp; with a lyre of ten {strings,} make music to him.* | *Praise Yahweh by playing songs on the harp. Praise him as you make music for him with instruments that have many strings.* |

ULT **with a lyre of ten strings**
UST with instruments that have many strings
(בְּנֵבֶל עָשׂוֹר)

The psalmist 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: [give thanks with a lyre of ten strings]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **with a lyre of ten strings**
UST with instruments that have many strings
(בְּנֵבֶל עָשׂוֹר)

A **lyre of ten** is a kind of musical instrument that has ten strings stretched across it and is plucked to produce sound. If your readers would not be familiar with what a lyre is, you could use the name of a similar thing that your readers would recognize, or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [a ten-stringed instrument]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | Yahweh |
| with the harp | by playing songs on the harp |
| with a lyre | with instruments |

# Psalms 33:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sing to him a new song; be skillful to play with a shout!* | *Sing a new song to him; play those instruments well, and shout joyfully as you play them!* |

**ULT Sing to him a new song**
**UST** Sing a new song to him
(שִׁירוּ־לוֹ שִׁיר חָדָשׁ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates an exhortation rather than a command. The psalmist is encouraging the people to worship. If the imperative does not communicate an exhortation for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates an exhortation or invitation. Alternate translation: [You should sing to him a new song]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

# Psalms 33:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the word of Yahweh {is} upright, and all of his work {is} in faithfulness.* | *Do this because everything that Yahweh says is true, and we can trust that everything that he does is right.* |

**ULT For the word of Yahweh {is} upright**
**UST** Do this because everything that Yahweh says is true
(כִּי־יָשָׁר דְּבַר־יְהוָה)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh always speaking truth as if his **word** were standing straight or **upright**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [For Yahweh always does what he says that he will do]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the word of Yahweh**
**UST** everything that Yahweh says
(דְּבַר־יְהוָה)

Here, **the word of Yahweh** represents what Yahweh said by using words. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what Yahweh has said]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT {is} in faithfulness**
**UST** we can trust that … is right
(בֶּאֱמוּנָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [is done in a faithful way] or [is done faithfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the word of Yahweh | everything that Yahweh says |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} upright | is true |
| {is} in faithfulness | we can trust that … is right |

# Psalms 33:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Loving righteousness and justice, the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh fills the earth.* | *He loves everything that people do that is right and just. Yahweh faithfully loves people all over the earth.* |

**ULT the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh fills the earth**
**UST** Yahweh faithfully loves people all over the earth
(חֶסֶד יְהוָה מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **Yahweh** who is characterized by **covenant faithfulness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Yahweh faithfully keeps his covenant throughout the earth]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT righteousness and justice**
**UST** everything that people do that is right and just
(צְדָקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **righteousness** and **justice**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [what is righteous and fair]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh faithfully loves people
(חֶסֶד יְהוָה)

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: [all the ways Yahweh is faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **fills the earth**
UST all over the earth
(מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the **covenant faithfulness of Yahweh** as if it were something that could **fill** the earth like water fills a container. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [extends to everyone on the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the earth**
UST the earth
(הָאָרֶץ)

The psalmist is using **the earth** to represent everyone who lives on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [everyone on the earth]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Loving | He loves |
| righteousness | everything that people do that is right |
| and justice | and just |
| the covenant faithfulness of | faithfully loves people |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 33:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *By the word of Yahweh, the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth, all of their host.* | *Yahweh created everything in the sky by commanding it. He created all of the stars by speaking.* |

ULT **By the word of Yahweh, the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth, all of their host**

UST Yahweh created everything in the sky by commanding it. He created all of the stars by speaking

(בִּדְבַר־יְהוָה שָׁמַיִם נַעֲשׂוּ וּבְרוּחַ פִּיו כָּל־צְבָאָם)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Another approach would be to combine them and express the emphasis in another way. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [By the word of Yahweh the heavens were made, indeed, by the breath of his mouth, all of their host] or [By his command, Yahweh made the heavens and everything in them]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **By the word of Yahweh**

UST Yahweh … by commanding it

(בִּדְבַר־יְהוָה)

Here, **the word of Yahweh** represents the command that Yahweh spoke using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [By the command of Yahweh] or [When Yahweh commanded]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the heavens were made**
UST created everything in the sky
(שָׁמַ֤יִם נַעֲשׂ֗וּ)

The expression **were made** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [he made the heavens]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and by the breath of his mouth**
UST He created … by speaking
(וּבְר֣וּחַ פִּ֭יו)

Here, **the breath of his mouth** represents Yahweh speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and by what Yahweh spoke]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **all of their host**
UST all of the stars
(כָּל־צְבָאָֽם)

The psalmist 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: [all the stars in the heavens were made]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| By the word of Yahweh | Yahweh … by commanding it |
| the heavens | everything in the sky |
| and by the breath of | He created … by speaking |

# Psalms 33:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Gathering the waters of the sea like a heap; putting the deeps into storehouses,* | *He gathered all the water of the sea into one huge mass as though scooping it into a container.* |

ULT **like a heap**
UST into one huge mass
(כַּנֵּד)

The point of this comparison is that just as a **heap** is a large mass piled together, so Yahweh gathered the sea waters together into a large mass. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [all piled together into one place]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **putting the deeps into storehouses**
UST as though scooping it into a container
(נֹתֵן בְּאֹצָרוֹת תְּהוֹמוֹת)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the deep waters of the ocean as if they were goods that could be placed in **storehouses**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he contains the deep waters within their boundaries]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Gathering | He gathered |
| into storehouses | into a container |

# Psalms 33:8

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *let all of the earth fear Yahweh; let all of the dwellers of the world be in dread of him.* | *Everyone on the earth should deeply revere Yahweh.* |

ULT **let all of the earth fear Yahweh; let all of the dwellers of the world be in dread of him**
UST Everyone on the earth should deeply revere Yahweh
(יִירְאוּ מֵיְהוָה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ מִמֶּנּוּ יָגוּרוּ כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל)

The psalmist is saying what he wants the people to do. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [all of the earth should fear Yahweh; all of the dwellers of the world should be in dread of him]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **let all of the earth fear Yahweh; let all of the dwellers of the world be in dread of him**
UST Everyone on the earth should deeply revere Yahweh
(יִירְאוּ מֵיְהוָה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ מִמֶּנּוּ יָגוּרוּ כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [everyone in the world should fear Yahweh, indeed, they should all be in dread of him]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **all of the earth**
UST Everyone on the earth
(כָּל־הָאָרֶץ)

The psalmist is using the term **earth** to mean all the people who live on the earth. Alternate translation: [all the people of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| let … fear | should deeply revere |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| let … be in dread | should deeply revere |
| the world | Everyone on the earth |

# Psalms 33:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For he, he spoke, and it came to be; he, he commanded, and it stood.* | *They should revere him because he is the one who spoke, making the world exist. Everything started to exist because he is the one who commanded it.* |

ULT **For he, he spoke, and it came to be; he, he commanded, and it stood**
UST They should revere him because he is the one who spoke, making the world exist. Everything started to exist because he is the one who commanded it
(כִּי הוּא אָמַר וַיֶּהִי הוּא־צִוָּה וַיַּעֲמֹד)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Because when he spoke, everything he commanded came into existence]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **he, he spoke, and it came to be; he, he commanded**
UST he is the one who spoke, making the world exist … because he is the one who commanded it
(הוּא אָמַר וַיֶּהִי הוּא־צִוָּה)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **he** separately, even though the verbs translated as **he spoke** and **he commanded** already include this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that it was Yahweh and no other who spoke and commanded. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [he himself spoke and it came to be; he himself commanded, and it stood]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and it came to be; he, he commanded, and it stood**
UST making the world exist. Everything started to exist because he is the one who commanded it
(וַיֶּהִי הוּא־צִוָּה וַיַּעֲמֹד)

The pronoun **it** refers to the earth. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and the earth came to be; he, he commanded, and the earth stood]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **and it stood**
> UST Everything started to exist
> (וַיֵּעָמֹד)

By **it stood**, the psalmist means that the earth came into existence or was created. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and it was created]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

# Psalms 33:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh frustrates the counsel of nations; he thwarts the plans of peoples.* | *Yahweh stops the nations from doing what they plan to do. He prevents the peoples from carrying out what they decide.* |

**ULT Yahweh frustrates the counsel of nations; he thwarts the plans of peoples**
**UST** Yahweh stops the nations from doing what they plan to do He prevents the peoples from carrying out what they decide
(יְהוָה הֵפִיר עֲצַת־גּוֹיִם הֵנִיא מַחְשְׁבוֹת עַמִּים)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Yahweh prevents the people of the nations from accomplishing what they plan]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT the counsel of nations**
**UST** the nations from doing what they plan to do
(עֲצַת־גּוֹיִם)

Here, **nations** represents either the people of the nations or the leaders of the nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the counsel of the leaders of other nations]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT the counsel of nations**
**UST** the nations from doing what they plan to do
(עֲצַת־גּוֹיִם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **counsel**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what nations decide to do]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT the plans of peoples**
**UST** the peoples from carrying out what they decide
(מַחְשְׁבוֹת עַמִּים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **plans**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what the people plan to do]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the counsel of<br>nations | from doing what they plan to do<br>the nations |

# Psalms 33:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The counsel of Yahweh stands forever, the plans of his heart, to generation and generation.* | *However, what Yahweh decides to do will last forever. What he plans to do will never change.* |

ULT **The counsel of Yahweh stands forever, the plans of his heart, to generation and generation**

UST However, what Yahweh decides to do will last forever. What he plans to do will never change

(עֲצַת־יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם תַּעֲמֹד מַחְשְׁבוֹת לִבּוֹ לְדֹר וָדֹר)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [What Yahweh has decided will endure through all generations]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **The counsel of Yahweh**

UST However, what Yahweh decides to do

(עֲצַת־יְהוָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **counsel**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Everything Yahweh decides]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **stands forever**

UST will last forever

(לְעוֹלָם תַּעֲמֹד)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's **counsel** as if it were something that could **stand** in the sense of remaining upright and stable for all time. He means that Yahweh's decisions are permanent and will never change or fail. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [endures forever]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the plans of his heart, to generation and generation**
UST What he plans to do will never change
(מַחְשְׁבוֹת לִבּוֹ לְדֹר וָדֹר)

The psalmist 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 plans of his heart stand to generation and generation]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **the plans of his heart**
UST What he plans to do
(מַחְשְׁבוֹת לִבּוֹ)

Here the **heart** represents where Yahweh's thoughts and intentions exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his intentions]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to generation and generation**
UST will never change
(לְדֹר וָדֹר)

The psalmist is using **to generation and generation** as a common expression of his culture to mean "forever" or "through all time." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [through all generations] or [forever]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The counsel of | However, what … decides to do |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| forever | forever |
| to generation | will never change |
| and generation | will never change |

# Psalms 33:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The happiness of the nation which Yahweh {is} its God, the people he chose for an inheritance for himself.* | *What a good life people have when Yahweh is the God of their nation; he chose those people to belong to him.* |

**ULT The happiness of the nation**
**UST** What a good life people have … of their nation
(אַשְׁרֵי הַגּוֹי)

The psalmist is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of joy or blessing. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy is the nation] or [How blessed will be the nation]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

**ULT of the nation**
**UST** people have … of their nation
(הַגּוֹי)

Here, **nation** represents the people of the nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the people of the nation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT for an inheritance for himself**
**UST** to belong to him
(לְנַחֲלָה לוֹ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of **the people** as if they were **an inheritance** that Yahweh received as a possession. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to be his own possession]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of the nation | people have … of their nation |
| Yahweh | Yahweh is |
| {is} its God | the God |
| for an inheritance | to belong to him |

# Psalms 33:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *From the heavens, Yahweh looks down; he sees all of the sons of man.* | *Yahweh looks down from heaven; he sees all human beings.* |

ULT **From the heavens, Yahweh looks down; he sees all of the sons of man**
UST Yahweh looks down from heaven; he sees all human beings
(מֵשָׁמַיִם הִבִּיט יְהוָה רָאָה אֶת־כָּל־בְּנֵי הָאָדָם)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [From the heavens, Yahweh looks down, indeed he sees all the sons of man]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the sons of man**
UST human beings
(בְּנֵי הָאָדָם)

The psalmist is using **the sons of man** as a common expression of the culture to mean "human beings." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [humanity] or [the people]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| From the heavens | from heaven |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 33:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *From the place of his dwelling he gazes at all of the dwellers of the earth,* | *From the place where he lives he watches everyone who lives on the earth.* |

ULT **From the place of his dwelling he gazes**
UST From the place where he lives he watches
(מִמְּכוֹן־שִׁבְתּוֹ הִשְׁגִּיחַ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a person who **gazes** from a physical **place of his dwelling**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [From where he rules, he watches carefully]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 33:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the one forming their hearts together, the one understanding all of their works.* | *He created each person's heart, and he knows everything that they do.* |

> **ULT the one forming their hearts together**
> UST He created each person's heart
> (הַיֹּצֵר יַחַד לִבָּם)

Here the **hearts** represents their inner person, including thoughts and desires. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one forming all of their inner beings]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the one understanding | and he knows |

# Psalms 33:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The king is not saved by a great army; a warrior is not delivered by great strength.* | *It is not because a king has a great army that he is able to win {battles}, and it is not because a soldier is very strong that he is able to defeat {his enemy}.* |

**ULT The king is not saved by a great army**
**UST** It is not because a king has a great army that he is able to win {battles}
(אֵין־הַמֶּלֶךְ נוֹשָׁע בְּרָב־חָיִל)

The expression **is not saved** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [A great army does not save the king]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT a warrior is not delivered by great strength**
**UST** and it is not because a soldier is very strong that he is able to defeat {his enemy}
(גִּבּוֹר לֹא־יִנָּצֵל בְּרָב־כֹּחַ)

The expression **is not delivered** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [great strength does not deliver a warrior]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT by great strength**
**UST** and it is … because … is very strong
(בְּרָב־כֹּחַ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [by being very strong]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The king | a king |
| is … saved | that he is able to win {battles} |
| a warrior | a soldier |
| not delivered | not |

# Psalms 33:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The horse {is} a falsehood for salvation, and by its great strength, it does not deliver.* | *It is foolish to hope that a horse can save anyone; even with its great strength, it cannot rescue {its rider}.* |

ULT **The horse {is} a falsehood for salvation, and by its great strength, it does not deliver**

UST It is foolish to hope that a horse can save anyone; even with its great strength, it cannot rescue {its rider … }

(שֶׁקֶר הַסּוּס לִתְשׁוּעָה וּבְרֹב חֵילוֹ לֹא יְמַלֵּט)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [The horse is a falsehood for salvation, indeed, by its great strength, it does not deliver]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **The horse {is} a falsehood for salvation**

UST It is foolish to hope that a horse can save anyone

(שֶׁקֶר הַסּוּס לִתְשׁוּעָה)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the horse as if it were a lie or **a falsehood** because it gives a false sense of security. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The horse gives a false sense of security]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **The horse**

UST a horse

(הַסּוּס)

The psalmist is using one part of an army, a **horse**, to represent the strongest part of the army. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Having an army with strong horses]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **for salvation**
UST can save anyone
(לִתְשׁוּעָה)

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: [for saving anyone]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The horse | a horse |
| for salvation | can save anyone |
| it does … deliver | it … rescue {its rider} |

# Psalms 33:18

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Behold, the eye of Yahweh {is} toward the fearers of him, toward those hoping for his covenant faithfulness,* | *Note this: Yahweh watches over those who deeply revere him; He watches over those who confidently expect him to faithfully love them,* |

**ULT Behold**
**UST** Note this
(הִנֵּה)

The psalmist is using the term **Behold** to focus his listeners' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Look] or [Pay attention]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the eye of Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh watches over
(עֵין יְהוָה)

Here, **the eye of Yahweh** represents Yahweh's watchful care and attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the watchful attention of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT for his covenant faithfulness**
**UST** him to faithfully love them
(לְחַסְדּוֹ)

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: [that he will faithfully keep his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| toward those hoping | He watches over those who confidently expect |
| for his covenant faithfulness | him to faithfully love them |

# Psalms 33:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to deliver their soul from death and to keep them alive in the famine.* | *to save them from dying and to preserve them alive through any famine.* |

> **ULT their soul**
> **UST** them
> (נַפְשָׁם)

The psalmist is using **soul** to represent the people who fear Yahweh themselves from the perspective of their spiritual existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those who fear him]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to deliver | to save |
| their soul | them |
| in the famine | through any famine |

# Psalms 33:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Our soul waits for Yahweh; he {is} our help and our shield.* | *We trust that Yahweh will take care of us; he will help us and protect us.* |

**ULT Our soul waits for Yahweh**
**UST** We trust that Yahweh will take care of us
(נַפְשֵׁנוּ חִכְּתָה לַיהוָה)

The psalmist is using **Our soul** to represent the himself and the people from the perspective of their spiritual existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [We ourselves wait for Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT {is} our help and our shield**
**UST** will help us and protect us
(עֶזְרֵנוּ וּמָגִנֵּנוּ)

The terms **our help** and **our shield** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [our sure protector]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT {is} our help and our shield**
**UST** will help us and protect us
(עֶזְרֵנוּ וּמָגִנֵּנוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh protecting his people as if he were a battle **shield**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [is our helper and our protector]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Our soul | We trust that … will take care of us |
| for Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and our shield | and protect us |

# Psalms 33:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For in him our heart rejoices; for in the name of his holiness we trust.* | *Indeed, he makes us very joyful; we trust him because he is holy.* |

ULT **our heart rejoices**
UST makes us very joyful
(יִשְׂמַח לִבֵּנוּ)

Here the **our hearts** represents their inner person, including thoughts and desires. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [we rejoice in our inner beings]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the name of his holiness**
UST he is holy
(בְּשֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ)

The psalmist is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is and his character. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in Yahweh's holiness]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| rejoices | makes … very joyful |
| his holiness | he is holy |
| we trust | we trust him |

# Psalms 33:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh, be upon us, just as we have hoped in you.* | *Yahweh, we pray that you will always faithfully love us, while we confidently wait for you {to help us}.* |

**ULT Let your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh, be upon us**
**UST** Yahweh, we pray that you will always faithfully love us
(יְהִי־חַסְדְּךָ יְהוָה עָלֵינוּ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a prayer request rather than a command. The psalmist is asking Yahweh for something. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please let your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh, be upon us]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Let your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh, be upon us**
**UST** Yahweh, we pray that you will always faithfully love us
(יְהִי־חַסְדְּךָ יְהוָה עָלֵינוּ)

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: [May you be faithful to your covenant with us, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your covenant faithfulness | faithfully love us |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| we have hoped | we confidently wait |

# Psalms 34

## Psalm 34 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 34 is a “psalm of thanksgiving.” It teaches that living right leads to a good life.

1. Praise Yahweh and testify of his deliverance (1–7)
2. Invite others to trust and fear Yahweh (8–14)
3. Yahweh watches over and rescues the righteous (15–22)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh’s help

Good people can have problems, but God brings them through these. (See: good, right, pleasant, better, best, goodness)

# Psalms 34:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Of David; when he changed his behavior to the face of Abimelech and he sent him away and he left.* | *David wrote this psalm about when he pretended to be insane in front of King Abimelech so that the king would send him away.* |

ULT **to the face of**
UST in front of
(לִפְנֵי)

Here, **to the face of** represents being in the presence of or in front of the king. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in the presence of] or [in front of]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and he sent him away and he left**
UST so that the king would send him away
(וַיְגָרְשֵׁהוּ וַיֵּלֶךְ)

The pronoun in **he sent him** refers to Abimelech, while the pronouns in **him away** and **he left** refer to David. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and the king sent David away and David left]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Of David | David wrote this psalm |
| Abimelech | King Abimelech |

# Psalms 34:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I shall bless Yahweh at all times; continually his praise {is} in my mouth.* | *I will always thank Yahweh; I will constantly praise him out loud.* |

ULT **I shall bless Yahweh at all times; continually his praise {is} in my mouth**
UST I will always thank Yahweh; I will constantly praise him out loud
(אֲבָרֲכָה אֶת־יְהוָה בְּכָל־עֵת תָּמִיד תְּהִלָּתוֹ בְּפִי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [I will praise Yahweh without ceasing] or [I will bless Yahweh at all times, indeed, continually his praise is in my mouth]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **his praise {is} in my mouth**
UST I will … praise him out loud
(תְּהִלָּתוֹ בְּפִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [praising him with my mouth]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **his praise {is} in my mouth**
UST I will … praise him out loud
(תְּהִלָּתוֹ בְּפִי)

Here, **my mouth** represents David's speech. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I shall praise him with my words]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I shall bless | I will … thank |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| his praise | I will … praise him |

# Psalms 34:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In Yahweh my soul will boast; the humble will hear and rejoice.* | *I will boast about {what} Yahweh {has done for me}. All of the humble people who hear me will rejoice.* |

**ULT my soul will boast**
**UST** I will boast about {what} … has done for me
(תִּתְהַלֵּל נַפְשִׁי)

Here, **my soul** represents David himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I will boast]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT the humble**
**UST** All of the humble people
(עֲנָוִים)

David is using the adjective **humble** as a noun to mean people who are humble. If your language would not use an adjective this way, you could translate it with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [those who are humble]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| In Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my soul | I |
| will boast | will boast about {what} … has done for me |
| the humble | All of the humble people |
| and rejoice | will rejoice |

# Psalms 34:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Magnify Yahweh with me, and let us exalt his name together.* | *Join with me in telling others that Yahweh is great, and let us together proclaim how glorious he is!* |

ULT **Magnify Yahweh with me and let us exalt his name together**
UST Join with me in telling others that Yahweh is great, and let us together proclaim how glorious he is
(גַּדְּלוּ לַיהוָה אִתִּי וּנְרוֹמְמָה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו)

See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Let us declare together that Yahweh is great]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Magnify Yahweh with me**
UST Join with me in telling others that Yahweh is great
(גַּדְּלוּ לַיהוָה אִתִּי)

Here David is speaking of praising Yahweh as if Yahweh were something that they could **Magnify** or make larger. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Everyone should join me in telling others about how great Yahweh is]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and let us exalt his name together**
UST and let us together proclaim how glorious he is
(וּנְרוֹמְמָה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו)

This is an imperative, but it communicates an exhortation rather than a command. David is encouraging the people to worship. If the imperative does not communicate an exhortation for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates an exhortation or invitation. Alternate translation: [and we should all exalt his name]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

> ULT **his name**
> UST how glorious he is
> (שְׁמֹו)

Here, **his name** represents Yahweh himself and his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [everything about him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Magnify … and let us exalt | in telling others that … is great, and let us … proclaim |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and let us exalt | and let us … proclaim |

# Psalms 34:4

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *I sought Yahweh, and he answered me, and from all of my fears he delivered me.* | *I prayed to Yahweh, and he answered me; he rescued me from everything that I was afraid of.* |

**ULT I sought Yahweh**
**UST** I prayed to Yahweh
(דָּרַשְׁתִּי אֶת־יְהוָה)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a lost object which could be **sought** and found. He means that the people should pray to Yahweh and desire to be in his presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I asked Yahweh for help]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and he answered me**
**UST** and he answered me
(וְעָנֵנִי)

David is using **answered me** as a common expression of the culture to mean “acted on my behalf” in response to a request. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he acted in my behalf]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT my fears**
**UST** that I was afraid of
(מְגוּרוֹתַי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **fears**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [all the things I feared]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| I sought | I prayed to |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my fears | that I was afraid of |
| he delivered me | he rescued me |

# Psalms 34:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They look to him and are radiant; let their faces not have shame.* | *Those who ask him {to help them} will be joyful; may Yahweh always provide for them.* |

ULT **They look**
UST Those who ask
(הִבִּיטוּ)

Here, **They** refers to those who seek Yahweh mentioned in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Those who seek Yahweh look]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **They look to him**
UST Those who ask him {to help them}
(הִבִּיטוּ אֵלָיו)

David is using **look to him** as a common expression of the culture to mean to "trust in Yahweh and ask him for help." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They trust him to help them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and are radiant**
UST will be joyful
(וְנֶהָרוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of the joy and gladness those who trust Yahweh feel as if they were shining with **radiant** light. If it would be helpful for your readers, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and are glad]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **let their faces not have shame**
> UST may Yahweh always provide for them
> (וּפְנֵיהֶם אַל־יֶחְפָּרוּ)

The expression **let their faces not have shame** was a common expression meaning that they would not be ashamed because of some public failure or discouraged. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly or state it positively as in the UST. Alternate translation: [they should never be put to shame]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| let … have shame | may Yahweh always provide for |

# Psalms 34:6

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *This afflicted {one} called, and Yahweh heard, and from all of his troubles he saved him.* | *I was suffering, but I called out to Yahweh, and he heard me. He saved me from all of the things that were troubling me.* |

ULT **This afflicted {one}**
UST I was suffering
(זֶה עָנִי)

David is using the adjective **afflicted** as a noun to mean a person who is afflicted. Here David is referring to himself. If your language would not use an adjective this way, you could translate it with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [I was the suffering person who]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and Yahweh heard**
UST to Yahweh, and he heard me
(וַיהוָה שָׁמֵעַ)

David assumes that readers will know that **Yahweh heard** means he listened to his prayer and responded favorably to it. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and Yahweh did what I asked]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **his troubles**
UST the things that were troubling me
(צָרוֹתָיו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **troubles**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the things that were troubling him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| afflicted {one} | was suffering |
| called | but I called out |
| and Yahweh | to Yahweh |
| his troubles | the things that were troubling me |
| he saved him | He saved me |

# Psalms 34:7

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *The angel of Yahweh is encamping around the fearers of him, and he rescues them.* | *An angel representing Yahweh guards people who deeply revere Yahweh, and the angel rescues them {from bad things}.* |

**ULT The angel of Yahweh is encamping around the fearers of him**
**UST** An angel representing Yahweh guards people who deeply revere Yahweh
(חֹנֶה מַלְאַךְ־יְהוָה סָבִיב לִירֵאָיו)

David is speaking of the angel protecting God's people as if the angel were an army **encamping** around them to protect them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The angel of Yahweh stands guard around those who fear him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT The angel of Yahweh**
**UST** An angel representing Yahweh
(מַלְאַךְ־יְהוָה)

David is using the possessive form to describe an **angel** that is sent by Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [The angel sent by Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The angel of | An angel representing |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the fearers of him | people who deeply revere Yahweh |
| and he rescues them | and the angel rescues them {from bad things} |

# Psalms 34:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Taste and see that Yahweh {is} good; the happinesses of the man—he takes refuge in him!* | *Experience for yourselves how good Yahweh is! Everyone who trusts in Yahweh will be truly happy!* |

ULT **the happinesses of**
UST will be truly happy
(אַשְׁרֵי)

David is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of joy or blessing. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy is]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **the man—he takes refuge**
UST Everyone who trusts
(הַגֶּבֶר יֶחֱסֶה)

David is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [the person who takes refuge]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **he takes refuge in him**
UST who trusts in Yahweh
(יֶחֱסֶה־בּוֹ)

David is speaking of trusting in Yahweh as if it were physically seeking shelter or **refuge** in a safe place. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he puts his trust in him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Taste and see that Yahweh {is} good**
UST Experience for yourselves how good Yahweh is
(טַעֲמוּ וּרְאוּ כִּי־טוֹב יְהוָה)

David is speaking of experiencing Yahweh's goodness as if it were some kind of food one could **Taste** and **see**. He means that one can discover Yahweh's goodness by personal trial and experience. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Try for yourself and discover that Yahweh is good]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} good | how good … is |
| the happinesses of | will be truly happy |
| he takes refuge | who trusts |

# Psalms 34:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Fear Yahweh, his holy {ones}, for there is no lack for the fearers of him.* | *All you people who belong to Yahweh, deeply revere him, because those who deeply revere him will always have everything that they need.* |

ULT **his holy {ones}**
UST All you people who belong to
(קְדֹשָׁיו)

David is using the adjective **holy** as a noun to mean people who belong to Yahweh and are set apart for him. If your language would not use an adjective this way, you could translate it with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [his people who are set apart for him]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **there is no lack**
UST will always have everything that they need
(אֵין מַחְסוֹר)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word **lack**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [there is provision]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

ULT **lack**
UST will always have everything that they need
(מַחְסוֹר)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **lack**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [going without anything they need]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Fear | deeply revere |
| Yahweh | Yahweh … him |
| his holy {ones} | All you people who belong to |

# Psalms 34:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Young lions are poor and hungry, but the seekers of Yahweh will not lack any good {thing}.* | *{Even} young lions {sometimes} go hungry and have nothing to eat, but people who trust in Yahweh for help will always have the good {things that they need}.* |

**ULT will not lack**
**UST** will always have
(לֹא־יַחְסְרוּ)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word **lack**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Young lions | {Even} young lions |
| but the seekers of | but people who trust in … for help |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| good {thing} | the good {things that they need} |

# Psalms 34:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Come, sons, listen to me; the fear of Yahweh I will teach you.* | *You who are my students, come and listen to me, and I will teach you how to deeply revere Yahweh.* |

ULT **sons**
UST You who are my students
(בָּנִים)

Although the term **sons** is masculine, David is using the word in a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a phrase that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [children]

**Support Reference:** When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **sons**
UST You who are my students
(בָּנִים)

David is speaking of his listeners as if they were his **sons**. He means that they are his students whom he will instruct. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [students]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the fear | how to deeply revere |
| of Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I will teach you | and I will teach you |

# Psalms 34:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Who {is} the man, the {one} desiring life, loving days to see good?* | *If any of you want to truly live and to enjoy a good, long life,* |

**ULT Who {is} the man, the {one} desiring life, loving days to see good**
**UST** If any of you want to truly live and to enjoy a good long life
(מִי־הָאִישׁ הֶחָפֵץ חַיִּים אֹהֵב יָמִים לִרְאוֹת טוֹב)

David 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. Alternate translation: [If you want to live and enjoy a long time of seeing good, then do what follows.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT {is} the man**
**UST** If any of you want
(הָאִישׁ)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [is the person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**ULT life**
**UST** to truly live
(חַיִּים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **life**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to live]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT days**
**UST** long life
(יָמִים)

Here, **days** represents one's lifespan or period of living. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [to live a long time]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| loving | and to enjoy |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| good | a good |

# Psalms 34:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Guard your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit.* | *then be careful to not say things that are harmful, and to not tell lies.* |

**ULT Guard your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit**
**UST** then be careful to not say things that are harmful, and to not tell lies
(נְצֹר לְשׁוֹנְךָ מֵרָע וּשְׂפָתֶיךָ מִדַּבֵּר מִרְמָה)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Do not say anything that is evil or deceptive]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT your tongue from evil**
**UST** not say things that are harmful
(לְשׁוֹנְךָ מֵרָע)

David is using one part of a person, their **tongue**, to mean all of them in the act of speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [yourself from speaking evil words]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT and your lips from speaking deceit**
**UST** and to not tell lies
(וּשְׂפָתֶיךָ מִדַּבֵּר מִרְמָה)

David 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 context if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [guard your lips from speaking deceit]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT and your lips from speaking deceit**
**UST** and to not tell lies
(וּשְׂפָתֶיךָ מִדַּבֵּר מִרְמָה)

David is using one part of a person, their **lips**, to mean all of them in the act of speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and yourself from deceptive speech]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **from evil … deceit**
UST things that are harmful … lies
(מֵרָעָה & מִרְמָה)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **evil** and **deceit**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [from saying evil things … deceitful things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Guard | then be careful to |
| your tongue | not say |
| from evil | things that are harmful |
| deceit | lies |

# Psalms 34:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.* | *Stop doing what is evil and instead do what is good; always strive to live peacefully with others.* |

ULT **Turn away from evil**
UST Stop doing what is evil
(סוּר מֵרָע)

David is speaking of doing what is evil as if it were walking on a path that a person could stop doing or **Turn away from**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Refuse to do what is evil]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Turn away from evil**
UST Stop doing what is evil
(סוּר מֵרָע)

This is an imperative, but it communicates an exhortation rather than a command. The psalmist is exhorting his students to stay away from evil. If the imperative does not communicate an exhortation for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates an exhortation. Alternate translation: [You should turn away from evil]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **from evil and do good seek peace and pursue it**
UST what is evil and instead do what is good; always strive to live peacefully with others
(מֵרָע וַעֲשֵׂה־טּוֹב בַּקֵּשׁ שָׁלוֹם וְרָדְפֵהוּ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **evil**, **good**, and **peace**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [from doing what is wrong and do what is right; strive to live at peace with others and pursue living peacefully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **seek peace and pursue it**
UST always strive to live peacefully with others
(בַּקֵּשׁ שָׁלוֹם וְרָדְפֵהוּ)

The terms **seek** and **pursue** mean similar things. David 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: [earnestly strive to live peacefully]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from evil | what is evil |
| good | what is good |
| seek | always strive |
| peace | to live peacefully with others |

# Psalms 34:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The eyes of Yahweh {are} toward the righteous, and his ears {are} toward their cry.* | *Yahweh pays attention to people who do what is right, and he listens when they call {to him to help them}.* |

**ULT The eyes of Yahweh {are} toward the righteous**
**UST** Yahweh pays attention to people who do what is right
(עֵינֵי יְהוָה אֶל־צַדִּיקִים)

Here, **eyes** represent Yahweh's attention and watchful care. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Yahweh watchfully cares for the righteous]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT the righteous**
**UST** people who do what is right
(צַדִּיקִים)

David is using the adjective **righteous** as a noun to mean people who do what is right. If your language would not use an adjective this way, you could translate it with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT and his ears {are} toward their cry**
**UST** and he listens when they call {to him to help them}
(וְאָזְנָיו אֶל־שַׁוְעָתָם)

Here, **ears** represents Yahweh's attentive responsiveness to prayer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and he listens attentively to their cry]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT their cry**
**UST** when they call {to him to help them}
(שַׁוְעָתָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **cry**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [them when they cry]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the righteous | people who do what is right |
| their cry | when they call {to him to help them} |

# Psalms 34:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The face of Yahweh {is} against the doers of evil, to cut off their remembrance from the earth.* | *But Yahweh opposes people who do what is evil. He does not allow their descendants to remain on the earth.* |

ULT **The face of Yahweh {is} against the doers of evil**
UST But Yahweh opposes people who do what is evil
(פְּנֵי יְהוָה בְּעֹשֵׂי רָע)

Here, **face of Yahweh** represents his active presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Yahweh sets himself against the doers of evil]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to cut off their remembrance from the earth**
UST He does not allow their descendants to remain on the earth
(לְהַכְרִית מֵאֶרֶץ זִכְרָם)

Here, **their remembrance** represents the lasting legacy or memory that people leave behind. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [so that no one on earth will remember them]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to cut off**
UST He does not allow … to remain
(לְהַכְרִית)

The psalmist is using **cut off** as a common expression of the culture to mean "destroy" or "remove." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to remove]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **evil … their remembrance**
UST what is evil … their descendants
(רָע & זִכְרָם)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **evil** and **remembrance**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [what is wicked … any trace of them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | But Yahweh |
| evil | what is evil |
| from the earth | on the earth |

# Psalms 34:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They cry out, and Yahweh hears, and from all of their troubles he delivers them.* | *People who do what is right cry out to Yahweh, and he hears them; he rescues them from all the things that trouble them.* |

**ULT They cry out**
**UST** People who do what is right cry out to
(צָעֲקוּ)

Here, **They** refers to the righteous people mentioned in verse 15. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the referent explicitly. Alternate translation: [Righteous people cry out]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and Yahweh hears**
**UST** Yahweh, and he hears them
(וַיהוָה שָׁמֵעַ)

David assumes that readers will know that **Yahweh hears** means he listens to their prayer and responds favorably to it. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and Yahweh did what they asked]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| They cry out | People who do what is right cry out to |
| and Yahweh | Yahweh |
| their troubles | the things that trouble them |
| he delivers them | he rescues them |

# Psalms 34:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh {is} near to the broken of heart, and the crushed of spirit he saves.* | *Yahweh is always ready to help people who are very sad, and he saves people who are deeply discouraged.* |

**ULT Yahweh {is} near**
**UST** Yahweh is always ready to help
(קָרוֹב יְהוָה)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh's availability or willingness to help as if he were standing right beside or **near** to those who cry out to him for help. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will always give help]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT to the broken of heart**
**UST** people who are very sad
(לְנִשְׁבְּרֵי־לֵב)

David is using **broken of heart** as a common expression of his culture to mean "overwhelmed with grief." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to those who are overwhelmed with grief]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT and the crushed of spirit**
**UST** and … people who are deeply discouraged
(וְאֶת־דַּכְּאֵי־רוּחַ)

David is using **crushed of spirit** as a common expression of his culture to mean "in deep despair." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and those who have lost all hope]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| spirit | people who are deeply discouraged |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he saves | he saves |

# Psalms 34:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Many {are} the evils of the righteous, but Yahweh delivers him from all of them.* | *People who do what is right experience many bad things, but Yahweh rescues them from all of those bad things.* |

**ULT {are} the evils of the righteous**
**UST** People who do what is right … bad things
(רָעוֹת צַדִּיק)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evils**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [trials can happen to the righteous]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT of the righteous**
**UST** People who do what is right
(צַדִּיק)

David is using the adjective **righteous** as a noun to mean a person who does what is right. If your language would not use an adjective this way, you could translate it with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [of the righteous person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT but Yahweh delivers him from all of them**
**UST** but Yahweh rescues them from all of those bad things
(וּמִכֻּלָּם יַצִּילֶנּוּ יְהוָה)

Here, **him** refers to the righteous and **them** refers to the evils they experience. David uses the singular **him** to refer to the righteous as a collective group. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [but Yahweh delivers each one of the righteous from all of those troubles]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {are} the evils | bad things |
| of the righteous | People who do what is right |
| Yahweh | but Yahweh |
| delivers him | rescues them |

# Psalms 34:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He is guarding all of his bones; not one of them is broken.* | *Yahweh protects their whole body; he does not allow {their enemies} to break even one of their bones.* |

**ULT He is guarding all of his bones**
**UST** Yahweh protects their whole body
(שֹׁמֵר כָּל־עַצְמוֹתָיו)

Here, **He** refers to Yahweh, and **his** refers to the righteous person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is guarding all of the righteous person's bones]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT all of his bones**
**UST** their whole body
(כָּל־עַצְמוֹתָיו)

David is using one part of the body, **his bones**, to mean the whole physical body of the righteous person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [his physical body]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT not one of them is broken**
**UST** he does not allow {their enemies} to break even one of their bones
(אַחַת מֵהֵנָּה לֹא נִשְׁבָּרָה)

The expression **is broken** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [nothing breaks any one of them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He is guarding | Yahweh protects |

# Psalms 34:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Evil will put to death the wicked, and the haters of the righteous will be guilty.* | *Wicked people will cause themselves to die because of the evil things that they do, and Yahweh will punish those who hate righteous people.* |

**ULT Evil will put to death the wicked**
**UST** Wicked people will cause themselves to die because of the evil things that they do
(תְּמוֹתֵת רָשָׁע רָעָה)

David speaks of **Evil** as if it were a person who could kill **the wicked**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: [The evil deeds of the wicked will destroy them]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT the wicked … the righteous**
**UST** Wicked people … righteous people
(רָשָׁע & צַדִּיק)

David is using the adjectives **the wicked** and **the righteous** as nouns to mean people who are wicked and people who are righteous. If your language would not use adjectives this way, you could translate them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [those who are wicked … those who are righteous]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Evil | because of the evil things that they do |
| will put to death | will cause themselves to die |
| the wicked | Wicked people |
| and the haters of | those who hate |
| the righteous | righteous people |
| will be guilty | and Yahweh will punish |

# Psalms 34:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh is redeeming the soul of his servants, and everyone taking refuge in him will not be guilty.* | *Yahweh saves those who serve him, and he will forgive all who trust in him.* |

**ULT the soul of his servants**
**UST** those who serve him
(נֶפֶשׁ עֲבָדָיו)

David is using the term **soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the lives of those who worship him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT taking refuge in him**
**UST** who trust in him
(הַחֹסִים בּוֹ)

David is speaking of trusting in Yahweh as if he were a physical location, a **refuge**, that could provide safety and protection. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [trusting in him for protection]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| is redeeming | saves |
| the soul of | those |
| his servants | who serve him |
| taking refuge | who trust |
| will … be guilty | and he will forgive |

# Psalms 35

## Psalm 35 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

This psalm is considered to be one of the “imprecatory psalms.” See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about the imprecatory psalms.

1. Ask Yahweh to fight against adversaries (1–10)
2. Lament unjust hatred and false accusations (11–18)
3. Pray for vindication and justice from Yahweh (19–28)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Enemies

When David’s enemies were sick, he tried to comfort them, but when he was in trouble his enemies used this as a time to attack him.

### Translation Issues in this Psalm

#### Imperatives

Throughout this psalm, David is requesting things from Yahweh by using an imperative form which may sound like a command in your language. If this would be impolite in your language to address a superior in this way, then use a form that would be more appropriate for addressing Yahweh with a request.

# Psalms 35:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Of David Yahweh, oppose my opponents; fight those fighting me.* | *A psalm of David. Yahweh, be the enemy of my enemies! Defend me against those who attack me!* |

**ULT Yahweh, oppose my opponents; fight those fighting me**
**UST** Yahweh, be the enemy of my enemies! Defend me against those who attack me
(רִיבָ֣ה יְ֭הוָה אֶת־יְרִיבַ֑י לְחַ֖ם אֶת־לֹחֲמָֽי)

These two clauses mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [contend against those who fight against me]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT Yahweh, oppose my opponents; fight those fighting me**
**UST** Yahweh, be the enemy of my enemies! Defend me against those who attack me
(רִיבָ֣ה יְ֭הוָה אֶת־יְרִיבַ֑י לְחַ֖ם אֶת־לֹחֲמָֽי)

The words **oppose** and **fight** are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than commands. If the imperatives do not communicate polite requests for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates a polite request. Here and throughout the psalm where this form is used, it may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, please oppose my opponents; please fight those fighting me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT oppose my opponents; fight those fighting me**
**UST** be the enemy of my enemies! Defend me against those who attack me
(רִיבָ֣ה & אֶת־יְרִיבַ֑י לְחַ֖ם אֶת־לֹחֲמָֽי)

David is using a construction in which a verb and its object come from the same root in both of these phrases. 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 saying this. Alternate translation: [go to battle against my enemies; fight against those who are attacking me]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 35:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Grab the small shield and large shield; rise up as my helper!* | *Protect me like a soldier who has both of his shields, and come to help me!* |

ULT **rise up**
UST and come
(וְקוּמָה)

David is using **rise up** as a common expression of the culture to ask Yahweh to take action. He is not telling him to get out of bed or stand up from a seated position. If this expression does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [take action]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the small shield | Protect me like a soldier who has both of his shields |
| and large shield | Protect me like a soldier who has both of his shields |

# Psalms 35:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Draw out spear and javelin to meet those chasing me; say to my soul, "I {am} your salvation."* | *Take your spear and javelin and confront those who are pursuing me! Tell me, "I am the one who saves you."* |

**ULT Draw out spear and javelin**
**UST** Take your spear and javelin
(וְהָרֵק חֲנִית וְסָגֹר)

The terms **spear** and **javelin** mean similar things. David 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: [Draw out your weapons]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT say to my soul**
**UST** Tell me
(אֱמֹר לְנַפְשִׁי)

David is using the term **my soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [assure me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT your salvation**
**UST** I am the one who saves you
(יְשׁוּעָתֶךָ)

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: [the one who rescues you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| spear | your spear |
| to my soul | Tell me |
| your salvation | I am the one who saves you |

# Psalms 35:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May those who seek my life have shame and be dishonored. May those who plan my harm be turned back and confounded.* | *Please defeat and dishonor those who want to kill me, and make those who plan to harm me become confused and turn back.* |

ULT **May those who seek my life have shame and be dishonored. May those who plan my harm be turned back and confounded**

UST Please defeat and dishonor those who want to kill me, and make those who plan to harm me become confused and turn back

(יֵבֹ֤שׁוּ וְיִכָּלְמוּ֙ מְבַקְשֵׁ֣י נַפְשִׁ֔י יִסֹּ֖גוּ אָח֑וֹר וְיַחְפְּר֥וּ חֹשְׁבֵ֖י רָעָתִֽי׃)

In this verse and throughout the psalm, David is saying what he wants Yahweh to do. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do.

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **May those who seek my life have shame and be dishonored**

UST Please defeat and dishonor those who want to kill me

(יֵבֹ֤שׁוּ וְיִכָּלְמוּ֙ מְבַקְשֵׁ֣י נַפְשִׁ֔י)

The expressions **have shame** and **be dishonored** mean similar things. David 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 those who want to kill me be utterly disgraced]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **those who seek my life**

UST those who want to kill me

(מְבַקְשֵׁ֣י נַפְשִׁ֔י)

David is using **seek my life** as a common expression to mean “try to kill me.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those who try to kill me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **and be dishonored**
UST and dishonor
(וְיִכָּלְמוּ׃)

The expression **be dishonored** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 did the action, it is clear from the context that it was Yahweh. Alternate translation: [and may Yahweh dishonor them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **May those who plan my harm be turned back and confounded**
UST and make those who plan to harm me become confused and turn back
(יִסֹּגוּ אָחוֹר וְיַחְפְּרוּ חֹשְׁבֵי רָעָתִי׃)

Here David is speaking of being unable to accomplish a goal as if the enemies were walking one direction and had to **be turned back**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May those who plan my harm be unsuccessful and confused]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **May those who plan my harm be turned back and confounded**
UST and make those who plan to harm me become confused and turn back
(יִסֹּגוּ אָחוֹר וְיַחְפְּרוּ חֹשְׁבֵי רָעָתִי׃)

The expression **be turned back** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 did the action, it is clear from the context that it was Yahweh. Alternate translation: [May Yahweh cause those who plan my harm to be unsuccessful and confused]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| May … have shame | Please defeat |
| those who seek | those who want to kill me |
| and be dishonored | and dishonor |
| my harm | to harm me |

# Psalms 35:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May they be as chaff before the wind, and the angel of Yahweh driving {them} away.* | *May an angel from Yahweh chase them away so that they disappear like chaff in the wind.* |

ULT **as chaff before the wind**
UST like chaff in the wind
(כְּמֹץ לִפְנֵי־רוּחַ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **chaff** is easily blown away by the wind, so David's enemies will be easily scattered. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [easily scattered like chaff before the wind]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| as chaff | like chaff |
| and the angel of | an angel from |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 35:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May their way be dark and slippery places, and the angel of Yahweh chasing them.* | *May their lives be like running on a path that is dark and slippery, while an angel from Yahweh pursues them!* |

**ULT May their way be dark and slippery places**
**UST** May their lives be like running on a path that is dark and slippery
(יְהִי־דַרְכָּם חֹשֶׁךְ וַחֲלַקְלַקּוֹת)

David is speaking of how his enemies live as if that were a **way** or path that they were walking along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May their lives be full of danger and uncertainty]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT chasing them**
**UST** pursues them
(רֹדָפָם)

Here David is speaking of keeping the enemies from harming him as if the **angel of Yahweh** were physically running and **chasing them** away. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [keeps them from harming me]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and the angel | while an angel from |
| of Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 35:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For without cause they hid for me a pit, their net; without cause they dug for my life.* | *Please do these things to them, because I have not done anything wrong to them, yet they try to kill me. It is as though they hide nets and dig pits for me to walk into!* |

**ULT For without cause they hid for me a pit, their net; without cause they dug for my life**

**UST** Please do these things to them, because I have not done anything wrong to them, yet they try to kill me. It is as though they hide nets and dig pits for me to walk into
(כִּי־חִנָּם טָמְנוּ־לִי שַׁחַת רִשְׁתָּם חִנָּם חָפְרוּ לְנַפְשִׁי)

The phrases **they hid for me a pit, their net; without cause they dug for my life** is a translation of the written Hebrew text. This reading, however, does not seem to make sense. Scholars have proposed that a scribe may have accidentally switched the order of the words for "pit" and "their net." Many translations put "their net" first so that "a pit" begins the second line, and you may want to do the same. Alternate translation: [For they hid for me their net; a pit without cause they dug for my life]

**Support Reference:** Alternative Readings

**ULT they hid for me a pit, their net**

**UST** It is as though they hide nets … pits for me to walk into
(טָמְנוּ־לִי שַׁחַת רִשְׁתָּם)

David is speaking of his enemies' schemes as if they were **a pit** and a **net** used to trap animals. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they secretly plotted to trap me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a pit | pits |

# Psalms 35:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let destruction overtake him; he does not know. Let the net that he hid catch him. In destruction, let him fall into it.* | *So let disaster suddenly surprise each of them! Let it be as though the nets that they hid catch them instead, and as though they fall into their own {pits} and die!* |

ULT **Let destruction overtake him; he does not know. Let the net that he hid catch him. In destruction, let him fall into it**
UST So let disaster suddenly surprise each of them! Let it be as though the nets that they hid catch them instead, and as though they fall into their own {pits} and die
(תְּבוֹאֵהוּ שׁוֹאָה לֹא־יֵדָ֑ע וְרִשְׁתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר־טָמַ֥ן תִּלְכְּדֶ֑נּוּ בְּשׁוֹאָ֥ה יִפָּל־בָּֽהּ׃)

Throughout this verse, the pronouns **him** and **he** are singular, but they refer to all of David's enemies as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the plural forms as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

ULT **Let destruction overtake him; he does not know**
UST So let disaster suddenly surprise each of them
(תְּבוֹאֵהוּ שׁוֹאָה לֹא־יֵדָ֑ע)

David is speaking of **destruction** as if it were a living thing that could a dangerous animal that would chase the enemies down and suddenly attack them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Let them be surprised because you destroy them suddenly]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **Let destruction overtake him**
UST So let disaster suddenly
(תְּבוֹאֵהוּ שׁוֹאָה)

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: [Let him be destroyed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Let the net that he hid catch him. In destruction, let him fall into it**
UST Let it be as though the nets that they hid catch them instead, and as though they fall into their own {pits} and die
(וְרִשְׁתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר־טָמַן תִּלְכְּדוֹ בְּשׁוֹאָה יִפָּל־בָּהּ)

David is describing the ironic reversal in which the traps his enemies prepared will instead ensnare them. The **net** they set for David will **catch** them, and they will fall to their own **destruction** into the "pit" they "dug." If a speaker of your language would not express this reversal in this way, you could translate the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Let his own trap catch him; let him fall into ruin by his own scheming]

**Support Reference:** Irony

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let … overtake him | So let … suddenly |
| destruction | disaster |
| he does … know | surprise each of them |
| Let … catch him | Let it be as though … catch them instead |
| In destruction | and die |

# Psalms 35:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But my soul will be joyful in Yahweh; it will rejoice in his salvation.* | *Then I will rejoice because of {what} Yahweh {has done for me}, and I will be glad because he has saved me.* |

ULT **But my soul will be joyful in Yahweh; it will rejoice**
UST Then I will rejoice because of {what} Yahweh {has done for me}, and I will be glad
(וְנַפְשִׁי תָּגִיל בַּיהוָה תָּשִׂישׂ)

David is using the term **my soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [But I will be joyful in Yahweh; I will rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **But my soul will be joyful**
UST Then I will rejoice
(וְנַפְשִׁי תָּגִיל)

David uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between the destruction of his enemies and his own joy in Yahweh. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Despite all this, my soul will be joyful in Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **will be joyful in Yahweh; it will rejoice**
UST will rejoice because of {what} Yahweh {has done for me}, and I will be glad
(תָּגִיל בַּיהוָה תָּשִׂישׂ)

The terms **joyful** and **rejoice** mean similar things. David 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: [my soul will celebrate with great gladness]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **in his salvation**
UST because he has saved me
(בִּישׁוּעָתוֹ)

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: [that he rescued me]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| But my soul | Then I |
| will be joyful | will rejoice |
| in Yahweh | because of {what} Yahweh {has done for me} |
| it will rejoice | and I will be glad |
| in his salvation | because he has saved me |

# Psalms 35:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *All my bones will say, "Yahweh, who is like you, rescuing the oppressed from those stronger than them and the oppressed and needy from those robbing them?"* | *With my whole being I will say, "Yahweh, no one is like you! No one else rescues weak people from those who are stronger, no one else rescues poor and needy people from those who rob them."* |

ULT **All my bones will say**
UST With my whole being I will say
(כָּל עַצְמוֹתַי ו תֹּאמַרְנָה)

David speaks of his **bones** as if they were a person who could speak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Every part of me will declare]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **All my bones**
UST With my whole being
(כָּל עַצְמוֹתַי)

David is using one part of his body, his **bones**, to represent his entire being. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Everything within me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **Yahweh, who is like you, rescuing the oppressed from those stronger than them and the oppressed and needy from those robbing them**
UST Yahweh, no one is like you! No one else rescues weak people from those who are stronger, no one else rescues poor and needy people from those who rob them
(יְהוָה מִי כָמוֹךָ מַצִּיל עָנִי מֵחָזָק מִמֶּנּוּ וְעָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן מִגֹּזְלוֹ)

David is using the question form to emphasize that no one is comparable to Yahweh. 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: [There is no one like you, Yahweh! You rescue the oppressed from those stronger than them and the oppressed and needy from those robbing them.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **the oppressed from those stronger than them and the oppressed and needy**
UST weak people from those who are stronger, no one else rescues poor and needy people
(עֲנִי מֵחָזָק מִמֶּנּוּ וְעָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן)

David is using the adjectives **oppressed** and **needy** as nouns to mean a certain kind of person. If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate these with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [those who are oppressed from those stronger than them and those who are oppressed and needy]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and the oppressed and needy**
UST no one else rescues poor and needy people
(וְעָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן)

David 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 rescuing the oppressed and needy]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| rescuing | No one else rescues |
| from those robbing them | from those who rob them |

# Psalms 35:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Witnesses of violence rise up; what I do not know they ask me.* | *Hostile people tell lies {about me} in court and accuse me of things that I know nothing about.* |

> **ULT Witnesses of violence rise up**
> **UST** Hostile people tell lies {about me} in court
> (יָקוּמוּן עֵדֵי חָמָס)

David is using the possessive form to describe **Witnesses** that are characterized by **violence**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Witnesses who wish me harm rise up]

**Support Reference:** Possession

> **ULT Witnesses of violence rise up**
> **UST** Hostile people tell lies {about me} in court
> (יָקוּמוּן עֵדֵי חָמָס)

David is using **rise up** as a common expression of the culture to mean to take action. He is not saying that they get out of bed or stand up from a seated position. If this expression does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Witnesses take violent action against me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Witnesses of | Hostile people tell lies {about me} |
| I do … know | of things that I know nothing about |

# Psalms 35:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They repay me evil in place of good—bereavement to my soul.* | *I was good to them. But instead of being good to me, they are evil to me. That makes me feel completely alone.* |

**ULT evil in place of good**
**UST** But instead of being good to me, they are evil to me
(רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **evil** and **good**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [by doing bad things to me in place of the good things I did for them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT They repay me**
**UST** I was good to them
(יְשַׁלְּמוּנִי)

Here David is speaking of the way his enemies treated him as if they were paying back a loan or trying to **repay** him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They treated me with]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT bereavement to my soul**
**UST** That makes me feel completely alone
(שְׁכוֹל לְנַפְשִׁי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **bereavement**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [they have bereaved my soul]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT bereavement to my soul**
**UST** That makes me feel completely alone
(שְׁכוֹל לְנַפְשִׁי)

David is using the term **my soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I feel bereaved]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| evil | they are evil to me |
| good | being good to me |
| to my soul | That makes me feel completely alone |

# Psalms 35:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But I, when they were sick, my clothing {was} sackcloth; I afflicted my soul with fasting, and my prayer returned upon my bosom.* | *Yet for my part, when they were sick, I put on rough cloth to mourn for them; I went without food as I prayed for them, bowing my head over my chest.* |

ULT **But I**
UST Yet for my part
(וַאֲנִי)

David uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between his enemies' cruelty toward him and his kindness toward them when they were sick. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I, on the other hand]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **my clothing {was} sackcloth**
UST I put on rough cloth to mourn for them
(לְבוּשִׁי שָׂק)

Wearing **sackcloth** was a symbolic action by which David expressed grief and mourning. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [I dressed in rough cloth as a sign of sorrow for them]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **my soul**
UST I went without food
(נַפְשִׁי)

David is using the term **my soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [myself]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **with fasting**
UST I went without food
(בַּצּ֑וֹם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **fasting**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [by refusing to eat]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and my prayer returned upon my bosom**
UST as I prayed for them, bowing my head over my chest
(וּתְפִלָּתִ֥י עַל־חֵיקִ֗י תָּשׁ֫וּב)

David is using **my prayer returned upon my bosom** as a common expression of his culture to mean that he prayed sincerely, with his head bowed to his chest. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I prayed with my head bowed down]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my clothing {was} | I put on rough cloth to mourn for them |
| sackcloth | I put on rough cloth to mourn for them |
| I afflicted | I went without food |
| my soul | I went without food |
| with fasting | I went without food |
| and … prayer … my | as I prayed for them |

# Psalms 35:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *As {for} a friend, as {for} a brother to me, I walked about; as {one} lamenting {for} a mother, mourning, I bowed down.* | *I walked around grieving for them as I would grieve for a friend or for a brother, and I bowed down mourning for them as though for my own mother.* |

ULT **As {for} a friend, as {for} a brother to me, I walked about; as {one} lamenting {for} a mother, mourning, I bowed down**
UST I walked around grieving for them as I would grieve for a friend or for a brother, and I bowed down mourning for them as though for my own mother
(כְּרֵעַ־כְּאָח לִי הִתְהַלָּכְתִּי כַּאֲבֶל־אֵם קֹדֵר שַׁחְתִּי)

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: [I walked about as one lamenting for a mother, as for a friend, as for a brother; mourning, I bowed down]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **As {for} a friend, as {for} a brother**
UST as I would grieve for a friend or for a brother
(כְּרֵעַ־כְּאָח)

The point of this comparison is that just as a person would grieve for **a friend** or **a brother**, so David grieved for his enemies when they were sick. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [As if each one were my close friend or a brother, I walked about]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **as {one} lamenting {for} a mother**
UST as though for my own mother
(כַּאֲבֶל־אֵם)

The point of this comparison is that just as a person in deep grief would be **lamenting** the loss of **a mother**, so David mourned deeply for his enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [with grief as deep as one who has lost his mother]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **as {one} lamenting {for} a mother**
UST as though for my own mother
(כַּאֲבֶל־אֵם)

David 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 one who was lamenting for his mother]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **mourning, I bowed down**
UST and I bowed down mourning for them
(קֹדֵר שַׁחְתִּי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **mourning**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [I mourned and bowed down]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **I bowed down**
UST and I bowed down
(שַׁחְתִּי)

The action of **bowing down** was a symbolic action by which David showed deep grief and mourning. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [I expressed deep sorrow]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| As {for} a friend | as I would grieve for a friend |
| as {one} lamenting {for} | as though for |
| mourning | mourning for them |
| I bowed down | and I bowed down |

# Psalms 35:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But at my stumbling they rejoiced and gathered together; they gathered together against me, the stricken {ones}, and I did not know. They tore and did not cease.* | *But when I suffered, they all gathered together and celebrated. People whom I did not even know gathered to attack me. They kept slandering me and would not stop.* |

ULT **But at my stumbling**
UST But when I suffered
(וּבְצַלְעִי)

David uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between his compassion for his enemies and their cruelty when he suffered. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [However, at my stumbling]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **But at my stumbling**
UST But when I suffered
(וּבְצַלְעִי)

David is speaking of experiencing trouble as if it were physically **stumbling**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [But at my time of difficulty]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **they rejoiced and gathered together**
UST they all gathered together and celebrated
(שָׂמְחוּ וְנֶאֱסָפוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to David's enemies. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [my enemies rejoiced and gathered together]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the stricken {ones}, and I did not know**
UST whom I did not even know … to attack
(נֻכִּים וְלֹא יָדָעְתִּי)

The word translated as **the stricken ones** represents the written Hebrew text. This could refer to the mockers imitating David's lameness as possibly described in verse 16, if vowels are used to read "deformity" instead of "food" in that verse. However, scholars have proposed that changing one vowel here would make the word "the strikers," which seems to fit better the meaning of this verse. The UST follows that interpretation. You may want to follow the major translation in your area. Alternate translation: [the strikers I did not even know]

**Support Reference:** Alternative Readings

ULT **They tore and did not cease**
UST They kept slandering me and would not stop
(קָרְעוּ וְלֹא־דָמּוּ)

David is speaking of his enemies' verbal attacks as if they physically **tore** at him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They attacked me with words and did not cease]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| But at my stumbling | But when I suffered |
| they rejoiced | and celebrated |
| and gathered together | they all gathered together |
| they gathered together | People … gathered |
| I did … know | whom I did … even know |

# Psalms 35:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Among godless mockers of food, they gnashed their teeth at me.* | *Profane people mocked me for being lame and ground their teeth at me {to show how angry they were}.* |

**ULT food**
**UST** for being lame
(מָעֻג)

The word translated as food represents the written Hebrew text. This reading, however, does not seem to make sense. Scholars have proposed that by changing the vowels of this word it would say "deformity," which seems to fit better the meaning of this passage. The UST follows that interpretation. You may want to follow the major translation in your area. Alternate translation: [my deformity]

**Support Reference:** Alternative Readings

**ULT they gnashed their teeth at me**
**UST** and ground their teeth at me {to show how angry they were}
(חָרַק עָלַי שִׁנֵּימוֹ)

**They gnashed their teeth at me** describes a symbolic action by which the enemies express rage and contempt. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [they showed their anger and hostility toward me]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Among godless | Profane people |
| mockers of | mocked me |

# Psalms 35:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Lord, how long will you look on? Restore my soul from their destructions, my only {one} from the young lions!* | *Lord, please do more than just watch what they do! Rescue me from these people who want to destroy me! Save me from these people who are as fierce as young lions!* |

ULT **Lord, how long will you look on? Restore my soul**
UST Lord, please do more than just watch what they do! Rescue me
(אֲדֹנָי֮ כַּמָּה תִּרְאֶה הָשִׁיבָה נַפְשִׁי)

David is using the question form to urgently appeal to God for help. 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: [Lord, you have looked on long enough!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **my soul**
UST me
(נַפְשִׁי)

David is using the term **my soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **from their destructions**
UST from these people who want to destroy me
(מִשֹּׁאֵיהֶם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **destructions**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from the things they do to try to destroy me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **my only {one}**
UST Save me
(יְחִידָתִי)

David is using **my only one** as a common expression to mean his precious, irreplaceable life. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my precious life]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **my only {one}**
UST Save me
(יְחִידָתִי)

David 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: [please rescue my life]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **from the young lions**
UST from these people who are as fierce as young lions
(מִכְּפִירִים)

David is speaking of his enemies as if they were **young lions** that were attacking him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from these fierce enemies]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Lord | Lord |
| Restore | Rescue |
| my soul | me |
| from the young lions | from these people who are as fierce as young lions |

# Psalms 35:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will thank you in the great assembly; I will praise you among many people.* | *Then I will thank you when the great crowd of your people gather together, and I will praise you in front of all of them.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| assembly | when … of your people gather together |
| I will praise you | and I will praise you |

# Psalms 35:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not let my deceitful enemies rejoice over me; let {not} the haters of me without cause wink the eye.* | *Do not let my enemies who lie about me celebrate {because they defeated me}, and do not let those who hate me for no reason wink at each other {to show how pleased they are about it}.* |

**ULT let {not} the haters of me without cause wink the eye**
**UST** and do not let those who hate me for no reason wink at each other {to show how pleased they are about it}
(שֹׂנְאַי חִנָּם יִקְרְצוּ־עָיִן)

David is using **wink the eye** to show a symbolic action by which someone showed scorn or signaling conspiracy against someone else. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [let not the haters of me without cause signal their contempt]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Do … let … rejoice | Do … let … celebrate |
| my … enemies | my enemies |
| let {not} … wink | and do not let … wink at each other {to show how pleased they are about it} |

# Psalms 35:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For they do not speak peace, and against the quiet {ones} of the earth they devise words of deceits.* | *{Do not let them succeed,} because they do not speak peacefully {to anyone}; instead, they make up lies about quiet, peaceable people in the land.* |

ULT **For they do not speak peace**
UST Do not let them succeed,} because they do not speak peacefully {to anyone}
(כִּי לֹא שָׁלֹום יְדַבֵּרוּ)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason the enemies should not rejoice over David's suffering mentioned in the previous verses. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Since they do not speak peace]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **peace**
UST they do … speak peacefully {to anyone}
(שָׁלֹום)

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: [peaceful words]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and against the quiet {ones} of the earth**
UST about quiet, peaceable people in the land
(וְעַל רִגְעֵי־אֶרֶץ)

David is speaking of peaceable people as **the quiet ones**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and against those who live quietly in the land]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the quiet {ones} of the earth**
UST about quiet, peaceable people in the land
(רִגְעֵי־אֶרֶץ)

David is using the adjective **quiet** as a noun to mean people who are quiet and peaceable. If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [the peaceful people of the land]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **words of deceits**
UST lies
(דִּבְרֵי מִרְמוֹת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **deceits**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [deceptive words]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| peace | they do … speak peacefully {to anyone} |
| the quiet {ones} of | about quiet, peaceable people |
| the earth | in the land |

# Psalms 35:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They open their mouth wide against me; they say, “Aha, Aha, our eyes have seen.”* | *They shout loudly to accuse me, saying, “Yes! Yes! We saw {what you did}!”* |

**ULT They open their mouth wide against me**
**UST** They shout loudly to accuse me
(וַיַּרְחִיבוּ עָלַי פִּיהֶם)

David is using the phrase **open their mouth wide** to represent what the enemies shouted loudly. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They speak loudly against me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT Aha, Aha**
**UST** Yes! Yes
(הֶאָח ׀ הֶאָח)

David’s enemies are using **Aha, Aha,** as a phrase that expresses a strong feeling or gloating and malicious delight at the misfortune of another person. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [You did it!]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

**ULT our eyes have seen**
**UST** We saw {what you did}
(רָאֲתָה עֵינֵינוּ)

David’s enemies are using **our eyes** to represent what they have witnessed. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [we have witnessed it]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

# Psalms 35:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have seen, Yahweh; do not be silent; Lord, do not be far from me.* | *Yahweh, you have seen all of this, so please do something about it! Lord, please help me!* |

ULT **do not be silent**
UST so please do something about it
(אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ)

David is speaking of a lack of intervention as being **silent**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [do not remain inactive]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **do not be far from me**
UST please help me
(אַל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי)

David is speaking of a lack of help as being physically **far** from him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [do not withhold your help from me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Lord | Lord |

# Psalms 35:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Awake and arouse yourself for my justice, my God and my Lord, for my cause.* | *Become active and do the right thing for me; my God and my Lord, defend me!* |

ULT **Awake and arouse yourself**
UST Become active and do
(הָעִירָה וְהָקִיצָה)

David is speaking of God as if he were sleeping and needed to **Awake** or **arouse** himself from sleep. He means that he is asking God to act on his behalf and intervene in this situation. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Take action] or [I ask you to intervene]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Awake and arouse yourself**
UST Become active and do
(הָעִירָה וְהָקִיצָה)

The expressions **Awake** and **arouse yourself** mean similar things. David 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: [Rouse yourself fully]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **for my justice, my God and my Lord, for my cause**
UST the right thing for me; my God and my Lord, defend me
(לְמִשְׁפָּטִי אֱלֹהַי וַאדֹנָי לְרִיבִי)

The terms **my justice** and **my cause** mean similar things. David 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 come to my defense, my God and my Lord]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **for my justice**
UST the right thing for me
(לְמִשְׁפָּטִי)

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: [for you to judge me fairly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **for my cause**
UST defend me
(לְרִיבִ֑י)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **cause**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to defend me against my accusers]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| for my justice | the right thing for me |
| my God | my God |
| and my Lord | and my Lord |

# Psalms 35:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Judge me according to your righteousness, Yahweh my God, and do not let them rejoice over me.* | *Yahweh my God, because you are righteous, declare that I am innocent, and do not let my enemies celebrate {that they have defeated} me.* |

ULT **according to your righteousness**
UST because you are righteous
(בְּצִדְקָךְ)

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: [according to the right way that you judge]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Judge me | declare that I am innocent |
| according to your righteousness | because you are righteous |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my God | my God |
| do … let them rejoice | and do not let my enemies celebrate |

# Psalms 35:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not let them say in their heart, “Aha, our soul!” Do not let them say, “We have swallowed him up.”* | *Do not let them think to themselves, “Yes! We got what we wanted!” Do not let them say {to each other}, “We have completely destroyed him!”* |

ULT **Do not let them say in their heart, “Aha, our soul!” Do not let them say, “We have swallowed him up**
UST Do not let them think to themselves, “Yes! We got what we wanted!” Do not let them say {to each other}, “We have completely destroyed him
(אַל־יֹאמְרוּ בְלִבָּם הֶאָח נַפְשֵׁנוּ אַל־יֹאמְרוּ בִּלַּעֲנוּהוּ)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could express these as indirect quotations. Alternate translation: [Do not let them think that they have gotten what they desire. Do not let them say that they have destroyed me]

**Support Reference:** Direct and Indirect Quotations

ULT **Do not let them say in their heart**
UST Do not let them think to themselves
(אַל־יֹאמְרוּ בְלִבָּם)

David is using **say in their heart** as a common expression of the culture to mean “say to themselves.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Do not let them say to themselves]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Aha, our soul**
UST Yes! We got what we wanted
(הֶאָח נַפְשֵׁנוּ)

The exclamation **Aha** expresses the enemies’ malicious gloating. The phrase **our soul** in this context means “we have gotten what we desired” which is to have him be declared guilty. Your language may have a comparable exclamation that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Hurrah! Our wish has been fulfilled] or [We are so glad he has been declared guilty just as we desired]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **We have swallowed him up**
UST We have completely destroyed him
(בְּלַעֲנוּהוּ)

David's enemies are speaking of defeating him completely as if they were wild animals who had **swallowed him up**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [We have totally overcome him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| our soul | We got what we wanted |

# Psalms 35:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let them be ashamed and confounded together, those rejoicing at my evil. Let them be clothed with shame and humiliation, the ones magnifying {themselves} against me.* | *Instead, make all those who celebrate when bad things happen to me feel totally ashamed and disgraced. Yes, completely humiliate those who boast that they are greater than me.* |

ULT **Let them be ashamed and confounded**
UST Instead, make … feel totally ashamed and disgraced
(יֵבֹ֣שׁוּ וְיַחְפְּרוּ)

The expressions **be ashamed** and **confounded** mean similar things. David 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: [be completely put to shame together]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **at my evil**
UST when bad things happen to me
(רָעָתִֽי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evil**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [at my misfortune]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Let them be clothed with shame and humiliation**
UST Yes, completely humiliate
(יִלָּבְשׁוּ־בֹ֥שֶׁת וּכְלִמָּ֑ה)

David is speaking of **shame and humiliation** as if these were garments that his enemies would wear or **be clothed** in. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [be completely covered in disgrace]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Let them be clothed with shame and humiliation**
UST Yes, completely humiliate
(יִלָּבְשׁוּ־בֹ֥שֶׁת וּכְלִמָּ֑ה)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **shame** and **humiliation**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Let them be completely ashamed and humiliated]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Let them be clothed**
UST Yes, completely humiliate
(יִלְבְּשׁוּ)

The expression **be clothed** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [May God clothe them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **with shame and humiliation**
UST Yes, completely humiliate
(בֹּשֶׁת וּכְלִמָּה)

The terms **shame** and **humiliation** mean similar things. David 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: [with utter disgrace]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **the ones magnifying {themselves} against me**
UST those who boast that they are greater than me
(הַמַּגְדִּילִים עָלָי)

David is using **magnifying themselves against me** as a common expression to mean boasting or exalting themselves in defiance of him. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those who exalt themselves over me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let them be ashamed | Instead, make … feel totally ashamed |
| those rejoicing | those who celebrate |
| at my evil | when bad things happen to me |
| with shame | Yes, completely humiliate |

# Psalms 35:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let them shout for joy and be glad, those delighting in my righteousness, and let them say continually, "Let Yahweh be great, the {one} delighting in the peace of his servant."* | *But let those who want God to show that I am innocent shout for joy and celebrate! Let them always say, "Yahweh is great! He loves to make things go well for the one who serves him."* |

ULT **Let them shout for joy and be glad**
UST But let … shout for joy and celebrate
(יָרֹנּוּ וְיִשְׂמְחוּ)

The expressions **shout for joy** and **be glad** mean similar things. David is using the two expressions together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [Let them greatly rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **my righteousness**
UST God to show that I am innocent
(צִדְקִי)

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: [my being declared right]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and let them say continually, "Let Yahweh be great, the {one} delighting in the peace of his servant**
UST Let them always say, "Yahweh is great! He loves to make things go well for the one who serves him
(וְיֹאמְרוּ תָמִיד יִגְדַּל יְהוָה הֶחָפֵץ שְׁלוֹם עַבְדּוֹ)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: [and let them continually declare that Yahweh is great, the one delighting in the peace of his servant]

**Support Reference:** Direct and Indirect Quotations

ULT **the peace of**
UST to make things go well for
(שְׁלוֹם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **word**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the welfare of]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Let them shout for joy | But let … shout for joy |
| and be glad | and celebrate |
| those delighting in | those who want |
| my righteousness | God to show that I am innocent |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the {one} delighting in | He loves |
| the peace of | to make things go well for |
| his servant | the one who serves him |

# Psalms 35:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And my tongue will meditate on your righteousness, all the day, your praise.* | *Then I will tell everyone how righteous you are, and I will praise you all day long.* |

ULT **And my tongue will meditate on your righteousness**
UST Then I will tell everyone how righteous you are
(וּלְשׁוֹנִי תֶּהְגֶּה צִדְקֶךָ)

The word translated as **And** connects this verse to what came before as a result. David is saying that because Yahweh will act on his behalf, he will respond with praise. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a result of what came before. Alternate translation: [Because of this, my tongue will meditate on your righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **And my tongue will meditate on**
UST Then I will tell everyone
(וּלְשׁוֹנִי תֶּהְגֶּה)

David is using one part of his person, his **tongue**, to mean all of him in the act of meditating. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [For I will speak about]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **your righteousness**
UST how righteous you are
(צִדְקֶךָ)

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: [the ways you act righteously]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **all the day**
UST all day long
(כָּל־הַיּוֹם)

David is saying **all the day** as an overstatement to emphasize that his praise will be constant and habitual. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [continually]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **your praise**
UST and I will praise you
(תְּהִלָּתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [praising you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And my tongue | Then I will tell everyone |
| will meditate on | Then I will tell everyone |
| your righteousness | how righteous you are |
| your praise | and I will praise you |

# Psalms 36

## Psalm 36 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 36 is a “psalm of praise.” It speaks of how good God is to those who love him.

1. The depth of human sin (1–4)
2. The greatness of Yahweh’s steadfast love (5–9)
3. Prayer for continued protection and justice (10–12)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### God and man

Evil people do not think about God; but he is such a pleasure to all who honor him.

# Psalms 36:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; of the servant of Yahweh; of David.* | *Note for the worship leader: David, a man who served Yahweh faithfully, wrote this psalm.* |

**ULT For the chief musician**
UST Note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of the servant | man who served … faithfully |
| of Yahweh | Yahweh |
| of David | David, a … wrote this psalm |

# Psalms 36:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The declaration of transgression to the wicked {is} in the midst of my heart: there is no dread of God before his eyes.* | *Wicked people act as though they are obeying a voice from deep within themselves that is urging them to sin. They have no respect for God at all.* |

ULT **The declaration of transgression to the wicked {is} in the midst of my heart**
UST Wicked people act as though they are obeying a voice from deep within themselves that is urging them to sin
(נְאֻם־פֶּשַׁע לָרָשָׁע בְּקֶרֶב לִבִּי)

David is speaking of **transgression** as if it were a living thing that could speak a **declaration** to the wicked. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Sin causes a person to act like they are listening to bad advice within themselves]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **The declaration of transgression**
UST act as though they are obeying a voice … that is urging them to sin
(נְאֻם־פֶּשַׁע)

If your language does not use an abstract nouns for the idea of **declaration** and **transgression**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [What rebelling against God declares]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to the wicked**
UST Wicked people
(לָרָשָׁע)

David 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: [to those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **{is} in the midst of my heart**
UST from deep within themselves
(בְּקֶרֶב לִבִּי)

The phrase **my heart** is a translation of the majority of Hebrew manuscripts. Other Hebrew manuscripts and ancient translations say, “his heart,” which seems to make better sense. The UST follows that reading. You may want to follow the major translation in your area. Alternate translation: [is in the midst of his heart]

**Support Reference:** Alternative Readings

ULT **{is} in the midst of my heart**
UST from deep within themselves
(בְּקֶרֶב לִבִּי)

Here the **heart** represents where a person’s thoughts and understanding exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [is in his deepest understanding]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **dread of**
UST respect for
(פַּחַד)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **dread**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [reverence for]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **before his eyes**
UST They
(לְנֶגֶד עֵינָיו)

Here, **before his eyes** represents the wicked person’s awareness. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in his awareness]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **his eyes**
UST They
(עֵינָיו)

The pronoun **his** refers to the wicked person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the wicked person’s eyes]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| transgression | that is urging them to sin |
| to the wicked | Wicked people |
| dread of | respect for |
| God | God |

# Psalms 36:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For it is slippery to him in his eyes to find his iniquity to hate {it}.* | *Indeed, they are so proud that they refuse to recognize how wrongly they act so that they might hate {doing those things}.* |

ULT **For**
UST Indeed
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **it is slippery to him in his eyes**
UST they are so proud that they refuse
(הֶחֱלִיק אֵלָיו בְּעֵינָיו)

David is describing the way that a wicked person flatters himself and is proud by saying that recognizing his sin **is slippery to him in his eyes**, that is, his pride blinds him to it and he convinces himself that he is not sinful. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this in another way. Alternate translation: [he flatters himself too much]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to find his iniquity**
UST to recognize how wrongly they act
(לִמְצֹא עֲוֹנוֹ)

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: [to acknowledge that he acts wrongly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to hate {it}**
UST so that they might hate {doing those things}
(לִשְׂנֹא)

The pronoun **it** refers to the wicked person's sin. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [so he hates his sin]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in his eyes | they are so proud that they refuse |
| his iniquity | how wrongly they act |

# Psalms 36:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The words of his mouth {are} iniquity and deceit; he has ceased to act wisely, to do good.* | *Everything that they say is wicked and deceptive; they have stopped acting wisely and {stopped} doing what is right.* |

ULT **The words of his mouth**
UST Everything that they say
(דִּבְרֵי־פִיו)

David is using the phrase **words of his mouth** to represent what the wicked person said by using words. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The things he says]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **{are} iniquity and deceit**
UST is wicked and deceptive
(אָוֶן וּמִרְמָה)

The terms **iniquity** and **deceit** mean similar things. David 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: [thoroughly wicked speech]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **{are} iniquity and deceit**
UST is wicked and deceptive
(אָוֶן וּמִרְמָה)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **iniquity** and **deceit**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [are what is wicked and deceptive]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **he has ceased to act wisely, to do good**
UST they have stopped acting wisely and {stopped} doing what is right
(חָדַל לְהַשְׂכִּיל לְהֵיטִיב)

These two phrases **to act wisely** and **to do good** mean basically the same thing. David 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: [he has completely ceased to do things that are good]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {are} iniquity | is wicked |
| to act wisely | acting wisely |
| to do good | and {stopped} doing what is right |

# Psalms 36:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He devises iniquity on his bed; he stations himself on the not-good road; he does not reject evil.* | *They plan sinful activities while lying on their beds; they commit themselves to a bad way of living; they do not refuse to do evil things.* |

ULT **iniquity**
UST sinful activities
(אָוֶן)

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: [how to act wickedly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **he stations himself on the not-good road**
UST they commit themselves to a bad way of living
(יִתְיַצֵּב עַל־דֶּרֶךְ לֹא־טוֹב)

David is speaking of how the wicked person commits to a bad way of living as if it were a **not-good road** that he chose and that he **stations himself on**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he commits himself to a wicked way of living]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **evil**
UST to do evil things
(רָע)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evil**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [doing wicked things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| iniquity | sinful activities |
| good | bad |
| he does … reject | they do … refuse |
| evil | to do evil things |

# Psalms 36:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, your covenant faithfulness {is} in the heavens; your trustworthiness, to the clouds.* | *Yahweh, the amount that you faithfully love us is so much that it is as though it fills the heavens. If we could measure how trustworthy you are, the amount would extend into the clouds.* |

ULT **your covenant faithfulness {is} in the heavens**
UST the amount that you faithfully love us is so much that it is as though it fills the heavens
(בַּהַשָּׁמַיִם חַסְדֶּךָ)

David is speaking as if Yahweh's covenant faithfulness were so vast that it fills **the heavens**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your covenant faithfulness is immeasurably great]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **your covenant faithfulness**
UST the amount that you faithfully love us is so much that it is as though
(חַסְדֶּךָ)

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: [how faithful you are to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your trustworthiness, to the clouds**
UST If we could measure how trustworthy you are, the amount would extend into the clouds
(אֱמוּנָתְךָ עַד־שְׁחָקִים)

David 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: [your trustworthiness extends to the clouds]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **your trustworthiness**
UST If we could measure how trustworthy you are
(אֱמוּנָתְךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **trustworthiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how trustworthy you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| your covenant faithfulness | the amount that you faithfully love us is so much that it is as though |
| {is} in the heavens | it fills the heavens |
| your trustworthiness | If we could measure how trustworthy you are |

# Psalms 36:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your righteousness {is} like the mountains of God; your judgments {are} the great deep. You save man and beast, Yahweh.* | *Your way of doing what is right is {as permanent} as the highest mountains; your way of acting justly is {as vast and mysterious} as the deepest oceans. Yahweh, you take care of {all living creatures,} both people and animals.* |

ULT **Your righteousness {is} like the mountains of God**
UST Your way of doing what is right is {as permanent} as the highest mountains
(צִדְקָתְךָ ׀ כְּהַרְרֵי־אֵ֗ל)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the mountains of God** are immovable and enduring, so is his **righteousness**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [Your righteousness is as enduring as the highest mountains]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **Your righteousness**
UST Your way of doing what is right
(צִדְקָתְךָ)

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: [The way you do what is right]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your judgments {are} the great deep**
UST your way of acting justly is {as vast and mysterious} as the deepest oceans
(מִשְׁפָּטֶ֣יךָ תְהוֹם רַבָּ֑ה)

David 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: [your judgments are like the great deep]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **your judgments {are} the great deep**
UST your way of acting justly is {as vast and mysterious} as the deepest oceans
(מִשְׁפָּטֶךָ תְּהוֹם רַבָּה)

David is using another comparison to describe Yahweh's ways. The point of this comparison is that just as **the great deep** or the deepest ocean is vast and mysterious, so are God's **judgments**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [your judgments are as immeasurable and unsearchable as the deepest ocean]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **your judgments**
UST your way of acting justly
(מִשְׁפָּטֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **judgments**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the way you act justly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Your righteousness | Your way of doing what is right |
| God | highest |
| your judgments | your way of acting justly |
| You save | you take care of {all living creatures … } |
| and beast | and animals |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 36:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *How precious {is} your covenant faithfulness, God! And the sons of man take refuge in the shadow of your wings.* | *God, how precious it is that you faithfully love us! You protect people just as a bird shelters its young under its wings.* |

**ULT {is} your covenant faithfulness**
**UST** that you faithfully love us
(חַסְדְּךָ)

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: [is the way you are faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT And the sons of man**
**UST** people
(וּבְנֵי אָדָם)

David is using **the sons of man** as a common expression of the culture to mean "human beings." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And people]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT take refuge in the shadow of your wings**
**UST** You protect … just as a bird shelters its young under its wings
(בְּצֵל כְּנָפֶיךָ יֶחֱסָיוּן)

David is speaking of God's protection as if he were a bird that provides a **refuge** or protection under **the shadow of** its **wings**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [can find their protection in you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {is} your covenant faithfulness | that you faithfully love us |
| God | God |
| take refuge | You protect |

# Psalms 36:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They are refreshed from the fatness of your house, and {from} the river of your delights you give them drink.* | *You provide for them plenty of food from the abundant supply that you have; you satisfy them with good things that they enjoy, as if from a never-ending stream.* |

**ULT They are refreshed**
**UST** You provide for them plenty of food
(יְרֻוֻן)

The pronoun **They** refers to "the sons of man" or people mentioned in verse 7. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [People are refreshed]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT They are refreshed**
**UST** You provide for them plenty of food
(יְרֻוֻן)

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [You refresh them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT from the fatness of your house**
**UST** from the abundant supply that you have
(מִדֶּשֶׁן בֵּיתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **fatness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [from all that you so abundantly provide]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and {from} the river of your delights you give them drink**
**UST** you satisfy them with good things that they enjoy, as if from a never-ending stream
(וְנַחַל עֲדָנֶיךָ תַשְׁקֵם)

David is speaking as if God's blessings were a **river** of **delights** that people could **drink** from. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and they experience the abundance of your blessings]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| They are refreshed | You provide for them plenty of food |
| your house | from the abundant supply that you have |
| your delights | with good things that they enjoy |

# Psalms 36:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For with you {is} the fountain of life; in your light we see light.* | *Indeed, you are the one who causes everything to live; you are the one who makes it possible for us to understand what is true.* |

**ULT {is} the fountain of life**
**UST** who causes everything to live
(מְקוֹר חַיִּים)

David is speaking as if God were a **fountain** from which **life** flows. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [is the source of life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT life**
**UST** to live
(חַיִּים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **life**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the ability to live]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT in your light we see light**
**UST** you are the one who makes it possible for us to understand what is true
(בְּאוֹרְךָ נִרְאֶה־אוֹר)

David is speaking as if God's presence were **light** that enables people to see **light**, representing understanding. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [because you reveal yourself to us, we are able to understand truth]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {is} the fountain of | who causes everything |

# Psalms 36:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Extend your covenant faithfulness to the knowers of you, and your righteousness to the upright of heart.* | *Please continue to faithfully love those who know you, and continue to do right for those who sincerely want to do what is right.* |

ULT **your covenant faithfulness**
UST Please continue to faithfully love
(חַסְדְּךָ)

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 way you are faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and your righteousness**
UST and continue to do right
(וְצִדְקָתְךָ)

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 how you do what is right]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to the upright of heart**
UST for those who sincerely want to do what is right
(לְיִשְׁרֵי־לֵב)

David 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 could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [to those who are upright in heart]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **to the upright of heart**
UST for those who sincerely want to do what is right
(לְיִשְׁרֵי־לֵב)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's motives and intentions exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to those who have right intentions]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your covenant faithfulness | Please continue to faithfully love |
| to the knowers of you | those who know you |
| and your righteousness | and continue to do right |
| to the upright of | for those who sincerely want to do what is right |

# Psalms 36:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let not the foot of pride come to me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me.* | *Do not let arrogant people overcome me, and do not let wicked people force me to flee.* |

ULT **Let not the foot of pride come to me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me**
UST Do not let arrogant people overcome me, and do not let wicked people force me to flee
(אַל־תָּבוֹאֵנִי רֶגֶל גַּאֲוָה וְיַד־רְשָׁעִים אַל־תְּנִדֵנִי)

David is expressing a wish to God. In your translation, use a form that people would recognize as a wish or request in your language. You might express this as a prayer, if that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Please keep the foot of pride from coming to me, and the hand of the wicked from removing me]

**Support Reference:** Blessings

ULT **the foot of pride**
UST arrogant people
(רֶגֶל גַּאֲוָה)

Here, **the foot** represents the power to trample or overcome another person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the overwhelming power of the proud]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **pride**
UST arrogant people
(גַּאֲוָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **pride**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [proud people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and let not the hand of the wicked remove me**
UST and do not let wicked people force me to flee
(וְיַד־רְשָׁעִים אַל־תְּנִדֵנִי)

Here, **the hand** represents the power and action of **the wicked**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and let not the power of the wicked remove me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the wicked**
UST and … wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

David 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 could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| pride | arrogant people |
| the wicked | and … wicked people |

# Psalms 36:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *There the doers of iniquity have fallen; they are thrust down and are not able to rise.* | *See how the people who do evil have fallen! God has thrown them down, and they can never get up again.* |

ULT **iniquity**
UST evil
(אָוֶן)

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 wicked]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **they are thrust down**
UST God has thrown them down
(דָּחֹה)

The expression **are thrust down** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [God has thrust them down]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| iniquity | evil |

# Psalms 37

## Psalm 37 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 37 is considered to be one of the “wisdom psalms.” See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about the wisdom psalms.

1. Do not envy the wicked but trust Yahweh (1–11)
2. Yahweh upholds the righteous and judges the wicked (12–20)
3. The righteous are sustained and secure in Yahweh (21–31)
4. Wait for Yahweh and observe his final justice (32–40)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Envy

Do not envy evil people. Although it appears as though they prosper, soon they will be destroyed and the good people will continue on living.

# Psalms 37:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Of David Do not be upset about evildoers; do not be envious of the doers of unrighteousness.* | *This is a psalm of David. Do not let what wicked people do upset you; do not wish that you had what people who do evil things have.* |

**ULT Of David Do not be upset about evildoers; do not be envious of the doers of unrighteousness**

UST This is a psalm of David. Do not let what wicked people do upset you; do not wish that you had what people who do evil things have
(לְדָוִד ׀ אַל־תִּתְחַר בַּמְּרֵעִים אַל־תְּקַנֵּא בְּעֹשֵׂי עַוְלָה)

These two clauses mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Do not let yourself be troubled by those who do evil] or [Do not be upset about evildoers; indeed, do not be envious of the doers of unrighteousness]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| unrighteousness | what people who do evil things have |

# Psalms 37:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For like the grass they will quickly wither, and like a green plant they will fade.* | *{Do not worry about them} because they will soon disappear, just as grass dries up {in the sun} and green plants quickly wither and die.* |

**ULT For**
**UST** {Do not worry about them} because
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT like the grass they will quickly wither**
**UST** they will soon disappear, just as grass dries up {in the sun}
(כֶּחָצִיר מְהֵרָה יִמָּלוּ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the grass** quickly **withers** and dies, so the wicked will quickly perish. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [just as the grass quickly withers, they will quickly perish]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT and like a green plant they will fade**
**UST** and green plants quickly wither and die
(וּכְיֶרֶק דֶּשֶׁא יִבּוֹלוּן)

The point of this comparison is that just as a **green plant** will **fade** and die, so the wicked will not last. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and just as a green plant fades, they too will fade away]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they will … wither | they will … disappear |
| and like a green plant | and green plants |

# Psalms 37:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Trust in Yahweh and do good; inhabit the land and feed faithfulness.* | *Trust in Yahweh and do what is right; live in the land {that he has given you}, and be faithful {to him}.* |

ULT **good**
UST what is right
(טֽוֹב)

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: [the right thing]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and feed faithfulness**
UST and be faithful {to him}
(וּרְעֵ֖ה אֱמוּנָֽה)

The word translated as **feed** is used to describe what shepherds do for sheep as they care for them, and also for what sheep do as they feed themselves. So this could mean: (1) Cultivate, develop, or practice faithfulness to Yahweh (and each other). Alternate translation: [and practice faithfulness] or (2) Enjoy the faithfulness that Yahweh offers to his people. Alternate translation: [and experience Yahweh's faithfulness]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and feed faithfulness**
UST and be faithful {to him}
(וּרְעֵ֖ה אֱמוּנָֽה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and act faithfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Trust | Trust |
| in Yahweh | in Yahweh |
| good | what is right |
| the land | the land {that he has given you} |
| faithfulness | faithful {to him} |

# Psalms 37:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And delight yourself in Yahweh, and he will give to you the desires of your heart.* | *Also, enjoy Yahweh more than anything else; then he will give you what you desire most.* |

> ULT **the desires of your heart**
> UST what you desire most
> (מִשְׁאֲלֹת לִבֶּךָ)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's **desires** exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what you truly desire]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And delight yourself | Also, enjoy … more than anything else |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 37:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Roll your way upon Yahweh, and trust in him, and he, he will act* | *Entrust everything that you plan to do to Yahweh; trust in him, and then, for his part, he will do {whatever you need him to do}.* |

**ULT Roll your way upon Yahweh**
**UST** Entrust everything that you plan to do to Yahweh
(גַּ֤וֹל עַל־יְהוָה֙ דַּרְכֶּ֔ךָ)

David is using **Roll your way upon Yahweh** as a common expression of his culture to mean to turn over or entrust your plans to Yahweh. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Commit your plans to Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT and he, he will act**
**UST** and then, for his part, he will do {whatever you need him to do}
(וְהֽוּא־יַעֲשֶׂ֑ה)

David is stating the pronoun **he** separately, even though the verb translated as **he will act** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that Yahweh is the only one who can do this. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [and Yahweh himself will act]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and trust | trust |

# Psalms 37:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *and he will bring out your righteousness like the light, and your justice like the noonday.* | *He will show everyone as clearly as the light of the noonday sun that you do what is right and that you are innocent of doing anything wrong.* |

**ULT your righteousness like the light**
**UST** as clearly as the light of the noonday sun that you do what is right
(כָּאוֹר צִדְקֶךָ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the light** is clearly visible to everyone, so Yahweh will make the person's righteousness clearly evident. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [your righteousness so that it is as clearly visible as the light]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT your righteousness**
**UST** that you do what is right
(צִדְקֶךָ)

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: [how righteous you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and your justice like the noonday**
**UST** as clearly as the light of the noonday sun … and that you are innocent of doing anything wrong
(וּמִשְׁפָּטֶךָ כַּצָּהֳרָיִם)

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: [and publicly defend your just cause]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

> ULT **and your justice like the noonday**
> UST as clearly as the light of the noonday sun … and that you are innocent of doing anything wrong
> (וּמִשְׁפָּטֶךָ כַּצָּהֳרָיִם)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the noonday** sun shines at its brightest, so Yahweh will make the person's justice unmistakably clear. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and he will bring out that you are innocent so that it is as clear as the noonday sun]

**Support Reference:** Simile

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and your justice | and that you are innocent of doing anything wrong |

# Psalms 37:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Be silent to Yahweh and tremble for him. Do not be angry because of the {one} making his way prosper, because of a man doing schemes.* | *Be calm before Yahweh and wait patiently for him {to act}. Do not become upset when you see {evil} people succeed as they do the {wicked} things that they have planned.* |

ULT **Be silent to Yahweh**
UST Be calm before Yahweh
(דֹּם ׀ לַיהוָה)

David is using **Be silent to Yahweh** as a common expression of the culture to mean "wait patiently and reverently for Yahweh." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Rest quietly before Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **and tremble**
UST and wait patiently
(וְהִתְחַוֵּל)

The word translated as **tremble** represents the written Hebrew text. This reading, however, does not seem to make sense here. Scholars have proposed that a different word with a similar spelling was intended that means "to wait" that seems to better fit the meaning of this passage. You may want to follow the major translation in your area. Alternate translation: [and wait]

**Support Reference:** Alternative Readings

ULT **for him**
UST for him {to act}
(לוֹ)

The pronoun **him** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and tremble for Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **his way**
UST when you see {evil} people succeed
(דַּרְכּוֹ)

David is speaking of how a wicked person lives as if that were a **way** or path that the person was walking along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a wicked person's way]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **doing schemes**
UST as they do the {wicked} things that they have planned
(עֹשֶׂה מְזִמּוֹת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **schemes**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [carrying out wicked plans]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| to Yahweh | before Yahweh |
| and tremble | and wait patiently |
| because of the {one} making … prosper | when you see {evil} people succeed |
| schemes | the {wicked} things that they have planned |

# Psalms 37:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let go of nose and abandon wrath; do not be angry; only to cause evil.* | *Stop being angry {about what wicked people do}; do not want to punish them yourself; that only leads to doing evil.* |

ULT **of nose and abandon wrath**
UST Stop being angry {about what wicked people do}
(מֵאַף וַעֲזָב חֵמָה)

The terms **nose** and **wrath** mean similar things. David 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: [of intense anger]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **of nose**
UST being angry {about what wicked people do}
(מֵאַף)

David is using the **nose** here as a common expression of the culture, **the burning of his nose** to mean "anger." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [of anger]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **wrath**
UST being angry {about what wicked people do}
(חֵמָה)

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: [being furious]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| wrath | being angry {about what wicked people do} |
| to cause evil | doing evil |

# Psalms 37:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For evildoers will be cut off, but the ones waiting for Yahweh, they, they will inherit the land.* | *Do not do that because Yahweh will destroy people who do evil, but as for the people who trust Yahweh to act, they will possess the land.* |

ULT **For**
UST Do not do that because
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Since]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **evildoers will be cut off**
UST Yahweh will destroy people who do evil
(מְרֵעִים יִכָּרֵתוּן)

David is using **cut off** as a common expression of the culture to mean “destroy.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [evildoers will perish]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **evildoers will be cut off**
UST Yahweh will destroy people who do evil
(מְרֵעִים יִכָּרֵתוּן)

The expression **will be cut off** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will cut off evildoers]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **they, they will inherit the land**
UST as for the people … they will possess the land
(הֵ֣מָּה יִ֭ירְשׁוּ־אָ֑רֶץ)

David is stating the pronoun **they** separately, even though the verb translated as **they will inherit** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that, unlike the evildoers in the previous line, those who wait for Yahweh will inherit the land. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [they themselves will inherit the land]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| they will inherit | they will possess |
| the land | the land |

# Psalms 37:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And yet a little and there are no wicked; then you will look carefully at his place, but he is not.* | *Soon wicked people will disappear. You will look for them where they used to be, but they will be gone.* |

ULT **And yet a little and there are no**
UST Soon … will disappear
(וְעוֹד מְעַט וְאֵין)

David 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 yet a little while and then there are no more]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **wicked**
UST wicked people
(רָשָׁע)

David 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 person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **his place**
UST where they used to be
(מְקוֹמוֹ)

The pronoun **his** refers to the wicked person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [where the wicked person was]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| wicked | wicked people |

# Psalms 37:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But the meek will inherit the land and will delight themselves over an abundance of peace.* | *Humble people, however, will possess the land and will enjoy living {there} very peacefully and well.* |

ULT **But the meek**
UST Humble people, however
(וְעַנָוִים)

David is using the adjective **meek** 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: [But meek people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **an abundance of peace**
UST very peacefully and well
(רֹ֣ב שָׁלֽוֹם)

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: [living so peacefuly and prosperously]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| But the meek | Humble people, however |
| will inherit | will possess |
| the land | the land |
| and will delight themselves | and will enjoy living {there} |
| peace | peacefully and well |

# Psalms 37:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The wicked is plotting against the righteous and is gnashing his teeth against him.* | *Wicked people plan to harm people who do what is right. They grind their teeth at people who do what is right {to show how much they hate them}.* |

**ULT The wicked is plotting against the righteous**
UST Wicked people plan to harm people who do what is right
(זֹמֵם רָשָׁע לַצַּדִּיק)

David is using the adjectives **wicked** and **righteous** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [The wicked person is plotting against the righteous person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT and is gnashing his teeth against him**
UST They grind their teeth at people who do what is right {to show how much they hate them}
(וְחֹרֵק עָלָיו שִׁנָּיו)

The pronoun **his** refers to the wicked person, while the pronoun **him** refers to the righteous person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and the wicked person is gnashing his teeth against the righteous person]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and is gnashing his teeth against him**
UST They grind their teeth at people who do what is right {to show how much they hate them}
(וְחֹרֵק עָלָיו שִׁנָּיו)

The action of **gnashing his teeth** describes a symbolic action by which the wicked person expresses rage and contempt against the righteous person. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [and showing his rage against the righteous]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The wicked | Wicked people |
| against the righteous | people who do what is right |
| against him | |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| | at people who do what is right {to show how much they hate them} |

# Psalms 37:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The Lord laughs at him, for he sees that his day is coming.* | *But the Lord scoffs at wicked people, because he knows that the time when he will judge them is coming.* |

**ULT The Lord laughs at him**
**UST** But the Lord scoffs at wicked people
(אֲדֹנָי יִשְׂחַק־לוֹ)

David is speaking of **the Lord** as if he were a person who could **laugh at** someone. This represents the Lord's contempt for the wicked person and his plans. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The Lord regards him with contempt]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT for he sees that his day is coming**
**UST** because he knows that the time when he will judge them is coming
(כִּי־רֹאֶה כִּי־יָבֹא יוֹמוֹ)

The pronoun **he** refers to the Lord, while the pronoun **his** refers to the wicked person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the Lord sees that the wicked person's day is coming]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT his day is coming**
**UST** the time when he will judge them is coming
(יָבֹא יוֹמוֹ)

David is speaking of the wicked person's judgment as if it were a time or a **day** that is **coming** toward him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the time of his judgment is near]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The Lord | But the Lord |

# Psalms 37:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The wicked have opened a sword and have trodden their bow to bring down the poor and the needy, to slaughter the upright of way.* | *Wicked people draw their swords and string their bows to kill people who are poor and helpless and to slaughter people who live honestly.* |

ULT **The wicked**
UST Wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

David 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: [Those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **to bring down the poor and the needy**
UST to kill people who are poor and helpless
(לְהַפִּיל עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן)

Here, **to** marks **bring down the poor and the needy** as the goal or purpose of the wicked preparing their weapons to kill, having **opened a sword** and **trodden their bow**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. [in order to bring down the poor and the needy]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **the poor and the needy**
UST people who are poor and helpless
(עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן)

David 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 adjectives with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [those who are poor people and needy]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the poor and the needy**
UST people who are poor and helpless
(עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן)

The terms **the poor** and **the needy** mean similar things. David 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 very vulnerable]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **the upright of way**
UST people who live honestly
(יִשְׁרֵי־דָֽרֶךְ)

David is speaking of how a person lives as if that were a **way** that the person was walking along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those who live uprightly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The wicked | Wicked people |
| a sword | their swords |
| their bow | their bows |
| to slaughter | and to slaughter |
| the upright of | honestly |

# Psalms 37:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Their sword will come into their heart, and their bows will be broken.* | *But their swords will pierce their own hearts, and the Lord will break their bows.* |

**ULT Their sword will come into their heart**
**UST** But their swords will pierce their own hearts
(חַרְבָּם תָּבוֹא בְלִבָּם)

David is speaking as if the violent plans of the wicked were a **sword** that would pierce their own **heart**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Their own schemes will bring about their ruin]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and their bows will be broken**
**UST** and the Lord will break their bows
(וְקַשְׁתוֹתָם תִּשָּׁבַרְנָה)

The expression **will be broken** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will destroy their bows]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Their sword | But their swords |
| and their bows | and … their bows |

# Psalms 37:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Better {is} the little of the righteous than the abundance of many wicked.* | *It is better to be a person who does what is right and to have only a few possessions than to have the abundant wealth of many wicked people.* |

ULT **Better is the little of the righteous than the abundance of many wicked**
UST It is better to be a person who does what is right and to have only a few possessions than to have the abundant wealth of many wicked people
(טוֹב־מְּעַט לַצַּדִּיק מֵהֲמוֹן רְשָׁעִים רַבִּים)

David is using the possessive form to describe the **little** amount that **the righteous** person possesses as being far better in contrast to the great wealth or **abundance** that **many wicked** people possess. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Better is what little the righteous person owns than what many wicked people have in abundance]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Better is | It is better |
| of the righteous | to be a person who does what is right |
| wicked | wicked people |

# Psalms 37:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the arms of the wicked will be broken, but Yahweh is supporting the righteous.* | *{This is so} because Yahweh will make wicked people unable to do what they want to do, but he will take care of people who do what is right.* |

ULT **the arms of the wicked will be broken**
UST will make wicked people unable to do what they want to do
(זְרוֹעוֹת רְשָׁעִים תִּשָּׁבֵרְנָה)

David is speaking as if the strength of the wicked were **arms** that could be **broken**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the power of the wicked will fail]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the arms of the wicked will be broken**
UST will make wicked people unable to do what they want to do
(זְרוֹעוֹת רְשָׁעִים תִּשָּׁבֵרְנָה)

The expression **will be broken** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will break the arms of the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

David 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: [those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **but Yahweh is supporting the righteous**
UST Yahweh … but he will take care of people who do what is right
(וְסוֹמֵךְ צַדִּיקִים יְהוָה)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh's care and protection as if he were physically holding up or **supporting** the righteous. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but Yahweh protects and sustains the righteous]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the righteous**
UST people who do what is right
(צַדִּיקִים)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [those who are righteous]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the wicked | wicked people |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the righteous | people who do what is right |

# Psalms 37:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh is knowing the days of the blameless, and their inheritance will be forever.* | *Each day Yahweh watches over people who do not do wrong things, and what he gives them will last forever.* |

**ULT** **Yahweh is knowing the days of**
**UST** Each day Yahweh watches over
(יוֹדֵעַ יְהוָה יְמֵי)

David is using **knowing the days of** as a common expression of the culture to mean "concerned for the needs of." This refers to Yahweh's intimate and active involvement in the life of his people. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is concerned for the needs of]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT** **the days of the blameless**
**UST** Each day … people who do not do wrong things
(יְמֵי תְמִימִם)

David is using the possessive form to describe the **days** that **the blameless** live. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the days that the blameless live]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT** **the blameless**
**UST** people who do not do wrong things
(תְמִימִם)

David is using the adjective **blameless** 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: [those who live blameless lives]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT** **and their inheritance**
**UST** and what he gives them
(וְנַחֲלָתָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **inheritance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and what they inherit]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| is knowing | watches over |
| the blameless | people who do not do wrong things |
| and their inheritance | and what he gives them |
| forever | will last forever |

# Psalms 37:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They will not have shame in a time of evil, and in the days of famine they will have enough.* | *During times when bad things happen they will not despair; even when there is a famine, they will still have enough {to eat}.* |

ULT **They will not have shame**
UST they will not despair
(לֹא־יֵבֹשׁוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to the blameless people from the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The blameless will not have shame]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **They will not have shame**
UST they will not despair
(לֹא־יֵבֹשׁוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **shame**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [They will not be ashamed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in a time of evil**
UST During times when bad things happen
(בְּעֵת רָעָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evil**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a time when evil things happen]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and in the days of famine**
UST even when there is a famine
(וּבִימֵי רָעָבוֹן)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **famine**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and in the days when people are starving]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| They will … have shame | they will … despair |
| in a time of | During times when |
| evil | bad things happen |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| famine | a famine |

# Psalms 37:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the wicked will perish, and the enemies of Yahweh {will be} like the precious of pastures; they vanish, in smoke they vanish.* | *But wicked people will die. Those who hate Yahweh will be like wildflowers that look beautiful in the meadows; but then they will disappear {as quickly} as a puff of smoke.* |

ULT **For**
UST But
(כִּי)

David uses the word **For** here to indicate a contrast between the fate of "the blameless" mentioned in vs. 18 and the fate of **the wicked**. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [However,]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

David 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: [those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **{will be} like the precious of pastures**
UST will be like wildflowers that look beautiful in the meadows
(כִּיקַר כָּרִים)

The word translated as **pastures** could also be translated as "rams." So this could refer to: (1) flowers that grow in the meadows and then quickly fade away. Alternate translation: [will be like the flowers of the meadow] or (2) the choicest parts of the ram that is offered for sacrifice. Alternate translation: [will be like the choice parts of rams]

ULT **and the enemies of Yahweh {will be} like the precious of pastures**
UST Those who hate Yahweh will be like wildflowers that look beautiful in the meadows
(וְאֹיְבֵי יְהוָה כִּיקַר כָּרִים)

The point of this comparison is that just as the wildflower in the field or **the precious of pastures** is beautiful but quickly fades away, so **the enemies of Yahweh** will quickly perish. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and the enemies of Yahweh will be like flowers in the meadow that quickly wither]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **{will be} like the precious of pastures**
UST will be like wildflowers that look beautiful in the meadows
(כִּיקַר כָּרִים)

David is using the adjective **precious** 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. Alternate translation: [will be like the beautiful flowers in the pastures]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **they vanish, in smoke they vanish**
UST but then they will disappear {as quickly} as a puff of smoke
(כָּלוּ בֶעָשָׁן כָּלוּ)

David is speaking of the disappearance of the wicked as if they were **smoke** that quickly vanishes. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they disappear completely, they are utterly gone]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the wicked | wicked people |
| will perish | will die |
| and the enemies of | Those who hate |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {will be} like the precious of | will be like wildflowers that look beautiful |

# Psalms 37:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The wicked is borrowing and does not repay, but the righteous is showing grace and giving.* | *Wicked people borrow {money} and never repay {it}, but people who do what is right are generous and give {freely to others}.* |

ULT **The wicked**
UST Wicked people
(רָשָׁע)

David 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: [The wicked person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **but the righteous**
UST but people who do what is right
(וְצַדִּיק)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [but the righteous person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **is showing grace**
UST are generous
(חוֹנֵן)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **grace**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [is acting graciously]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The wicked | Wicked people |
| but the righteous | but people who do what is right |
| is showing grace | are generous |

# Psalms 37:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For those blessed by him will inherit the land, but those cursed by him will be cut off.* | *Moreover, those whom Yahweh blesses will possess the land, but he will destroy those whom he has cursed.* |

ULT **those blessed by him**
UST those whom Yahweh blesses
(מְבֹרָכָיו)

The pronoun **him** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [those blessed by Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **but those cursed by him will be cut off**
UST but he will destroy those whom he has cursed
(וּמְקֻלָלָיו יִכָּרֵתוּ)

The expression **will be cut off** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [but Yahweh will cut off those he has cursed]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **will be cut off**
UST he will destroy
(יִכָּרֵתוּ)

David is using **be cut off** as a common expression of the culture to mean “be destroyed.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [will be destroyed]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| those blessed by him | those whom Yahweh blesses |
| those blessed by him | those whom Yahweh blesses |
| will inherit | will possess |
| the land | the land |
| but those cursed by him | but … those whom he has cursed |

# Psalms 37:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *From Yahweh the steps of a man are established, and he delights in his way.* | *Yahweh directs a person to live securely, and he is pleased with how that person lives.* |

**ULT From Yahweh the steps of a man are established**
UST Yahweh directs a person to live securely
(מֵיְהוָה מְצְעֲדֵי־גֶבֶר כּוֹנָנוּ)

The expression **are established** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh establishes people's steps]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT the steps of a man are established**
UST directs a person to live securely
(מְצְעֲדֵי־גֶבֶר כּוֹנָנוּ)

David is speaking of a person's life course as if it were **steps** that a person walks. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the life of a man is directed]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT a man**
UST a person
(גֶּבֶר)

David is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [each person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**ULT and he delights in his way**
UST and he is pleased with how that person lives
(וְדַרְכּוֹ יֶחְפָּץ)

David 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 helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he delights in the way he lives]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **and he delights in his way**
> UST and he is pleased with how that person lives
> (וְדַרְכּוֹ יֶחְפָּץ)

The pronoun **he** refers to Yahweh, while the pronoun **his** refers to the man. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh delights in that man's way]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| From Yahweh | Yahweh |
| are established | directs … securely |
| he delights in | he is pleased with |

# Psalms 37:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Though he falls, he will not be hurled down, for Yahweh is supporting his hand.* | *Even if something bad happens to that person, he will not completely fail, because Yahweh takes care of him.* |

**ULT Though he falls**
**UST** Even if something bad happens to that person
(כִּי־יִפֹּל)

David is presenting a possible condition, that a righteous man might have something bad happen to him. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that could happen. Alternate translation: [Even if he falls]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

**ULT he falls**
**UST** something bad happens to that person
(יִפֹּל)

The pronoun **he**and **his** in this verse refer to the righteous man described in verse 23. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the righteous man falls]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT he falls**
**UST** something bad happens to that person
(יִפֹּל)

Here David is speaking of the reaction the righteous have to difficult times as if he stumbles and **falls**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he has difficult times]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT he will not be hurled down**
**UST** he will not completely fail
(לֹא־יוּטָל)

The expression **will not be hurled down** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [nothing will hurl him down]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **Yahweh is supporting his hand**
UST Yahweh takes care of him
(יְהוָה סוֹמֵךְ יָדוֹ)

David is speaking of Yahweh's help as if Yahweh were physically holding him up by **supporting his hand**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is helping him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he will … be hurled down | he will … completely fail |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 37:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I was a youth, and I am old, and I have not seen the righteous abandoned or his seed seeking bread.* | *I have been young, and now I am old, but {in all those years} I have never seen Yahweh stop caring for any person who does what is right, nor have I seen such a person's children {needing to} beg for food.* |

ULT **the righteous abandoned**
UST Yahweh stop caring for any person who does what is right
(צַדִּיק נֶעֱזָב)

The word **abandoned** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh abandoning the righteous]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **the righteous**
UST any person who does what is right
(צַדִּיק)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [any righteous person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **or his seed**
UST nor have I seen such a person's children
(וְזַרְעוֹ)

Here David is speaking of the offspring of the righteous person as if they were actually his **seed**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [or his offspring]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **bread**
UST food
(לֶחֶם)

David 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 enough food to eat]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and | and now |
| I am old | I am old |
| the righteous | any person who does what is right |
| abandoned | Yahweh stop caring for |
| or his seed | nor have I seen such a person's children |
| seeking | {needing to} beg for |
| bread | food |

# Psalms 37:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *All the day he is showing grace and lending, and his seed {are} for a blessing.* | *People who do what is right are generous and lend freely {to others} every day, and their children bless others.* |

**ULT he is showing grace**
**UST** People who do what is right are generous
(חוֹנֵן)

The pronoun **he** refers to the righteous person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the righteous person is showing grace]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT he is showing grace**
**UST** People who do what is right are generous
(חוֹנֵן)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **grace**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [he is being gracious]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and his seed**
**UST** and their children
(וְזַרְעוֹ)

Here David is speaking of the offspring of the righteous person as if they were actually his **seed**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and his offspring]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT {are} for a blessing**
**UST** bless others
(לִבְרָכָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **blessing**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [are able to bless others]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he is showing grace | People who do what is right are generous |
| and his seed | and their children |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {are} for a blessing | bless others |

# Psalms 37:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Turn away from evil and do good, and dwell forever.* | *Avoid doing evil and do what is right. If you do that, you {and your descendants} will live in the land forever.* |

**ULT Turn away from evil**
**UST** Avoid doing evil
(סוּר מֵרָע)

David is speaking of **evil** as if it were an object that they should physically **turn away** from. Your language may have a comparable expression you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Stop doing what is bad]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT from evil and do good**
**UST** evil and do what is right
(מֵרָע וַעֲשֵׂה־טּוֹב)

If your language does not use an abstract nouns for the ideas of **evil** and **good**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [from doing evil things and instead do good things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from evil | evil |
| good | what is right |
| and dwell | If you do that, you {and your descendants} will live in the land |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 37:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For Yahweh is loving justice, and he will not abandon his faithful. Forever they are preserved, but the offspring of the wicked will be cut off.* | *Indeed, Yahweh loves it when people do what is just, and he will never stop caring for those who are faithful to him. He will protect them forever, but he will destroy the descendants of wicked people.* |

ULT **justice**
UST when people do what is just
(מִשְׁפָּט)

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]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **his faithful**
UST those who are faithful to him
(אֶת־חֲסִידָיו)

David is using the adjective **faithful** 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: [his faithful people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **they are preserved**
UST He will protect them
(נִשְׁמָרוּ)

The expression **are preserved** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh preserves them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **but the offspring of the wicked will be cut off**
UST but he will destroy the descendants of wicked people
(וְזֶרַע רְשָׁעִים נִכְרֵת)

The expression **will be cut off** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [but Yahweh will cut off the offspring of the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **but the offspring of the wicked**
UST but … the descendants of wicked people
(וְזֶרַע רְשָׁעִים)

David is using the possessive form to describe **offspring** that belong to **the wicked**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [but the children of wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

David 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: [those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **will be cut off**
UST he will destroy
(נִכְרֵת)

David is using **be cut off** as a common expression of the culture to mean "be destroyed." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [will be destroyed]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| is loving | loves it |
| justice | when people do what is just |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he will … abandon | he will … stop caring for |
| his faithful | those who are faithful to him |
| Forever | forever |
| they are preserved | He will protect them |
| but the offspring of | but … the descendants of |
| the wicked | wicked people |

# Psalms 37:29

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The righteous will inherit the land and will dwell forever upon it.* | *People who do what is right will possess the land {that Yahweh gives them} and will live there forever.* |

**ULT The righteous**
**UST** People who do what is right
(צַדִּיקִים)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [Righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The righteous | People who do what is right |
| will inherit | will possess |
| the land | the land {that Yahweh gives them} |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 37:30

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The mouth of the righteous murmurs wisdom, and his tongue speaks justice.* | *People who do what is right speak wisely, and they say what is just.* |

ULT **The mouth of the righteous**
UST People who do what is right
(פִּי־צַדִּיק)

David is using one part of a person, 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 righteous person]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **the righteous**
UST People who do what is right
(צַדִּיק)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the righteous person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **wisdom**
UST wisely
(חָכְמָה)

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: [wise words]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and his tongue speaks justice**
UST and they say what is just
(וּלְשׁוֹנוֹ תְדַבֵּר מִשְׁפָּט)

David is using one part of a person, his **tongue**, to mean all of the righteous person in the act of speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he speaks justice]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **justice**
UST what is just
(מִשְׁפָּט)

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]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the righteous | People who do what is right |
| wisdom | wisely |
| and his tongue | and they say |
| justice | what is just |

# Psalms 37:31

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The law of his God {is} in his heart; his steps will not slip.* | *They continually think about the instructions that their God gave to them; they succeed in living {the way that God wants them to live}.* |

**ULT his God**
**UST** their God gave to them
(אֱלֹהָיו)

David is using the possessive form to describe a **law** that comes from **his God**. Also, by using the phrase **his God** he does not mean that the righteous person possesses or controls Yahweh, but rather to emphasize that Yahweh is the God he worships. See the introduction to Psalms for further discussion. Alternate translation: [The law given by the God whom he worships]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT {is} in his heart**
**UST** They continually think about
(בְּלִבּוֹ)

Here the **his heart** represents where a person's thoughts exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [is always in his thoughts]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT his steps will not slip**
**UST** they succeed in living {the way that God wants them to live}
(לֹא תִמְעַד אֲשֻׁרָיו)

David is speaking as if the righteous person were walking along a path and his **steps** could **slip**. He means that the righteous person will not fail in his conduct. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he will not fail in the way he lives]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The law of | the instructions that |
| his God | their God gave to them |

# Psalms 37:32

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The wicked is watching the righteous and is seeking to kill him.* | *Wicked people observe people who do what is right and look for ways to kill them.* |

**ULT The wicked is watching the righteous**
**UST** Wicked people observe people who do what is right
(צוֹפֶה רָשָׁע לַצַּדִּיק)

David is using the adjectives **wicked** and **righteous** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [The wicked person is watching the righteous person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT to kill him**
**UST** to kill them
(לַהֲמִיתוֹ)

The pronoun **him** refers to the righteous person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [to kill the righteous person]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The wicked | Wicked people |
| is watching | observe |
| the righteous | people who do what is right |
| and is seeking | and look for ways |
| to kill him | to kill them |

# Psalms 37:33

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh will not abandon him into his hand, and will not condemn him when he is judged.* | *But Yahweh will keep protecting them from what the wicked people want to do to them, and he will not let a judge {wrongly} condemn the people who do what is right.* |

ULT **Yahweh will not abandon him into his hand, and will not condemn him when he is judged**

UST But Yahweh will keep protecting them from what the wicked people want to do to them, and he will not let a judge {wrongly} condemn the people who do what is right
(יְהוָה לֹא־יַעַזְבֶנּוּ בְיָדוֹ וְלֹא יַרְשִׁיעֶנּוּ בְּהִשָּׁפְטוֹ)

In this verse, both of uses of the pronoun **him** refer to the righteous person as well as the **he** at the end while the pronoun **his** refers to the wicked person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will not abandon the righteous person into the hand of the wicked person, and will not condemn the righteous person when he is judged]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **into his hand**

UST from what the wicked people want to do to them
(בְיָדוֹ)

Here, **his hand** represents the power of the wicked person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [to the power of the wicked person]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **when he is judged**

UST a judge
(בְּהִשָּׁפְטוֹ)

The expression **is judged** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [when he comes to trial]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | But Yahweh |
| will … abandon him | will keep protecting them |
| will … condemn him | |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| | he will … let … {wrongly} condemn the people who do what is right |
| when he is judged | a judge |
| when he is judged | a judge |

# Psalms 37:34

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Wait for Yahweh and keep his way, and he will raise you up to inherit the land. When the wicked are cut off, you will see {it.}* | *Patiently rely on Yahweh {to help you} and obey what he commands. {If you do that,} he will honor you by giving you the land. When God destroys the wicked people, you will see it happen.* |

ULT **and keep his way**
UST and obey what he commands
(וּשְׁמֹ֣ר דַּרְכּ֑וֹ)

David is speaking of how Yahweh wants a person to live as if that were a **way** or path that the person was walking along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and live how he wants you to live]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **his way**
UST what he commands
(דַּרְכּ֑וֹ)

David is using the possessive form to describe a **way** that belongs to **Yahweh**. He means the way of living that Yahweh prescribes. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the way that Yahweh commands]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **and he will raise you up**
UST {If you do that,} he will honor you
(וְיָרוֹמֵ֥מְךָ)

Here David is speaking of honoring someone as if they were and object that someone would **raise** up. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he will honor you in order for you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **When the wicked are cut off**
UST When God destroys the wicked people
(בְּהִכָּרֵת רְשָׁעִים)

David 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: [When those who are wicked are cut off]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **When the wicked are cut off**
UST When God destroys the wicked people
(בְּהִכָּרֵת רְשָׁעִים)

The expression **are cut off** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh cuts off the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **When the wicked are cut off**
UST When God destroys the wicked people
(בְּהִכָּרֵת רְשָׁעִים)

David is using **cut off** as a common expression of the culture to mean “destroyed.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [When the wicked are destroyed]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and he will raise you up | {If you do that,} he will honor you |
| to inherit | by giving you |
| the land | the land |
| the wicked | the wicked people |

# Psalms 37:35

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have seen a wicked, violent {one}, and spreading himself out like a green native {tree.}* | *I once saw a wicked and tyrannical person who was becoming powerful, like a large tree that was spreading out its branches over its native soil.* |

ULT **and spreading himself out like a green native {tree … }**
UST who was becoming powerful, like a large tree that was spreading out its branches over its native soil
(וּמִתְעָרֶה כְּאֶזְרַח רַעֲנָן)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a green native tree** spreads out and flourishes, so the wicked person was **spreading himself out** and becoming powerful. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [becoming powerful like a flourishing native tree that spreads out]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a wicked | a wicked |
| violent {one} | and tyrannical person |

# Psalms 37:36

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he passed away, and behold, he was not, and I sought him, and he was not found.* | *But then he passed away! Suddenly, he was gone! I looked for him, but he was not there.* |

ULT **And he passed away**
UST But then he passed away
(וַיַּֽעֲבֹר)

The pronouns **he** and **him** throughout this verse refer to the wicked person mentioned in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [And the wicked man passed away]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and he was not found**
UST but he was not there
(וְלֹ֣א נִמְצָ֑א)

The expression **was not found** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [but I could not find him]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and I sought him | I looked for him |

# Psalms 37:37

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Watch the blameless and see the upright, for {there is} a future for the man of peace.* | *Observe {and imitate} people who are honest and who live rightly, because people who live peacefully will have a long life.* |

ULT **the blameless and see the upright**
UST people who are honest and who live rightly
(תָּם וּרְאֵה יָשָׁר)

The psalmist is using the adjectives **blameless** and **upright** as nouns to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these adjectives with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [blameless people and see upright people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **{there is} a future**
UST will have a long life
(אַחֲרִית)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **future**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [there is something good ahead]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **for the man of peace**
UST people who live peacefully
(לְאִישׁ שָׁלוֹם)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **man** that is characterized by **peace**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the peaceful man]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **for the man of peace**
UST people who live peacefully
(לְאִישׁ שָׁלוֹם)

David is not referring to a specific **man**. He means anyone in general who lives peacefully. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [for anyone who lives peacefully]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Watch | Observe {and imitate} |
| the blameless | people who are honest |
| the upright | and who live rightly |
| peace | who live peacefully |

# Psalms 37:38

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But the transgressors are destroyed together; the future of the wicked is cut off.* | *But Yahweh will destroy all people who rebel against him; he will make the lives of wicked people short.* |

ULT **But the transgressors are destroyed**
UST But Yahweh will destroy … people who rebel against him
(וְפֹשְׁעִים נִשְׁמְדוּ)

The expression **are destroyed** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh destroys the transgressors]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **But the transgressors**
UST people who rebel against him
(וְפֹשְׁעִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **transgressors** 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: [the people who transgress]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the future of the wicked is cut off**
UST he will make the lives of wicked people short
(אַחֲרִית רְשָׁעִים נִכְרָתָה)

The expression **is cut off** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh cuts off the future of the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **the future of the wicked**
UST he will make the lives of wicked people short
(אַחֲרִית רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe the future lives that wicked people would have. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the future life of the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist 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: [those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **is cut off**
UST he will make the lives of … short
(נִכְרָתָה)

David is using **cut off** as a common expression of the culture to mean "destroyed." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [is destroyed]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| But the transgressors | people who rebel against him |
| are destroyed | But Yahweh will destroy |
| the wicked | wicked people |

# Psalms 37:39

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And the salvation of the righteous {is} from Yahweh, their fortress in the time of distress.* | *Yahweh saves people who do what is right; he protects them when bad things are happening.* |

ULT **And the salvation of the righteous**
UST saves people who do what is right
(וּתְשׁוּעַת צַדִּיקִים)

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: [And the righteous being saved]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **And the salvation of the righteous**
UST saves people who do what is right
(וּתְשׁוּעַת צַדִּיקִים)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **the salvation** that **the righteous** receive. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [And the salvation that righteous people receive]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the righteous**
UST people who do what is right
(צַדִּיקִים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **their fortress in the time of distress**
UST he protects them when bad things are happening
(מָעוּזָּם בְּעֵת צָרָה)

David is speaking of Yahweh's protection as if it were a **fortress** or a strong building that protects them from enemies. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [their protector in the time of distress]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the time of distress**
UST when bad things are happening
(בְּעֵת צָרָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distress**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [when they are troubled]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And the salvation of | saves |
| the righteous | people who do what is right |
| {is} from Yahweh | Yahweh |
| their fortress | he protects them |
| in the time of | when |
| distress | bad things are happening |

# Psalms 37:40

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And Yahweh helps them and delivers them; he delivers them from the wicked and saves them, because they have taken refuge in him.* | *Yahweh helps them and rescues them from {what} wicked people {want to do to them}. He saves them because they have trusted in him {to help them}.* |

**ULT And Yahweh helps them and delivers them**
**UST** Yahweh helps them and rescues them
(וַיַּעְזְרֵם יְהוָה וַיְפַלְּטֵם)

The pronouns **them** and **they** in this verse refer to the righteous people mentioned in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [And Yahweh helps the righteous and delivers them]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT from the wicked**
**UST** from {what} wicked people {want to do to them}
(מֵרְשָׁעִים)

David 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: [from those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT they have taken refuge in him**
**UST** they have trusted in him {to help them}
(חָסוּ בוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of trusting in Yahweh as if the righteous had **taken refuge in him**, as people take shelter in a safe place. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they have depended on him to keep them safe]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| from the wicked | from {what} wicked people {want to do to them} |
| and saves them | He saves them |
| they have taken refuge | they have trusted |

# Psalms 38

## Psalm 38 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 38 is a “psalm of supplication” or “lament.” It is a confession of sin and a prayer for deliverance.

1. Cry to Yahweh under discipline and distress (1–8)
2. Describe suffering and isolation (9–14)
3. Hope in Yahweh for healing and help (15–22)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### David’s sickness

The psalmist was very sick and his enemies were seeking ways to destroy him.

# Psalms 38:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, do not rebuke me in your anger, nor discipline me in your wrath.* | *Yahweh, please do not correct me angrily; no, please do not punish me wrathfully.* |

ULT **Yahweh, do not rebuke me in your anger, nor discipline me in your wrath**
UST Yahweh, please do not correct me angrily; no, please do not punish me wrathfully
(יְהוָ֗ה אַל־בְּקֶצְפְּךָ֥ תוֹכִיחֵ֑נִי וּבַחֲמָתְךָ֥ תְיַסְּרֵֽנִי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional as in the UST. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, please do not continue to discipline me in your anger]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **in your anger**
UST angrily
(בְּקֶצְפְּךָ֥)

If your language does not use abstract noun for the idea of **anger** you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [when you are angry]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **nor discipline me in your wrath**
UST no, please do not punish me wrathfully
(וּבַחֲמָתְךָ֥ תְיַסְּרֵֽנִי)

If your language does not use abstract noun for the idea of **wrath**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [nor discipline me when you are furious]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| do … rebuke me | please do … correct me |
| nor … in your wrath | no … wrathfully |
| discipline me | please do not punish me |

# Psalms 38:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For your arrows have sunk into me, and your hand has come down on me.* | *{I feel as though} you have shot arrows into me, and that you have struck me with your hand.* |

ULT **your arrows have sunk into me**
UST you have shot arrows into me
(חִצֶּיךָ נָחֲתוּ בִי)

David is speaking of Yahweh's punishment as if it were **arrows** that had pierced him and **sunk into** his flesh. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your punishment has wounded me deeply]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and your hand has come down on me**
UST and that you have struck me with your hand
(וַתִּנְחַת עָלַי יָדֶךָ)

David is using **your hand** as part of a common expression of his culture as seen in Psalm 32:4, "your hand was heavy upon me" to mean that Yahweh has afflicted or disciplined him severely. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and you have afflicted me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

# Psalms 38:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of your indignation; there is no peace in my bones from the face of my sin.* | *Because you are so angry with me, my whole body suffers. My body is restless because I have sinned.* |

ULT **There is no soundness in my flesh from the face of your indignation**
UST Because you are so angry with me, my whole body suffers
(אֵין־מְתֹם בִּבְשָׂרִי מִפְּנֵי זַעְמֶךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **soundness** and **indignation**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [There is no healthy part in my flesh from the face of your anger]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in my flesh**
UST my whole body suffers
(בִּבְשָׂרִי)

David is using **my flesh** to represent his whole body. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my entire body]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **from the face of**
UST Because
(מִפְּנֵי)

David is using **from the face of** as a common expression of the culture to mean “because of” or “on account of.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [because of]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **there is no peace in my bones from the face of my sin**
UST My body is restless because I have sinned
(אֵין־שָׁלוֹם בַּעֲצָמַי מִפְּנֵי חַטָּאתִי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **peace** and **sin**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [there is nothing healthy in my body because I have sinned]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in my bones**
UST My body
(בַּעֲצָמָֽי)

David is using **my bones** to represent his whole body. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my whole body]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **from the face of**
UST because
(מִפָּנֶ֗יךָ)

David is using **from the face of** as a common expression of the culture to mean "because of" or "on account of." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [because of]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| peace | is restless |
| my sin | I have sinned |

# Psalms 38:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For my iniquities have passed over my head; like a heavy burden, they are too heavy for me.* | *Indeed, all my sins {are like flood waters that} rise above my head; they are like a heavy load that is too much for me to bear.* |

ULT **my iniquities have passed over my head**
UST all my sins {are like flood waters that} rise above my head
(עֲוֹנֹתַי עָבְרוּ רֹאשִׁי)

David is speaking of his sins or **iniquities** overwhelming him as if they were flood waters that had **passed over** his head. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my iniquities have overwhelmed me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my iniquities**
UST all my sins
(עֲוֹנֹתַי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **iniquities**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the sins I have committed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my iniquities | all my sins |

# Psalms 38:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My wounds stink, they fester from the face of my foolishness.* | *Because I have acted foolishly, I have sores that keep getting worse and stink.* |

ULT **from the face of**
UST Because
(מִפְּנֵי)

David is using **from the face of** as a common expression of the culture to mean "because of" or "on account of." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [because of]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **my foolishness**
UST I have acted foolishly
(אִוַּלְתִּי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **foolishness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [my foolish sins]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my foolishness | I have acted foolishly |
| my foolishness | I have acted foolishly |

# Psalms 38:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I am twisted; I am bowed down exceedingly; all the day I go about mourning.* | *My body is twisted and bent over very low. I go around sad and grieving constantly.* |

> ULT **I am twisted I am bowed down exceedingly**
> UST My body is twisted and bent over very low
> (נַעֲוֵיתִי שַׁחֹתִי עַד־מְאֹד)

The expressions **am twisted** and **bowed down** are passive verbal forms. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Sickness has twisted my body and made it very bent over]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| mourning | sad and grieving |

# Psalms 38:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For my loins are full of burning, and there is no soundness in my flesh.* | *This is because there is a fever inside me, and my whole body is sick.* |

**ULT my loins are full of burning**
**UST** there is a fever inside me
(כְסָלַי מָלְאוּ נִקְלֶה)

David is speaking as if his physical suffering were a **burning** fire filling his body. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my body is full of feverish pain]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT burning and there is no soundness**
**UST** there is a fever … and … is sick
(נִקְלֶה וְאֵין מָתֹם)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **burning** and **soundness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [fever and there is no healthy part]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT in my flesh**
**UST** my whole body
(בִּבְשָׂרִי)

David is using **my flesh** to represent his whole body. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [anywhere in my body]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my loins | inside me |

# Psalms 38:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I am numb and crushed exceedingly; I roar from the groaning of my heart.* | *I am exhausted and feel completely broken. I moan loudly because I feel so distressed.* |

ULT **I am numb and crushed**
UST I am exhausted and feel … broken
(נָפּוּגוֹתִי וְנִדְכֵּיתִי)

The expressions **am numb** and **crushed** are passive verbal forms. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Sickness has made my body feel numb and broken down]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **from the groaning of my heart**
UST because I feel so distressed
(מִנַּהֲמַת לִבִּי)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's feelings and emotions exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [because of all the anxiety I feel]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from the groaning of | because I feel so distressed |

# Psalms 38:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Lord, all of my desire {is} before you, and my sighing is not hidden from you.* | *Lord, you know everything that I long for, and you hear every time that I sigh.* |

ULT **my desire**
UST that I long for
(תַּאֲוָתִי)

If your language does not use abstract noun for the idea of **desire**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what I desire]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and my sighing is not hidden from you**
UST and you hear every time that I sigh
(וְאַנְחָתִי מִמְּךָ לֹא־נִסְתָּרָה)

The expression **is not hidden** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and you know all my sighing]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **is not hidden from you**
UST you hear every time
(מִמְּךָ לֹא־נִסְתָּרָה)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word **hidden**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [is very clear to you]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Lord | Lord |
| {is} before you | you know |

# Psalms 38:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My heart pounds; my strength has left me, and the light of my eyes—even they {are} not with me.* | *My heart beats rapidly and I am very weak. Even my eyesight is failing me.* |

ULT **my strength has left me**
UST and I am very weak
(עֲזָבַנִי כֹחִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [I am no longer strong]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **my strength has left me**
UST and I am very weak
(עֲזָבַנִי כֹחִי)

David is speaking of **his strength** as if it were a living thing that could walk away and **leave** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my strength has faded away]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **and the light of my eyes—even they {are} not with me**
UST Even my eyesight is failing me
(וְאוֹר־עֵינַי גַּם־הֵם אֵין אִתִּי)

David is speaking of his ability to see as if it were a **light** that was in his **eyes**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and all I can see with my eyes is darkness]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| has left me | and I am very weak |

# Psalms 38:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My loved ones and my friends stand from before my plague, and my relatives stand from afar.* | *My friends and the people I love keep away from me because of my disease; even my own family stays far away from me.* |

ULT **My loved ones and my friends stand from before my plague, and my relatives stand from afar**

UST My friends and the people I love keep away from me because of my disease; even my own family stays far away from me

(אֹהֲבַי ׀ וְרֵעַי מִנֶּגֶד נִגְעִי יַעֲמֹדוּ וּקְרוֹבַי מֵרָחֹק עָמָדוּ)

These two clauses mean basically the same thing. See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of clauses in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [My loved ones all stand far away from me because of my sickness]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My loved ones | and the people I love |
| and my friends | My friends |
| from before | away from me because of |
| my plague | my disease |
| and my relatives | even my own family |

# Psalms 38:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And the seekers of my life lay snares, and the pursuers of my harm speak destructions and mutter treacheries all the day.* | *Those who want to kill me set traps for me, and those who want to harm me talk about how to destroy me and they constantly plot how they will deceive me.* |

ULT **And the seekers of my life lay snares**
UST Those who want to kill me set traps for me
(וּמְבַקְשֵׁי נַפְשִׁי ׀ וַיְנַקְּשׁוּ)

David is speaking as if his enemies' plots were **snares** set to trap an animal. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And the seekers of my life plot against me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the seekers of my life**
UST Those who want to kill me
(מְבַקְשֵׁי נַפְשִׁי)

David is using **the seekers of my life** as a common expression of the culture to mean "those who want to kill me." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all my enemies who want to see me dead]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **destructions and mutter treacheries all the day**
UST how to destroy me and they constantly plot how they will deceive me
(הַוּוֹת וּמִרְמוֹת כָּל־הַיּוֹם יֶהְגּוּ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **destructions** and **treacheries**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [about their plans to destroy me and constantly mutter lies against me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And … lay snares | set traps for me |
| the seekers of | Those who want to kill me |
| and the pursuers of | and those who want to harm me |
| my harm | and those who want to harm me |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| destructions | how to destroy me |

# Psalms 38:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But I {am} like a deaf man; I do not hear, and like a mute man—he does not open his mouth.* | *But I act like someone who is deaf, and I do not listen {to them}. I act like someone who cannot speak, and I say nothing {to them}.* |

**ULT But I**
UST But I act like someone who is deaf
(וַאֲנִי)

David uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between his enemies' hostile actions and his own silence in response. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [However, I]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

**ULT {am} like a deaf man; I do not hear**
UST But I act like someone who is deaf, and I do not listen {to them}
(כֶּחֵרֵשׁ לֹא אֶשְׁמָע)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a deaf man** cannot hear what is said to him, so David deliberately does not listen to his enemies' accusations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [am like a man who deliberately does not hear; I do not pay attention to what they say]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT and like a mute man—he does not open his mouth**
UST I act like someone who cannot speak, and I say nothing {to them}
(וּכְאִלֵּם לֹא יִפְתַּח־פִּיו)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a mute man** cannot speak, so David deliberately does not respond to his enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and I deliberately do not open my mouth to respond to them]

**Support Reference:** Simile

# Psalms 38:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I am like a man who is not hearing, and there are no rebukes in his mouth.* | *I have become like a man who cannot hear and who cannot argue back.* |

**ULT like a man who is not hearing**
**UST** like a man who cannot hear
(כְּאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־שֹׁמֵעַ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a man who is not hearing** does not hear or respond to what is said, so David deliberately does not pay attention to his enemies' words. See how you translated the very similar comparison in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [like a man who does not pay attention to what his enemies are saying]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT and there are no rebukes in his mouth**
**UST** and who cannot argue back
(וְאֵין בְּפִיו תּוֹכָחוֹת)

David is using the term **mouth** to mean speech. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he does not respond to anyone]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| rebukes | and who cannot argue back |

# Psalms 38:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Because for you, Yahweh, I have waited; you, you will answer, Lord my God.* | *{This is} because I wait for you, Yahweh{, to help me}. You will be the one who will respond, Lord my God.* |

**ULT you, you will answer**
**UST** You will be the one who will respond
(אַתָּה תַּעֲנֶה)

David is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you will answer** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that Yahweh alone is the one who will respond to him. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [you alone will answer me]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT my God**
**UST** my God
(אֱלֹהָי)

David is not using the phrase **my God** to mean that he possesses or controls Yahweh, but rather to emphasize that Yahweh is the God he worships. See the introduction to Psalms for further discussion. Alternate translation: [the God whom I worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Lord | Lord |
| my God | my God |

# Psalms 38:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For I said, "Lest they rejoice over me; at the slipping of my foot, they magnify {themselves} against me."* | *{I know this} because I prayed, "Do not let my enemies celebrate over me. Do not let them gloat over me if something bad happens to me."* |

ULT **Lest they rejoice over me; at the slipping of my foot, they magnify {themselves} against me**

UST Do not let my enemies celebrate over me. Do not let them gloat over me if something bad happens to me

(פֶּן־יִשְׂמְחוּ־לִי בְּמוֹט רַגְלִי עָלַי הִגְדִּילוּ)

David is using the word translated as **Lest** to introduce an outcome that he does not want to happen. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that avoiding this outcome is the purpose of the instruction. Alternate translation: [I pray that they will not rejoice over me; at the slipping of my foot, may they not magnify themselves against me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **at the slipping of my foot**

UST if something bad happens to me

(בְּמוֹט רַגְלִי)

David is speaking as if experiencing misfortune were his **footslipping**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [at my misfortune]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **at the slipping of my foot**

UST if something bad happens to me

(בְּמוֹט רַגְלִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **slipping**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [when my foot slips]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **they magnify {themselves} against me**
UST them gloat over me
(עָלַי הִגְדִּילוּ)

David is using **magnify themselves against me** as a common expression of the culture to mean “they exalt themselves over me” or “they gloat over me.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they exalt themselves over me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| they rejoice | my enemies celebrate |
| they magnify {themselves … } | them gloat |

# Psalms 38:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For I am set up for a stumbling, and my pain {is} before me continually.* | *Indeed, I feel that something bad will soon happen, and I am constantly in pain.* |

ULT **I am set up for a stumbling**
UST I feel that something bad will soon happen
(אֲנִי לְצֶלַע נָכוֹן)

David is speaking of experiencing something bad happen as if it were a **stumbling** that he is about to experience. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am about to experience calamity]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| am set up | feel that … will soon happen |
| for a stumbling | something bad |

# Psalms 38:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For I declare my iniquity; I am anxious because of my sin.* | *Certainly, I confess all the wrong things that I have done; I feel terrible about my sin.* |

**ULT my iniquity**
**UST** all the wrong things that I have done
(עֲוֹנִי)

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: [the wrong I have done]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT because of my sin**
**UST** about my sin
(מֵחַטָּאתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **sin**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [because of how sinful I am]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I declare | I confess |
| my iniquity | all the wrong things that I have done |
| because of my sin | about my sin |

# Psalms 38:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But my living enemies are strong, and my haters of falsehood are many.* | *But my vigorous enemies are powerful, and there are many people who hate me for no reason.* |

**ULT my haters of falsehood**
**UST** who hate me for no reason
(שֹׂנְאַי שָׁקֶר)

David is using the possessive form to describe a **hater** that is characterized by **falsehood**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [those who hate me without cause]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| But my … enemies | But my … enemies |

# Psalms 38:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And the repayers of evil in exchange for good accuse me in exchange for my pursuing of good.* | *When I do good things for people, some of them do evil things to me in return. Those people accuse me {of doing evil things}, even though I am trying to do what is right.* |

**ULT And the repayers of evil in exchange for good**
**UST** When I do good things for people, some of them do evil things to me in return
(וּמְשַׁלְּמֵי רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה)

If your language does not use an abstract nouns for the ideas of **evil** and **good**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [And those who treat me evilly for doing good things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT And the repayers of evil**
**UST** some of them do evil things to me
(וּמְשַׁלְּמֵי רָעָה)

David is using the possessive form to describe a **repayer** that is characterized by **evil**. He means those who repay the good things he does for them with evil. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [And those who repay me with evil]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT accuse me in exchange for my pursuing of good**
**UST** Those people accuse me {of doing evil things}, even though I am trying to do what is right
(יִשְׂטְנוּנִי תַּחַת רדופי־טוֹב)

If your language does not use an abstract nouns for the ideas of **pursuing** and **good**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [accuse me falsely even though I pursue doing good things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| evil | evil things |
| good | When I do good things for people |
| good | what is right |

# Psalms 38:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not forsake me, Yahweh; my God, do not be far from me.* | *Yahweh, please do not leave me! My God, please stay near me!* |

ULT **my God**
UST My God
(אֱלֹהָ֑י)

David is not using this possessive form **my God** to indicate that he possesses or controls Yahweh. Rather David is using these words to indicate that Yahweh is the God whom he worships. Alternate translation: [oh God whom I worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **do not be far from me**
UST please stay near me
(אַל־תִּרְחַ֖ק מִמֶּֽנִּי)

David is speaking of a lack of help as if it were being physically **far** from God. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [do not withhold your help from me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Do … forsake me | please do … leave me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my God | My God |

# Psalms 38:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hurry to my help, Lord, my salvation.* | *Come quickly to help me, Lord, you who save me!* |

ULT **Hurry to my help**
UST Come quickly to help me
(חִוּשָׁה לְעֶזְרָתִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please hurry to my help]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **to my help Lord my salvation**
UST to help me Lord you who save me
(לְעֶזְרָתִי אֲדֹנָי תְּשׁוּעָתִי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **help** and **salvation**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [to help me, Lord, the one who saves me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Lord | Lord |
| my salvation | you who save me |

# Psalms 39

## Psalm 39 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 39 is a “psalm of supplication” or “lament.” See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about “psalms of supplication” or “laments.”

1. Struggle with silence and the weight of life (1–6)
2. Place hope in Yahweh alone (7–11)
3. Plead for mercy in light of life’s shortness (12–13)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Life

Life on earth is short. The psalmist wanted God’s healing so he can enjoy the rest of his life.

This psalm shares some characteristics of a wisdom book called Ecclesiastes but is more positive.

# Psalms 39:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on Jeduthun. A psalm of David.* | *This is a note to the worship leader: David wrote this song. Perform in the style of Jeduthun.* |

**ULT For the chief musician**
**UST** This is a note to the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**ULT on Jeduthun**
**UST** Perform in the style of Jeduthun
(לִֽידוּתֽוּן)

**Jeduthun** was a Levite who was one of the worship leaders in the temple during the reign of David. The expression **on Jeduthun** could mean: (1) that David gave this song to Jeduthun and his choir to perform. Alternate translation: [for Jeduthun's choir] or (2) that singers were to perform this song in the style of Jeduthun's choir. Alternate translation: [perform in the style of Jeduthun]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm | this song |
| of David | David wrote |

# Psalms 39:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I said, "Let me guard my ways from sinning with my tongue. Let me guard a muzzle for my mouth while the wicked {is} before me."* | *I thought to myself, "I must be very careful about how I act so that I do not sin by what I say. I must keep myself from speaking while wicked people are near me."* |

ULT **I said**
UST I thought to myself
(אָמַ֥רְתִּי)

The phrase **I said** is here represented as introducing a direct quotation although it was likely an unspoken thought. In your translation, use a natural way of introducing unspoken thoughts in your language as modeled in the UST. It may not be necessary to represent this phrase explicitly.

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **Let me guard my ways**
UST I must be very careful about how I act
(אֶשְׁמְרָ֣ה דְרָכַ֑י)

This is an imperative, but it communicates David's personal resolve rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a personal resolve for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates a personal resolve. Alternate translation: [I resolve to guard my ways]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Let me guard my ways**
UST I must be very careful about how I act
(אֶשְׁמְרָ֣ה דְרָכַ֑י)

David is speaking of his behavior as if it were paths or **ways** where there could be a **guard** posted to control access. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [control my conduct]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **from sinning with my tongue**
UST so that I do not sin by what I say
(מֵֽחָטָ֥וא בִלְשׁוֹנִֽי)

David is using the term **tongue** to mean speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from sinning by what I say]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Let me guard a muzzle for my mouth**
UST I must keep myself from speaking
(אֶשְׁמְרָ֣ה לְפִ֣י מַחְסֹ֑ום)

David is speaking of restraining his speech as if he were putting a **muzzle** on his **mouth** like one would muzzle an animal. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will keep silent]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let me guard | I must be very careful |
| from sinning | so that I do not sin |
| with my tongue | by what I say |
| the wicked | wicked people |

# Psalms 39:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I was mute {with} silence; I was silent from good, and my pain was stirred up.* | *So I kept completely silent; I did not say anything, not even anything good, but my suffering only became worse.* |

ULT **{with} silence**
UST So I kept completely silent
(דוּמִיָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **silence**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [by not saying a word]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **I was silent from good**
UST I did not say anything, not even anything good
(הֶחֱשֵׁיתִי מִטּוֹב)

David 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 refrained from saying anything good]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and my pain was stirred up**
UST but my suffering only became worse
(וּכְאֵבִי נֶעְכָּר)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **pain**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and my suffering increased]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and my pain was stirred up**
UST but my suffering only became worse
(וּכְאֵבִי נֶעְכָּר)

The expression **was stirred up** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and my silence only made my pain worse]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and my pain**
UST but my suffering
(וְכְאֵבִי)

David uses the word **and** here to indicate a contrast rather than adding information. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [but instead, my pain]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from good | I did not say anything, not even anything good |
| was stirred up | only became worse |

# Psalms 39:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My heart became hot within me; in my sighing, fire burned. I spoke with my tongue:* | *I felt very agitated inside me; the more I pondered, the more agonized I became. Then finally I spoke and said,* |

**ULT My heart became hot within me**
**UST** I felt very agitated inside me
(חַם־לִבִּי ׀ בְּקִרְבִּי)

David is speaking of his intense emotions as if his **heart became hot** like something burning with fire. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I burned with anxiety within me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT in my sighing**
**UST** the more I pondered
(בַּהֲגִיגִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **sighing**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the more I was distressed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT fire burned**
**UST** the more agonized I became
(תִּבְעַר־אֵשׁ)

David is speaking of his emotional turmoil as if **fire burned** within him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my distress intensified]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT I spoke with my tongue**
**UST** Then finally I spoke and said
(דִּבַּרְתִּי בִלְשׁוֹנִי)

The phrase **I spoke with my tongue** introduces a direct quotation that begins in the next verse. In your translation, use a natural way of introducing direct quotations in your language. Alternate translation: [I finally said,]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

> ULT **I spoke with my tongue**
> UST Then finally I spoke and said
> (דִּבַּרְתִּי בִלְשׁוֹנִי)

David is using the term **tongue** to mean speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I spoke these words]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| with my tongue | and said |

# Psalms 39:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“Make me know my end, Yahweh, and the measure of my days, what it {is}. May I know how transient I {am.}* | *“Yahweh, let me know when I will die. Tell me how many days I have left to live. Help me to understand how short my life really is.* |

ULT **Make me know my end, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh, let me know when I will die
(הוֹדִ֣יעֵנִ֣י יְהוָ֣ה ׀ קִצִּ֑י)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please let me know my end, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **my end**
UST when I will die
(קִצִּ֑י)

David 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 life will end]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Make me know | let me know |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 39:5

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Behold, you have given my days {as} handbreadths, and my lifetime {is} as nothing before you. Surely every man stands {as} all vapor. Selah* | *Indeed, you have made my days very few; the time that I have to live is practically nothing to you. Truly, every person appears and disappears as quickly as vapor. Selah* |

**ULT you have given my days {as} handbreadths**
**UST** you have made my days very few
(טְפָחוֹת ׀ נָתַתָּה יָמָי)

David is speaking of his life span as if it were **days** that could be measured out in **handbreadths** of time, a very small measure. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you have made my lifetime as short as a handbreadth]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and my lifetime {is} as nothing before you**
**UST** the time that I have to live is practically nothing to you
(וְחֶלְדִּי כְאַיִן נֶגְדֶּךָ)

David says **my lifetime is as nothing before you** as an extreme statement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [and my lifetime is extremely brief from your point of view]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

**ULT every man stands {as} all vapor**
**UST** every person appears and disappears as quickly as vapor
(כָּל־הֶבֶל כָּל־אָדָם נִצָּב)

The point of this comparison is that just as the time that a man **stands** or lives is frail and transient, so is **vapor** or a mere breath. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [each man's life is frail and transient]

**Support Reference:** Simile

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| stands | appears and disappears |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 39:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Surely a man walks about as an image; surely they make an uproar for vapor. He heaps up and does not know who will be gathering them.* | *Truly, each person does not do anything more substantial than a shadow would do. Truly, people become agitated about things that do not matter. They pile up {wealth}, but they do not know who will get it {after they die}.* |

ULT **a man walks about as an image**
UST each person does not do anything more substantial than a shadow would do
(בְּצֶלֶם ׀ יִתְהַלֶּךְ־אִישׁ)

The point of this comparison is that just as an **image** is insubstantial and fleeting, so is a person's life. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [a man walks about but has no real substance]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **a man walks about**
UST each person does not do anything more substantial
(יִתְהַלֶּךְ־אִישׁ)

Here David is speaking of people going through life as if it were **a man** who **walks about**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [people go through life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **a man**
UST each person
(אִישׁ)

David is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [a person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **surely they make an uproar for vapor**
UST Truly, people become agitated about things that do not matter
(אַךְ־הֶבֶל יֶהֱמָיוּן)

David is speaking of people's pursuits as if they were **vapor**, something futile and insubstantial. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [surely they make an uproar over what is futile and worthless]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **they make an uproar**
UST people become agitated
(יֶהֱמָיוּן)

The pronoun **they** refers to people in general. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [everyone bustles around]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **He heaps up**
UST They pile up {wealth}
(יִצְבֹּר)

David assumes that readers will know that by **heaps up** he means acquiring a lot of possessions. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [He acquires possessions]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **who will be gathering them**
UST who will get it {after they die}
(מִי־אֹסֵף)

The pronoun **them** refers to the things that the person has heaped up. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [who will be getting all of those things]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| does … know | they do … know |
| will be gathering them | will get it {after they die} |

# Psalms 39:7

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And now, what do I wait for, Lord? My hope, it {is} for you.* | *So now, Lord, I realize that it is useless for me to expect any person to make my life purposeful. You are the only one who can do anything worthwhile for me.* |

ULT **And now**
UST So now
(וְעַתָּה)

The word **And** here introduces a transition from David's reflection on the brevity of life to his direct appeal to God. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [Now then]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **what do I wait for, Lord**
UST Lord, I realize that it is useless for me to expect any person to make my life purposeful
(מַה־קִּוִּיתִי אֲדֹנָי)

David is using the question form to emphasize that there is nothing worth waiting for apart from God. 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: [there is nothing I should wait for, Lord!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **My hope**
UST You are the only one who can do anything worthwhile for me
(תּוֹחַלְתִּי)

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: [What I wait hopefully for]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Lord | Lord |
| My hope | You are the only one who can do anything worthwhile for me |

# Psalms 39:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Deliver me from all my transgressions; do not make me the reproach of a fool.* | *Please save me from all the ways that I sin against you. Do not let me be someone whom foolish people ridicule.* |

ULT **from all my transgressions**
UST from all the ways that I sin against you
(מִכָּל־פְּשָׁעַי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **transgressions**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from all the ways I have sinned against you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the reproach of a fool**
UST whom foolish people ridicule
(חֶרְפַּת נָבָל)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **reproach**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [someone whom a fool insults]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my transgressions | that I sin against you |
| the reproach of | ridicule |
| a fool | whom foolish people |

# Psalms 39:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I am mute; I do not open my mouth, for you, you have done {it}.* | *I kept silent and did not say anything, because {I knew that} you were the one who caused {me to suffer}.* |

ULT **I am mute; I do not open my mouth, for you, you have done {it … }**
UST I kept silent and did not say anything, because {I knew that} you were the one who caused {me to suffer … }
(נֶאֱלַמְתִּי לֹא אֶפְתַּח־פִּי כִּי אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ)

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 you have done it, I am mute; I do not open my mouth]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **I do not open my mouth**
UST and did not say anything
(לֹא אֶפְתַּח־פִּי)

The expression **I do not open my mouth** represents David choosing not to speak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I do not say anything]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **for you, you have done {it … }**
UST because {I knew that} you were the one who caused {me to suffer}
(כִּי אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ)

David is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you have done** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that it is Yahweh who is responsible for what has happened. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [because of what you specifically have done]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

# Psalms 39:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Remove your plague from upon me; from the blow of your hand, I, I am finished.* | *{But now,} please stop punishing me! As for me, because you have afflicted me, I am about to die.* |

ULT **Remove your plague from upon me**
UST {But now,} please stop punishing me
(הָסֵר מֵעָלַי נִגְעֶךָ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please remove your plague from upon me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **from the blow of your hand**
UST because you have afflicted me
(מִתִּגְרַת יָדְךָ)

David is using **your hand** as part of a common expression of his culture as seen in Psalm 32:4, "your hand was heavy upon me" to mean that Yahweh has afflicted or disciplined him severely. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the way you have afflicted me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **I, I am finished**
UST As for me … I am about to die
(אֲנִי כָלִיתִי)

David is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **I am finished** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize his own desperate condition. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [indeed, I am finished]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your plague | {But now,} please stop punishing me |

# Psalms 39:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *With rebukes on account of iniquity you discipline a man, and you dissolve like a moth his desired thing. Surely all mankind {is} vapor. Selah* | *When you correct a person for the wrong things that he has done, you destroy what he treasures, just as moths destroy clothing. Truly, every person lives only a very short time. Selah* |

ULT **With rebukes**
UST When you correct … for the wrong things that he has done
(בְּתוֹכָחוֹת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **rebukes**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [By rebuking a man]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **on account of iniquity**
UST When you correct … for the wrong things that he has done
(עַל־עָוֹן)

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: [for the sinful things he has done]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **you discipline a man**
UST When you correct a person for the wrong things that he has done
(יִסַּרְתָּ אִישׁ)

David is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [you discipline a person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **and you dissolve like a moth his desired thing**
UST you destroy what he treasures, just as moths destroy clothing
(וַתֶּמֶס כָּעָשׁ חֲמוּדוֹ)

The point of this comparison is that just as a **moth** gradually destroys clothing, so Yahweh destroys what a person treasures. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and like a moth destroys clothing, you dissolve the things he desires]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **Surely all mankind {is} vapor**
UST Truly, every person lives only a very short time
(אַךְ הֶבֶל כָּל־אָדָם)

David is speaking of all human existence as if it were **vapor** that quickly disappears. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. See how you translated the similar phrase “every man stands as all vapor” in verse 5. Alternate translation: [Surely all mankind lives but a short time]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| With rebukes | When you correct … for the wrong things that he has done |
| iniquity | When you correct … for the wrong things that he has done |
| and you dissolve | you destroy … just as moths destroy clothing |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 39:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hear my prayer, Yahweh, and give ear to my cry for help. Do not be deaf to my weeping, for I {am} a sojourner with you, a foreigner like all my fathers.* | *Yahweh, please hear me as I pray {to you} and listen {to me} when I cry out for help. Do not ignore my tears, because I am only living before you {on the earth} for a short time, a temporary resident, just like all of my ancestors.* |

ULT **my prayer**
UST as I pray {to you}
(תְּפִלָּתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **prayer**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what I pray]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and give ear to**
UST listen {to me}
(הַאֲזִינָה)

David is using the term **ear** to mean hearing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and hear]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Do not be deaf**
UST Do not ignore
(אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word **deaf**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [Please pay attention]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

ULT **I {am} a sojourner with you, a foreigner**
UST I am only living before you {on the earth} for a short time, a temporary resident
(גֵּר אָנֹכִי עִמָּךְ תּוֹשָׁב)

David is speaking of his temporary time on earth as if he were a **sojourner** and a **foreigner** who is only passing through. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am only passing through with you, a temporary visitor]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my fathers**
UST my ancestors
(אֲבוֹתָי)

David is using the term **fathers** to mean "ancestors." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my forebears]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my prayer | as I pray {to you} |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my cry for help | and … when I cry out for help |
| be deaf | Do … ignore |
| to my weeping | my tears |
| {am} a sojourner | am only living … {on the earth} for a short time |
| a foreigner | a temporary resident |

# Psalms 39:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Look away from me that I may be cheerful before I go and I am no more.”* | *Please leave me alone in order that I may be happy {for awhile} before I die.”* |

ULT **Look away from me that I may be cheerful**
UST Please leave me alone in order that I may be happy {for awhile}
(הָשַׁע מִמֶּנִּי וְאַבְלִיגָה)

Here, **that** marks **I may be cheerful** as the goal or purpose of David’s request for Yahweh to **Look away** from him. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [Turn your angry gaze away from me so that I may be cheerful]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **I go and I am no more**
UST I die
(אֵלֵךְ וְאֵינֶנִּי)

David is referring to dying in a polite way by using the phrase **I go and I am no more**. Depending on what is helpful for your readers, you could use a polite way of referring to this in your language, or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [I pass away]

**Support Reference:** Euphemism

# Psalms 40

## Psalm 40 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 40 is considered to be one of the “psalms of praise.” At the same time, it is a “messianic psalm” that looks forward to the triumph of Jesus Christ. The writer of Hebrews (Hebrews 10:5–7) applies this passage (Psalm 40:6–8) to Jesus using the ancient Greek version. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Praise Yahweh for past deliverance (1–5)
2. Commit to obey Yahweh’s will (6–10)
3. Ask Yahweh for continued help and rescue (11–17)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Sacrifices

God is not interested in sacrifices but wants people to obey him and fulfill his plans for them.

# Psalms 40:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; of David; a psalm* | *A note for the worship leader: David wrote this psalm.* |

> ULT **For the chief musician**
> UST A note for the worship leader
> (לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of David | David |
| a psalm | wrote this psalm |

# Psalms 40:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Waiting, I waited for Yahweh, and he inclined to me and heard my cry.* | *I patiently waited for Yahweh {to help me,} and he was attentive to me and listened when I called out to him.* |

ULT **Waiting, I waited for**
UST I patiently waited for
(קַוֹּה קִוִּיתִי)

David is repeating forms of the verb **wait** in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [I waited expectantly for]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

ULT **and he inclined to me**
UST and he was attentive to me
(וַיֵּט אֵלָי)

David is speaking of Yahweh's attentive concern for him as if Yahweh were physically bending down or **inclined** toward him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he paid close attention to me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and heard**
UST and listened
(וַיִּשְׁמַע)

David assumes that readers will know that by **heard** he means means Yahweh listened and responded favorably to his prayer. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and responded to]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **my cry**
UST when I called out to him
(שַׁוְעָתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **cry**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [me cry out]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh {to help me … } |
| my cry | when I called out to him |

# Psalms 40:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he brought me up from the pit of tumult, from the mud of the mire, and he set my feet on a rock; he established my steps.* | *When bad things were happening to me, it was as though I was in a dangerous pit that was full of mud and slime but he rescued me from those terrible things as though he had lifted me out of the pit and set me onto a solid rock where I could stand securely.* |

ULT **And he brought me up**
UST but he rescued me from … as though he had lifted me out of
(וַיַּעֲלֵנִי)

Here David is speaking Yahweh's rescuing him from a terrible situation as if he were lifted or **brought up** from a deep hole. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And he saved me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **from the pit of tumult**
UST When bad things were happening to me, it was as though I was in a dangerous pit … those terrible things … the pit
(מִבּוֹר שָׁאוֹן)

David is speaking as if his distress were a deep **pit** from which he could not escape. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the terrible danger I was in]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **from the pit of tumult**
UST When bad things were happening to me, it was as though I was in a dangerous pit … those terrible things … the pit
(מִבּוֹר שָׁאוֹן)

David is using the possessive form to describe a **pit** that is characterized by **tumult**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from the tumultuous pit]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **from the mud of the mire**
UST that was full of mud and slime
(מִטִּיט הַיָּוֵן)

David is speaking as if his desperate situation were **mud** and **mire** from which he could not free himself. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the terrible situation in which I was stuck]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and he set my feet on a rock**
UST and set me onto a solid rock
(וַיָּקֶם עַל־סֶלַע רַגְלָי)

David is speaking as if Yahweh's deliverance were Yahweh physically placing his **feet on a rock**, giving him stability and safety. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he made me stable and safe]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **he established my steps**
UST where I could stand securely
(כּוֹנֵן אֲשֻׁרָי)

David is speaking as if his way of living were **steps** that Yahweh made firm. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he made my way of life secure]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| from the pit of | When bad things were happening to me, it was as though I was in a … pit … those terrible things … the pit |
| tumult | dangerous |

# Psalms 40:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he put a new song in my mouth, praise to our God. Many will see and will fear and will trust in Yahweh.* | *He gave me reason to sing a new song, praising him, our God. Many people will see {what he did for me} and will revere him and will trust in Yahweh.* |

ULT **And he put a new song in my mouth**
UST He gave me reason to sing a new song
(וַיִּתֵּן בְּפִי ׀ שִׁיר חָדָשׁ)

David is speaking of Yahweh giving him reason to sing a song of praise as if **a new song** were a physical object that he placed into his **mouth**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And he made me want to sing a different song of]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **praise to our God**
UST praising him, our God
(תְּהִלָּה לֵאלֹהֵינוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a song that says that our God is great]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to our God**
UST our God
(לֵאלֹהֵינוּ)

David is not using the possessive form **our God** to indicate that he and his people possess or control Yahweh. Rather David is using these words to indicate that Yahweh is the God whom they worship. Alternate translation: [to the God we worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **Many will see and will fear**
UST Many people will see {what he did for me} and will revere him
(יִרְאוּ רַבִּים וְיִירָאוּ)

David 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: [Many people will see what God has done for me and will reverence him]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **Many**
UST Many people
(רַבִּים)

David is using the adjective **Many** 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [There will be many people who]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| praise | praising him |
| to our God | our God |
| and will fear | and will revere him |
| and will trust | and will trust in |
| in Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 40:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The happinesses of the man who has made Yahweh his trust, and has not turned to the proud and the goers aside to falsehood!* | *What a good life the person has who trusts confidently in Yahweh and does not imitate proud people who are loyal to what is false.* |

ULT **The happinesses of the man**
UST What a good life the person has
(אַשְׁרֵי הַגֶּבֶר)

David is using the phrase **The happinesses of** to express a strong feeling of admiration for those who trust in Yahweh. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. If not, you could express the idea of how fortunate such a person is. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy is the person]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **the man**
UST the person
(הַגֶּבֶר)

David is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [the one]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **his trust**
UST trusts confidently in
(מִבְטַחוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **trust**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the one he relies on]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and has not turned to the proud**
UST and does not imitate proud people
(וְלֹא־פָנָה אֶל־רְהָבִים)

David is speaking as if choosing to follow or trust the proud were physically having **turned** to face them. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [has not put his trust in the proud]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the proud**
UST proud people
(רְהָבִ֑ים)

David is using the adjective **proud** 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: [arrogant people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and the goers aside to falsehood**
UST who are loyal to what is false
(וְשָׂטֵ֖י כָּזָֽב)

By **the goers aside**, David means "those who have gone astray after falsehood." You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and those who follow after falsehood]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **falsehood**
UST what is false
(כָּזָֽב)

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: [lies]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The happinesses of | What a good life … has |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| his trust | trusts confidently in |
| has … turned | does … imitate |
| the proud | proud people |
| falsehood | what is false |

# Psalms 40:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Many {things} you have done, you, Yahweh my God, your wonderful deeds and your thoughts toward us; there is none to line up against you. Should I declare and speak {them}, they are more than to recount.* | *Yahweh my God, you are the one who has done many wonderful things and made {great} plans for us! No one compares to you. If I tried to tell others about all of those wonderful things, there would be too many for me to mention.* |

ULT **Many {things} you have done, you, Yahweh my God**
UST Yahweh my God, you are the one who has done many
(רַבּוֹת עָשִׂיתָ ׀ אַתָּה ׀ יְהוָה אֱלֹהַי)

David is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you have done** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that Yahweh is the one who performed these wonderful deeds. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [For it is you, Yahweh my God, who has done many things]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Yahweh my God**
UST Yahweh my God
(יְהוָה אֱלֹהַי)

David is not using the possessive form **my God** to indicate that he possesses or controls Yahweh. Rather David is using these words to indicate that Yahweh is the God whom he worships. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, the God I worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **and your thoughts toward us**
UST and made {great} plans for us
(וּמַחְשְׁבֹתֶיךָ אֵלֵינוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **thoughts**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and what you have planned for us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **there is none to line up against you**
UST No one compares to you
(אֵין ׀ עָרֹךְ אֵלָיִךְ)

The clause translated as **there is none to line up against you** could refer to: (1) anyone who might compare to Yahweh. Alternate translation: [there is no one to compare to you] or (2) all of the things that Yahweh has done, that cannot be listed. Alternate translation: [there is no way to enumerate them to you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **they are more than to recount**
UST there would be too many for me to mention
(עָצְמוּ מִסַּפֵּר)

David says **they are more than to recount** as an extreme statement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [there are too many to count]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **Should I declare and speak {them}**
UST If I tried to tell others about all of those wonderful things
(אַגִּידָה וַאֲדַבֵּרָה)

The terms **declare** and **speak** mean similar things. David 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: [Should I be able to tell all about those deeds]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **they are more than to recount**
UST there would be too many for me to mention
(עָצְמוּ מִסַּפֵּר)

The pronoun **they** refers to all Yahweh's wonderful deeds and plans. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [all those wonderful deeds are more than can be recounted]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my God | my God |
| your wonderful deeds | wonderful things |
| Should I declare | If I tried to tell others about all of those wonderful things |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and speak {them} | If I tried to tell others about all of those wonderful things |

# Psalms 40:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sacrifice and grain offering you have not desired; ears you have dug for me. Burnt offering and sin offering you have not asked for.* | *It is not the sacrifices and offerings that you have wanted {from me}; instead, you gave me the ability to hear and obey you. Burnt offerings and sin offerings are not what you require {to forgive my sins}.* |

ULT **ears you have dug for me**

UST instead, you gave me the ability to hear and obey you

(אָזְנַיִם כָּרִיתָ לִּי)

David is using **ears you have dug for me** as a common expression of the culture to mean "you gave me the ability to hear and obey you." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you have given me ears to hear] or [you have made me able to listen to you]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Sacrifice | It is … the sacrifices |
| and grain offering | and offerings |
| you have … desired | that you have wanted {from me} |
| Burnt offering | Burnt offerings |
| and sin offering | and sin offerings |
| and sin offering | and sin offerings |

# Psalms 40:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then I said, "Behold, I have come; in the scroll of the book it is written about me.* | *So I said, "Yahweh, here I am, {ready to do the things that} the scroll of your instruction says about me."* |

**ULT Behold**
**UST** Yahweh, here I am
(הִנֵּה)

David is using the term **Behold** to call attention to what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Look]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT it is written about me**
**UST** says about me
(כָּתוּב עָלָי)

The expression **it is written about me** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [a prophet has written about me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the scroll of | the scroll of your instruction |
| the book | the scroll of your instruction |

# Psalms 40:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To do your will, my God, I have delighted, and your law {is} in the midst of my inward parts."* | *My God, I gladly do what you desire; I deeply treasure your instruction.* |

ULT **your will**
UST what you desire
(רְצוֹנְךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **will**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what you want]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **my God**
UST My God
(אֱלֹהָי)

David is not using the possessive form **my God** to indicate that he possesses or controls Yahweh. Rather David is using these words to indicate that Yahweh is the God whom he worships. Alternate translation: [the God I worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **and your law {is} in the midst of my inward parts**
UST I deeply treasure your instruction
(וְתוֹרָתְךָ בְּתוֹךְ מֵעָי)

David is speaking as if his deep commitment to Yahweh's law were that law being physically present **in the midst of** his **inward parts**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I am deeply committed to keeping your law]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your will | what you desire |
| my God | My God |
| I have delighted | I gladly |
| and your law {is} | your instruction |

# Psalms 40:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have proclaimed righteousness in the great assembly; behold, I will not restrain my lips. Yahweh, you, you know.* | *Whenever your people gather together in the large congregation, I tell them about the righteous things {that you do}. Indeed, Yahweh, certainly you know that I do not stop talking {about this}.* |

ULT **righteousness**
UST the righteous things {that you do}
(צֶדֶק)

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: [that you are righteous]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **behold**
UST Indeed
(הִנֵּה)

See how you translated the similar expression in 40:7.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **I will not restrain my lips**
UST that I do not stop talking {about this}
(שְׂפָתַי לֹא אֶכְלָא)

Here, **my lips** represents David's speech. By saying he will not **restrain** them, David means he will not stop speaking about Yahweh's righteousness. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I will not stop telling others]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Yahweh, you, you know**
UST Yahweh, certainly you know
(יְהוָה אַתָּה יָדָעְתָּ)

David is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you know** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that Yahweh himself is fully aware of David's faithfulness. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [Yawheh, you know this is true]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| I have proclaimed | I tell them about |
| righteousness | the righteous things {that you do} |
| in the great | Whenever your people gather together in the … congregation |
| assembly | large |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| you know | you know |

# Psalms 40:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have not concealed your righteousness in the midst of my heart; I have declared your faithfulness and your salvation. I have not hidden your covenant faithfulness and your trustworthiness from the great assembly.* | *I have not kept to myself {the good news} that you are righteous; I have told the large gathering of your people that you are faithful and that you save us. I have not hidden from them that you faithfully love us and are always trustworthy.* |

ULT **your righteousness**
UST {the good news} that you are righteous
(צִדְקָתְךָ)

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: [your righteous acts]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in the midst of my heart**
UST I have not kept to myself
(בְּתוֹךְ לִבִּי)

David is using **heart** to mean the place where his thoughts and intentions exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [just within my own thoughts]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **your faithfulness and your salvation**
UST that you are faithful and that you save us
(אֱמוּנָתְךָ וּתְשׁוּעָתֶךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **faithfulness** and **salvation**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [how faithful you are and how you have saved us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your covenant faithfulness and your trustworthiness**
UST that you faithfully love us and are always trustworthy
(חַסְדְּךָ וַאֲמִתְּךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant faithfulness** and **trustworthiness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [how you faithfully keep your covenant and how trustworthy you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your righteousness | {the good news} that you are righteous |
| I have declared | I have told |
| your faithfulness | that you are faithful |
| and your salvation | and that you save us |
| your covenant faithfulness | that you faithfully love us |
| and your trustworthiness | and are always trustworthy |
| from the … assembly | the … gathering of your people … from them |

# Psalms 40:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You, Yahweh, will not withhold your compassion from me; your covenant faithfulness and your trustworthiness will continually preserve me.* | *Yahweh, you will not stop being merciful to me. Because you faithfully love me and are always trustworthy, {I know that} you will continually protect me.* |

ULT **your compassion**
UST being merciful
(רַחֲמֶיךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **compassion**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [being compassionate]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your covenant faithfulness and your trustworthiness**
UST Because you faithfully love me and are always trustworthy
(חַסְדְּךָ וַאֲמִתְּךָ)

See how you translated the same abstract nouns in verse 10.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| your compassion | being merciful |
| your covenant faithfulness | Because you faithfully love me |
| and your trustworthiness | and are always trustworthy |

# Psalms 40:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For evils have surrounded me until there is no number; my iniquities have overtaken me, and I am not able to see. They are more numerous than the hairs of my head, and my heart has abandoned me.* | *I assure myself of this because so many bad things are happening to me that it seems that I cannot even count them. the wrong things that I have done are now affecting me badly, and I cannot see {a way to fix them}. It seems that they are more numerous than the hairs on my head, and I am very discouraged.* |

ULT **evils**
UST so many bad things
(רָעֹ֑ות)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evils**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [evil things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **have surrounded me**
UST are happening to me
(אָפְפ֖וּ־עָלָֽי)

Here David is speaking of bad things happening to him as if they were objects that **surrounded** him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [are constantly happening all around me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **until there is no number**
UST that it seems that I cannot even count them
(עַד־אֵ֣ין מִסְפָּ֑ר)

David says **until there is no number** as an extreme statement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [there are too many to count]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **my iniquities have overtaken me**
UST the wrong things that I have done are now affecting me badly
(הִשִּׂיגֻנִי עֲוֹנֹתָי)

Here David is speaking his sins overwhelming him as if they were actually something chasing after and having caught up or **overtaken** him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my sins have caught up with me] or [my iniquities have overwhelmed me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my iniquities**
UST the wrong things that I have done
(עֲוֹנֹתָי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **iniquities**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the sins I have committed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and I am not able to see**
UST and I cannot see {a way to fix them}
(וְלֹא־יָכָלְתִּי לִרְאוֹת)

David 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 am not able to see a way out]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **They are more numerous than the hairs of my head**
UST It seems that they are more numerous than the hairs on my head
(עָצְמוּ מִשַּׂעֲרוֹת רֹאשִׁי)

David says **more numerous than the hairs of my head** as an extreme statement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [They are too many for me to count]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **and my heart has abandoned me**
UST and I am very discouraged
(וְלִבִּי עֲזָבָנִי)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts and emotions exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and my courage has failed me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| evils | so many bad things |
| my iniquities | the wrong things that I have done |
| has abandoned me | and I am very discouraged |

# Psalms 40:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Be pleased, Yahweh, to rescue me; Yahweh, hurry to my help.* | *Yahweh, please rescue me! Yahweh, please come quickly to help me!* |

ULT **Be pleased Yahweh to rescue me Yahweh hurry to my help**
UST Yahweh, please rescue me! Yahweh, please come quickly to help me
(רְצֵה יְהוָה לְהַצִּילֵנִי יְהוָה לְעֶזְרָתִי חוּשָׁה)

These lines are imperatives, but they communicate a polite request or prayer rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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 as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **to my help**
UST to help me
(לְעֶזְרָתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **help**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to rescue me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Be pleased | please |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| to rescue me | rescue me |

# Psalms 40:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let them have shame and have disgrace together, the seekers of my life to sweep it away. Let them be turned back and be confounded, those pleased with my harm.* | *May God completely disgrace all of the people who want to kill me. May God frustrate the people who want me to suffer and may he humiliate them.* |

ULT **Let them have shame and have disgrace together**
UST May God completely disgrace all of
(יֵבֹ֣שׁוּ וְיַחְפְּר֣וּ ׀ יַחַד)

By using **Let** in each of the phrases in this and the following verses, David is expressing what he desires or prays will happen. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants to happen. Alternate translation: [I desire that they all have shame and disgrace]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **Let them have shame**
UST May God completely disgrace
(יֵבֹ֣שׁוּ)

The pronoun **them** here and in the next several verses refers to **the seekers of my life** mentioned in the next line. These were the enemies who were trying to kill David. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Let my enemies have shame]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Let them have shame and have disgrace**
UST May God completely disgrace
(יֵבֹ֣שׁוּ וְיַחְפְּר֣וּ)

The terms **shame** and **disgrace** mean similar things. David 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: [Let them be utterly ashamed]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **Let them have shame and have disgrace**
UST May God completely disgrace
(יֵבֹ֣שׁוּ וְיַחְפְּר֑וּ)

If your language does not use an abstract nouns for the ideas of **shame** and **disgrace**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Let them be ashamed and disgraced]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the seekers of my life to sweep it away**
UST the people who want to kill me
(מְבַקְשֵׁ֣י נַפְשִׁ֣י לְסִפּוֹתָ֑הּ)

David is using **the seekers of my life** as a common expression of the culture to mean "those who want to kill me." See how you translated this same phrase in 38:12. Alternate translation: [all my enemies who want to see me dead]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Let them be turned back and be confounded**
UST May God frustrate … and may he humiliate them
(יִסֹּ֣גוּ אָח֣וֹר וְיִכָּלְמ֑וּ)

The expressions **be turned back** and **be confounded** are passive verbal forms. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [Let God turn them back and confuse them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **Let them be turned back**
UST May God frustrate
(יִסֹּ֣גוּ אָח֣וֹר)

Here David is asking that his enemies be stopped as if they were walking on a path and then were blocked or **turned back**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Let them be stopped]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **those pleased with my harm**
UST the people who want me to suffer
(חֲפֵצֵי רָעָתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **harm**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [those wanting to harm me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let them have shame | May God completely disgrace |
| and have disgrace | May God completely disgrace |
| the seekers | the people who want to kill me |
| to sweep it away | the people who want to kill me |
| and be confounded | and may he humiliate them |
| those pleased with | the people who want |
| my harm | me to suffer |

# Psalms 40:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let them be appalled on account of their shame, the ones saying to me, "Aha! Aha!"* | *May those who mock me, saying, "Ha, Ha!" feel horrified because God has so humiliated them.* |

ULT **their shame**
UST God has so humiliated them
(בָּשְׁתָּם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **shame**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how disgraced they are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Aha! Aha**
UST Ha, Ha
(הֶאָח ׀ הֶאָח)

David's enemies using **Aha! Aha!** as a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of malicious glee at his misfortune. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. If not, you could say what those people were feeling. Alternate translation: [We are glad to see your downfall]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their shame | God has so humiliated them |

# Psalms 40:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let all the seekers of you rejoice and be glad in you; let the lovers of your salvation say continually, "May Yahweh be great!"* | *May all those who come to worship you be very joyful because of you. May those who love that you save them say continually, "Yahweh is great!"* |

**ULT Let all the seekers of you rejoice and be glad in you**
**UST** May all those who come to worship you be very joyful because of you
(יָשִׂישׂוּ וְיִשְׂמְחוּ ׀ בְּךָ כָּל־מְבַקְשֶׁיךָ)

The terms **rejoice** and **be glad** mean similar things. David 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: [Let all those who seek you greatly rejoice in you]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT of your salvation**
**UST** you save them
(תְּשׁוּעָתֶךָ)

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: [how you save them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Let … rejoice | be very joyful |
| the seekers of you | May all those who come to worship you |
| and be glad | be very joyful |
| the lovers | May those who love that |
| of your salvation | you save them |
| May … be great | is great |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 40:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I {am} poor and needy; the Lord thinks of me. You {are} my help and my deliverer; my God, do not delay.* | *As for me, I am very poor, but the Lord cares about me. You are the one who rescues me; my God, please do not wait any longer!* |

ULT **poor and needy**
UST I am very poor
(עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן)

The terms **poor** and **needy** mean similar things. David 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 need]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **my help and my deliverer**
UST who rescues me
(עֶזְרָתִי וּמְפַלְטִי)

The terms **help** and **deliverer** mean similar things. David 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: [my great deliverer]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **my help and my deliverer**
UST who rescues me
(עֶזְרָתִי וּמְפַלְטִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **help**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the one who helps and delivers me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **my God**
UST my God
(אֱלֹהַי)

See how you translated the similar expression in 40:8. Alternate translation: [oh, God whom I worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **do not delay**
UST please do not wait any longer
(אַל־תְּאַחַר)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please do not delay]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the Lord | but the Lord |
| and my deliverer | who rescues me |
| my God | my God |

# Psalms 41

## Psalm 41 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 41 is a “psalm of supplication” or “lament.” See the Introduction to Psalms for more information about types of psalms.

1. Blessing for those who care for the weak (1–3)
2. Cry for mercy amid betrayal and sickness (4–9)
3. Trust Yahweh for restoration and justice (10–12)
4. Conclusion of Book 1, which consists of Psalms 1–41 (13)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Enemies

The author’s best friend had become an enemy. His enemies were happy because they were sure his sickness would result in death.

# Psalms 41:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; a psalm of David* | *Note for the worship leader: David wrote this psalm.* |

> **ULT For the chief musician**
> UST Note for the worship leader
> (לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a psalm | wrote this psalm |
| of David | David |

# Psalms 41:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The happinesses of the one considering the lowly! In the day of evil, Yahweh will rescue him.* | *What a good life those people have who help powerless people! When bad things happen to them, Yahweh will rescue them.* |

ULT **The happinesses of the one considering**
UST What a good life those people have who help
(אַשְׁרֵי מַשְׂכִּיל)

David is using the phrase **The happinesses of** to express a strong feeling of admiration. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. If not, you could express the idea of how fortunate such a person is. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy is the one considering]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **the lowly**
UST those people have who help powerless people
(אֶל־דָּל)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [people who are lowly]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **In the day of evil**
UST When bad things happen to them
(בְּיוֹם רָעָה)

David is using the possessive form to describe a **day**, time, or occasion that is characterized by **evil**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [When evil things are happening]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **evil**
UST bad things happen to them
(רָעָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evil**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [harmful things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The happinesses | What a good life |
| of the one considering | those people have who help |
| the lowly | those people have who help powerless people |
| evil | bad things happen to them |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| will rescue him | will rescue them |

# Psalms 41:2

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Yahweh will guard him and will keep him alive, and he will be called happy in the land; so do not give him into the soul of his enemies.* | *Yahweh will protect them and people will see that things turn our well for them as they live in the land. {Yahweh,} please do not let their enemies do what they want with them.* |

**ULT and he will be called happy**
**UST** and people will see that things turn our well for them
(יאשר)

The expression **be called happy** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and people will call him happy]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT so do not give him**
**UST** {Yahweh,} please do not let
(וְאַל־תִּתְּנֵהוּ)

David switches to addressing Yahweh directly in order to make his conclusion more vivid. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the third person for consistency. Alternate translation: [so may Yahweh not give him]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

**ULT into the soul of his enemies**
**UST** their enemies do what they want with them
(בְּנֶפֶשׁ אֹיְבָיו)

Here, **soul** represents “desire.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [over to the desire of his enemies]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| will guard him | will protect them |
| and he will be called happy | and people will see that things turn our well for them |
| in the land | as they live in the land |
| into the soul | do what they want with them |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of his enemies | their enemies |

# Psalms 41:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh will support him on the bed of suffering; you transformed each bed of his in his sickness.* | *Yahweh will strengthen them when they are sick; {Yahweh,} you completely restore them whenever they become ill.* |

ULT **the bed of suffering**
UST when they are sick
(עֶרֶשׂ דָּוֵי)

The psalmist is speaking of the person's time of illness as if it were **the bed of suffering** on which the person lies. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his sickbed]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **on the bed of suffering**
UST when they are sick
(עַל־עֶרֶשׂ דָּוֵי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **suffering**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [when he suffers]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **you transformed**
UST {Yahweh,} you completely restore them
(הָפַכְתָּ)

As he did in the previous verse, David switches to addressing Yahweh directly in order to make his conclusion more vivid. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the third person for consistency. Alternate translation: [Yahweh transformed]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

ULT **you transformed each bed of his in his sickness**
UST {Yahweh,} you completely restore them whenever they become ill
(כָּל־מִשְׁכָּבוֹ הָפַכְתָּ בְחָלְיוֹ)

By **transformed each bed of his in his sickness**, David means that Yahweh transforms his illness into health. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh transformed his sickness into health]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **in his sickness**
UST whenever they become ill
(בְּחֳלְיוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **sickness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [when he is ill]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| suffering | when they are sick |

# Psalms 41:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I, I said, "Yahweh, be gracious to me! Heal my soul, for I have sinned against you."* | *As for me, I said, "Yahweh, please be merciful to me and heal me. {I am sick} because I have sinned against you."* |

ULT **I, I said**
UST As for me, I said
(אֲנִי־אָמַרְתִּי)

The pronoun **I** refers to David. David is stating the pronoun **I** separately for emphasis even though the verb translated as **I said** already includes this meaning. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [I, David, said]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **be gracious to me! Heal**
UST please be merciful to me and heal
(חָנֵּנִי רְפָאָה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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 as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Heal my soul**
UST and heal me
(רְפָאָה נַפְשִׁי)

David is using the term **soul** to mean his entire person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Please make me whole again]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Heal my soul, for I have sinned against you**
UST { … and heal me. I am sick} because I have sinned against you
(רָפְאָה נַפְשִׁי כִּי־חָטָאתִי לָךְ)

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: [Since I have sinned against you, I need you to heal me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| be gracious to me | please be merciful to me |
| my soul | me |
| I have sinned | I have sinned |

# Psalms 41:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My enemies say evil concerning me, "When will he die and his name perish?"* | *My enemies say hateful things about me; they say, "We want him to die so that everyone will forget him!"* |

ULT **evil**
UST hateful things
(רָע)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evil**, you could express the same idea in another way. See how you translated the similar expression in verse 1. Alternate translation: [harmful things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **When will he die and his name perish**
UST they say, "We want him to die so that everyone will forget him
(מָתַי יָמוּת וְאָבַד שְׁמוֹ)

David's enemies are using the question form to express their hostile wish that David would die. 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: [We wish he would die and his name would perish!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **and his name perish**
UST so that everyone will forget him
(וְאָבַד שְׁמוֹ)

Here, **his name** represents "his memory" or "his reputation." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and the memory of him will perish]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My enemies | My enemies |
| evil | hateful things |
| and … perish | so that everyone will forget him |

# Psalms 41:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And if he comes to see {me,} he speaks worthlessness; his heart gathers iniquity to itself. He goes out to the outside; he speaks.* | *Whenever one of them comes to visit {me}, he says things that mean nothing. He secretly collects harmful information, then he goes outside and tells {it to everyone}.* |

ULT **his heart gathers iniquity to itself**
UST He secretly collects harmful information
(לִבּוֹ יִקְבָּץ־אָוֶן לָוֹ)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts and intentions exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his mind plans evil]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **And if he comes**
UST Whenever one of them comes
(וְאִם־בָּא)

The pronouns **he** and **his** in this verse refer to one of David's enemies mentioned in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [And if one of my enemies comes]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **he speaks worthlessness**
UST he says things that mean nothing
(שָׁוְא יְדַבֵּר)

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: [he speaks empty words] or [he pretends to be friendly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **his heart gathers iniquity to itself**
UST He secretly collects harmful information
(לִבּוֹ יִקְבָּץ־אָוֶן לָוֹ)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts exist so the phrase **his heart gathers iniquity to itself** means that the enemy is secretly trying to think of bad things to say about David. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he thinks of evil things he can say]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **his heart gathers iniquity**
UST He secretly collects harmful information
(לִבּוֹ יִקְבָּץ־אָוֶן)

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: [ways to defame]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| he comes | one of them comes |
| gathers | He … collects harmful information |
| iniquity | He … collects harmful information |

# Psalms 41:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Together against me all my haters whisper; against me they plan evil to me.* | *Everyone who hates me whispers about me to one another; they plot how to harm me.* |

**ULT evil to me**
**UST** how to harm me
(רָעָה לִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evil**, you could express the same idea in another way. See how you translated the similar expression in 41:1. Alternate translation: [things that will harm me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they plan | they plot |
| evil | how to harm |

# Psalms 41:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“A matter of wickedness is poured on him, and he who has lain down will not repeat to rise.”* | *{They say about me,} “Something terrible has happened to him, and he will never get up from where he is lying.”* |

**ULT A matter of wickedness is poured on him**
**UST** {They say about me,} “Something terrible has happened to him
(דְּבַר־בְּלִיַּעַל יָצוּק בּוֹ)

David’s enemies are speaking of **A matter of wickedness** as if it were a liquid that is **poured** on a person. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Something wicked has overwhelmed him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT A matter of wickedness is poured on him**
**UST** {They say about me,} “Something terrible has happened to him
(דְּבַר־בְּלִיַּעַל יָצוּק בּוֹ)

The expression **is poured** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Terrible things are happening to him]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT A matter of wickedness**
**UST** {They say about me,} “Something terrible
(דְּבַר־בְּלִיַּעַל)

This is the beginning of what David’s “haters” (enemies mentioned in the previous verse) are saying about him. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could mark that this is a direct quote of SPEAKER. Alternate translation: [My enemies are saying, “A matter of wickedness]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

**ULT wickedness**
**UST** terrible
(בְּלִיַּעַל)

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: [something very evil]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and he who has lain down will not repeat to rise**
UST and he will never get up from where he is lying
(וַאֲשֶׁר שָׁכַב לֹא־יוֹסִיף לָקוּם)

David's enemies are referring to dying in a polite way by using the phrase **he who has lain down will not repeat to rise**. Depending on what is helpful for your readers, you could use a polite way of referring to this in your language, or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [and he will die from this illness]

**Support Reference:** Euphemism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| wickedness | terrible |

# Psalms 41:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Even the man of my peace, whom I trusted in him, the eater of my bread, has made great the heel against me.* | *Even my closest friend, the one I trusted, who shared meals with me, has greatly betrayed me.* |

ULT **the man of my peace**
UST my closest friend
(אִישׁ שְׁלוֹמִי)

David is using **the man of my peace** as a common expression of his culture to mean "my close friend" or "my trusted ally." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my closest ally]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **whom I trusted in him**
UST the one I trusted
(אֲשֶׁר־בָּטַחְתִּי בּוֹ)

It might seem that the expression **whom I trusted in him** contains extra information that would not be natural to express in your language. If so, you could shorten it. Alternate translation: [in whom I trusted]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

ULT **the eater of my bread**
UST who shared meals with me
(אוֹכֵל לַחְמִי)

David is using one kind of food, **bread**, to mean food or in general so **the eater of my bread** here means "the one who shared meals with me." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one who ate meals with me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **has made great the heel against me**
UST has greatly betrayed me
(הִגְדִּיל עָלַי עָקֵב)

David is using **has made great the heel against me** as a common expression of the culture to mean “has greatly betrayed me.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [has greatly turned against me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my peace | my closest friend |
| I trusted | the one I trusted |
| the eater of | who shared meals with me |
| my bread | who shared meals with me |
| has made great | has greatly betrayed me |

# Psalms 41:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But you, Yahweh, be gracious to me and raise me up, so that I may repay them.* | *However, Yahweh, please be merciful to me and make me well, so that I can do to them what they did to me.* |

**ULT so that I may repay them**
**UST** so that I can do to them what they did to me
(וְאֲשַׁלְּמָה לָהֶם)

Here, **so that** marks **I may repay them** as the goal or purpose of **be gracious to me and raise me up**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [in order that I may repay them]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| be gracious to me | please be merciful to me |

# Psalms 41:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *By this I know that you delight in me, that my enemy does not shout over me.* | *When you do this, I will know that you are pleased with me, when my enemies {will not be able to defeat me and so} cannot rejoice about it.* |

ULT **my enemy does not shout over me**
UST my enemies {will not be able to defeat me and so} cannot rejoice about it
(לֹא־יָרִיעַ אֹיְבִי עָלָי)

Here, **shout** represents “triumph.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my enemy does not triumph over me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I know | I will know |
| you delight | you are pleased |
| my enemy | my enemies |

# Psalms 41:12

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And I, in my integrity you upheld me, and you set me to your face forever.* | *As for me, you have helped me because I live honestly, and you will allow me to be with you forever.* |

**ULT And I**
**UST** As for me
(וַאֲנִי)

The pronoun **I** refers to David. David places this pronoun at the front of the sentence for emphasis, contrasting himself with his enemies. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [But as for me]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT in my integrity**
**UST** because I live honestly
(בְּתֻמִּי)

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: [because I am honest]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT to your face**
**UST** to be with you
(לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here, **to your face** represents being in front of or in the presence of Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| in my integrity | because I live honestly |
| and you set me | and you will allow me |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 41:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Blessed {be} Yahweh, the God of Israel, from the everlasting and unto the everlasting. Amen and amen.* | *We should all praise Yahweh, the God whom the people of Israel worship! People should praise him at all times, now and forever! Yes, let it be so!* |

**ULT Blessed {be} Yahweh**
**UST** We should all praise Yahweh
(בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה)

The expression **Blessed be** is a passive verbal form. The psalmist is expressing his desire to praise Yahweh. If it would be unnatural to use that form for this purpose, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I bless Yahweh] or [Let us all praise Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT the God of Israel**
**UST** the God whom the people of Israel worship
(אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist is not using this possessive form **the God of Israel** to indicate that the Israelites possess or control God. Rather the psalmist is using these words to indicate that God is the one whom Israel worships. Alternate translation: [who is the God whom Israel worships]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT from the everlasting and unto the everlasting**
**UST** People should praise him at all times, now and forever
(מֵהָעוֹלָם וְעַד הָעוֹלָם)

David is referring to all of time by naming two extremes, **from the everlasting** and **unto the everlasting**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from before time began and continuing forever]

**Support Reference:** Merism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Blessed {be} | We should all praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the God of | the God whom |
| Israel | the people of Israel worship |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from the everlasting | People should praise him at all times, now |
| the everlasting | forever |
| Amen | Yes |
| and amen | let it be so |

# Psalms 42

## Psalm 42–43 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalms 42 and 43 were originally one psalm. They are presented that way in many Hebrew manuscripts and ancient versions. A repeated refrain joins them together. Psalm 43 has no superscription. This psalm was divided in two in the traditional Hebrew text probably to achieve a round total of 150 psalms. See the discussion of the numbering of the psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

Psalm 42–43 is a psalm of supplication or lament. It presents all the basic elements of that type of psalm. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. First stanza (42:1–4): Description of troubles and cry for help
2. First refrain (42:5): Statement of trust
3. Second stanza (42:6–10): Description of troubles and cry for help
4. Second refrain (42:11): Statement of trust
5. Third stanza (43:1–4): Petition and vow of praise
6. Third refrain (43:5): Statement of trust

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a “maskil.” See the discussion of that term in the introduction to Psalms.

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Why was a Levite worship leader far away from Jerusalem?

This psalm is one of nine psalms attributed to “the sons of Korah,” that is, to the Korahite clan, the descendants of a Levite named Korah. The members of this clan had a special responsibility for leading the Israelites in worship. They played musical instruments and sang in the temple courtyard, and they composed songs. However, some of the later kings of Judah worshiped false gods represented by idols. They

tried to suppress the worship of Yahweh. Prophets, worship leaders, and faithful believers in Yahweh often had to flee for their safety. The Korahite who wrote this psalm records that he had gone to the region in the far northeast of the territory of Israel where the Jordan River begins. This territory was contested between Israel and Aram, and at the time when this psalm was written, the Arameans may have controlled the location where the psalmist was. (In 43:1, he asks God to defend him from "a nation not faithful.") So in this psalm, he laments that he has had to flee from Jerusalem, where he joyfully led the people in worship, probably to foreign territory. But he encourages himself with the memory of those experiences, and he asks God to make it possible for him to return to the temple and worship him there once more.

## Translation Issues in This Psalm

### Repeated phrases

In 42:10, for poetic effect, the psalmist uses some the same phrases that he uses in 42:3. Similarly for poetic effect, the psalmist uses in 43:2 some of the same phrases that he uses in 42:9. And the refrain in 42:5, 42:11, and 43:5 uses the same phrases in each case. To help your readers appreciate this, we recommend that you represent the same phrases in the same way in your translation.

# Psalms 42:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician. A maskil of the sons of Korah.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: One of the Korahites wrote this song.* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. See how you translated the term “chief musician” in the superscription to Psalm 4. Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **A maskil**
UST this song
(מַשְׂכִּיל)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **maskil**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **of the sons of Korah**
UST One of the Korahites wrote
(לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח)

The psalmist of this psalm belonged to a clan of the tribe of Levi whose members led the Israelites in worship and composed many worship songs. The superscription to this psalm describes them as if they were actual **sons** or first-generation descendants of **Korah**, who was a great-grandson of Levi. They were instead later descendants of Korah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [of the descendants of Korah] or [of the Korahites]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Korah | One of the Korahites wrote |

# Psalms 42:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *As a deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, God.* | *When a wild deer is very thirsty, it takes short, quick breaths because it wants so badly to find a brook from which it can drink water. That is how much I want you, God. It is as if I am taking short, quick breaths.* |

ULT **As a deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, God**
UST When a wild deer is very thirsty, it takes short, quick breaths because it wants so badly to find a brook from which it can drink water. That is how much I want you, God. It is as if I am taking short, quick breaths
(כְּאַיָּל תַּעֲרֹג עַל־אֲפִיקֵי־מָיִם כֵּן נַפְשִׁי תַעֲרֹג אֵלֶיךָ אֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist is using one part of himself, his **soul** or inner being, to mean all of him in the act of desiring God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [As a deer pants for streams of water, so in my inner being I pant for you, God]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **As a deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, God**
UST When a wild deer is very thirsty, it takes short, quick breaths because it wants so badly to find a brook from which it can drink water. That is how much I want you, God. It is as if I am taking short, quick breaths
(כְּאַיָּל תַּעֲרֹג עַל־אֲפִיקֵי־מָיִם כֵּן נַפְשִׁי תַעֲרֹג אֵלֶיךָ אֱלֹהִים)

The point of this comparison is that just as a **deer**, when it is very thirsty in a dry place, **pants** desperately for water, so the psalmist desperately desires God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [As a deer pants desperately for streams of water, so in my inner being I pant desperately for you, God]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **As a deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, God**
UST When a wild deer is very thirsty, it takes short, quick breaths because it wants so badly to find a brook from which it can drink water. That is how much I want you, God. It is as if I am taking short, quick breaths
(כְּאַיָּל תַּעֲרֹג עַל־אֲפִיקֵי־מָיִם כֵּן נַפְשִׁי תַעֲרֹג אֵלֶיךָ אֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist is speaking as if his soul were actually panting or taking short, quick breaths. He means that in his inner being, he is desperately feeling and expressing a desire for God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [As a deer pants desperately for streams of water, so in my inner being I desperately desire you, God]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| As a deer | When … is very thirsty, it takes short, quick breaths |
| my soul | I |
| God | God |

# Psalms 42:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When will I come and appear to the face of God?* | *You are the only true God, and I desire very greatly to be in your temple again and worship in your presence. I desire that so much that it is as if I am very thirsty.* |

**ULT My soul thirsts for God**
**UST** I desire that so much that it is as if I am very thirsty
(צָמְאָה נַפְשִׁי ׀ לֵאלֹהִים)

See how you translated the expression “my soul” in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [In my inner being, I thirst for God]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT My soul thirsts for God**
**UST** I desire that so much that it is as if I am very thirsty
(צָמְאָה נַפְשִׁי ׀ לֵאלֹהִים)

The psalmist is speaking as if he felt physical thirst for God. He is using this image to depict his great desire for God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [In my inner being, I feel a great desire for God]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT When will I come and appear to the face of God**
**UST** and I desire very greatly to be in your temple again and worship in your presence
(מָתַי אָבוֹא וְאֵרָאֶה פְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist is using the question form to express a strong desire. 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 want very much to come and appear to the face of God!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT to the face of God**
**UST** in your temple again and worship in your presence
(פְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים)

Here, **face** represents “presence.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in the presence of God]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to the face of God**
UST in your temple again and worship in your presence
(פְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים)

As 42:4 and 43:4 suggest, the psalmist is speaking of coming into the presence of God to mean coming into God's temple. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [in God's temple again]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| My soul | I |
| for God | that |
| for the … God | God |
| God | in your temple again and worship in your presence |

# Psalms 42:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My weeping is bread to me day and night, in {their} saying to me all of the day, "Where {is} your God?"* | *I have been crying continually. I have been crying so much that I have not been able to eat. This is because my enemies keep telling me, "Your God will certainly not help you!"* |

ULT **My weeping is bread to me**
UST I have been crying … I have been crying so much that I have not been able to eat
(הָיְתָה־לִּי דִמְעָתִי לֶחֶם)

The psalmist is using one kind of food, **bread**, to represent food in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [My weeping is my food]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **My weeping is bread to me**
UST I have been crying … I have been crying so much that I have not been able to eat
(הָיְתָה־לִּי דִמְעָתִי לֶחֶם)

The psalmist is speaking as if he were actually eating his **weeping**. He means that he has been weeping so much that he has been unable to eat. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Instead of eating, I have been weeping]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **day and night**
UST continually
(יוֹמָם וָלָיְלָה)

The psalmist is using the two main components of time, **day** and **night**, to mean all of time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all the time]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **in {their} saying to me**
UST This is because my enemies … telling me
(בְּאָמְרֹ֣ אֵלַ֔י)

The psalmist does not indicate specifically who has been **saying** what he quotes. To make clear that someone else, not the psalmist, has been saying this, the ULT supplies the indefinite pronoun **their**. It may be natural in your language to do something similar. You could also use a general expression. Alternate translation: [as they say to me] or [as people say to me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **all of the day**
UST keep
(כָּל־הַיּ֑וֹם)

The psalmist is saying **all the day** as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [constantly]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **Where {is} your God**
UST Your God will certainly not help you
(אַיֵּ֖ה אֱלֹהֶ֣יךָ)

The psalmist's enemies are using the question form to mock him. 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: [Your God certainly does not appear to be helping you!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| My weeping | I have been crying … I have been crying |
| bread | so much that I have not been able to eat |
| {is} your God | Your God |

# Psalms 42:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let me remember these, and let me pour out my soul within me, that I went over with the crowd. I led them in procession to the house of God with a voice of rejoicing and praise, a multitude celebrating a festival.* | *It is appropriate for me to weep to express my great sorrow. But {to encourage myself,} I should also remember how I used to go with large groups of people to celebrate festivals at God's temple. {Because I was one of the worship musicians,} I would lead the people as they walked to the temple. {On the way there,} we all shouted joyfully and praised God.* |

ULT **Let me remember these, and let me pour out my soul within me**
UST It is appropriate for me to weep to express my great sorrow. But {to encourage myself,} I should also remember
(אֵלֶּה אֶזְכְּרָה ו וְאֶשְׁפְּכָה עָלַי ו נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using a verbal form that expresses a resolution. In your translation, use an appropriate verbal form to indicate this. Alternate translation: [I will remember these, and I will pour out my soul within me]

**Support Reference:** Irregular Use of Tenses

ULT **Let me remember these, and let me pour out my soul within me**
UST It is appropriate for me to weep to express my great sorrow. But {to encourage myself,} I should also remember
(אֵלֶּה אֶזְכְּרָה ו וְאֶשְׁפְּכָה עָלַי ו נַפְשִׁי)

The phrases **Let me remember these** and **let me pour out my soul within me** together express a single idea. The second phrase describes the circumstances under which the psalmist is encouraging himself to do what the first phrase describes. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [Let me remember these as I pour out my soul within me] or [I will remember these as I pour out my soul within me]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

ULT **these**
UST But {to encourage myself,} I should also remember
(אֵלֶּה)

The psalmist is using the demonstrative adjective **these** as a noun to mean things of a certain kind, the things he describes in the rest of the verse Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the following things]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and let me pour out my soul within me**
UST It is appropriate for me to weep to express my great sorrow
(וְאֶשְׁפְּכָה עָלַי ו נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is speaking as if his **soul** were actually a liquid that he could **pour out**. He is encouraging himself to give full expression, in his own private reflections (**within me**), to what he is feeling deeply in his inner being. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and let me fully express to myself what I am feeling deep inside] or [as I fully express to myself what I am feeling deep inside]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **with the crowd. I led them in procession to the house of God with a voice of rejoicing and praise, a multitude celebrating a festival**
UST { … with large groups of people to celebrate festivals at God's temple. Because I was one of the worship musicians,} I would lead the people as they walked to the temple. On the way there,} we all shouted joyfully and praised God
(בַּסָּךְ֭ אֲדַדֵּם עַד־בֵּ֣ית אֱלֹהִ֑ים בְּקוֹל־רִנָּ֥ה וְתוֹדָ֗ה הָמ֥וֹן חוֹגֵֽג)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put together the information that this **crowd** was **a multitude celebrating a festival**. Alternate translation: [with the crowd, a multitude celebrating a festival. I led them in procession to the house of God with a voice of rejoicing and praise]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **the house of God**
UST at God's temple … the temple
(בֵּ֣ית אֱלֹהִ֑ים)

See how you translated the term "house" in 5:7. Alternate translation: [the temple of God]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **with a voice of rejoicing and praise**
UST { … On the way there,} we all shouted joyfully and praised God
(בְּקוֹל־רִנָּה וְתוֹדָה)

The psalmist is using the **voice** that each person in the **crowd** used for shouting to represent the shouts of the crowd. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [with shouts of rejoicing and praise]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my soul | my great sorrow |
| the house of God | at God's temple … the temple |
| rejoicing | joyfully |
| and praise | and praised God |
| celebrating a festival | to celebrate festivals |

# Psalms 42:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Why have you bowed yourself down, my soul, and are clamoring within me? Wait for God, for I will again thank him, the salvation of his face.* | *So I certainly should not be so sad and upset! I can confidently expect God to rescue me! When he does, I will have the opportunity to praise him as my savior and* |

> ULT **the salvation of his face … My God**
> UST as my savior and … my God
> (יְשׁוּעֹות פָּנָיו: אֱלֹהָי) (42:5-6)

At the end of 42:5 and the beginning of 42:5, the ULT translates the traditional written Hebrew text. This reading, however, does not seem to make sense. It is different from the other two occurrences of the refrain of this psalm in 42:11 and 43:5. It appears that a verse division has been placed in the middle of a word, so that the prefix that means “and” in those two verses has become a suffix that means “his” in this verse. You may want to follow an alternative reading from the ancient Greek translation. Alternate translation: [the salvation of my face and my God]

**Support Reference:** Alternative Readings

> ULT **Why have you bowed yourself down, my soul, and are clamoring within me**
> UST So I certainly should not be so sad and upset
> (מַה־תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי | נַפְשִׁי וַתֶּהֱמִי עָלָי)

The psalmist is speaking as if his **soul** had actually **bowed** itself **down** and as if it were actually **clamoring** or making noises **within** him that indicated how upset it was. He is describing his own inner feelings of despondency and agitation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Why do I feel so despondent and agitated inside]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **Why have you bowed yourself down, my soul, and are clamoring within me**
> UST So I certainly should not be so sad and upset
> (מַה־תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי | נַפְשִׁי וַתֶּהֱמִי עָלָי)

The psalmist is using the question form to give himself a mild rebuke and to encourage himself to consider his situation from a different perspective and so come to feel differently about it. 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 do not have to feel so despondent and agitated inside!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Wait for God**
UST I can confidently expect God to rescue me
(הוֹחִ֣ילִי לֵאלֹהִ֑ים)

The word that the ULT translates as **Wait** can mean simply not to do something until a certain time has passed or a certain other event has occurred. However, in many biblical contexts, it means to expect that God will do something to change an unfavorable situation that a person cannot change or that a person therefore should not try to change himself, and that is the meaning here. You may be able to use a different term to express this meaning in your language. Alternate translation: [Hope in God] or [I can hope in God]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **for**
UST When he does
(כִּ֤י)

Here the word **for** introduces not a reason but an explanation. You may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [after all,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **the salvation of his face**
UST as my savior and
(יְשׁוּעֹ֖ת פָּנָֽיו)

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, following the alternative reading of the ancient Greek translation: [the one who saves my face] or [the savior of my face]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the salvation of his face**
UST as my savior and
(יְשׁוּעֹ֖ת פָּנָֽיו)

The psalmist is using one part of himself, his **face**, to mean all of him in the act of receiving God's salvation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, following the alternative reading of the ancient Greek translation: [the one who saves me] or [my savior]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| have you bowed yourself down | should not be so sad |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my soul | I |
| and are clamoring | and upset |
| for God | God |
| the salvation of | as … savior |

# Psalms 42:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My God, my soul has bowed itself down within me. Therefore I will remember you from the land of the Jordan and the Hermons, from Mount Mizar.* | *my God. But I do feel very sad. So {even though I am a long distance from your temple, God} I will remember you from here at Mount Mizar in the land near Mount Hermon where the Jordan River begins.* |

ULT **My God**
UST my God
(אֱלֹהַי)

See the explanation in a note to the previous verse of how this expression was likely put at the start of this verse when a verse division was mistakenly placed in the middle of a word. You may wish to put this expression at the end of the previous verse, as many versions do, so that the refrain of this psalm will be the same in all three of its occurrences.

**Support Reference:** Alternative Readings

ULT **my soul has bowed itself down within me**
UST But I do feel very sad
(עָלַי־נַפְשִׁי תִשְׁתּוֹחָח)

See how you translated the similar expression in in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [I do feel despondent]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the Hermons**
UST near Mount Hermon
(וְחֶרְמוֹנִים)

The psalmist may be using the plural term **Hermons** because: (1) Mount Hermon has three distinct peaks. Alternate translation: [and Mount Hermon] or (2) he is referring to the range of mountains that includes Mount Hermon. Alternate translation: [and the Hermon mountain range]

**Support Reference:** Unusual Uses of the Plural

> ULT **from Mount Mizar**
> UST from here at Mount Mizar
> (מֵהַר מִצְעָר)

**Mount Mizar** seems to have been the psalmist's specific location within the general area he describes in the earlier part of this verse. It is not known to what mountain he was referring, so it is not possible to associate it with a mountain that is known by another name today. We therefore recommend that you use the name Mount Mizar in your translation.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| My God | my God |
| my soul | But I |
| has bowed itself down | do feel very sad |
| from the land of | in the land |
| the Jordan | where the Jordan River begins |

# Psalms 42:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Deep is calling to deep at the sound of your waterfalls. All of your breakers and your waves pass over me.* | *The waterfalls you created make such a loud sound that it is as if one deep stream were shouting to another deep stream within the river. I feel such anguish that it is as if one wave after another were crashing over me.* |

**ULT Deep is calling to deep at the sound of your waterfalls**
**UST** The waterfalls you created make such a loud sound that it is as if one deep stream were shouting to another deep stream within the river
(תְּהוֹם־אֶל־תְּהוֹם קוֹרֵא לְקוֹל צִנּוֹרֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking as if the **sound** of the **waterfalls** he hears in the nearby forming Jordan River were actually one **Deep** (one large mass of water) **calling** to another such **deep**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. You could also express this image as a comparison, as the UST does. Alternate translation: [The powerful streams in the river make loud, echoing sounds as they flow over rock ledges as waterfalls]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT All of your breakers and your waves pass over me**
**UST** I feel such anguish that it is as if one wave after another were crashing over me
(כָּל־מִשְׁבָּרֶיךָ וְגַלֶּיךָ עָלַי עָבָרוּ)

The terms **breakers** and **waves** mean similar things. The term **waves** describes swellings of water that move across the surface of the ocean, and the term **breakers** describes those swellings as they crash onto the shore. The psalmist 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: [As your waves break on the shore, the surf pounds me]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT All of your breakers and your waves pass over me**
**UST** I feel such anguish that it is as if one wave after another were crashing over me
(כָּל־מִשְׁבָּרֶיךָ וְגַלֶּיךָ עָלַי עָבָרוּ)

The psalmist is speaking as if he were actually in an ocean or on its shore and strong **waves** and **breakers** were crashing over him, tossing him about. He is representing how overwhelmed he feels. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. You could also express this image as a comparison, as the UST does. Alternate translation: [I am feeling overwhelmed by what you have allowed to happen]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| is calling | that it is as if … were shouting |

# Psalms 42:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{By} day, Yahweh commands his covenant faithfulness, and at night, his song {is} with me, a prayer to the God of my life.* | *Yahweh continually loves me faithfully as he promised. In response, as he inspires me, I continually sing prayers to him. He is the God who keeps me alive.* |

ULT **{ … By} day, Yahweh commands his covenant faithfulness, and at night, his song {is} with me**

UST Yahweh continually loves me faithfully as he promised. In response, as he inspires me, I continually sing

(יוֹמָם ׀ יְצַוֶּה יְהוָה ׀ חַסְדּוֹ וּבַלַּיְלָה שִׁירוֹ עִמִּי)

As in verse 3, the psalmist is using the two main components of time, **day** and **night**, to mean all of time. See how you translated the expression “day and night” in verse 3. It would be appropriate to use similar language here, since the psalmist’s recognition of Yahweh’s covenant faithfulness and his celebration of it in worship are his intentional responses to the sorrow he described earlier. Alternate translation: [Yahweh commands his covenant faithfulness all the time, and his song is with me all the time]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **Yahweh commands his covenant faithfulness**

UST Yahweh … loves me faithfully as he promised

(יְצַוֶּה יְהוָה ׀ חַסְדּוֹ)

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: [Yahweh acts toward me in a way that is faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **his song {is} with me, a prayer**

UST as he inspires me, I … sing prayers

(שִׁירוֹ עִמִּי תְּפִלָּה)

Since the psalmist is referring to a continual activity, he is likely not referring to one specific **song** that expresses one specific **prayer**. He probably means all of the songs that Yahweh enables him to compose in order to sing prayers to him. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [his songs are with me, prayers]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **his song {is} with me, a prayer**
UST as he inspires me, I … sing prayers
(שִׁירֹו עִמִּי תְּפִלָּה)

The psalmist is speaking of this **song** as if it were a living thing that could be **with** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he enables me to compose songs, prayers]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **to the God of my life**
UST to him. He is the God who keeps me alive
(לְאֵל חַיָּי)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to indicate that it is **God** who has given him **life** and who preserves his life. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the God who has given me life] or [the God who preserves my life]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| his covenant faithfulness | loves me faithfully as he promised |
| a prayer | prayers |
| to the God of | to him. He is the God |

# Psalms 42:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let me say to God, my rock, "Why have you forgotten me? Why do I walk about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?"* | *God is like a huge rock on top of which I am safe. So I will pray to him, "Please pay attention to me! I am living sorrowfully because my enemies are afflicting me!"* |

ULT **Let me say**
UST So I will pray
(אוֹמְרָה)

As in 42:4, the psalmist is using a verbal form that expresses a resolution. See how you translated the similar form there. Alternate translation: [I will say]

**Support Reference:** Irregular Use of Tenses

ULT **my rock**
UST is like a huge rock on top of which I am safe
(סַלְעִי)

See how you translated the term "rock" in 18:2. Alternate translation: [who keeps me safe]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Why have you forgotten me? Why do I walk about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy**
UST Please pay attention to me! I am living sorrowfully because my enemies are afflicting me
(לָמָּה שְׁכַחְתָּנִי לָמָּה־קֹדֵר אֵלֵךְ בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב)

The psalmist is using the question form to express his feelings to God honestly and urgently. 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 appear to have forgotten me! I should not have to walk about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Why do I walk about**
UST I am living
(לָמָּה & אֵלֵךְ)

As in 15:2 and many other places in the Psalms, the psalmist may be using the term **walk** to mean "live." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Why do I go through life] or [I should not have to go through life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **because of the oppression of the enemy**
> UST because my enemies are afflicting me
> (בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב)

As the next verse makes clear, the psalmist is not referring to a specific **enemy**. He means all of the enemies who are oppressing him. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [because of the oppression of my enemies]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

> ULT **because of the oppression of the enemy**
> UST because my enemies are afflicting me
> (בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב)

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: [because of the enemies who are oppressing me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| to God | God … to him |
| mourning | sorrowfully |
| because of the oppression of | because … are afflicting me |
| the enemy | my enemies |

# Psalms 42:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *With crushing in my bones, the ones afflicting me reproach me in their saying to me all of the day, "Where is your God?"* | *Those enemies are continually insulting me. They keep telling me, "Your God will certainly not help you!" When they insult me like that, it is as painful as if they were breaking my bones.* |

**ULT With crushing in my bones**
**UST** When they insult me like that, it is as painful as if they were breaking my bones
(בְּרֶצַח ׀ בְּעַצְמוֹתַי)

The psalmist is speaking as if his afflicters were actually **crushing** his **bones**, that is, so badly mistreating him physically that his bones were bruised or broken. He is using this image to represent the deeply painful effect of their **reproach**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [In a way that penetrates very painfully into my inner being]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT in their saying to me all of the day, Where is your God**
**UST** continually … They keep telling me, "Your God will certainly not help you
(בְּאָמְרָם אֵלַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם אַיֵּה אֱלֹהֶיךָ)

For poetic effect, the psalmist is using again the same phrases that he used in 42:3. We recommend that you show this to your readers by translating the phrases here the same way that you translated them there. Alternate translation: [as they say to me constantly, "Your God certainly does not appear to be helping you!"]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the ones afflicting me | Those enemies |
| reproach me | are … insulting me |
| is your God | Your God |

# Psalms 42:11

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Why have you bowed yourself down, my soul, and why are you clamoring within me? Wait for God, for I will again thank him, the salvation of my face and my God.* | *But I certainly should not be so sad and upset! I can confidently expect God to rescue me! When he does, I will have the opportunity to praise him as my savior and my God.* |

ULT **Why have you bowed yourself down, my soul, and why are you clamoring within me? Wait for God, for I will again thank him, the salvation of my face and my God**
UST But I certainly should not be so sad and upset! I can confidently expect God to rescue me! When he does, I will have the opportunity to praise him as my savior and my God
(מַה־תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי | נַפְשִׁי וּמַה־תֶּהֱמִי עָלָי הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי־עוֹד אוֹדֶנּוּ יְשׁוּעֹת פָּנַי וֵאלֹהָי)

This is the second occurrence of the refrain in this psalm. We recommend that you show this to your readers by translating the phrases here the same way that you translated them in the first occurrence of this refrain in 42:5. Alternate translation: [I do not have to feel so despondent and agitated inside! I can hope in God. After all, I will again praise him, the one who saves me and who is my God]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| have you bowed yourself down | should not be so sad |
| my soul | I |
| and why are you clamoring | and upset |
| for God | God |
| the salvation of | as … savior |
| and my God | and my God |

# Psalms 43

## Psalm 43 Introduction

Psalms 42 and 43 were originally one psalm. For an introduction to what is now Psalm 43, see the introduction to Psalm 42, which discusses both psalms together.

# Psalms 43:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Vindicate me, God, and plead my plea against a nation not faithful. Rescue me from a deceitful and unjust man.* | *Please protect me, God, from the people who are being so cruel to me. Please consider that I do not deserve that. Rescue me from people who would deceive me and treat me unfairly.* |

ULT **Vindicate me, God, and plead my plea**
UST Please protect me, God … Please consider that I do not deserve that
(שָׁפְטֵנִי אֱלֹהִים ו וְרִיבָה רִיבִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if he were actually in a legal proceeding and wanted God to take his side, as if he were a judge who would **Vindicate** him or a defense attorney who would **plead** his case. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Recognize that I am innocent and defend me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and plead my plea**
UST Please protect me
(וְרִיבָה רִיבִי)

The psalmist is using a construction in which a verb and its object come from the same root. If you decide to retain the legal image in your translation, you may be able to use the same construction in your language to express the meaning here. Alternate translation: [and plead my case]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **from a deceitful and unjust man**
UST from people who would deceive me and treat me unfairly
(מֵאִישׁ־מִרְמָה וְעַוְלָה)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means all of the people who are acting in a **deceitful** and **unjust** way toward him. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [from these deceitful and unjust people] or [from every deceitful and unjust person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| and plead | Please protect me |
| my plea | Please protect me |
| against a nation | from the people |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| faithful | who are being so cruel to me |
| Rescue me | Rescue me |
| and unjust | and treat me unfairly |

# Psalms 43:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you {are} the God of my refuge. Why have you rejected me? Why do I walk about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?* | *{I ask you to do this} because you are the God who protects me, and yet I feel as if you have abandoned me! I am living sorrowfully because my enemies are afflicting me.* |

ULT **For**
UST {I ask you to do this} because
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **you {are} the God of my refuge**
UST you are the God who protects me
(אַתָּה ׀ אֱלֹהֵי מָעוּזִּי)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **God** as being like a **refuge** for him. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [you are the God who is like a refuge to me]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **you {are} the God of my refuge**
UST you are the God who protects me
(אַתָּה ׀ אֱלֹהֵי מָעוּזִּי)

See how you translated the term “refuge” in 11:1. Alternate translation: [you are the God who protects me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Why have you rejected me? Why do I walk about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy**
UST and yet I feel as if you have abandoned me! I am living sorrowfully because my enemies are afflicting me
(לָמָה זְנַחְתָּנִי לָמָּה־קֹדֵר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב)

See how you translated the similar questions in 42:9. Alternate translation: [You appear to have rejected me! I should not have to walk about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Why do I walk about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy**
UST I am living sorrowfully because my enemies are afflicting me
(לָמָּה־קֹדֵר אֶתְהַלָּךְ בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב)

For poetic effect, the psalmist is using again the same phrases that he used in 42:9. We recommend that you show this to your readers by translating the phrases here the same way that you translated them there. Alternate translation: [I should not have to go through life mourning because of the enemies who are oppressing me!]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **Why do I walk about**
UST I am living
(לָמָּה & אֶתְהַלָּךְ)

While the psalmist uses essentially the same language here as in 42:9, he uses a different form of the verb translated as **walk**. The form used here can indicate repeated action, and that seems to be the sense in this context. Your language may have a comparable verbal form that you can use in your translation. If not, you may be able to use a different verb or expression. Alternate translation: [Why do I wander about]

**Support Reference:** Irregular Use of Tenses

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {are} the God of | are the God |
| my refuge | who protects me |
| have you rejected me | you have abandoned me |
| mourning | sorrowfully |
| the enemy | my enemies |

# Psalms 43:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Send out your light and your faithfulness, them, let them lead me. Let them bring me to the mountain of your holiness and to your dwellings.* | *Treat me favorably, as if you were smiling at me. Help me, as you have promised to do for those who are loyal to you. Guide me so that I can return to your temple on Mount Zion.* |

ULT **Send out your light and your faithfulness, them, let them lead me. Let them bring me**

UST Treat me favorably, as if you were smiling at me. Help me, as you have promised to do for those who are loyal to you. Guide me so that I can return

(שְׁלַח־אוֹרְךָ֖ וַאֲמִתְּךָ֑ הֵ֥מָּה יַנְחֻ֜נִי יְבִיאֻ֗נִי)

The psalmist is speaking of God's **light** and **truth** as if they were living things that God could **Send out** and that could **lead** the psalmist and **bring** him home. By **your light**, the psalmist probably means "the light of your face," as in 4:6. This represents God's favor, as if God were smiling and looking brightly at someone. By **faithfulness**, the psalmist probably means God's covenant faithfulness, as in 42:8, that is, God's commitment to fulfill the promises he has made to help people who are loyal to him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Extend your favor and faithfulness to me, and exhibit those qualities as you lead me. Exhibit those qualities in order to bring me]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **them, let them lead me**

UST Guide me

(הֵ֥מָּה יַנְחֻ֜נִי)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **them** separately, even though the verb translated as **let them lead me** already includes this meaning. He is doing this because he is speaking of God's **light** and **faithfulness** as if they were people and he wants to emphasize the personal role that he would like these qualities to take. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [let them be the ones who lead me]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **to the mountain of your holiness**
UST to … on Mount Zion
(אֶל־הַ֥ר קָדְשְׁךָ֑)

The psalmist is not using the possessive form to ascribe **holiness** to the mountain where God's **dwellings** are located. Instead, he is using the possessive form to indicate that God consecrated or set apart this mountain as a place where he would dwell, that is, where he would be present in a special way in his temple. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this purpose, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to the mountain that you have set apart] or [to the mountain that you have consecrated]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **your dwellings**
UST your temple
(מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶֽיךָ׃)

The psalmist is using the plural form **dwellings** where he could have used the singular form, since the context indicates that he is referring to the temple in Jerusalem ("the house of God," 42:4, the location of "the altar of God," 43:4). This suggests that he is using the plural form to emphasize the magnificence of the temple and especially its sacred character as a place where God is present in a special way. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the singular and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [your sacred temple]

**Support Reference:** Unusual Uses of the Plural

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and your faithfulness | Help me, as you have promised to do for those who are loyal to you |
| your holiness | Zion |
| your dwellings | your temple |

# Psalms 43:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let me come to the altar of God, to the God of the joy of my gladness. I will thank you with the lyre, God, my God.* | *{When I do come to Zion,} I will go to your altar {to worship you}. O God, you make me very joyful! {At your altar,} I will sing praise to you, the God whom I worship, as I play the harp.* |

ULT **the altar of God, to the God of the joy of my gladness**
UST your altar … O God, you make me very joyful
(מִזְבַּח אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אֵל֥ שִׂמְחַת גִּילִ֑י)

The psalmist is speaking of 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: [to your altar, O God, to you, the God of the joy of my gladness]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

ULT **the God of the joy of my gladness**
UST God, you make me very joyful
(אֵל֥ שִׂמְחַת גִּילִ֑י)

The psalmist is using the possessive expression **the joy of my gladness** to describe **joy** that is characterized by **gladness**, that is, great joy. He is using the fuller possessive expression **the God of the joy of my gladness** to describe God as the one who gives him this great joy. If a speaker of your language would not use possessive forms for these purposes, you could express these ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [the God who gives me great joy]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the altar of | altar |
| God | your |
| the God of | God |
| the joy of | you make me … joyful |
| with the lyre | as I play the harp |
| my God | whom I worship |

# Psalms 43:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Why have you bowed yourself down, my soul, and why are you clamoring within me? Wait for God, for I will again thank him, the salvation of my face and my God.* | *So I certainly should not be so sad and upset! I can confidently expect God to rescue me! When he does, I will have the opportunity to praise him as my savior and my God.* |

ULT **Why have you bowed yourself down, my soul, and why are you clamoring within me? Wait for God, for I will again thank him, the salvation of my face and my God**
UST So I certainly should not be so sad and upset! I can confidently expect God to rescue me! When he does, I will have the opportunity to praise him as my savior and my God
(מַה־תִּשְׁתּוֹחֲחִי נַפְשִׁי וּמַה־תֶּהֱמִי עָלָי הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי־עוֹד אוֹדֶנּוּ יְשׁוּעֹת פָּנַי וֵאלֹהָי)

This is the third occurrence of the refrain in this psalm. We recommend that you show this to your readers by translating the phrases here the same way that you translated them in the first two occurrences of this refrain in 42:5 and 42:11. Alternate translation: [I do not have to feel so despondent and agitated inside! I can hope in God. After all, I will again praise him, the one who saves me and who is my God]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| have you bowed yourself down | should not be so sad |
| my soul | I |
| God, for | God |
| the salvation of | as … savior |
| and my God | and my God |

# Psalms 44

## Psalm 44 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 44 is a psalm of supplication or lament. It presents most of the basic elements of that type of psalm, but in a different order than is common. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Statement of trust (1–8) including a short petition (4b)
2. Description of troubles (9–16, 22, 25)
3. Claim of innocence (17–21)
4. Cry for help (23–24)
5. Petition (25)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a "maskil." See the discussion of that term in the introduction to Psalms.

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### If God had "scattered" the people "among the nations" (v. 11), how did they still have "armies" (v. 9)?

It seems likely that this psalm was written not after the people of Judah had been deported to Babylon but while they were still in their land, ruled by a godly king, but suffering military defeats that led to some of their cities being conquered and the people of those cities being taken away into exile. One plausible historical setting for the composition of the psalm is the reign of Hezekiah, specifically during the invasion by the Assyrian king Sennacherib in 701 B.C. Hezekiah was an exceptionally godly king, which would correspond with the psalmist's statement that "we have not forgotten you, and we have not dealt falsely with your covenant" (v. 17). Nevertheless, the invading Assyrians repeatedly defeated the Judean defenders. They conquered most of the fortified cities in Judah and deported their inhabitants. This would correspond with the psalmist's complaint to God that "you do not go out

with our armies" (v. 9) and "you have scattered us among the nations" (v. 11). Hezekiah's godliness, reforms, and previous military victories are described in 2 Kings 18:1–8. The Assyrian invasion is described in 2 Kings 18:9–19:34. And the defeat of the Assyrians by God's miraculous power, which would be an answer to this psalmist's prayer if that is the historical setting, is described in 2 Kings 19:35–37.

# Psalms 44:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician. A maskil of the sons of Korah.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: One of the Korahites wrote this song.* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. See how you translated the term “chief musician” in the superscription to Psalm 4. Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **A maskil**
UST this song
(מַשְׂכִּיל)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **maskil**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **of the sons of Korah**
UST One of the Korahites wrote
(לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח)

See how you translated the expression “the sons of Korah” in the superscription to Psalm 42. Alternate translation: [the descendants of Korah] or [the Korahites]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Korah | One of the Korahites wrote |

# Psalms 44:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God, we have heard with our ears, our fathers have recounted to us, the work you worked in their days, in the days of antiquity.* | *God, we listened carefully when our ancestors told us about the great things you did long ago when the Israelites first came into the land of Canaan.* |

ULT **we have heard with our ears, our fathers have recounted to us**
UST we listened carefully when our ancestors told us about
(בְּאָזְנֵינוּ שָׁמַעְנוּ אֱבוֹתֵינוּ סִפְּרוּ־לָנוּ)

Here and throughout this psalm, the psalmist is applying the terms **we**, **our**, and **us** to himself and his fellow Judeans but not to God, to whom he is speaking. So use the exclusive forms of those terms in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’

ULT **we have heard with our ears**
UST we listened carefully
(בְּאָזְנֵינוּ שָׁמַעְנוּ)

It might seem that the expression **with our ears** adds extra information to this statement that would not be natural to express in your language. If so, you may choose not to represent this expression in your translation. However, it does add some emphasis, and you may also choose to reflect that emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [we have heard] or [we have clearly heard]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

ULT **our fathers**
UST our ancestors
(אֱבוֹתֵינוּ)

See how you translated the term “fathers” in 22:4. Alternate translation: [our forefathers]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the work you worked**
UST the great things you did
(פֹּעַל פָּעַלְתָּ)

The psalmist 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 another way of saying this. Alternate translation: [the work you did]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **in their days**
UST when the Israelites first came into the land of Canaan
(בְּיֵמֵיהֶם)

The psalmist is using the term **days** to mean "time," since time consists of days. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in their time]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in their days**
UST when the Israelites first came into the land of Canaan
(בְּיֵמֵיהֶם)

The **fathers** or ancestors who **recounted** the **work** described in verses 2 and 3 did not experience it personally. The psalmist is using them generally to represent earlier generations of Israelites and specifically to represent the generation that conquered and occupied the land of Canaan. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [for the generation that conquered and occupied the land of Canaan]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in the days of antiquity**
UST long ago
(בִּימֵי קֶדֶם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **antiquity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in ancient times]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| have recounted to us | when … told us about |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in their days | when the Israelites first came into the land of Canaan |
| in the days of | long ago |

# Psalms 44:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You, you drove out the nations {by} your hand, but you planted them. You caused harm to the peoples, but you sent them.* | *{They told us about} how powerfully you forced the other nations to leave and established our ancestors securely in their land. It was as if they had been plants that you put firmly in the ground. You destroyed the people groups that had lived there and enabled our ancestors to settle there.* |

ULT **You, you drove out**
UST {They told us about} how … you forced … to leave
(אַתָּה & הוֹרַשְׁתָּ)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **You** separately, even though the verb translated as **you drove out** already includes this meaning. He is doing that in order to emphasize a contrast between what the Israelites did not do, as described in the next verse, and what God did. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [You were the one who drove out]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **{by} your hand**
UST powerfully
(יָדְךָ)

Here, **hand** represents "power." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [by your power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **but you planted them … but you sent them**
UST and established our ancestors securely in their land. It was as if they had been plants that you put firmly in the ground … and enabled our ancestors to settle there
(וַתִּטָּעֵם & וַתְּשַׁלְּחֵם)

In each case, the pronoun **them** refers to the "fathers" or ancestors of the Israelites mentioned in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [but you planted our ancestors … but you sent our ancestors]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **but you planted them**
UST and established our ancestors securely in their land. It was as if they had been plants that you put firmly in the ground
(וַתִּטָּעֵם)

The psalmist is speaking as if God had actually **planted** the Israelites in the land of Canaan, as if they had been plants. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but you settled our ancestors there]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **but you sent them**
UST and enabled our ancestors to settle there
(וְתְשַׁלְּחֵם)

The psalmist 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 you sent them into the land] or [but you sent our ancestors into the land]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **but you sent them**
UST and enabled our ancestors to settle there
(וְתְשַׁלְּחֵם)

While it is true that God **sent** the Israelites into the land of Canaan in the sense that he commanded them to go there, the sense here seems to be that God actively propelled them into the land by helping them. That was in contrast to the way he **caused harm** to the nations he drove out. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the nations | the other nations |
| but you planted them | and established our ancestors securely in their land. It was as if they had been plants that you put firmly in the ground |
| You caused harm | You destroyed |

# Psalms 44:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For they did not possess the land with their sword, and their arm did not save them, but your right hand and your arm and the light of your face, for you favored them.* | *Our ancestors did not conquer this land with their own weapons or by their own power. Instead, you helped them and defeated their enemies by your own great power. You did that because you loved them.* |

ULT **For**
UST not
(כִּ֤י)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but a complementary truth by way of concession. You may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [Indeed,] or [Admittedly,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **with their sword**
UST with their own weapons
(בְּחַרְבָּ֗ם)

The psalmist is using one kind of weapon, a **sword**, to mean weapons in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with their weapons] or [militarily]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **and their arm**
UST by their own power
(וּזְרוֹעָ֣ם)

Here, **arm** represents “power.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and their own power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **but your right hand and your arm and the light of your face, for you favored them**
UST Instead, you helped them and defeated their enemies by your own great power. You did that because you loved them
(כִּֽי־יְמִינְךָ֤ וּזְרוֹעֲךָ֨ וְאוֹר֙ פָּנֶ֔יךָ כִּ֥י רִצִּיתָֽם)

The psalmist 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 your right hand and your arm and the light of your face saved them, for you favored them]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **but your right hand and your arm and the light of your face, for you favored them**
UST Instead, you helped them and defeated their enemies by your own great power. You did that because you loved them
(כִּֽי־יְמִינְךָ֤ וּזְרוֹעֲךָ֨ וְאוֹר֙ פָּנֶ֔יךָ כִּ֥י רִצִּיתָֽם)

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: [but because you favored them, your right hand and your arm and the light of your face saved them]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **but your right hand and your arm**
UST Instead, you helped them and defeated their enemies by your own great power
(כִּֽי־יְמִינְךָ֤ וּזְרוֹעֲךָ֨)

In this context, the terms **right hand** and **arm** mean similar things, since they both represent power. The psalmist 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: [but your very strong power]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **and the light of your face**
UST you loved them
(וְאוֹר֙ פָּנֶ֔יךָ)

The **light** of God's **face** represents his favor, as if he were smiling and looking brightly at someone. See how you translated the similar expression in 4:6. Alternate translation: [and the favor you showed them]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they did … possess | Our ancestors did … conquer |
| the land | this land |
| with their sword | with their own weapons |
| did … save | Our ancestors did … conquer |
| you favored them | you loved them |

# Psalms 44:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You {are} he, my king, God. Command the salvation of Jacob.* | *You are our real king, O God. Please enable the people of Israel to defeat their enemies.* |

**ULT You {are} he, my king**
**UST** You are our real king
(אַתָּה־הוּא מַלְכִּי)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **he** for clarity and emphasis. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [You are the one who is my king]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT my king**
**UST** are our … king
(מַלְכִּי)

Since the psalmist uses first-person plural pronouns throughout most of this psalm, you may wish to use one here, as the UST does. Alternate translation: [our king]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT Command the salvation of Jacob**
**UST** Please enable the people of Israel to defeat their enemies
(צַוֵּה יְשׁוּעוֹת יַעֲקֹב)

The psalmist is speaking of the **salvation of Jacob** as if it were a living thing that God could **Command**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Bring about the salvation of Jacob]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT Command the salvation of Jacob**
**UST** Please enable the people of Israel to defeat their enemies
(צַוֵּה יְשׁוּעוֹת יַעֲקֹב)

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: [Act to save Jacob]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Command**
UST Please enable
(צַוֵּה)

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: [Please command]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Jacob**
UST the people of Israel
(יַעֲקֹב)

The psalmist is using the name **Jacob** to represent the Israelite people, who were descendants of a man named Jacob. God gave him the name Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [us Israelites]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my king | are our … king |
| God | O God |
| the salvation of | to defeat their enemies |
| Jacob | the people of Israel |

# Psalms 44:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *By you we gore our enemies; by your name we trample the ones arising {against} us.* | *You enable us to defeat our enemies. Because you help us, we destroy armies that fight against us.* |

ULT **we gore … we trample**
UST to defeat … we destroy
(נְנַגֵּחַ & נָבוּס)

The psalmist is speaking as if the Israelite army were actually a horned animal that would **gore** and **trample** an opposing army as if it were another animal. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [we push back … we defeat]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **by your name**
UST Because you help us
(בְּשִׁמְךָ)

In this context, God's **name** seems to represent his authority. The psalmist seems to mean that since God assigned the land of Canaan to the Israelites, when they fight to defend that territory, they are doing so on his authority. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [by your authority]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the ones arising {against} us**
UST armies that fight against us
(קָמֵינוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of the **adversaries** of Israel as if they were physically **arising** to a higher elevation. See how you translated the similar expression in 18:48. Alternate translation: [the ones attacking us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| our enemies | our enemies |
| we trample | we destroy |

# Psalms 44:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For I do not trust in my bow, and my sword does not save me,* | *We do not expect to win victories because of the weapons we have.* |

ULT **For**
UST not
(כִּי)

As in verse 3, here the word **For** introduces not a reason but a complementary truth. Alternate translation: [Indeed,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **I do not trust in my bow, and my sword does not save me**
UST We do not expect to win victories because of the weapons we have
(לֹא בְקַשְׁתִּי אֶבְטָח וְחַרְבִּי לֹא תוֹשִׁיעֵנִי)

The psalmist is using two kinds of weapons, his **bow** and his **sword**, to mean weapons in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I do not rely on my weapons, no, those weapons do not save me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **I do not trust in my bow, and my sword does not save me**
UST We do not expect to win victories because of the weapons we have
(לֹא בְקַשְׁתִּי אֶבְטָח וְחַרְבִּי לֹא תוֹשִׁיעֵנִי)

If you decided to use first-person plural pronouns in verse 4, you may wish to do that here as well. Alternate translation: [We do not trust in our bows, and our swords do not save us] or [We do not rely on our weapons, no, those weapons do not save us]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and my sword does not save me**
UST not … to win victories because of the weapons we have
(וְחַרְבִּי לֹא תוֹשִׁיעֵנִי)

The psalmist is speaking of his **sword** as if it were a living thing that could **save** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I do not win victories with my sword]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I do … trust | We do … expect |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in my bow | because of the weapons we have |
| and my sword | because of the weapons we have |
| does … save me | to win victories |

# Psalms 44:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *but you save us from our enemies, and you shame the ones hating us.* | *Instead, you rescue us from our enemies. You disgrace our opponents {by defeating them}.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| you save us | you rescue us |
| from our enemies | from our enemies |
| and you shame | You disgrace … by defeating them |

# Psalms 44:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In God we boast all of the day, and we will praise your name forever. Selah* | *We regularly celebrate what God has done for us. We will always praise him. Selah* |

**ULT all of the day**
**UST** regularly
(כָּל־הַיּוֹם)

The psalmist is saying **all of the day** as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [continually]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

**ULT and we will praise your name**
**UST** We will … praise him
(וְשִׁמְךָ נוֹדֶה)

In this context, God's **name** seems to represent his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and we will praise your reputation] or [and we will praise you for who you are]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT Selah**
**UST** Selah
(סֶלָה)

See how your translation team decided at 3:2 to represent the term "Selah."

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| In God | what God has done for us |
| we boast | We … celebrate |
| and we will praise | We will … praise |
| forever | always |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 44:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But you have rejected and humiliated us, and you do not go out with our armies.* | *But now it appears that you no longer want to help us. This has embarrassed us. When our armies march out to fight a battle, you no longer enable them to win victories.* |

**ULT and you do not go out with our armies**

**UST** When our armies march out to fight a battle, you no longer enable them to win victories
(וְלֹא־תֵצֵא בְּצִבְאוֹתֵינוּ)

The psalmist is speaking as if God would previously **go out** physically with the Israelite **armies**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you no longer help our armies]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| you have rejected | it appears that you no longer want to help us |
| and humiliated us | This has embarrassed us |

# Psalms 44:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You make us turn back from the enemy, and the ones hating us plunder for themselves.* | *You make us retreat from our enemies. We must leave behind weapons and possessions, and they take as many of those as they want.* |

**ULT You make us turn back from the enemy**
**UST** You make us retreat from our enemies
(תְּשִׁיבֵנוּ אָחוֹר מִנִּי־צָר)

The psalmist may not mean to say that God is actively opposing the Judeans. He may be describing the consequences of God no longer helping them. Alternate translation: [You oblige us to turn back from the enemy]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT for themselves**
**UST** as many of those as they want
(לָֽמוֹ)

In this context, the expression **for themselves** has the sense of "as they wish" or "at will," that is, without any resistance. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [at will]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the enemy | our enemies |
| plunder | We must leave behind weapons and possessions … take |

# Psalms 44:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have made us like sheep of food, and you have scattered us among the nations.* | *You have allowed our enemies to slaughter us as if we were sheep. Foreign armies have captured many of our people and taken them back to their countries as slaves.* |

**ULT like sheep of food**
**UST** to slaughter us as if we were sheep
(כְּצֹ֣אן מַאֲכָ֑ל)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **sheep** that are characterized by being slaughtered and eaten as **food**. In context, the emphasis seems to be on the slaughtering, as the parallel phrase "sheep of slaughter" in verse 22 indicates. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [like sheep that are slaughtered]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT like sheep of food**
**UST** to slaughter us as if we were sheep
(כְּצֹ֣אן מַאֲכָ֑ל)

The point of this comparison is that just as **sheep** that people slaughter for **food** are very vulnerable and easily killed, so the Judeans have become very vulnerable. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. The point of comparison is the same in verse 22. Alternate translation: [very vulnerable, like sheep that are slaughtered]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| like sheep of | as if we were sheep |
| and … among the nations | back to their countries as slaves |
| you have scattered us | Foreign armies have captured many of our people and taken them |

# Psalms 44:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have sold your people for not-wealth, and you have not increased by their price.* | *You did not even receive any money for allowing others to take your people as their slaves. You did not become any richer as a result of that.* |

**ULT and you have not increased**
**UST** You did not become any richer
(וְלֹא־רַבִּיתָ)

The psalmist means that God has not become greater in terms of wealth. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and you have not increased in wealth]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

# Psalms 44:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have made us a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and a derision to {those} around us.* | *Because you no longer help us, the people groups around us insult us. They express contempt for us and laugh at us.* |

ULT **You have made us a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and a derision to {those} around us**

UST Because you no longer help us, the people groups around us insult us. They express contempt for us and laugh at us
(תְּשִׂימֵנוּ חֶרְפָּה לִשְׁכֵנֵינוּ לַעַג וָקֶלֶס לִסְבִיבוֹתֵינוּ)

The psalmist 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 made us a reproach to our neighbors, and you have made us a scorn and a derision to the ones around us]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **You have made us a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and a derision to {those} around us**

UST Because you no longer help us, the people groups around us insult us. They express contempt for us and laugh at us
(תְּשִׂימֵנוּ חֶרְפָּה לִשְׁכֵנֵינוּ לַעַג וָקֶלֶס לִסְבִיבוֹתֵינוּ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **reproach**, **scorn**, and **derision**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [You have given our neighbors occasion to reproach us, and you have given the ones around us occasion to scorn and deride us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **You have made us a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and a derision**

UST Because you no longer help us, the people groups around us insult us … express contempt for us and laugh at us
(תְּשִׂימֵנוּ חֶרְפָּה לִשְׁכֵנֵינוּ לַעַג וָקֶלֶס)

The psalmist does not mean that God has made the Judeans something that causes **reproach** to their **neighbors**. He means that they have become an object of their neighbors' reproach. He means the same thing when he uses the terms **scorn** and **derision**. If you retain these abstract nouns in your translation, you could indicate this explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [You have made us an object of reproach to our neighbors, an object of scorn and derision]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| us … reproach | insult us |
| to our neighbors | the people groups around us |

# Psalms 44:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have made us a proverb among the nations, a shaking of the head among the peoples.* | *People in other nations are using us Israelites as an example of an unfortunate people group. They are shaking their heads at us to ridicule us.* |

**ULT a shaking of the head among the peoples**
**UST** They are shaking their heads at us to ridicule us
(מְנֽוֹד־רֹ֣אשׁ בַּלְּאֻמִּ֑ים)

In this culture, shaking or wagging one's head at a person or group was a symbolic action by which people showed contempt and expressed mockery toward that person or group. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [a group at which individuals among the peoples shake their heads contemptuously]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a proverb | are using us Israelites as an example of an unfortunate people group |
| among the nations | People in other nations |
| a shaking of | are shaking … at us to ridicule us |

# Psalms 44:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *All of the day my disgrace {is} before me, and the shame of my face covers me,* | *I am constantly aware of my disgrace. I feel complete shame* |

**ULT All of the day my disgrace {is} before me**
**UST** I am constantly aware of my disgrace
(כָּל־הַיּוֹם כְּלִמָּתִי נֶגְדִּי)

See how you translated the phrase “all of the day” in 44:8. Alternate translation: [My disgrace is continually before me]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

**ULT my disgrace {is} before me, and the shame of my face covers me**
**UST** I am … aware of my disgrace. I feel complete shame
(כְּלִמָּתִי נֶגְדִּי וּבֹשֶׁת פָּנַי כִּסָּתְנִי)

If you decided to use first-person plural pronouns in verses 4 and 6, you may wish to do that here as well. Alternate translation: [our disgrace is before us, and the shame of our faces covers us]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT my disgrace {is} before me**
**UST** I am … aware of my disgrace
(כְּלִמָּתִי נֶגְדִּי)

The psalmist is speaking as if his **disgrace** were actually an object that was **before** or in front of him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am aware of my disgrace]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and the shame of my face covers me**
**UST** I feel complete shame
(וּבֹשֶׁת פָּנַי כִּסָּתְנִי)

The psalmist is using one part of himself, his **face**, to mean all of him in the act of being ashamed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and my shame covers me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **and the shame of my face covers me**
UST I feel complete shame
(וּבֹ֣שֶׁת פָּנַ֣י כִּסָּתְנִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if **shame** were physically covering him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the shame of my face overwhelms me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the shame of my face covers me**
UST I feel complete shame
(וּבֹ֣שֶׁת פָּנַ֣י כִּסָּתְנִי)

Hebrew culture associated **shame** with the **face**. If your culture does the same thing, you may wish to retain the figurative usage in your translation and express this in terms that the people of your culture would use. Alternate translation: [I have lost face, and shame overwhelms me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my disgrace | my disgrace |
| and the shame of | shame |

# Psalms 44:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *from the voice of one reproaching and one reviling, from the face of an enemy and one avenging.* | *because people are speaking so harshly to me. Those people are my enemies, and they want to harm me.* |

**ULT from the face of**
**UST** Those people are my enemies
(מִפְּנֵי)

Here, **face** represents "presence." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in the presence of]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT an enemy and one avenging**
**UST** Those people are my enemies, and they want to harm me
(אוֹיֵב וּמִתְנַקֵּם)

Together, the expressions **an enemy** and **one avenging** express a single idea. The expression **one avenging** tells what kind of **enemy** the psalmist is describing. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [a vengeful enemy]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| one reproaching | so harshly |
| and one reviling | so harshly |
| an enemy | Those people are my enemies |
| and one avenging | and they want to harm me |

# Psalms 44:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *All of this has come {to} us, but we have not forgotten you and we have not dealt falsely with your covenant.* | *These things have happened to us even though we have not stopped worshiping you and we have not disobeyed the solemn agreement that you made with our ancestors.* |

ULT **All of this has come {to} us**
UST These things have happened to us
(כָּל־זֹאת בָּאַתְנוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of the misfortunes he has described as if they were a living thing that could have **come** to the Judeans. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, as in the UST: [All of this has happened to us]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **but we have not forgotten you**
UST even though we have not stopped worshiping you
(וְלֹא שָׁכַחֲנוּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking as if the Judeans might actually have **forgotten** their God, that is, ceased to have remember anything about him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. The meaning is similar in verse 20. Alternate translation: [but we have not neglected to worship you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and we have not dealt falsely with your covenant**
UST and we have not disobeyed the solemn agreement that you made with our ancestors
(וְלֹא־שִׁקַּרְנוּ בִּבְרִיתֶךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of God's **covenant** as if it were a person with whom the Judeans could have **dealt falsely**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and we have not dealt falsely with you by not keeping your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Personification

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| with your covenant | the solemn agreement that you made with our ancestors |

# Psalms 44:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Our heart has not turned itself back, nor have our steps turned aside from your way.* | *We still love you as our God, and we have continued to do what you have commanded us to do.* |

ULT **Our heart has not turned itself back**
UST We still love you as our God
(לֹא־נָסוֹג אָחוֹר לִבֵּנוּ)

The psalmist is using one part of the Judeans, their **heart**, to mean all of them in the act of remaining loyal to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [We have not turned ourselves back]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **Our heart has not turned itself back**
UST We still love you as our God
(לֹא־נָסוֹג אָחוֹר לִבֵּנוּ)

The term **heart** is singular in form, but it refers to the hearts of all of the Judeans. If you retain the image of the heart, if it would be helpful in your language, you could use the plural form of that word. Alternate translation: [Our hearts have not turned themselves back]

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

ULT **Our heart has not turned itself back**
UST We still love you as our God
(לֹא־נָסוֹג אָחוֹר לִבֵּנוּ)

The psalmist is speaking as if the Judeans were physically following God and had not **turned** to go in the opposite direction. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [We are still loyal to you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Our heart has not turned itself back**
UST We still love you as our God
(לֹא־נָסוֹג אָחוֹר לִבֵּנוּ)

The psalmist is using one part of the Judeans, their **steps**, to mean all of them in the act of remaining loyal to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and we have not turned aside from your way]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **nor have our steps turned aside from your way**
UST and we have continued to do what you have commanded us to do
(וַתֵּט אֲשֻׁרֵינוּ מִנְּגִי אָרְחֶךָ)

The psalmist is speaking as if how God wants people to live were a **way** or path on which people were supposed to walk. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [nor have we stopped living as you want us to live]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 44:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But you have crushed us into a place of jackals, and you have covered over us with a dark shadow.* | *But {you have allowed} our enemies to ruin our land and leave it desolate. You have left us feeling as though we are going to die.* |

ULT **into a place of jackals**
UST our land and leave it desolate
(בִּמְקוֹם תַּנִּים)

The psalmist is using the phrase **a place of jackals** to represent a desolate area where only wild animals live. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [so that our land is now desolate]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **jackals**
UST and leave it desolate
(תַּנִּים)

The term **jackals** describes wild dogs that live in desolate regions. If your readers would not be familiar with what a jackal is, in your translation you could use the name of a similar animal that your readers would recognize, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: [wild dogs]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **and you have covered over us with a dark shadow**
UST You have left us feeling as though we are going to die
(וַתְּכַס עָלֵינוּ בְצַלְמָוֶת)

The psalmist is speaking as if God had actually **covered** the Judeans with a **dark shadow**. He means that God has allowed them to be in a situation in which they are in great danger of death. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and you have brought us into a situation of mortal peril]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 44:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *If we had forgotten the name of our God and spread out our palms to a foreign god,* | *If we had stopped worshiping you as our God and had started worshiping a foreign god,* |

ULT **If we had forgotten the name of our God and spread out our palms to a foreign god … would God not have discovered this? For he is knowing the secrets of the heart**
UST If we had stopped worshiping you as our God and had started worshiping a foreign god … you would surely have known that. That is because you know even what people secretly think
(אִם־שָׁכַחְנוּ שֵׁם אֱלֹהֵינוּ וַנִּפְרֹשׂ כַּפֵּינוּ לְאֵל זָר׃ הֲלֹא אֱלֹהִים יַחְקָר־זֹאת כִּי־הוּא יֹדֵעַ תַּעֲלֻמוֹת לֵב) (44:20-21)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine 44:20 and 44:21 into a verse bridge and put the last phrase in verse 21 at the beginning of verse 20, since it gives the reason for the result that the material in the rest of these verses describes. Alternate translation: [Since our God knows the secrets of the heart, if we had forgotten his name and spread out our palms to a foreign god, would he not have discovered this?]

**Support Reference:** Verse Bridges

ULT **If we had forgotten the name of our God**
UST If we had stopped worshiping you as our God
(אִם־שָׁכַחְנוּ שֵׁם אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

In this context, **the name of our God** represents calling on God by name. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [If we had ceased to call on our God by name] or [If we had ceased to worship our God explicitly]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and spread out our palms**
UST and had started worshiping
(וַנִּפְרֹשׂ כַּפֵּינוּ)

The psalmist is using the action of spreading out one's **palms** toward the sky to represent prayer, since that was the characteristic posture of prayer in this culture. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and prayed]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| our God | our God |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to a … god | a … god |
| foreign | foreign |

# Psalms 44:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *would God not have discovered this? For he is knowing the secrets of the heart.* | *you would surely have known that. That is because you know even what people secretly think.* |

**ULT would God not have discovered this**
**UST** you would surely have known that
(הֲלֹא אֱלֹהִים יַחֲקָר־זֹאת)

The psalmist is using the question form to make a strong affirmation. 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: [God would certainly have discovered this!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT the secrets of the heart**
**UST** even what people secretly think
(תַּעֲלֻמוֹת לֵב)

Here the **heart** represents a person's private thoughts and memories. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the things that people do but do not tell others about]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | you |
| is knowing | know |

# Psalms 44:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But because of you we are killed all of the day, we are considered like sheep of slaughter.* | *Because you are not helping us, our enemies are continuing to kill our people. They believe they can kill us as easily as if we were sheep, which people slaughter easily.* |

ULT **we are killed**
UST our enemies are … to kill our people
(הֲרֻגְנוּ)

The expression **are killed** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [our enemies are killing us]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **all of the day**
UST continuing
(כָּל־הַיּוֹם)

See how you translated the same expression in 44:8. Alternate translation: [continually]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **we are considered**
UST They believe
(נֶחְשַׁבְנוּ)

The expression **are considered** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [our enemies consider us]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| we are killed | our enemies are … to kill our people |
| like sheep of | as easily as if we were sheep |
| slaughter | they can kill us … which people slaughter easily |

# Psalms 44:23

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Awake! Why are you sleeping, Lord? Wake up! Do not reject {us} forever!* | *Protect us! Do not fail to act, Lord, as if you were asleep! Defend us! Do not keep treating us as if we were not your people!* |

**ULT Awake! Why are you sleeping, Lord? Wake up**
**UST** Protect us! Do not fail to act, Lord, as if you were asleep! Defend us
(עוּרָה ׀ לָמָּה תִישַׁן ׀ אֲדֹנָי הָקִיצָה)

The psalmist is using the question form as a rebuke. 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: [Awake! You should not be sleeping, Lord! Wake up!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT Awake! Why are you sleeping, Lord? Wake up**
**UST** Protect us! Do not fail to act, Lord, as if you were asleep! Defend us
(עוּרָה ׀ לָמָּה תִישַׁן ׀ אֲדֹנָי הָקִיצָה)

The psalmist is speaking as if God were actually **sleeping** and therefore unaware of or unconcerned about the Judeans' situation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Take action! You should not do nothing while we are in such danger! Help us!]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Do not reject {us}**
**UST** Do not … treating us as if we were not your people
(אַל־תִּזְנַח)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a request rather than a command. (By contrast, the imperatives **Awake** and **Wake up** are urgent summonses rather than requests.) Use a form in your language that communicates a request. Alternate translation: [Please do not reject us]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Lord | Lord |
| reject {us} | Do … treating us as if we were not your people |
| forever | keep |

# Psalms 44:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Why do you hide your face, forget our affliction and our oppression?* | *Please be favorable to us and help us! Consider how badly our enemies are harming us and how greatly we are suffering!* |

ULT **Why do you hide your face, forget our affliction and our oppression**
UST Please be favorable to us and help us! Consider how badly our enemies are harming us and how greatly we are suffering
(לָמָּה־פָנֶיךָ תַסְתִּיר תִּשְׁכַּח עָנְיֵנוּ וְלַחֲצֵנוּ)

The psalmist 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 do you hide your face, and why do you forget our affliction and our oppression]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **Why do you hide your face, forget our affliction and our oppression**
UST Please be favorable to us and help us! Consider how badly our enemies are harming us and how greatly we are suffering
(לָמָּה־פָנֶיךָ תַסְתִּיר תִּשְׁכַּח עָנְיֵנוּ וְלַחֲצֵנוּ)

As in the previous verse, the psalmist is using the question form as a rebuke. 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: [You should not hide your face, and you should not forget our affliction and our oppression!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Why do you hide your face, forget**
UST Please be favorable to us and help us! Consider
(לָמָּה־פָנֶיךָ תַסְתִּיר תִּשְׁכַּח)

The psalmist is speaking as if God had actually hidden his **face** so that the Judeans could not see it. He means that it is as if God had turned his face away from the Judeans rather than looking at them with a bright expression that indicated favor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Why do you not regard us with favor] or [Please regard us with favor, and do not forget]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **forget**
UST Consider
(תִּשְׁכַּח)

The psalmist is speaking as if God had once known about the **affliction** and **oppression** of the Judeans but had now forgotten about them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [neglect to do anything about]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| our affliction | how badly our enemies are harming us |

# Psalms 44:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For our soul has sunk down into the dust, our belly clings to the earth.* | *We ask you to do this because we are helpless, as if we had fallen down and were lying on the ground and could not get up.* |

ULT **For**
UST We ask you to do this because
(כִּי)

Here the psalmist is using the word **For** to introduce a reason why God should help the Judeans. Alternate translation: [Help us because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **our soul has sunk down into the dust, our belly clings to the earth**
UST we are helpless, as if we had fallen down and were lying on the ground and could not get up
(שָׁחָה לֶעָפָר נַפְשֵׁנוּ דָּבְקָה לָאָרֶץ בִּטְנֵנוּ)

The psalmist is speaking as if the Judeans had physically fallen onto the **earth** and could not get up and as if their **soul** or inner being had similarly **sunk down into the dust**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [We have no physical strength left, as if we had fallen down and could not get up, and we have no strength in our inner beings either, as if they had collapsed into the dust]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **our soul has sunk down … our belly clings**
UST we are helpless, as if we had fallen down and were lying … and could not get up
(שָׁחָה & נַפְשֵׁנוּ דָּבְקָה & בִּטְנֵנוּ)

In this verse, the words **soul** and **belly** are singular in form, but they refer to the souls and bellies of all of the Judeans. If you retain the images that the psalmist is using, if it would be helpful in your language, you could use the plural forms of these words. Alternate translation: [our souls have sunk … our bellies cling]

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

> ULT **our belly clings to the earth**
> UST and were lying on the ground and could not get up
> (דָּבְקָה לָאָרֶץ בִּטְנֵנוּ)

The psalmist is using one part of a person, his **belly**, to mean all of him in the act of clinging to the **earth**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [our bodies cling to the earth]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

> ULT **our belly clings to the earth**
> UST and were lying on the ground and could not get up
> (דָּבְקָה לָאָרֶץ בִּטְנֵנוּ)

The psalmist is speaking as if each Judean's **belly** or body were actually clinging to the **earth**. He means that it is as if each Judean had fallen and could not get up. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [our bodies have fallen to the earth and we cannot get up]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| our soul | we are helpless, as if we |
| to the earth | on the ground |

# Psalms 44:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Arise {as} a helper to us and redeem us because of your covenant faithfulness.* | *You have promised to love us faithfully because we belong to you. So please do something to rescue us from our enemies!* |

ULT **Arise {as} a helper to us and redeem us because of your covenant faithfulness**
UST You have promised to love us faithfully because we belong to you. So please do something to rescue us from our enemies
(קוּמָה עֶזְרָתָה לָּנוּ וּפְדֵנוּ לְמַעַן חַסְדֶּךָ)

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 of your covenant faithfulness, arise as a helper to us and redeem us]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **Arise**
UST please do something
(קוּמָה)

The psalmist assumes that God will understand that by **Arise**, he means “Take action.” You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Take action]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Arise**
UST please do something
(קוּמָה)

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: [Please take action]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT because of your covenant faithfulness**
**UST** You have promised to love us faithfully because we belong to you. So
(לְמַעַן חַסְדֶּךָ)

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: [in order to be faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and redeem us | from our enemies |
| your covenant faithfulness | You have promised to love us faithfully because we belong to you |

# Psalms 45

## Psalm 45 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 45 is a royal psalm written for a king's wedding day. At the same time, it is a Messianic psalm that looks forward to the reign of Jesus Christ. Hebrews 1:8–9 applies Psalm 45:6–7 to Jesus. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. The psalmist's self-introduction (1)
2. Praise for the king as God's representative who maintains justice (2–8)
3. Transition from the king to the bride (9)
4. Exhortation to the king's bride (10–17)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a "maskil." See the discussion of that term in the introduction to Psalms.

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Whose wedding was this?

Psalm 45 is a royal wedding song for a historical king, composed for an actual court marriage. This king was probably a descendant of David, and he was certainly loyal to Yahweh, but the psalmist does not name him, so it is uncertain exactly which king he is describing. The exalted language about the king's eternal throne and perfectly just rule has led both ancient and modern interpreters to see this psalm as deliberately shaped to point beyond that occasion to God's ultimate King. Because Hebrews 1:8–9 applies Psalm 45:6–7 to Christ, both Jewish and Christian traditions have often treated the psalm as Messianic, seeing the historical king and his bride as a type or foreshadowing of the ultimate King and his people. So we recommend that you not suggest in a note or in the text of your translation for which king the psalmist may have composed this wedding song.

## Why does the psalmist call the king “God” in verse 6?

As a note to this verse suggests, the Hebrew term that is often translated as “God” in other contexts was also a respectful form of address for judges. Since this verse speaks of the king as upholding justice, that title would be appropriate for him in this context. That is one likely explanation of why the psalmist uses this term. However, other interpreters suggest that the phrase “Your throne, God” could mean “Your throne of God,” that is, “your divinely ordained throne.” Translators might represent this as “The kingdom that God has given you.” One other possibility is that the psalmist could be addressing God directly but briefly in this sentence and then returning to address the king through the end of verse 9, after which he addresses the bride. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to follow the interpretation that it does. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to follow the interpretation suggested in these notes.

# Psalms 45:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on “Lilies.” A maskil of the sons of Korah; a song of loves.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: One of the Korahites wrote this song. It is a love song. The tune is “Lilies.”* |

**ULT For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. See how you translated the term “chief musician” in the superscription to Psalm 4. Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**ULT A maskil**
UST this song
(מַשְׂכִּיל)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **maskil**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

**ULT of the sons of Korah**
UST One of the Korahites wrote
(לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח)

See how you translated the expression “the sons of Korah” in the superscription to Psalm 42. Alternate translation: [the descendants of Korah] or [the Korahites]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT a song of loves**
UST It is a love song
(שִׁיר יְדִידֹת)

The superscription to this wedding psalm uses the plural form **loves** to refer to the love of the king for his new wife and the love of the queen for her new husband. It may be more natural in your language to use the singular form. Alternate translation: [A love song]

**Support Reference:** Unusual Uses of the Plural

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Korah | One of the Korahites wrote |
| loves | love |

# Psalms 45:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My heart boils over {with} a good matter. I am reciting my works to the king. My tongue is the stylus of a quick scribe.* | *There is something wonderful that I feel so strongly about that I must sing about it. I will sing a song that I have composed in honor of the king. As I sing, I will express my ideas in an orderly and complete way, just like a scribe who records quickly and accurately what he hears people say.* |

**ULT My heart boils over {with} a good matter**
UST There is something wonderful that I feel so strongly about that I must sing about it
(רָחַשׁ לִבִּי ׀ דָּבָר טוֹב)

The verb that the ULT translates as **boils over** occurs only here in the Bible, but it comes from the same root as a term for a pot or cauldron, so that seems to be its meaning. However, in this context, the focus is not on the heat that causes a liquid to boil. It is on the way a boiling liquid may overflow from a pot. Particularly if your language and culture associate heat with anger, it may be helpful to express the general meaning in order not to suggest that the psalmist is angry. Alternate translation: [My heart overflows with a good matter]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT My heart boils over {with} a good matter**
UST There is something wonderful that I feel so strongly about that I must sing about it
(רָחַשׁ לִבִּי ׀ דָּבָר טוֹב)

Here the **heart** represents a person's thoughts. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [My mind overflows with a good matter] or [My thoughts about a good matter are overflowing]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **My heart boils over {with} a good matter**
UST There is something wonderful that I feel so strongly about that I must sing about it
(רָחַשׁ לִבִּי ׀ דָּבָר טוֹב)

The psalmist is speaking as if his **heart** (his mind) were actually overflowing with the **matter** he will describe in this psalm. He means that he finds his subject so inspiring that he cannot contain his thoughts about it; that is, he must speak out loud what he thinks about it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. (See the further discussion of this in the introduction to this psalm.) Alternate translation: [My subject is so inspiring that I must express my thoughts about it aloud]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **I am reciting**
UST I will sing
(אֹמֵר אֲנִי)

The psalmist says **I am reciting** because he has already begun to sing his composition. However, since he is referring to the part of it that will follow, in some languages it may be more natural to use a verb in the future tense here. Alternate translation: [I will recite]

**Support Reference:** Irregular Use of Tenses

ULT **my works**
UST a song that I have composed
(מַעֲשַׂי)

The psalmist is using the plural term **works** to refer to the many elements he has incorporated into this song. In some languages it may be more natural to use a singular term to refer to his entire composition. Alternate translation: [my work] or [my composition]

**Support Reference:** Unusual Uses of the Plural

ULT **to the king**
UST in honor of the king
(לְמֶלֶךְ)

The phrase that the ULT translates as **to the king** may indicate: (1) that the psalmist is performing this song for the king and directing it to him. The ULT reflects this meaning. (2) that the psalmist has composed this song about the king. Alternate translation: [about the king]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **My tongue is the stylus of a quick scribe**
UST As I sing, I will express my ideas in an orderly and complete way, just like a scribe who records quickly and accurately what he hears people say
(לְשׁוֹנִי עֵט סוֹפֵר מָהִיר)

The psalmist is speaking as if his **tongue** were actually a **stylus** that belonged to a **scribe** who was able to record quickly and accurately what he heard people say. The psalmist means that even though he has many thoughts that he would like to share on this occasion, he will be able to sing them all articulately and continuously. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will be able to express all of my thoughts articulately and continuously in this song]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| a … scribe | just like a scribe |
| good | wonderful |
| to the king | in honor of the king |
| My tongue | As I sing, I will express my ideas in an orderly and complete way |

# Psalms 45:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You are fairer than the sons of man. Grace is poured onto your lips. Therefore God has blessed you forever.* | *O King, you are the most handsome man in the world! You speak very graciously! So we know that God has always blessed you.* |

ULT **You are fairer than the sons of man**
UST O King, you are the most handsome man in the world
(יָפְיָ֥פִיתָ מִבְּנֵי אָדָ֑ם)

In verse 1, the psalmist was addressing all of his listeners. Here he begins to address the king directly. In some cultures, a person would not begin to speak to a ruler without using a specific form of address. If your culture has such a form, you could use it in your translation. Alternate translation: [Your Majesty, you are fairer than the sons of man]

**Support Reference:** Politeness

ULT **You are fairer than the sons of man. Grace is poured onto your lips**
UST O King, you are the most handsome man in the world! You speak very graciously
(יָפְיָ֥פִיתָ מִבְּנֵי אָדָ֑ם הוּצַ֥ק חֵ֝֗ן בְּשִׂפְתוֹתֶ֑יךָ)

The words **You** and **your** are singular here and in the rest of the psalm because the psalmist is always addressing an individual. So use singular forms in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

ULT **You are fairer than the sons of man**
UST O King, you are the most handsome man in the world
(יָפְיָ֥פִיתָ מִבְּנֵי אָדָ֑ם)

The psalmist is using **sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "human beings." He is not implying that the king is not a man. He means that he is **fairer** or more handsome than all the other **sons of man**. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [You are more handsome than other people]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **You are fairer than the sons of man**
UST O King, you are the most handsome man in the world
(יָפְיְפִיתָ מִבְּנֵי אָדָם)

The psalmist is making an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. (However, since an overstatement like this one was an appropriate compliment for a ruler in this culture, you may wish to retain the overstatement in your translation. The UST models one way to do that.) Alternate translation: [You are an exceptionally handsome man]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **You are fairer than the sons of man**
UST O King, you are the most handsome man in the world
(יָפְיְפִיתָ מִבְּנֵי אָדָם)

The psalmist is using or creating a special form of a verb that means “to be beautiful” by doubling its root. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [You are handsome, far more handsome than other men]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

ULT **Grace is poured onto your lips**
UST You speak very graciously
(הוּצַק חֵן בְּשִׂפְתוֹתֶיךָ)

The expression **is poured** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. If you need to say who has done this action, the context indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [God has poured grace onto your lips]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **Grace is poured onto your lips**
UST You speak very graciously
(הוּצַק חֵן בְּשִׂפְתוֹתֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking as if **Grace** had actually been **poured** onto the **lips** of the king. In context, the emphasis seems to be not on the action of pouring but on the result of pouring. When a liquid is poured onto a surface, it spreads out and covers that surface. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Grace covers your lips] or [Your lips are entirely gracious]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **Grace is poured onto your lips**
> UST You speak very graciously
> (הֻוצַק חֵן בְּשִׂפְתוֹתֶיךָ)

Here the king's **lips** represent his speech. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Your speech is entirely gracious]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **Therefore**
> UST So we know that
> (עַל־כֵּן)

The psalmist is not using the word **Therefore** to indicate that the king's attractive appearance and gracious speech are the reasons why **God** has **blessed** him. He means that these characteristics of the king are evidence that God has blessed him. If a term such as "therefore" would not communicate this meaning in your language, you may want to use a different connecting word or phrase to show how the following statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [This is how we know that]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Grace | graciously |
| God | God |
| has blessed you | has … blessed you |
| forever | always |

# Psalms 45:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Gird your sword on your thigh, warrior, {in} your glory and your majesty.* | *Prepare yourself to keep fighting powerfully {for justice}! You are glorious and majestic when you do that.* |

**ULT Gird your sword on your thigh**
**UST** Prepare yourself to keep fighting powerfully {for justice}
(חֲגֹר־חַרְבְּךָ עַל־יָרֵךְ)

The psalmist is using one action that a **warrior** would do in preparation for fighting a battle, strapping his **sword** onto his **thigh**, to refer to being equipped for battle in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Prepare yourself to do battle]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT Gird your sword on your thigh**
**UST** Prepare yourself to keep fighting powerfully {for justice}
(חֲגֹר־חַרְבְּךָ עַל־יָרֵךְ)

While the expression **Gird** is an imperative, the psalmist is not telling the king to do something or suggesting that he is not already doing it. Instead, the psalmist is celebrating what the king is already doing. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a form other than an imperative. Alternate translation: [You are always prepared to do battle]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Gird your sword on your thigh**
**UST** Prepare yourself to keep fighting powerfully {for justice}
(חֲגֹר־חַרְבְּךָ עַל־יָרֵךְ)

As the next verse indicates, the psalmist wants the king to use his power specifically to uphold justice. This may not necessarily involve fighting an actual battle. You could indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Be prepared to use your power to uphold justice] or [You are always prepared to use your power to uphold justice]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **{in} your glory and your majesty**
UST You are glorious and majestic when you do that
(הוֹדְךָ֣ וְהַדָרְךָ֣)

Together the terms **glory** and **majesty** express a single idea. The word **majesty** characterizes this man as a king, and the word **glory** tells what kind of king he is, specifically when he fights for justice. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [as a glorious king]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Gird | Prepare yourself to keep fighting powerfully {for justice} |
| your sword | Prepare yourself to keep fighting powerfully {for justice} |
| warrior | Prepare yourself to keep fighting powerfully {for justice} |
| {in} your glory | You are glorious … when you do that |
| and your majesty | and majestic |

# Psalms 45:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And {in} your majesty prosper, ride out for the sake of truth and humility {and} righteousness. May your right hand teach you fearful things.* | *Go and win victories to establish yourself as a king who is honest, who does not proudly oppress his people, and who does what is right. As you do that, may you find that your skill as a warrior terrifies anyone who would resist you.* |

ULT **And {in} your majesty**
UST as a king
(וְהַדְרְךָ)

See how you represented the term “majesty” in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [And as a king]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **prosper, ride out**
UST Go and win victories
(צְלַח רְכַב)

The phrase **prosper, ride out** expresses a single idea. The word **prosper**, meaning “succeed” or “triumph,” tells in what way the psalmist wants the king to **ride out** in his chariot. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [ride out triumphantly] or [ride out to victory]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

ULT **prosper, ride out**
UST Go and win victories
(צְלַח רְכַב)

The psalmist is speaking as if he actually wanted the king to **ride out** in his chariot to fight a battle. As in the previous verse, he wants the king to use his power to uphold justice without necessarily involve fighting an actual battle. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [use your power triumphantly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **for the sake of truth and humility {and} righteousness**
UST to establish yourself … who is honest, who does not proudly oppress his people, and who does what is right
(עַל־דְּבַר־אֱמֶת וְעַנְוָה־צֶדֶק)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **truth**, **humility**, and **righteousness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [to establish a reign that is truthful, humble, and righteous]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **May your right hand teach you fearful things**
UST As you do that, may you find that your skill as a warrior terrifies anyone who would resist you
(וְתוֹרְךָ נוֹרָאוֹת יְמִינֶךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of the king's **right hand** as if it were a living thing that could **teach** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May you discover that you can do fearful things with your right hand]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **May your right hand teach you fearful things**
UST As you do that, may you find that your skill as a warrior terrifies anyone who would resist you
(וְתוֹרְךָ נוֹרָאוֹת יְמִינֶךָ)

The psalmist is using the king's **right hand** to represent him using his sword and shooting arrows with that hand or, more generally, to represent him fighting against his enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [May you discover that you can do fearful things by using your sword and shooting arrows] or [May you discover that you can do fearful things as you fight against your enemies]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **fearful things**
UST terrifies anyone who would resist you
(נוֹרָאוֹת)

The expression **fearful things** is a passive verbal form, a participle that the psalmist is using as a noun. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [things that terrify your opponents]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And {in} your majesty | as a king |
| prosper | and win victories |
| and humility | who does not proudly oppress his people |
| {and} righteousness | and who does what is right |
| fearful things | terrifies anyone who would resist you |

# Psalms 45:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your arrows are sharp; the peoples fall under you; in the heart of the enemies of the king.* | *Your sharp arrows pierce into the hearts of your enemies. You defeat the people groups that fight against you.* |

ULT **Your arrows are sharp; the peoples fall under you; in the heart of the enemies of the king**

UST Your sharp arrows pierce into the hearts of your enemies. You defeat the people groups that fight against you

(חִצֶּיךָ שְׁנוּנִים עַמִּים תַּחְתֶּיךָ יִפְּלוּ בְּלֵב אוֹיְבֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put the information that the arrows are **in the heart of the enemies of the king** with the information that the **arrows are sharp**. Alternate translation: [Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the enemies of the king; the peoples fall under you]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **Your arrows are sharp**

UST Your sharp arrows pierce

(חִצֶּיךָ שְׁנוּנִים)

The psalmist says that these **arrows** are **sharp** to mean that they penetrate through armor into the bodies of enemy soldiers. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Your arrows penetrate]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the peoples fall under you**

UST You defeat the people groups that fight against you

(עַמִּים תַּחְתֶּיךָ יִפְּלוּ)

The psalmist is speaking as if **the peoples** who fight against the king actually **fall** down dead or wounded and he drives his chariot over them, so that they are **under** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you win victory over the peoples]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the heart of the enemies of the king**
UST into the hearts of your enemies
(בְּלֵב אוֹיְבֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ)

The psalmist is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. If you decide not to move this phrase to an earlier part of the verse, after **Your arrows are sharp**, you can supply those words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [Your arrows are in the heart of the enemies of the king] or [Your arrows penetrate into the heart of the enemies of the king]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **in the heart of**
UST into the hearts of
(בְּלֵב)

In this verse, the word **heart** is singular in form, but it refers to the hearts of all of the king's **enemies**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the plural form of "heart." Alternate translation: [in the hearts of]

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

ULT **the enemies of the king**
UST your enemies
(אוֹיְבֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ)

The psalmist is speaking of the king 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: [your enemies] or [your enemies, O king]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the enemies of | enemies |
| the king | your |

# Psalms 45:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your throne, God, {is} forever and ever. A scepter of justice {is} the scepter of your kingdom.* | *Your Majesty, you will be the king for a very long time. You decide people's cases fairly as you rule your kingdom.* |

**ULT Your throne**
**UST** you will be the king
(כִּסְאֲךָ)

Here the king's **throne** represents his reign. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Your reign]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT God**
**UST** Your Majesty
(אֱלֹהִים)

The Hebrew term that is translated as "God" in most contexts can sometimes be used to refer respectfully to judges. There are probable examples of this in Exodus 21:6, Exodus 22:9, Exodus 22:28, and Psalm 82:1. Since the rest of this verse speaks of the king enforcing justice, this seems to be another instance of that usage. (The psalmist clarifies in the next verse that the king is subject to God himself, who is his God.) To avoid the impression that the psalmist is addressing the king as if he were God or a god, it may be helpful to use a comparable respectful form of address in your language. (See the further discussion of this in the introduction to this psalm.) Alternate translation: [O royal judge]

**Support Reference:** Politeness

**ULT A scepter of justice {is} the scepter of your kingdom**
**UST** You decide people's cases fairly as you rule your kingdom
(שֵׁבֶט מִישׁוֹר שֵׁבֶט מַלְכוּתֶךָ)

Here the king's **scepter** represents his rule. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [You rule your kingdom with justice]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Your throne | you will be the king |
| God | Your Majesty |
| {is} forever | for a … long time |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A scepter of | as you rule |
| justice | You decide people’s cases fairly |
| your kingdom | your kingdom |

# Psalms 45:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You love righteousness, and you hate wickedness. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you {with} the oil of joy more than your companions.* | *You love it when people do what is right, and you hate it when people do what is wrong. That is why God, whom you worship, has made you so happy. You are happier than all the people around you.* |

ULT **You love righteousness, and you hate wickedness**
UST You love it when people do what is right, and you hate it when people do what is wrong
(אָהַבְתָּ צֶדֶק֮ וַתִּשְׂנָ֪א רֶ֫שַׁע)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **righteousness** and **wickedness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [You love right actions, and you hate wicked actions]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{ … has anointed you with} the oil of joy more than your companions**
UST has made you so happy. You are happier than all the people around you
(מָשַׁ֣חֲךָ֣ & שֶׁ֭מֶן שָׂשׂ֑וֹן מֵֽחֲבֵרֶֽיךָ׃)

The psalmist is speaking as if **God** had actually **anointed** the king with **oil** that consisted of or imparted **joy**. The image of pouring out a fluid so that it covers someone conveys the idea of abundance. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [has given you abundant joy, more than your companions]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{ … has anointed you with} the oil of joy more than your companions**
UST has made you so happy. You are happier than all the people around you
(מָשַׁ֣חֲךָ֣ & שֶׁ֭מֶן שָׂשׂ֑וֹן מֵֽחֲבֵרֶֽיךָ׃)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **joy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [has made you very joyful, more than your companions]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You love | You love it |
| righteousness | when people do what is right |
| wickedness | when people do what is wrong |
| God | God |
| your God | whom you worship |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| has anointed you | has made you so |
| {with} the oil of | has made you so |
| joy | happy. You are happier |
| more than your companions | than all the people around you |

# Psalms 45:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Myrrh and aloes, cassia, {are} all of your garments. From palaces of ivory, stringed instruments make you rejoice.* | *Your royal robes smell beautifully of {the spices} myrrh, aloes, and cassia. From within your palace, which has ivory decorations, you hear people playing stringed instruments. That music makes you happy.* |

ULT **Myrrh and aloes, cassia, {are} all of your garments**
UST Your royal robes smell beautifully of {the spices} myrrh, aloes, and cassia
(מֹר־וַאֲהָלוֹת קְצִיעוֹת כָּל־בִּגְדֹתֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking as if the king's **garments** were actually made of the spices **Myrrh**, **aloes**, and **cassia**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all of your garments are fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia] or [myrrh, aloes, and cassia scent all of your garments]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Myrrh and aloes, cassia**
UST {the spices} myrrh, aloes, and cassia
(מֹר־וַאֲהָלוֹת קְצִיעוֹת)

**Myrrh**, **aloes**, and **cassia** are fragrant spices. If your readers would not be familiar with these spices, we do not recommend that you use the names of similar spices that your readers might recognize, since the psalmist is describing a real historical situation. Instead, you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: [Fragrant spices]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **palaces of**
UST your palace
(הֵיכְלֵי)

The psalmist is using the plural **palaces** where he could have used the singular form. This suggests that he is using the plural form to emphasize the vast extent of the king's palace complex, which may include several buildings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the singular and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [your vast palace of]

**Support Reference:** Unusual Uses of the Plural

ULT **stringed instruments make you rejoice**
UST you hear people playing stringed instruments. That music makes you happy
(מִנֵּי שִׁמְּחוּךָ)

The psalmist is using **stringed instruments** to represent the music that people are playing on those instruments. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the music of stringed instruments is making you rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Myrrh | {the spices} myrrh |
| palaces of | your palace |
| make you rejoice | That music makes you happy |

# Psalms 45:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Daughters of kings {are} among your precious {ones}. The queen is stationed at your right hand in gold of Ophir.* | *The honored women of your court include foreign princesses. {Your bride,} the queen, is standing at your right side. Threads of gold fine gold from Ophir decorate her robe.* |

ULT **are} among your precious {ones}**
UST The honored women of your court include
(בְּיִקָרוֹתָיִךְ)

The psalmist is using the adjective **precious** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. (The ULT indicates this by supplying 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: [are among your honored women] or [are among the ladies of your court]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **is stationed**
UST is standing
(נִצָּבָה)

The expression **is stationed** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [is standing]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **at your right hand in gold of Ophir**
UST at your right side. Threads of gold fine gold from Ophir decorate her robe
(לְיִמִינְךָ בְּכֶתֶם אוֹפִיר)

Having the **queen** stand at his **right hand** (that is, on his right side) was a symbolic action by which the king honored his bride. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [in a place of honor at your right side]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **in gold of Ophir**
UST Threads of gold fine gold from Ophir decorate her robe
(בְּכֶתֶם אוֹפִיר)

Here, **gold of Ophir** represents garments decorated with that very fine gold, as verses 13 and 14 indicate. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in garments decorated with gold of Ophir]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Ophir**
UST Ophir
(אוֹפִיר)

The word **Ophir** is the name of a land that produced gold of excellent quality.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| kings | foreign princesses |
| The queen | {Your bride,} the queen |
| in gold of | Threads of gold fine gold from … decorate her robe |

# Psalms 45:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Listen, daughter, and consider, and incline your ear, and forget your people and the house of your father.* | *And as for you, dear bride, please listen carefully to my advice. From now on, regard this as your country and these people as your family.* |

ULT **Listen, daughter, and consider, and incline your ear**
UST And as for you, dear bride, please listen carefully to my advice
(שִׁמְעִי־בַת וּרְאִי וְהַטִּי אָזְנֵךְ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and do that here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Listen carefully, daughter, and consider] or [Listen, daughter, and consider, yes, incline your ear]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **daughter**
UST And as for you, dear bride
(בַּת)

The psalmist is addressing the bride with the courteous and gentle expression that wise older people in this culture used to address young people whom they were teaching. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [young lady]

**Support Reference:** Politeness

ULT **and incline your ear**
UST carefully
(וְהַטִּי אָזְנֵךְ)

The psalmist is speaking as if he wants the bride physically to **incline** her **ear**, that is, to lean over the way someone would do to pay close attention to someone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and pay close attention]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and forget your people and the house of your father**
UST From now on, regard this as your country and these people as your family
(וְשִׁכְחִי עַמֵּךְ וּבֵית אָבִיךְ)

The psalmist is speaking as if he wanted the bride actually to **forget** her nation and family. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and do not wish that you were still with your people and in the house of your father]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the house of your father**
UST and these people as your family
(וּבֵית אָבִיךְ)

Here the term **house** represents the "household" of the bride's **father**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and your family]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and the house of | and these people as your family |

# Psalms 45:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then the king will desire your beauty. Because he is your lord, prostrate yourself to him.* | *If you do that, the king will love and appreciate you even more. Bow down in front of him to honor him as your husband and king.* |

ULT **Then the king will desire your beauty**
UST If you do that, the king will love and appreciate you even more
(וְיִתְאָו הַמֶּלֶךְ יָפְיֶךָ)

The psalmist is using one part of the bride, her **beauty**, to mean all of her in the act of being attractive to the king. The psalmist means that if she gives the king her exclusive devotion, as he advised her in the previous verse, not just her physical appearance but her qualities of loyalty and faithfulness will make the king appreciate and love her. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [This will make you very attractive to the king]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **prostrate yourself to him**
UST Bow down in front of him
(וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִי־לוֹ)

Bowing low to the ground in front of the king was a symbolic action by which the bride showed her acceptance of his authority over her both as her new husband and as her new king. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [prostrate yourself respectfully and submissively to him]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the king | the king |
| is your lord | your husband and king |
| prostrate yourself | Bow down |

# Psalms 45:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The daughter of Tyre with a gift; the rich of the people will entreat your face.* | *Representatives of {foreign kingdoms such as the wealthy kingdom} of Tyre will bring gifts to you. The wealthy people of this kingdom will ask you to treat them favorably.* |

ULT **The daughter of Tyre with a gift; the rich of the people will entreat your face**
UST Representatives of {foreign kingdoms such as the wealthy kingdom} of Tyre will bring gifts to you. The wealthy people of this kingdom will ask you to treat them favorably
(וּבַת־צֹר ׀ בְּמִנְחָה פָּנֶיךָ יְחַלּוּ עֲשִׁירֵי עָם)

The psalmist 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 later in the verse if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [The rich of the people will entreat your face; the daughter of Tyre will do so with a gift]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **The daughter of Tyre**
UST Representatives of {foreign kingdoms such as the wealthy kingdom} of Tyre
(וּבַת־צֹר)

The psalmist is speaking as if the city of **Tyre** were a mother and its people were its **daughter**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The people of Tyre]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **The daughter of Tyre**
UST Representatives of {foreign kingdoms such as the wealthy kingdom} of Tyre
(וּבַת־צֹר)

The psalmist may be using one particularly wealthy and influential kingdom, **Tyre**, to represent foreign kingdoms in general. This would be complementary to **the people** of Israel or Judah whom he mentions later in the verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Representatives of foreign kingdoms]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **the rich of the people**
UST The wealthy people of this kingdom
(עֲשִׁירֵי עָם)

The psalmist is using the adjective **rich** 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: [the rich citizens among our people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **your face**
UST you
(פָּנַיִךְ)

Here the queen's **face** represents her "favor." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your favor]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Tyre | Tyre |

# Psalms 45:13

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *All glorious {is} the daughter of the king within; from interweavings of gold {is} her clothing.* | *This royal princess looked so beautiful in her private room where she had dressed for the wedding! She had put on a robe that gold threads richly decorated.* |

ULT **All glorious {is} the daughter of the king within; from interweavings of gold {is} her clothing**

UST This royal princess looked so beautiful in her private room where she had dressed for the wedding! She had put on a robe that gold threads richly decorated

(כָּל־כְּבוּדָּה בַת־מֶלֶךְ פְּנִימָה מִמִּשְׁבְּצוֹת זָהָב לְבוּשָׁהּ)

In this poem celebrating the king's wedding, the psalmist is not following a strict chronological sequence. In verse 9, he presented a portrait of the bride, groom, and attendants in their formal places at the ceremony. In verses 13–15, he describes the procession of the bride and her attendants to the ceremony. That procession took place before he started singing this song, so in some languages, it may be appropriate to describe them in a past tense. The UST models one way to do that.

**Support Reference:** Irregular Use of Tenses

ULT **{is} the daughter of the king**

UST This royal princess

(בַת־מֶלֶךְ)

By **the daughter of the king**, the psalmist means the same person whom he calls the "queen" in verse 9. (This indicates that her father is the **king** of a foreign country.) You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the royal bride]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **within**

UST in her private room where she had dressed for the wedding

(פְּנִימָה)

The psalmist is using the term **within** to mean a room or apartment within the palace where the bride has dressed for her wedding. Alternate translation: [in her chamber]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| glorious | looked … beautiful |
| the king | royal |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| gold | gold threads |
| {is} her clothing | She had put on a robe |

# Psalms 45:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *She will be led to the king in embroidery. The virgins after her, her companions, will be brought to you.* | *As she came in procession to where you are, O king, people could see that her robe also had beautiful designs of colored thread. Other young women, her bridesmaids, followed her in that procession.* |

ULT **She will be led**
UST As she came in procession
(תּוּבַל)

The expression **will be led** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Royal officials will lead her]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **to the king**
UST to where you are, O king
(לַמֶּלֶךְ)

The psalmist is addressing the king once again, as the pronoun **you** at the end of the verse indicates. So it may be more natural in some languages to use a second-person form here. Alternate translation: [to you, O king,]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

ULT **in embroidery**
UST people could see that her robe also had beautiful designs of colored thread
(לִרְקָמוֹת)

Here, **embroidery** represents embroidered garments, that is, garments decorated with embroidery. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in embroidered garments]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in embroidery**
UST people could see that her robe also had beautiful designs of colored thread
(לִרְקָמוֹת)

The term **embroidery** describes the art of making decorative designs in cloth by using needles to work colored threads into it to make beautiful images or patterns. If your readers would not be familiar with what embroidery is, in your translation you could use a general expresion. Alternate translation: [in garments decorated with colored thread]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **The virgins after her, her companions, will be brought to you**
UST Other young women, her bridesmaids, followed her in that procession
(בְּתוּלֹות אַחֲרֶיהָ רֵעוֹתֶיהָ מֻובָאֹות לָךְ)

The expression **will be brought** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Royal officials will bring her companions to you, the virgins who follow her]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| to the king | to where you are, O king |
| her companions | her bridesmaids |

# Psalms 45:15

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *They will be led by joy and rejoicing; they will enter into the palace of the king.* | *As they came in procession into your palace, this made everyone very happy.* |

**ULT They will be led by joy and rejoicing; they will enter**
**UST** As they came in procession … this made everyone very happy
(תּוּבַלְנָה בְשִׂמְחָ֥ת וָגִ֗יל תָּבֹ֫אנָה)

The psalmist is speaking of **joy** and **rejoicing** as if they were living things that could lead the bride and her attendants into the king's palace. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [There will be joy and rejoicing as they will enter]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT by joy and rejoicing**
**UST** this made everyone very happy
(בְשִׂמְחָ֥ת וָגִ֗יל)

The terms **joy** and **rejoicing** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [with great joy]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT into the palace of the king**
**UST** into your palace
(בְּהֵיכַ֖ל מֶֽלֶךְ)

See how you translated the similar expression "to the king" in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [into your palace, O king]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| by joy | this made everyone very happy |
| and rejoicing | this made everyone very happy |
| into the palace of | into … palace |
| the king | your |

# Psalms 45:16

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *In place of your fathers will be your sons; you will make him princes in all of the earth.* | *You will be famous not because of your ancestors but because of your descendants. They will have influence and authority all over the world.* |

ULT **your fathers … your sons**
UST your ancestors … your descendants
(אֲבֹתֶיךָ & בָּנֶיךָ)

The psalmist is using the term **fathers** to represent "ancestors," and he is using the term **sons** to represent "descendants." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your ancestors … your descendants]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **you will make him**
UST They will have influence and authority
(תְּשִׁיתֵמוֹ)

Since the psalmist is referring to multiple people (**sons** or descendants), it may be more natural in many languages to use a plural pronoun here. Alternate translation: [you will make them]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **in all of the earth**
UST all over the world
(בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ)

The psalmist is saying **all** as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. (However, since an overstatement like this one was an appropriate compliment for a ruler in this culture, you may wish to retain the overstatement in your translation, as the UST does. See what you decided to do in verse 2.) Alternate translation: [in many parts of the world]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| princes | They will have influence and authority |

# Psalms 45:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let me make {people} remember your name in every generation to generation; therefore the peoples will thank you forever and ever.* | *{By this song,} I want to make the people of future generations remember what a great king you are. Then people will always say good things about you.* |

ULT **your name**
UST what a great king you are
(שִׁמְךָ)

Here the king's **name** represents his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your reputation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in every generation to generation**
UST the people of future generations
(בְּכָל־דֹּר וָדֹר)

It might seem that this expression contains extra information that would not be natural to express in your language. If so, you can shorten it. Alternate translation: [in every generation] or [from generation to generation]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| generation | the people of future generations |
| to generation | the people of future generations |
| forever | always |

# Psalms 46

## Psalm 46 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 46 is a psalm of trust. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. First stanza (1–3): God as a refuge in an earthquake and an ocean storm
2. Second stanza (4–6): God as a helper in the turmoil of the nations
3. First refrain (7): Statement of trust
4. Third stanza (8–10): Yahweh as the one who ends wars
5. Second refrain (11): Statement of trust

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### What “stream” is the psalmist describing in verse 4?

Like Psalm 44, this psalm could have been written during the Assyrian invasion of Judah and siege of Jerusalem in 701 B.C. During a siege, the attacking army tried to cut off supplies of food and water to the people inside a city to make them surrender. But Jerusalem had its own water supply. The Gihon spring higher up on Mount Zion produced a steady stream of water. Kings such as Hezekiah engineered channels to bring its water safely into the city even during a siege. The psalmist is most likely referring to the life-giving stream of water from the Gihon spring and using it as a symbol of Yahweh’s care and provision for the people. The contrast between the images of this quiet stream and the violent ocean storm portrayed in the previous verse highlights the main theme of the psalm. Even in the midst of tumultuous and threatening events, Yahweh is always helping his people.

## Translation Issues in This Psalm

### Intentionally repeated terms

The psalmist uses the same verb for “roared” in verse 6 as he does for “roar” in verse 3. He uses the same verb for “shook” in verse 6 as he does for “shaking” in verse 2. He expects readers to realize as a result that he was using the sea in verse 3 to represent the “nations” he describes in verse 6 and that he was using the mountains in verse 2 to represent the “kingdoms” he describes in verse 6. So that your readers can appreciate this, we encourage you to use the same terms in your language for “roared” and “shook” in verse 6 that you use in verses 2 and 3 for “roar” and “shaking.”

# Psalms 46:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician. Of the sons of Korah. On “Maidens.” A song.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: One of the Korahites wrote this song. The tune is “Maidens.”* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **For the chief musician. Of the sons of Korah. On “Maidens.” A song**
UST This is a note for the worship leader: One of the Korahites wrote this song. The tune is “Maidens
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח עַל־עֲלָמוֹת שִׁיר)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put the information that this is a **song** with the information that one of the **sons of Korah** wrote it. Alternate translation: [A song of the sons of Korah. On Alamoth]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. See how you translated the term “chief musician” in the superscription to Psalm 4. Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **Of the sons of Korah**
UST One of the Korahites wrote
(לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח)

See how you translated the expression “the sons of Korah” in the superscription to Psalm 42. Alternate translation: [Of the descendants of Korah] or [Of the Korahites]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **On “Maidens**
UST The tune is “Maidens
(עַל־עֲלָמוֹת)

See how you translated the similar expression “On Sheminith” in the superscription to Psalm 6. Alternate translation: [Set to the tune Alamoth]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **On “Maidens**
UST The tune is “Maidens
(עַל־עֲלָמוֹת)

The term that the ULT translates as **Maidens** could be the name of the tune of this psalm. It might also be a musical instruction indicating that singers should perform the song in a higher range. Alternate translation: [Perform in a higher range]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Korah | One of the Korahites wrote |

# Psalms 46:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God {is} to us a refuge and strength, being found greatly a help in trouble.* | *God keeps us safe, as if he were a secure place where we could go if we were in danger. God strengthens us. He is always present to help us when we have troubles.* |

ULT **God {is} to us a refuge and strength**
UST God keeps us safe, as if he were a secure place where we could go if we were in danger. God strengthens us
(אֱלֹהִים לָנוּ מַחֲסֶה וָעֹז)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were actually a refuge, that is, a place where people can go to be safe from danger. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. See how you translated the term “refuge” in 14:6. Alternate translation: [God protects us and makes us strong]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **God {is} to us a refuge and strength**
UST God keeps us safe, as if he were a secure place where we could go if we were in danger. God strengthens us
(אֱלֹהִים לָנוּ מַחֲסֶה וָעֹז)

The psalmist could be using the terms **refuge** and **strength** together to express a single idea. The word **strength** would tell what kind of **refuge** God is. If you follow this interpretation in your translation, and if it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [God is our strong refuge] or [God powerfully protects us]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

ULT **being found greatly a help in trouble**
UST He is always present to help us when we have troubles
(עֶזְרָה בְצָרוֹת נִמְצָא מְאֹד)

The term **greatly** describes the degree or extent to which God is **found** to be **a help in trouble**. Translators may choose to put the focus either on the finding or the helping. Alternate translation: [being dependably found a help in trouble] or [being found a great help in trouble]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **being found greatly a help in trouble**
UST He is always present to help us when we have troubles
(עֶזְרָה בְצָרוֹת נִמְצָא מְאֹד)

The psalmist is using the term **found** in a way characteristic of his language to mean that when one is **in trouble**, God can be **found**; that is, he is present. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He is dependably present to help in trouble]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **being found greatly a help in trouble**
UST He is always present to help us when we have troubles
(עֶזְרָה בְצָרוֹת נִמְצָא מְאֹד)

The expression **being found** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, but a form of the verb “find” would communicate the psalmist’s meaning in your language, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural. Alternate translation: [We dependably find him a help in trouble] or [We find him a great help in trouble]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| a refuge | keeps … safe, as if he were a secure place where we could go if we were in danger |
| and strength | God strengthens us |
| in trouble | when we have troubles |

# Psalms 46:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Therefore we will not fear in the changing of the earth and the shaking of the mountains into the heart of the seas,* | *So we would not be afraid even if there were an earthquake that caused huge chunks of mountains to fall deep into the sea.* |

ULT **into the heart of**
UST deep into
(בְּלֵב)

The psalmist is speaking as if the deep part of the sea were actually its **heart**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [into the depths of]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the seas**
UST the sea
(יַמִּים)

The psalmist is using the plural **seas** where he could have used the singular form. (In the next verse, he refers back to the sea using a singular pronoun.) This suggests that he is using the plural form to emphasize the vastness of the sea. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the singular and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [the vast sea]

**Support Reference:** Unusual Uses of the Plural

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| we will … fear | we would … be afraid |
| the earth | even if there were an earthquake |
| and the shaking of | to fall |

# Psalms 46:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *should its waters roar and foam, should the mountains quake at its swelling. Selah* | *We would not be afraid even if there were a great storm in the ocean whose surging waves battered the coastline. Selah* |

ULT **should its waters roar and foam, should the mountains quake at its swelling**
UST We would not be afraid even if there were a great storm in the ocean whose surging waves battered the coastline
(יֶהֱמ֣וּ יַחְמְר֣וּ מֵימָ֑יו יִרְעֲשׁ֖וּ הָרִ֣ים בְּגַאֲוָתֹ֑ו)

In each instance, the pronoun **its** refers to “the seas” in the previous verse. Since that is a plural term, you may wish to use a plural pronoun or to repeat the noun for clarity. You may have chosen to use a singular form of the noun in your translation. Alternate translation: [should their waters roar and foam, should the mountains quake at their swelling] or [should the waters of the sea roar and foam, should the mountains quake at the swelling of the sea]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Selah**
UST Selah
(סֶֽלָה׃)

To translate the term **Selah** here and in verses 7 and 11, see how your translation team decided to represent that term in 3:2.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| should … quake | battered |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 46:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A stream, its channels make the city of God rejoice, the holy {place} of the dwellings of the Most High.* | *A stream flows down from the mountains into Jerusalem. Its cool waters refresh the people who live there. Jerusalem is the location of God's holy temple. He is greater than all other spirit beings.* |

ULT **the city of God**
UST into Jerusalem … the people who live there
(עִיר־אֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist is using **the city of God** (that is, Jerusalem) to represent the people of that city. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people of the city of God]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the holy {place} of the dwellings of the Most High**
UST Jerusalem is the location of God's holy temple. He is greater than all other spirit beings
(קֹדֶשׁ מִשְׁכְּנֵי עֶלְיוֹן)

The psalmist is using the adjective **holy** as a noun to mean a certain kind of place. (The ULT indicates this by supplying the word **place**.) Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the holy dwelling place of the Most High]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the holy {place} of the dwellings of the Most High**
UST Jerusalem is the location of God's holy temple. He is greater than all other spirit beings
(קֹדֶשׁ מִשְׁכְּנֵי עֶלְיוֹן)

The psalmist is speaking of the temple in Jerusalem as if it were a place in which God actually lived. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the holy temple of the Most High]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the holy {place} of the dwellings of the Most High**
UST Jerusalem is the location of God's holy temple. He is greater than all other spirit beings (קֹ֣דֶשׁ מִשְׁכְּנֵ֣י עֶלְיֽוֹן)

The psalmist is using the plural **dwellings** where he could have used the singular form. This suggests that, as in 43:3, he is using the plural form to emphasize the sacred character of the temple as a place where God is present in a special way. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the singular form and express the emphasis in another way. If it would be extra information to say both "holy" and "sacred" in your translation, you could use another term to make one of those words emphatic. Alternate translation: [the very holy dwelling of the Most High] or [the very sacred temple of the Most High]

**Support Reference:** Unusual Uses of the Plural

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| make … rejoice | Its cool waters refresh |
| God | into Jerusalem … the people who live there |
| the holy {place} of | God's holy |
| the dwellings of | Jerusalem is the location of … temple |
| the Most High | He is greater than all other spirit beings |

# Psalms 46:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God {is} in the midst of her, she will not be shaken. God will help her at the turning of the morning.* | *God is present in Jerusalem in a special way, so no one destroys it. God rescues the people of that city, and it is as if a dark night ends and a bright new day begins.* |

**ULT God {is} in the midst of her, she will not be shaken**
**UST** God is present in Jerusalem in a special way, so no one destroys it
(אֱלֹהִים בְּקִרְבָּהּ בַּל־תִּמּוֹט)

The pronouns **her** and **she** refer to the city of Jerusalem. It was common in this culture to envision a city as a mother and its residents as her children. If your language has a neuter pronoun that it uses for impersonal entities, it may be more natural to use that here. You could also repeat the noun from the previous verse. Alternate translation: [God is in the midst of the city, it will not be shaken]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT she will not be shaken**
**UST** so no one destroys it
(בַּל־תִּמּוֹט)

The expression **will not be shaken** contains a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [no one will shake her] or [no one will shake it]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT she will not be shaken**
**UST** so no one destroys it
(בַּל־תִּמּוֹט)

The psalmist is speaking as if the city of Jerusalem might actually be **shaken** by the "nations" he describes in the next verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [it will not be destroyed]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **God will help her**
UST God rescues the people of that city
(יַעֲזְרָהּ אֱלֹהִים)

The pronoun **her**, referring to the city of Jerusalem, represents the people of that city. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. See what you did in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [God will help the people of that city]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **at the turning of the morning**
UST and it is as if a dark night ends and a bright new day begins
(לִפְנוֹת בֹּקֶר)

The psalmist is using **at the turning of the morning** as a common expression of his culture to refer to the time when night ends and day begins. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [at the break of day] or [as soon as it becomes light]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **at the turning of the morning**
UST and it is as if a dark night ends and a bright new day begins
(לִפְנוֹת בֹּקֶר)

The psalmist is speaking as if God were going to help the people of Jerusalem at the actual **turning of the morning**, that is, as soon as it became light on a certain day. He means that the time of trouble, pictured as a dark night, will surely end as God brings deliverance. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when he brings deliverance]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| she will … be shaken | destroys it |

# Psalms 46:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Nations may roar; kingdoms may shake. He utters with his voice; the earth melts.* | *Sometimes foreign armies invade kingdoms and conquer them. {But that does not happen to us, because} God powerfully defends us and defeats our enemies.* |

**ULT Nations may roar; kingdoms may shake**
**UST** Sometimes foreign armies invade kingdoms and conquer them
(הָמְו֣וּ גֹ֭ויִם מָ֣טוּ מַמְלָכֹ֑ות)

The psalmist is speaking as if these **nations** might actually **roar** and these **kingdoms** might actually **shake**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Nations may attack kingdoms and devastate them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT He utters with his voice**
**UST** {But that does not happen to us, because} God powerfully defends us
(נָתַ֖ן בְּקֹולֹ֑ו)

It was characteristic of this culture to speak of thunder as if it were actually the **voice** of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. See how you translated the similar expression in 18:13. Alternate translation: [He causes thunder]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT He utters with his voice**
**UST** {But that does not happen to us, because} God powerfully defends us
(נָתַ֖ן בְּקֹולֹ֑ו)

The psalmist is speaking as if God actually causes thunder in the situations he is describing. He is doing that to represent God acting powerfully. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He acts powerfully]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **the earth melts**
> UST and defeats our enemies
> (תָּמֹוג אֶרֶץ)

The psalmist is speaking as if the **earth** actually **melts**. He is using the **earth** to represent the people of the earth, specifically hostile armies. He is using the term **melts** to mean that they will dissipate, that is, cease to be an organized force and go away. Alternate translation: [armies that threaten us dissipate]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Nations | Sometimes foreign armies |
| kingdoms | kingdoms |
| may shake | and conquer them |
| the earth | our enemies |

# Psalms 46:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh of Armies {is} with us; the God of Jacob {is} a stronghold to us. Selah* | *Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, helps us. The God whom we Israelites worship keeps us safe. Selah* |

**ULT {is} with us**
**UST** helps us
(עִמָּנוּ)

The psalmist is using a common expression of his culture to mean that Yahweh is helping the Judeans. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, as in the UST: [is helping us]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT the God of Jacob {is} a stronghold to us**
**UST** The God whom we Israelites worship keeps us safe
(מִשְׂגָּב־לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב)

See how you translated the similar term “refuge” in 46:1. Alternate translation: [the God of Jacob is protecting us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the God of Jacob {is}**
**UST** The God whom we Israelites worship
(אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב)

Here **Jacob**, the ancestor of the Israelites (whose name God changed to Israel), represents the nation that consists of his descendants. Alternate translation: [the God of us Israelites]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh of Armies | Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies |
| the God of … is | The God whom … worship |
| Jacob | we Israelites |
| a stronghold | keeps … safe |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 46:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Come, see the works of Yahweh, who makes desolations on the earth,* | *Let me tell you what Yahweh does. He destroys our enemies.* |

ULT **Come**
UST Let me tell you
(לְכוּ)

The psalmist is not telling his listeners to **Come** somewhere with him. He is saying **Come** to encourage them to take action. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: [Come on]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **who makes desolations on the earth**
UST He destroys our enemies
(אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם שַׁמּוֹת בָּאָרֶץ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **desolations**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [who makes the earth desolate]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **who makes desolations on the earth**
UST He destroys our enemies
(אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם שַׁמּוֹת בָּאָרֶץ)

As in verse 6, here the **earth** seems to represent the people of the earth and specifically the armies that are threatening Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [who desolates armies that threaten us] or [who destroys armies that threaten us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| desolations | destroys |
| on the earth | our enemies |

# Psalms 46:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *making wars cease to the end of the earth. He shatters the bow and cuts the spear in pieces; he burns the wagons with fire.* | *He stops wars all over the world. It is as if he breaks bows and arrows, destroys spears, and burns up war wagons.* |

ULT **to the end of the earth**
UST all over the world
(עַד־קְצֵה הָאָרֶץ)

The psalmist is speaking of the effects of Yahweh's action from the perspective of looking off as far as he can see in one direction, to one **end** of the **earth**. He is using that one direction to represent how Yahweh's action will have effects in every direction. (While in verses 6 and 9 the term "earth" had a symbolic meaning, now that Yahweh has defeated the forces opposing his people, the "earth" has the sense of a literal place.) Alternate translation: [to the ends of the earth] or [throughout the earth]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **He shatters the bow and cuts the spear in pieces; he burns the wagons with fire**
UST It is as if he breaks bows and arrows, destroys spears, and burns up war wagons
(קֶשֶׁת יְשַׁבֵּר וְקִצֵּץ חֲנִית עֲגָלוֹת יִשְׂרֹף בָּאֵשׁ)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **bow** or **spear** or to specific **wagons**. He means those things in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [He shatters bows and spears in pieces; he burns wagons with fire]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **He shatters the bow and cuts the spear in pieces; he burns the wagons with fire**
UST It is as if he breaks bows and arrows, destroys spears, and burns up war wagons
(קֶשֶׁת יְשַׁבֵּר וְקִצֵּץ חֲנִית עֲגָלוֹת יִשְׂרֹף בָּאֵשׁ)

The psalmist does not mean that Yahweh actually does these things personally. He is speaking of the effects of Yahweh's action of ending wars. Alternate translation: [He keeps people from using weapons and equipment to wage war]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **he burns the wagons with fire**
UST and burns up war wagons
(עֲגָלוֹת יִשְׂרֹף בָּאֵשׁ)

It might seem that this expression contains extra information that would not be natural to express in your language. If so, if you retain this image in your translation, you can shorten this expression. Alternate translation: [he burns up the wagons]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the bow | bows and arrows |
| the spear | spears |

# Psalms 46:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“Be still and know that I {am} God. I will be high among the nations, I will be high on the earth.”* | *God says, “Calm down and remember that I am God. The people of nations throughout the earth will honor me.”* |

**ULT Be still and know that I {am} God**
**UST** God says, “Calm down and remember that I am God
(הַרְפּוּ וְדְעוּ כִּי־אָנֹכִי אֱלֹהִים)

This verse is a direct quotation of Yahweh. The ULT indicates that by putting the verse inside quotation marks. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could also use a natural way of introducing direct quotations in your language. Alternate translation: [Yahweh says, “Be still and know that I {am} God]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

**ULT I will be high among the nations, I will be high on the earth**
**UST** The people of nations throughout the earth will honor me
(אָרוּם בַּגּוֹיִם אָרוּם בָּאָרֶץ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and do that here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [I will be high among the nations of the earth] or [I will be high among the nations; indeed, I will be high on the earth]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT I will be high among the nations, I will be high on the earth**
**UST** The people of nations throughout the earth will honor me
(אָרוּם בַּגּוֹיִם אָרוּם בָּאָרֶץ)

Yahweh is speaking as if he were actually going to be in a **high** location. He means that he will receive honor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. The UST models one way to do that.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and know | and remember |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {am} God | am God |
| among the nations | The people of nations |
| on the earth | throughout the earth |

# Psalms 46:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh of Armies {is} with us; the God of Jacob {is} a stronghold to us. Selah* | *Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, helps us. The God whom we Israelites worship keeps us safe. Selah* |

ULT **Yahweh of Armies {is} with us; the God of Jacob {is} a stronghold to us**
UST Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, helps us. The God whom we Israelites worship keeps us safe
(יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עִמָּנוּ מִשְׂגָּב־לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב)

This is the second instance of the refrain of this poem. The first instance is in verse 7. To help your readers appreciate this, translate this verse the same way you translated that verse.

**Support Reference:** Poetry

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh of Armies | Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies |
| the God of | The God whom … worship |
| Jacob | we Israelites |
| {is} a stronghold | keeps … safe |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 47

## Psalm 47 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 47 is a psalm of praise. It is a specific type of praise psalm, a divine enthronement psalm. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Call to worship (1)
2. Reason to worship (2–5)
3. Call to worship (6)
4. Reason to worship (7–9)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### What “peoples” and “nations” had Yahweh enabled the Israelites to subdue (v. 3)?

The psalmist does not give specific details of the victory he is celebrating. This might be a general song of praise to Yahweh, in which case verse 3 might be translated, “He subdues peoples under us and nations under our feet.” However, interpreters have suggested one likely historical occasion for the composition of this psalm. It is generally agreed that the Korahites wrote their psalms in the later years of the kingdom of Judah. During the reign of Jehoshaphat, as 2 Chronicles 20:1–30 relates, a huge army of Moabite, Ammonite, and Meunite soldiers attacked Judah. The Judeans felt unable to defeat this army, but people from all over Judah gathered at the temple and Jehoshaphat prayed for Yahweh’s help. He appealed to him on the grounds that he had promised to give the land of Israel to the descendants of Abraham. Yahweh made the invading soldiers from the different countries fight against each other, so the enemy army destroyed itself. As a result, the people of the surrounding kingdoms came to fear and respect Yahweh greatly. The psalmist may be referring to this in verse 9 when he describes people from all nations worshiping “the God of Abraham.”

## Translation Issues in This Psalm

### The order of reasons and results

As the introduction to the book of Psalms discusses, the typical pattern of a psalm of praise is to issue a call to worship and then give a reason to worship. A psalm of praise may do this more than once. (This psalm does it twice.) It would be helpful to follow this pattern to show your readers how these psalms work. However, if, as a rule, your language would not give a reason after a result, you could create verse bridges for verses 1 and 2 and verses 6 and 7 in order to put the reasons before the results.

In the ULT, which follows the Hebrew order, verses 1 and 2 read this way:

Clap a palm, all peoples!

Shout to God with a voice of rejoicing.

For Yahweh, the Most High, is to be feared,

the great king over all of the earth.

In your translation, you might present them as verse 1–2 this way:

Since Yahweh, the Most High,

the great king over all of the earth, is to be feared,

Clap a palm, all peoples!

Shout to God with a voice of rejoicing.

In the ULT, verses 6 and 7 read this way:

Sing praise {to} God, sing praise!

Sing praise {to} our King, sing praise!

For God {is} the king of all of the earth.

Sing praise {with} a maskil.

In your translation, you might present them as verse 6–7 this way:

Since God is the king of all of the earth,

Sing praise to God, sing praise!

Sing praise to our king, sing praise!

Sing praise with a maskil.

# Psalms 47:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician. A psalm of the sons of Korah.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: One of the Korahites wrote this psalm.* |

> ULT **For the chief musician**
> UST This is a note for the worship leader
> (לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. See how you translated the term “chief musician” in the superscription to Psalm 4. Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

> ULT **the sons of Korah**
> UST One of the Korahites wrote
> (לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח)

See how you translated the expression “the sons of Korah” in the superscription to Psalm 42. Alternate translation: [of the descendants of Korah] or [of the Korahites]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm of | this psalm |
| Korah | One of the Korahites wrote |

# Psalms 47:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Clap a palm, all peoples! Shout to God with a voice of rejoicing.* | *People all over the world, clap your hands! Shout joyfully to praise God!* |

**ULT Clap a palm**
**UST** clap your hands
(תִּקְעוּ־כָף)

Since people strike their palms together in order to applaud, it may be more natural in your language to use a plural term here. Alternate translation, as in the UST: [Clap your hands]

**Support Reference:** Unusual Uses of the Plural

**ULT Shout to God with a voice of rejoicing**
**UST** Shout joyfully to praise God
(הָרִיעוּ לֵאלֹהִים בְּקוֹל רִנָּה)

It might seem that to say both **Shout** and **voice** would be to express extra information that would not be natural to express in your language. If so, you can use just one of these terms in your translation. Alternate translation: [Celebrate by shouting to God] or [Lift your voice to God in rejoicing]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Shout | Shout |
| to God | God |
| rejoicing | joyfully to praise |

# Psalms 47:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For Yahweh, the Most High, is to be feared, the great king over all of the earth.* | *Everyone should revere Yahweh, who is much greater than any other spirit being. He rules powerfully over the whole world!* |

ULT **For Yahweh, the Most High, is to be feared, the great king over all of the earth**
UST Everyone should revere Yahweh, who is much greater than any other spirit being. He rules powerfully over the whole world
(כִּֽי־יְהוָ֣ה עֶלְי֣וֹן נוֹרָ֑א מֶ֥לֶךְ גָּ֝ד֗וֹל עַל־כָּל־הָאָֽרֶץ׃)

This verse gives the reason for the result that the previous verse describes. See the discussion in the introduction to this psalm of how you might order the reason and result here and in verses 6 and 7.

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **Yahweh, the Most High, is to be feared, the great king over all of the earth**
UST Everyone … revere Yahweh, who is much greater than any other spirit being. He rules powerfully over the whole world
(יְהוָ֣ה עֶלְי֣וֹן נוֹרָ֑א מֶ֥לֶךְ גָּ֝ד֗וֹל עַל־כָּל־הָאָֽרֶץ׃)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put the information that Yahweh is **the great king over all of the earth** with the information that he is **the Most High**. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, the Most High, the great king over all of the earth, is to be feared]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **Yahweh, the Most High, is to be feared**
UST Everyone … revere Yahweh, who is much greater than any other spirit being
(יְהוָ֣ה עֶלְי֣וֹן נוֹרָ֑א)

The expression **is to be feared** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [People should fear Yahweh, the Most High]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the Most High | who is much greater than any other spirit being |
| is to be feared | Everyone … revere |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the … king | He rules |

# Psalms 47:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He subdues peoples under us and nations under our feet.* | *He enables us to conquer people groups that oppose us.* |

**ULT He subdues peoples under us and nations under our feet**
**UST** He enables us to conquer people groups that oppose us
(יַדְבֵּר עַמִּים תַּחְתֵּינוּ וּלְאֻמִּים תַּחַת רַגְלֵינוּ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. It may be clearer in your language to connect the phrases with a word other than **and** in order to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Another approach would be to combine the phrases and express the emphasis in another way. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and do that here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [He has subdued peoples under us, yes, he has subdued nations under our feet] or [He has subdued many nations under our feet]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT He subdues peoples under us and nations under our feet**
**UST** He enables us to conquer people groups that oppose us
(יַדְבֵּר עַמִּים תַּחְתֵּינוּ וּלְאֻמִּים תַּחַת רַגְלֵינוּ)

The psalmist is speaking as if Yahweh actually put **peoples** and **nationsunder** the **feet** of the Israelites. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He has enabled us to defeat peoples, yes, he has enabled us to defeat nations] or [He has enabled us to defeat many nations]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and nations | people groups that oppose us |

# Psalms 47:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He chose our inheritance for us, the pride of Jacob, whom he loved. Selah* | *He loved our ancestor Jacob, and so he chose this land to be our possession. We are proud of the land he gave us. Selah* |

ULT **our inheritance for us**
UST this land to be our possession
(לָ֝נוּ אֶת־נַחֲלָתֵ֗נוּ)

The psalmist is speaking as if the land of Canaan were something that the Israelites had inherited as a lasting possession. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the land that would be our lasting possession]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the pride of Jacob, whom he loved**
UST He loved our ancestor Jacob, and so … We are proud of the land he gave us
(אֶת גְּאוֹן יַעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר־אָהֵֽב)

The psalmist is using **Jacob** to represent his descendants. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the pride of the descendants of Jacob, whom he loved]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the pride of Jacob, whom he loved**
UST He loved our ancestor Jacob, and so … We are proud of the land he gave us
(אֶת גְּאוֹן יַעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר־אָהֵֽב)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **pride**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [of which the descendants of Jacob, whom he loved, are proud]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Selah**
UST Selah
(סֶֽלָה)

See how your translation team decided at 3:2 to represent the term **Selah**.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| our inheritance | this land to be … possession |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the pride of | We are proud of the land he gave us |
| Jacob | our ancestor Jacob |
| he loved | He loved |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 47:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God has gone up with a shout, Yahweh with the sound of a shofar.* | *People have acclaimed Yahweh their God as their king by shouting and blowing ram's horns.* |

**ULT God has gone up with a shout, Yahweh with the sound of a shofar**
**UST** People have acclaimed Yahweh their God as their king by shouting and blowing ram's horns
(עָלָה אֱלֹהִים בִּתְרוּעָה יְהוָה בְּקוֹל שׁוֹפָר)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [Yahweh our God has gone up with a shout and the sound of a shofar]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT God has gone up with a shout, Yahweh with the sound of a shofar**
**UST** People have acclaimed Yahweh their God as their king by shouting and blowing ram's horns
(עָלָה אֱלֹהִים בִּתְרוּעָה יְהוָה בְּקוֹל שׁוֹפָר)

The psalmist is using the expression **gone up** to mean that God has ascended onto his throne as king. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [God has ascended his throne with a shout, Yahweh with the sound of a shofar] or [Yahweh our God has ascended his throne with a shout and the sound of a shofar]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT God has gone up with a shout, Yahweh with the sound of a shofar**
**UST** People have acclaimed Yahweh their God as their king by shouting and blowing ram's horns
(עָלָה אֱלֹהִים בִּתְרוּעָה יְהוָה בְּקוֹל שׁוֹפָר)

The psalmist is using God going up onto his throne to represent him assuming the role of king. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [God has become king with a shout, Yahweh with the sound of a shofar] or [Yahweh our God has become king with a shout and the sound of a shofar]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT God has gone up with a shout, Yahweh with the sound of a shofar**
**UST** People have acclaimed Yahweh their God as their king by shouting and blowing ram's horns
(עָלָה אֱלֹהִים בִּתְרוּעָה יְהוָה בְּקוֹל שׁוֹפָר)

As passages such as 2 Samuel 15:10 and 2 Kings 9:13 illustrate, shouting that a person was the king and blowing a shofar were symbolic actions by which people acclaimed that person as their new king. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of these actions in the text of your translation or in a footnote. The UST models one way to do that.

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | their God |
| with a shout | by shouting |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| a shofar | ram's horns |

# Psalms 47:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sing praise {to} God, sing praise! Sing praise {to} our king, sing praise!* | *Sing songs to praise God our King! Yes, sing songs to praise him!* |

**ULT Sing praise {to} God, sing praise! Sing praise {to} our king, sing praise**
UST Sing songs to praise God our King! Yes, sing songs to praise him
(זַמְּרוּ אֱלֹהִים זַמֵּרוּ זַמְּרוּ לְמַלְכֵּנוּ זַמֵּרוּ)

In each part of this verse, the psalmist is repeating the expression “sing praise” in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. If your language can repeat expressions for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the intensification. Alternate translation: [Sing praise to God enthusiastically! Yes, sing praise to our king enthusiastically!]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Sing praise | Sing songs to praise |
| {to} God | God … him |
| {to} our king | our King |

# Psalms 47:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For God {is} the king of all of the earth. Sing praise {with} a maskil.* | *Do that because God rules the whole world. Sing a special song about that.* |

**ULT {with} a maskil**
**UST** a special song
(מַשְׂכִּיל)

The psalmist is using a musical term here, **maskil**, that also occurs in the superscriptions to several psalms. Biblical scholars have different understandings of what this term means. (See the discussion in the introduction to the book of Psalms.) Since the meaning is not certain, in your translation, you may wish to represent this word in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language, as the ULT does. You could also use a general expression, as the UST does.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| {is} the king of | rules |
| Sing praise | Sing … about that |

# Psalms 47:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God reigns over the nations; God sits on the throne of his holiness.* | *God rules over all people groups. He rules them completely fairly, not the way many human kings do.* |

**ULT God sits on the throne of his holiness**
**UST** He rules them completely fairly, not the way many human kings do
(אֱלֹהִים יָשַׁב ׀ עַל־כִּסֵּא קָדְשׁוֹ)

Since the psalmist has already used the name **God** earlier in this sentence, it may be more natural in your language to use a pronoun here. (However, the repetition of the name has a poetic effect, so you may wish to repeat the name in your own translation.) Alternate translation: [he sits on the throne of his holiness]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT God sits on the throne of his holiness**
**UST** He rules them completely fairly, not the way many human kings do
(אֱלֹהִים יָשַׁב ׀ עַל־כִּסֵּא קָדְשׁוֹ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **throne**, representing God's reign, that is characterized by **holiness**. The idea is that God's reign is not common, that is, it is not like the usual reign of kings on earth, who are not always just in their dealings with their people. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [God reigns with perfect justice] or [he reigns with perfect justice]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| reigns | rules |
| the nations | all people groups |
| the throne of | rules them |
| his holiness | completely fairly, not the way many human kings do |

# Psalms 47:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The nobles of the peoples will gather themselves {as} the people of the God of Abraham, for {to} God are the shields of the earth. He is greatly exalted!* | *The rulers of the people groups will assemble to join those who worship the same God whom Abraham worshiped. They will do that because the leaders of the world must obey God. He is the supreme ruler of the world.* |

ULT **for**
UST They will do that because
(כִּי)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **{to} God are the shields of the earth**
UST the leaders of the world must obey God
(לֵאלֹהִים מָגִנֵּי־אָרֶץ)

Here, **shields** represents "rulers," since rulers are protectors. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the rulers of the earth belong to God] or [God reigns over the rulers of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **He is greatly exalted**
UST He is the supreme ruler of the world
(מְאֹד נַעֲלָה)

The expression **is greatly exalted** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. This could mean: (1) that God has exalted himself. Alternate translation: [He has exalted himself greatly] or (2) that people should or do exalt God. Alternate translation: [People should exalt him greatly] or [People exalt him greatly]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The nobles of | The rulers of |
| will gather themselves | will assemble |
| the God of | the same God whom … worshiped |
| Abraham | Abraham |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {to} God | must obey God |
| are the shields of | the leaders of |
| the earth | the world |
| He is … exalted | He is the … ruler of the world |

# Psalms 48

## Psalm 48 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 48 is a psalm of praise. It is a specific type of praise psalm, a “song of Zion.” See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Call to worship (1–3)
2. Reason to worship (4–10)
3. Call to worship (11–13)
4. Reason to worship (14)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Who were the “kings” who “advanced” against Jerusalem?

The psalmist says in verse 4 that “kings assembled themselves” and “advanced together” to attack Jerusalem. He does not give enough information to identify these kings definitively. However, it is possible to understand Psalms 44, 46, and 48 as reflecting a sequence of compositions related to the Assyrian siege of Jerusalem in 701 B.C.

Psalm 44 is a psalm of supplication that complains to Yahweh that “you do not go out with our armies” even though “we have not forgotten you and we have not dealt falsely with your covenant.” This is an urgent cry for help in a desperate and dangerous situation.

Psalm 46 is psalm of trust. Even though there is warfare in the background (“Nations may roar; kingdoms may shake”), and this warfare seems to be ongoing, the psalmist expresses confident trust that Yahweh will help Jerusalem in time to save the city.

Psalm 48 is a psalm of praise. It celebrates Jerusalem as the city that God has chosen as the place for people to worship him. In this psalm, the psalmist says in verse 8 that just as he and his contemporaries had heard from their ancestors about Yahweh’s

deliverance, now they have seen it for themselves. This could be understood as an allusion back to Psalm 44:1, where the psalmist said, “God, we have heard with our ears, our fathers have recounted to us, the work you worked in their days.”

While it is not necessarily the case that all three of these psalms relate to the same historical occasion, together they do represent the sequence of crying desperately to God for help, reaching a place of confident trust in God even before he acts, and celebrating God’s deliverance after he has brought it about. This rhythm characterizes the book of Psalms as a whole. See how you can translate these three psalms, which at least come from the same group of worship leaders and the same period in the history of the kingdom of Judah, in such a way as to highlight this rhythm.

# Psalms 48:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A song. A psalm of the sons of Korah.* | *One of the Korahites wrote this psalm.* |

> ULT **the sons of Korah**
> UST One of the Korahites wrote
> (לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח)

See how you translated the expression “the sons of Korah” in the superscription to Psalm 42. Alternate translation: [of the descendants of Korah] or [of the Korahites]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm of | this psalm |
| Korah | One of the Korahites wrote |

# Psalms 48:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh is great, and he is being praised greatly in the city of our God, {on} the mountain of his holiness.* | *Yahweh is great, and he deserves to have people praise him greatly in {Jerusalem}, the city that belongs to him. That city is high up on the mountain that he chose as the place where people would worship him.* |

ULT **and he is being praised**
UST and he deserves to have people praise him
(וּמְהֻלָּל)

The expression **is being praised** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and people are praising him]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and he is being praised**
UST and he deserves to have people praise him
(וּמְהֻלָּל)

In this context, the verbal form has the implied sense that Yahweh "is to be praised" or "ought to be praised." Your language may have a verbal form that indicates that explicitly. If so, it would be appropriate to use it here in your translation. If not, you may be able to indicate this sense in another way. Alternate translation: [and he is worthy to be praised]

**Support Reference:** Irregular Use of Tenses

ULT **in the city of our God**
UST in {Jerusalem}, the city that belongs to him
(בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

Since the psalmist has used the name **Yahweh** earlier in this sentence, and since Yahweh is the same person as **our God**, it may be more natural in your language to use a pronoun here. Alternate translation: [in his city]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **{on} the mountain of his holiness**
UST That city is high up on the mountain that he chose as the place where people would worship him
(הַר־קָדְשׁוֹ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **mountain**, Mount Zion, that is characterized by **holiness**. The idea is that Yahweh set apart this mountain as a place where he would be present in a special way and where people would worship him. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [on the mountain that he set apart for himself] or [on the mountain that he made a sacred place]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and he is being praised | and he deserves to have people praise him |
| our God | that belongs to him |
| his holiness | that he chose as the place where people would worship him |

# Psalms 48:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Beautiful of elevation, the joy of all of the earth, {is} Mount Zion {in} the recesses of the north, the city of the great king.* | *The height of Mount Zion is magnificent. People from all over the world are happy when they see it. The city {of Jerusalem,} where Yahweh rules as the great king, is on the northern ridge of that mountain.* |

ULT **the joy of all of the earth**
UST People from all over the world are happy when they see it
(מָשׂוֹשׂ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ)

Here the **earth** represents the people of the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the joy of all of the people of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the joy of all of the earth**
UST People from all over the world are happy when they see it
(מָשׂוֹשׂ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ)

The psalmist is saying **all** as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [the joy of people from throughout the earth]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **the joy of all of the earth**
UST People from all over the world are happy when they see it
(מָשׂוֹשׂ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **joy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [something that makes people from throughout the earth rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{ … in} the recesses of the north, the city of the great king**
UST The city {of Jerusalem,} where Yahweh rules as the great king, is on the northern ridge of
(יַרְכְּתֵי צָפוֹן קִרְיַת מֶלֶךְ רָב)

This could mean: (1) that the psalmist is saying where on Mount Zion the **city** of Jerusalem, and especially the temple and the royal palace, are located. Alternate translation: [on its northern slope, where the city of the great king is] or (2) that the psalmist is using the phrase **the recesses of the north** in the same way as in Isaiah 14:13 to mean the distant north, where pagan nations believe the council of the gods met. The psalmist would be saying that Yahweh is the supreme God who actually rules the council of supernatural beings (as in 89:7) from his temple in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [, the site of Jerusalem, the place from which Yahweh, the great king, rules as the supreme God]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the joy of | are happy when they see it |
| {is} Mount Zion | Mount Zion … that mountain |
| the … king | as the … king |

# Psalms 48:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God {is} in her citadels. He is known as a stronghold.* | *God is present {as a defender} in the city's fortifications. He has shown that he protects the people of the city.* |

**ULT He is known as a stronghold**
**UST** He has shown that he protects the people of the city
(נוֹדַע לְמִשְׂגָּב)

The expression **is known** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [People know him as a stronghold] or [He has made himself known as a stronghold]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT as a stronghold**
**UST** that he protects the people of the city
(לְמִשְׂגָּב)

See how you translated the term "stronghold" in 46:7 and 46:11. Alternate translation: [as a protector]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| {is} in her citadels | is present {as a defender} in the city's fortifications |
| He is known | He has shown |
| as a stronghold | that he protects the people of the city |

# Psalms 48:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For behold, kings assembled themselves, they advanced together.* | *Listen to why Yahweh deserves our praise. Kings joined together and led their armies to attack our city.* |

ULT **For**
UST why Yahweh deserves our praise
(כִּי)

As is characteristic in a psalm of praise, the word **For** introduces the reason why people should praise Yahweh as the psalmist has been saying they should. Alternate translation: [We should praise Yahweh because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **behold**
UST Listen to
(הִנֵּה)

The psalmist is using the term **behold** to focus his listeners' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [listen]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| kings | Kings |
| assembled themselves | joined |

# Psalms 48:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They, they saw, then they marveled. They were terrified, they hastened themselves away.* | *However, when they saw it, its secure position and defenses amazed them. They became so frightened that they ran away.* |

ULT **They, they saw, then they marveled**
UST However, when they saw it, its secure position and defenses amazed them
(הַמָּה רָאוּ כֵּן תָּמָהוּ)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **They** separately, even though the verb translated as **they saw** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that this action took place at the same time as when the kings **marveled**. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [As soon as they saw it, they marveled]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **They were terrified**
UST They became so frightened
(נִבְהָלוּ)

The expression **were terrified** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [This terrified them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **they hastened themselves away**
UST that they ran away
(נֶחְפָּזוּ)

In this clause, the psalmist is describing the result of the previous clause. It may be helpful to add a connector in your language that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [so they hastened themselves away]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

# Psalms 48:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Trembling seized them there, pain like childbearing.* | *Their bodies shook because they were so afraid. They screamed as if they were women who were giving birth.* |

**ULT Trembling seized them there**
**UST** Their bodies shook because they were so afraid
(רְעָדָה אֲחָזָתַם שָׁם)

The psalmist is speaking of **Trembling** as if it were a living thing that could have **seized** the enemy kings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [There they trembled uncontrollably]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT pain like childbearing**
**UST** They screamed as if they were women who were giving birth
(חִיל כַּיּוֹלֵדָה)

The psalmist 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: [pain seized them there, like that of childbearing]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT pain like childbearing**
**UST** They screamed as if they were women who were giving birth
(חִיל כַּיּוֹלֵדָה)

The point of this comparison is not that these kings felt physical **pain** but that they cried out in anguish and distress as a woman would who was feeling the actual **pain** of **childbearing**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [they cried out uncontrollably in anguish and distress]

**Support Reference:** Simile

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Trembling | Their bodies shook |
| seized them | Their bodies shook |

# Psalms 48:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *With the wind of the east, you shatter ships of Tarshish.* | *Just as you, Yahweh, can sent a strong east wind that wrecks even the sturdiest ships at sea{, so you destroyed the armies that were attacking us}.* |

**ULT you shatter**
**UST** that wrecks … so you destroyed
(תְּשַׁבֵּר)

The word **you** is singular here and through verse 11 because the psalmist is directly addressing Yahweh. So use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. Alternate translation: [you, Yahweh, shatter]

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

**ULT ships of Tarshish**
**UST** even the sturdiest ships at sea … the armies that were attacking us
(אֳנִיּוֹת תַּרְשִׁישׁ)

The psalmist is using **ships of Tarshish** as a common expression of his culture to mean "ocean-going ships" or "large, sturdy ships." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. If you have already translated the book of 1 Kings, see how you translated the similar expression in 1 Kings 10:22. Alternate translation: [ocean-going ships] or [large, sturdy ships]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Tarshish | even the sturdiest … at sea … that were attacking us |

# Psalms 48:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *As we have heard, so we have seen in the city of Yahweh of Armies, in the city of our God. God will establish it to forever. Selah* | *Jerusalem belongs to Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, who is our God. We had heard {from our ancestors} that God would always keep the city secure. Now we who live in the city have seen for ourselves that this is true. Selah* |

ULT **Selah**
UST Selah
(סֶלָה)

See how your translation team decided at 3:2 to represent the term **Selah**.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh of Armies | Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies |
| our God | who is our God |
| God | God |
| forever | always |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 48:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *We have compared your covenant faithfulness, God, in the midst of your temple.* | *We went into your temple, God, and recognized that you faithfully kept your covenant when you protected us. We acknowledged that you had been just as faithful to us as you were to our ancestors.* |

ULT **We have compared your covenant faithfulness**
UST and recognized that you faithfully kept your covenant when you protected us. We acknowledged that you had been just as faithful to us as you were to our ancestors
(דִּמִּינוּ & חַסְדֶּךָ)

The psalmist means that he and his fellow Judeans have **compared** the **covenant faithfulness** that God showed on this occasion with the past covenant faithfulness that their ancestors related to them, as described in the previous verse. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [We have compared your present covenant faithfulness with your past covenant faithfulness]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **We have compared your covenant faithfulness**
UST and recognized that you faithfully kept your covenant when you protected us. We acknowledged that you had been just as faithful to us as you were to our ancestors
(דִּמִּינוּ & חַסְדֶּךָ)

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: [We have compared how faithful you were to your covenant on this occasion with how faithful you were to your covenant in the past]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **We have compared**
UST and recognized that … We acknowledged that you had been just as faithful to us as you were to our ancestors
(דִּמִּינוּ)

By **We**, The psalmist means himself and his fellow Judeans but not Yahweh, to whom he is speaking. So use the exclusive form of that word in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your covenant faithfulness | you faithfully kept your covenant when you protected us |
| God | God |
| your temple | your temple |

# Psalms 48:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *As {is} your name, God, so {is} your praise to the ends of the earth. Your right hand is full {of} righteousness.* | *People throughout the world praise you as you deserve. You use your power to make sure that people treat each other right.* |

**ULT As {is} your name, God, so {is} your praise to the ends of the earth**
**UST** People throughout the world praise you as you deserve
(כְּשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים כֵּן תְּהִלָּתְךָ עַל־קַצְוֵי־אֶרֶץ)

In this context, God's **name** represents his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [People to the ends of the earth praise you, God, as your reputation deserves]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT Your right hand is full {of} righteousness**
**UST** You use your power to make sure that people treat each other right
(צֶדֶק מָלְאָה יְמִינֶךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of **righteousness** as if it were an object with which God's **right hand** could be **full**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Your right hand is thoroughly characterized by righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Your right hand is full {of} righteousness**
**UST** You use your power to make sure that people treat each other right
(צֶדֶק מָלְאָה יְמִינֶךָ)

Here, God's **hand** represents his powerful activity. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You powerfully bring about righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT Your right hand is full {of} righteousness**
**UST** You use your power to make sure that people treat each other right
(צֶדֶק מָלְאָה יְמִינֶךָ)

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: [You powerfully do what is right]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | you |
| {is} your praise | praise you |
| the earth | the world |
| {of} righteousness | to make sure that people treat each other right |

# Psalms 48:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of your judgments.* | *The people who live in Jerusalem and in other parts of the kingdom of Judah should celebrate the way you judge people fairly.* |

**ULT Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad**
**UST** The people who live in Jerusalem and in other parts of the kingdom of Judah should celebrate
(יִשְׂמַח ׀ הַר־צִיּוֹן תָּגֵלְנָה בְּנוֹת יְהוּדָה)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and do that here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Let Mount Zion and the daughters of Judah rejoice greatly] or [Let Mount Zion rejoice; yes, let the daughters of Judah be glad]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT Let Mount Zion rejoice**
**UST** The people who live in Jerusalem … should celebrate
(יִשְׂמַח ׀ הַר־צִיּוֹן)

Here, **Mount Zion** represents the people who live on Mount Zion, that is, the people of the city of Jerusalem. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Let the people of Jerusalem rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT let the daughters of Judah be glad**
**UST** and in other parts of the kingdom of Judah should celebrate
(תָּגֵלְנָה בְּנוֹת יְהוּדָה)

This could mean: (1) that the psalmist is speaking of the kingdom of **Judah** were a mother and of its people as if they were her **daughters**. Alternate translation: [let the people of Judah be glad] or (2) that the psalmist is speaking specifically of the women of the kingdom of **Judah** and encouraging them to have a victory celebration, as women in this culture did. Alternate translation: [let the women of Judah hold a victory celebration]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Let … rejoice | should celebrate |
| let … be glad | should celebrate |
| Mount Zion | The people who live in Jerusalem |
| Judah | the kingdom of Judah |
| your judgments | you judge people fairly |

# Psalms 48:12

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Circle Zion and go around her. Count her towers,* | *You Judeans should walk around the walls of the city of Jerusalem. See how many defensive towers it has!* |

**ULT Circle Zion and go around her. Count**
**UST** You Judeans should walk around the walls of the city of Jerusalem. See how many
(סֹ֭בּוּ צִיּ֣וֹן וְהַקִּיפֻ֑הָ סִּפְר֥וּ)

The instances of the implied "you" in the imperatives **Circle**, **go around**, and **Count** are plural because the psalmist is addressing many people. In the next verse, the terms "your" and "you" and the instances of the implied "you" in the imperatives are plural for the same reason. So use plural forms in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

**ULT Circle Zion and go around her**
**UST** You Judeans should walk around the walls of the city of Jerusalem
(סֹ֭בּוּ צִיּ֣וֹן וְהַקִּיפֻ֑הָ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [Go all the way around Zion]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT Circle Zion**
**UST** You Judeans should walk around the walls of the city of Jerusalem
(סֹ֭בּוּ צִיּ֣וֹן)

Since a mountain does not have **towers**, here **Zion** represents the city of Jerusalem. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Circle the city on Mount Zion] or [Circle Jerusalem]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Zion | the walls of the city of Jerusalem |
| her towers | defensive towers it has |

# Psalms 48:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *put your heart to her rampart, consider her citadels, so that you may recount to a later generation.* | *You should observe the strength of the walls and the fortifications so that you can tell your descendants about them.* |

**ULT put your heart to her rampart**
**UST** You should observe the strength of the walls
(שִׂ֭ימוּ לִבְּכֶ֣ם ׀ לְחֵילָ֑הּ)

The psalmist is using **put your heart to** as a common expression of his culture to mean "carefully consider." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [keep in mind her rampart] or [carefully consider her rampart]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT to her rampart**
**UST** the strength of the walls
(לְחֵילָ֑הּ)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **rampart**. He means all the ramparts of the walls of Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [her ramparts]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| her citadels | and the fortifications |
| you may recount | you can tell … about them |
| to a … generation | your descendants |

# Psalms 48:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For this God {is} our God forever and ever. He, he will guide us until death.* | *The people of Judah and Jerusalem should praise Yahweh because he is our God and he will always be our God. He will lead us for as long as we live.* |

**ULT For this God {is} our God**
**UST** The people of Judah and Jerusalem should praise Yahweh because he is our God … our God
(כִּי זֶה ׀ אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

As in verse 4, here the word **For** introduces the reason why people should praise Yahweh. It is not introducing the reason why people should walk around the walls of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [We should praise this God because he is our God]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT He, he will guide us**
**UST** He will lead us for as long as we live
(הוּא יְנַהֲגֵנוּ עַל)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **He** separately, even though the verb translated as **he will guide us** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize the personal role of Yahweh in guiding the Judeans. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [He is the one who will guide us]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | is our God |
| {is} our God | our God |
| forever | and he will always be |

# Psalms 49

## Psalm 49 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 49 is a wisdom psalm that describes the difference between how righteous people and wicked people live and the difference between what happens to them. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Introduction: call to listen (1–4)
2. Reminder that all people die, just as animals do (5–13; refrain, 12)
3. The psalmist's confident assertion that God will bring him out of Sheol (14–15)
4. Reassertion that all people die, just as animals do (16–19; refrain, 20)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Life after death

This psalm teaches that having wealth and power cannot keep anyone from dying. All people, whether they are rich or poor, will die. But in verses 14–15, the psalmist expresses his confident expectation that God will not leave him in the place where people go when they die. Instead, God will take him out of there and bring him to himself. While the belief in life after death and the resurrection from the dead is expressed more clearly in the New Testament, that belief is also expressed in the Old Testament in places such as this. Translators should translate this psalm, especially verses 14 and 15, in such a way that it is clear that this Old Testament writer had this expectation.

# Psalms 49:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician. A psalm of the sons of Korah.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: One of the Korahites wrote this psalm.* |

> **ULT For the chief musician**
> UST This is a note for the worship leader
> (לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. See how you translated the term “chief musician” in the superscription to Psalm 4. Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

> **ULT the sons of Korah**
> UST One of the Korahites wrote
> (לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח)

See how you translated the expression “the sons of Korah” in the superscription to Psalm 42. Alternate translation: [of the descendants of Korah] or [of the Korahites]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm of | this psalm |
| Korah | One of the Korahites wrote |

# Psalms 49:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hear this, all peoples! Listen, all dwellers of the world,* | *Listen to me, members of people groups from throughout the world,* |

**ULT Hear this, all peoples! Listen, all dwellers of the world**
**UST** Listen to me, members of people groups from throughout the world
(שִׁמְעוּ־זֹאת כָּל־הָעַמִּים הַאֲזִינוּ כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי חָלֶד)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and do that here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Listen carefully to me, all of you people who live in the world] or [Hear this, all peoples! Yes, listen, everyone who lives in the world]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT Hear … Listen**
**UST** Listen
(שִׁמְעוּ & הַאֲזִינוּ)

The implied “you” in these imperatives is plural because the psalmist is addressing many people. So use plural forms in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of ‘You’ — Singular

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the world | the world |

# Psalms 49:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *both sons of a human and sons of a man, the rich and the poor together.* | *whether or not you are famous and whether or not you are rich!* |

> ULT **both sons of a human and sons of a man**
> UST whether or not you are famous
> (גַּם־בְּנֵי אָדָם גַּם־בְּנֵי־אִישׁ)

The psalmist is using **sons of a human** as a common expression of his culture to mean "ordinary people," and he is using **sons of a man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "distinguished people." If these phrases do not have those meanings in your language, you could use comparable expressions from your language that do have those meanings, or you could state the meanings plainly. Alternate translation: [both the man on the street and the man in the corner office] or [both ordinary people and distinguished people]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

> ULT **the rich and the poor**
> UST and whether or not you are rich
> (עָשִׁיר וְאֶבְיוֹן)

The psalmist 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 adjective with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [rich people and poor people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

# Psalms 49:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My mouth will speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart, understanding.* | *I have thought carefully about what I am going to say, so it will be wise, and it will help you understand things better.* |

**ULT My mouth will speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart, understanding**
**UST** I have thought carefully about what I am going to say, so it will be wise, and it will help you understand things better
(פִּי יְדַבֵּר חָכְמוֹת וְהֶגְיוֹת לִבִּי תְבוּנוֹת)

The psalmist 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 mouth will speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart will speak understanding]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT My mouth will speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart, understanding**
**UST** I have thought carefully about what I am going to say, so it will be wise, and it will help you understand things better
(פִּי יְדַבֵּר חָכְמוֹת וְהֶגְיוֹת לִבִּי תְבוּנוֹת)

The psalmist is using individual parts of a himself, his **mouth** and the **meditation of his heart**, to mean all of him in the act of speaking **wisdom** and **understanding**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [With my mouth I will speak wisdom, and from the meditation of my heart I will speak understanding]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT and the meditation of my heart, understanding**
**UST** I have thought carefully about … and it will help you understand things better
(וְהֶגְיוֹת לִבִּי תְבוּנוֹת)

Here the **heart** represents a person's thoughts. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and from the meditation of my thoughts I will speak understanding]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the meditation of my heart, understanding**
UST I have thought carefully about … and it will help you understand things better
(וְהָגְיוֹת לִבִּי תְבוּנוֹת)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **meditation** and **understanding**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [and from what I have meditated on in my thoughts, I will say things that will help you understand]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| wisdom | so it will be wise |
| and the meditation of | have thought carefully about |
| understanding | and it will help you understand things better |

# Psalms 49:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will incline my ear to a proverb; I will open my enigma with a harp.* | *There is a popular saying about something that people find difficult to understand. I have considered it, and I will explain it as I {sing and} play my harp.* |

> ULT **I will incline my ear to a proverb**
> UST There is a popular saying … I have considered it
> (אַטֶּה לְמָשָׁל אָזְנִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if he is going to physically **incline** his **ear**, that is, lean over the way someone would do to listen to someone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will listen carefully to a proverb]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **I will incline my ear to a proverb**
> UST There is a popular saying … I have considered it
> (אַטֶּה לְמָשָׁל אָזְנִי)

The psalmist is speaking of this **proverb** as if it were a living thing that could speak to him. While he actually could listen to this proverb in the sense of hearing other people quote it, he means that he will carefully consider its meaning. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: [I will see what a proverb has to say to me] or [I will carefully consider the meaning of a proverb]

**Support Reference:** Personification

> ULT **I will incline my ear to a proverb**
> UST There is a popular saying … I have considered it
> (אַטֶּה לְמָשָׁל אָזְנִי)

While the term that the ULT translates as **proverb** generally means a short, popular saying that expresses some wisdom or truth, the specific meaning in this context is a "comparison," which many proverbs draw. The psalmist is probably referring to the comparison in the refrain in verses 12 and 20 of this psalm, that people are like beasts. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I will carefully consider the meaning of a comparison]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **I will open my enigma with a harp**
UST about something that people find difficult to understand … and I will explain it as I {sing and} play my harp
(אֶפְתַּח בְּכִנּוֹר חִידָתִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if his **enigma** (the difficult and puzzling question he is trying to solve) were a closed container that he is going to use a **harp** to **open**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will explain my enigma as I sing and accompany myself with a harp]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to a proverb | There is a popular saying |
| with a harp | as I {sing and} play my harp |

# Psalms 49:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Why should I fear in the days of evil, {when} the iniquity of my heels surrounds me,* | *I do not have to be afraid during difficult times when wicked people around me try to harm me.* |

**ULT { … Why should I fear in the days of evil, when} the iniquity of my heels surrounds me … the ones trusting in their wealth, and in the abundance of their treasure they boast**

UST I do not have to be afraid during difficult times when wicked people around me try to harm me … These wicked people believe that they will be able to use their money to overcome any difficulty. They boast about how rich they are

(לָמָּה אִירָא בִּימֵי רָע עֲוֹן עֲקֵבַי יְסוּבֵּנִי: הַבֹּטְחִים עַל־חֵילָם וּבְרֹב עָשְׁרָם יִתְהַלָּלוּ) (49:5-6)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine 49:5 and 49:6 into a verse bridge in order to keep together the entire question that the psalmist is asking in these verses. The psalmist is using the question form to make a confident affirmation. 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 do not have to be afraid in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels surrounds me, the ones trusting in their wealth, and in the abundance of their treasure they boast!]

**Support Reference:** Verse Bridges

**ULT in the days of evil**

UST during difficult times

(בִּימֵי רָע)

The psalmist is using the term **days** to mean "time," since time consists of days. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [during evil times] or [during troubled times]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT {when} the iniquity of my heels surrounds me**

UST when wicked people around me try to harm me

(עֲוֹן עֲקֵבַי יְסוּבֵּנִי)

As the next verse indicates, the psalmist is using his **heels** to represent people who would trip him up at his heels, that is, make him fall down. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [when the iniquity of those who would trip me up surrounds me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **{when} the iniquity of my heels surrounds me**
UST when wicked people around me try to harm me
(עֲוֹן עְקֵבַי יְסוֹבְבֵנִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if people wanted to trip him physically and make him fall down. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: [when the iniquity of those who want to cause my downfall surrounds me] or [when the iniquity of those who want to ruin me surrounds me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{when} the iniquity of my heels surrounds me**
UST when wicked people around me try to harm me
(עֲוֹן עְקֵבַי יְסוֹבְבֵנִי)

The psalmist is speaking of the **iniquity** of certain people as if it were a living thing that could surround him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when iniquitous people who want to ruin me surround me]

**Support Reference:** Personification

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| should I fear | I … be afraid |
| in the days of | during … times |
| evil | difficult |
| the iniquity of | when wicked people |

# Psalms 49:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the ones trusting in their wealth, and in the abundance of their treasure they boast?* | *These wicked people believe that they will be able to use their money to overcome any difficulty. They boast about how rich they are.* |

ULT **the ones trusting in their wealth, and in the abundance of their treasure they boast**
UST These wicked people believe that they will be able to use their money to overcome any difficulty. They boast about how rich they are
(הַבֹּטְחִים עַל־חֵילָם וּבְרֹב עָשְׁרָם יִתְהַלָּלוּ)

The psalmist is using two different verb forms in parallel statements. It may be more natural in your language to use the same verb form in both statements. Alternate translation: [the ones trusting in their wealth and boasting in the abundance of their treasure]

**Support Reference:** Irregular Use of Tenses

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the ones trusting | These wicked people believe that they will be able to use … to overcome any difficulty |
| their wealth | their money |
| they boast | They boast |

# Psalms 49:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Redeeming, a man does not redeem a brother, he does not give his ransom to God.* | *No one can use his money to keep a person from dying. No, no one can pay God money so that another person will not die.* |

ULT **Redeeming, a man does not redeem a brother, he does not give his ransom to God**
UST No one can use his money to keep a person from dying. No, no one can pay God money so that another person will not die
(אָח לֹא־פָדֹה יִפְדֶּה אִישׁ לֹא־יִתֵּן לֵאלֹהִים כָּפְרוֹ)

The psalmist is repeating forms of the verb **redeem** in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [A man certainly does not redeem a brother, he does not give his ransom to God]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

ULT **Redeeming, a man does not redeem a brother, he does not give his ransom to God**
UST No one can use his money to keep a person from dying. No, no one can pay God money so that another person will not die
(אָח לֹא־פָדֹה יִפְדֶּה אִישׁ לֹא־יִתֵּן לֵאלֹהִים כָּפְרוֹ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [A man certainly does not pay a ransom to God to redeem a brother]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **a brother**
UST a person
(אָח)

The psalmist is speaking as if a fellow human being were actually another person's **brother**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a fellow human]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Redeeming | one can use his money to keep … from dying |
| does … redeem | one can use his money to keep … from dying |
| his ransom | money so that another person will not die |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to God | God |

# Psalms 49:8

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *For the redemption of their life is costly, and it ceases forever,* | *No matter how much money a person has, it is never enough to keep someone else from dying* |

ULT **For the redemption of their life is costly, and it ceases forever … { … that one should live on forever, that} one should not see the pit**

UST No matter how much money a person has, it is never enough to keep someone else from dying … so that the person will live forever and never leave this world

(וְיֵקַר פִּדְיוֹן נַפְשָׁם וְחָדַל לְעוֹלָם׃ וְיִחִי־עוֹד לָנֶצַח לֹא יִרְאֶה הַשָּׁחַת) (49:8-9)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine verses 8 and 9 into a verse bridge in order to put the information about what **the redemption of their life** means right after that phrase. Alternate translation: [For the redemption of their life, that one should live on forever, that one should not see the pit, is costly, and it ceases forever]

**Support Reference:** Verse Bridges

ULT **their life**

UST someone else

(נַפְשָׁם)

In this verse, the word **life** is singular in form, but it refers to the lives of all humans as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the plural form of "life." Alternate translation: [their lives]

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

ULT **and it ceases forever**

UST it is never enough

(וְחָדַל לְעוֹלָם)

The psalmist means that the attempt at the **redemption** of a life **ceases** in the sense that it does not succeed and must be abandoned. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and the attempt always fails]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the redemption of | to keep … from dying |
| forever | never |

# Psalms 49:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *that one should live on forever, {that} one should not see the pit.* | *so that the person will live forever and never leave this world.* |

> ULT **{that} one should not see the pit**
> UST and never leave this world
> (לֹא יִרְאֶה הַשָּׁחַת)

In this context, the term **see** has the sense of "experience." You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [that one should not experience the pit]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **{that} one should not see the pit**
> UST and never leave this world
> (לֹא יִרְאֶה הַשָּׁחַת)

The psalmist is using the expression **the pit** to refer to Sheol, the realm of the dead. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: [that one should not experience the grave] or [that one should not go to the realm of the dead]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| forever | forever |
| the pit | and … leave this world |

# Psalms 49:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For one will see. The wise die, likewise the fool and the brute perish, and they leave their wealth to others.* | *Whether people are wise or foolish and brutish, they all die. Then other people inherit their money.* |

ULT **For**
UST they … die
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation. You may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [After all,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **one will see**
UST they … die
(יִרְאֶה)

The psalmist 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 will see the Pit]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **The wise**
UST Whether people are wise
(חֲכָמִים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [Wise people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the fool and the brute**
UST or foolish and brutish
(כְּסִיל וָבַעַר)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **fool** or **brute**. He means such people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [fools and brutes] or [foolish people and brutish people]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The wise | Whether people are wise |
| the fool | or foolish |
| perish | they … die |
| and they leave | Then … inherit |
| their wealth | their money |

# Psalms 49:11

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Inside of them, their houses {are} forever, their dwellings {are} to generation and generation. They call over lands by their names.* | *They imagine that the houses they live in will always exist. They call their properties by their own names {as if they would always have them}.* |

**ULT Inside of them, their houses {are} forever**
**UST** They imagine that the houses … will always exist
(קִרְבָּם בָּתֵּימוֹ ו לְעוֹלָם)

This phrase is a translation of the written Hebrew text. You may wish to follow an alternative reading from the ancient Greek translation. Alternate translation: [Their graves {are} their houses forever]

**Support Reference:** Alternative Readings

**ULT Inside of them**
**UST** They imagine that
(קִרְבָּם)

Here, what is **Inside** people represents their thoughts. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [In their thoughts]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT They call over lands by their names**
**UST** They call their properties by their own names as if they would always have them
(קָרְאוּ בִשְׁמוֹתָם עֲלֵי אֲדָמוֹת)

The psalmist is using a common expression of his culture to mean that the people he is describing give new names, their own names, to **lands** or properties. If this expression does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They give their names to lands] or [They name lands after themselves]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| their houses | the houses |
| {are} forever | will always exist |
| their dwellings | they live in |
| {are} to generation | will always exist |
| and generation | will always exist |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| They call<br>lands | They call<br>their properties |

# Psalms 49:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But a human does not abide in honor. He is likened to the beasts, they are destroyed.* | *Even if someone is great, he does not stay that way. He still dies, just as animals do.* |

**ULT He is likened to the beasts, they are destroyed**
**UST** He still dies, just as animals do
(נִמְשַׁל כַּבְּהֵמוֹת נִדְמוּ)

The expressions **is likened** and **are destroyed** are passive verbal forms. If your language would not use those forms, you could express the ideas in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [He is like the beasts, which perish]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in honor | is great |
| to the beasts | animals |
| they are destroyed | He still dies |

# Psalms 49:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *This, their way, {is} folly to them, but after them, they delight in their mouths. Selah* | *Those who think and act as if they will never die are living in a foolish manner. Even so, some other people admire them and approve of what they say. Selah* |

**ULT This, their way, {is} folly to them**
**UST** Those who think and act as if they will never die are living in a foolish manner
(זֶה דַּרְכָּם כֵּסֶל לָמוֹ)

In this context, **to them** is a possessive form. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [This, their way, is their folly]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT This, their way, {is} folly to them**
**UST** Those who think and act as if they will never die are living in a foolish manner
(זֶה דַּרְכָּם כֵּסֶל לָמוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of how people live as if that were a **way** or path that they was walking along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [This, their manner of life, is their folly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT but after them, they delight**
**UST** Even so, some other people admire them and approve
(וְאַחֲרֵיהֶם יִרְצוּ & וְאַחֲרֵיהֶם יִרְצוּ)

The psalmist is speaking as if those who admire them and want to be like these presumptuous rich people were walking **after** them on the same **way** or path. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: [but their followers delight]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT in their mouths**
**UST** of what they say
(בְּפִיהֶם)

The psalmist is using the **mouths** of these presumptuous rich people to represent what they say by using their mouths. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in their sayings]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Selah**
UST Selah
(סֶלָה)

To translate the term **Selah** here and in verse 15, see how your translation team decided to represent that term in 3:2.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {is} folly | foolish |
| they delight | and approve |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 49:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Like sheep, they appoint {them} to Sheol; death will shepherd them. And the upright will rule over them in the morning, and Sheol will consume their form from the dwelling to it.* | *God has determined that they will die, as easily as sheep die, and go to the place where dead people are. They will remain there, as if death were a shepherd keeping them in a pen. One day God will make righteous people rule over wicked people. Wicked people will no longer live in comfortable homes. Instead, their bodies will decay in their graves.* |

ULT **Like sheep**
UST as easily as sheep die
(כַּצֹּאן)

The point of this comparison is that just as **sheep** are vulnerable and easily killed, so these rich people are vulnerable to dying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [As if they were vulnerable sheep]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **they appoint {them}**
UST God has determined
(שַׁתּוּ)

Here the psalmist is using the pronoun **They** in a general sense, not to refer to specific people. Use an expression for this that would be natural in your language. If you need to say specifically who does the action, the context in the next verse indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [They are appointed] or [God appoints them]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **death will shepherd them**
UST They will remain there, as if death were a shepherd keeping them in a pen
(מָוֶת יִרְעֵם)

The psalmist is speaking of **death** as if it were a living thing that could **shepherd** these people. He means that just as a shepherd keeps all of his sheep under his control so that none wander away, none of these people will get away from the realm of the dead. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. (However, since the image of a **shepherd** here extends the image of **sheep** earlier in the verse, you may wish to express both images as comparisons. The UST models one way to do that.) Alternate translation: [they will not get away from the realm of the dead]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **And the upright will rule over them in the morning**
UST One day God will make righteous people rule over wicked people
(וַיִּרְדּוּ בָם יְשָׁרִים ׀ לַבֹּקֶר)

The psalmist is speaking as if the **upright** were going to rule **in the morning** on a certain day over rich people who had been wicked. He means that the "days of evil" (that is, the troubled times) that he began describing in verse 5, pictured here as a dark night, will surely end as God delivers innocent people from oppression. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. See how you translated the similar expression in 46:5. Alternate translation: [And when God delivers the upright from their oppression, they will rule over them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the upright**
UST righteous people
(יְשָׁרִים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [upright people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and Sheol will consume their form**
UST Instead, their bodies will decay in their graves
(וְצוּרָם לִבְלוֹת שְׁאוֹל)

The psalmist is speaking of **Sheol** as if it were a living thing that could **consume** the **form** or body of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and their body will decompose in the grave]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **and … their form**
UST Instead, their bodies
(וְצוּרָם)

In this verse, the word **form** is singular in form, but it refers to the forms or bodies of these wicked people as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the plural form of "form." Alternate translation: [their forms] or [their bodies]

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

**ULT from the dwelling to it**
**UST** Wicked people will no longer live in comfortable homes
(מִזְּבֻל לוֹ)

The pronoun **it** refers to the **form** of each wicked person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [from its dwelling] or [away from where they lived]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Like sheep | as easily as sheep die |
| they appoint {them} | God has determined |
| to Sheol | that they will die … and go to the place where dead people are |
| will shepherd them | They will remain there, as if … were a shepherd keeping them in a pen |
| And … will rule | God will make … rule |
| the upright | righteous people |
| Sheol | in their graves |
| will consume | will decay |

# Psalms 49:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But God will redeem my soul from the hand of Sheol, for he will take me. Selah* | *But God will take me to himself. In that way, he will rescue me from the place where dead people are. Selah* |

ULT **from the hand of Sheol**
UST from the place where dead people are
(מִיַּד־שְׁאוֹל)

Here, **hand** represents the power and control that a person or thing has over someone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the control of Sheol] or [from the custody of Sheol]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **for he will take me**
UST will take me to himself. In that way
(כִּי יִקָּחֵנִי)

Here the word **for** introduces not a reason but an explanation. Use a connecting word or phrase in your language that will show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [and he will do that by taking me]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| will redeem | he will rescue |
| my soul | me |
| Sheol | the place where dead people are |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 49:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not fear when a man becomes rich, when the glory of his house increases.* | *Do not let it trouble you when a person becomes rich and has many valuable possessions.* |

**ULT a man**
**UST** a person
(אִישׁ)

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]

**Support Reference:** When Masculine Words Include Women

**ULT when the glory of his house increases**
**UST** and has many valuable possessions
(כִּֽי־יִרְבֶּה כְּבוֹד בֵּיתוֹ)

Here, a rich person's **house** represents all of his possessions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [when the splendor of his estate increases]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| fear | Do … let it trouble you |
| when … becomes rich | when … becomes rich |
| the glory of | valuable |
| his house | has … possessions |

# Psalms 49:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For in his death, he will not take anything; his glory will not go down after him.* | *After all, when that person dies, he will take nothing with him {to the place where dead people are}. He will not be able to bring his money there with him.* |

**ULT his glory**
**UST** his money
(כְּבוֹדוֹ)

Here, **glory** represents "wealth." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [his wealth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT will not go down**
**UST** He will not be able to bring … there
(לֹא־יֵרֵד)

The psalmist assumes that readers will understand that by **go down**, he means "go down to Sheol." You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [go down to Sheol]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his glory | his money |

# Psalms 49:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Although in his life he blesses his soul (and they do praise you when you do well for yourself),* | *While a rich person is alive, he says to himself that he is successful. (People tend to praise anyone who is successful.)* |

ULT **he blesses his soul**
UST he says to himself that he is successful
(נַפְשׁוֹ יְבָרֵךְ & נַפְשׁוֹ)

The psalmist is using one part of a person, his **soul**, to mean all of him in the act of blessing himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he blesses himself]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **he blesses his soul**
UST he says to himself that he is successful
(נַפְשׁוֹ יְבָרֵךְ & נַפְשׁוֹ)

While the term “bless” usually refers to expressing hope that good things would happen to a person, in this context, it means saying that good things have happened to a person. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [he congratulates himself]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and they do praise you when you do well for yourself**
UST People tend to praise anyone who is successful
(וְיוֹדֶךָ כִּי־תֵיטִיב לָךְ)

Here the psalmist is using the pronoun **they** in a general sense, not to refer to specific people. Use an expression for this that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and people do praise you when you do well for yourself] or [and you are praised when you do well for yourself]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and they do praise you when you do well for yourself**
UST People tend to praise anyone who is successful
(וְיוֹדֶךָּ כִּי־תֵיטִיב לָךְ)

The words **you** and **yourself** are singular here because the psalmist is addressing each person in the audience as a representative individual who needs to consider whether what he says applies directly to him. So use singular forms in your translation if your language marks that distinction. If it does not, you may be able to communicate the meaning here in some other way. Alternate translation: [and they will praise any one of you if you do well for yourself] or [and any one of you will be praised if he does well for himself]

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| he blesses | he says to himself |
| his soul | that he is successful |
| and they do praise you | People tend to praise anyone |
| you do well | is successful |

# Psalms 49:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *he will come to the generation of his fathers; forever they will not see light.* | *Nevertheless, he will die and go to where his dead ancestors are. All of them will remain in that dark place forever.* |

ULT **he will come to the generation of his fathers**
UST Nevertheless, he will die and go to where his dead ancestors are
(תָּבוֹא עַד־דּוֹר אֲבוֹתָיו)

In a context such as this, your language might say “go” instead of **come**. Alternate translation: [he will go to the generation of his fathers]

**Support Reference:** Go and Come

ULT **he will come to the generation of his fathers**
UST Nevertheless, he will die and go to where his dead ancestors are
(תָּבוֹא עַד־דּוֹר אֲבוֹתָיו)

The psalmist is using the term **fathers** to mean “ancestors.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he will come to the generation of his ancestors]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **he will come to the generation of his fathers**
UST Nevertheless, he will die and go to where his dead ancestors are
(תָּבוֹא עַד־דּוֹר אֲבוֹתָיו)

The psalmist assumes that his listeners will understand that by this phrase he means that the rich man he has been describing since verse 16 will join in death the **generation** of people that consists of his ancestors. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [he will join his ancestors in death]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **forever they will not see light**
UST All of them will remain in that dark place forever
(עַד־נֶ֑צַח לָ֥א יִרְאֽוּ־אֽוֹר)

The psalmist is using **they will not see light** as a common expression of his culture to mean that the rich man and his ancestors will not live on the earth again. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they will never see the light of day] or [they will never live on the earth again]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the generation of | where his dead ancestors are |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 49:20

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *A human in honor, but he does not understand, he is likened to the beasts, they are destroyed.* | *If someone is great but does not understand these things, he will die, just as animals do.* |

ULT **A human in honor, but he does not understand, he is likened to the beasts**
UST If someone is great but does not understand these things … just as animals do
(אָדָם בִּיקָר וְלֹא יָבִין נִמְשַׁל כַּבְּהֵמוֹת)

**A human in honor, but he does not understand** introduces the first part of a possible condition. What the psalmist describes in the rest of this verse is true if this condition happens. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that could happen. Alternate translation: [Suppose a human is in honor, but he does not understand. Then he is likened to the beasts]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

ULT **he is likened to the beasts, they are destroyed**
UST he will die, just as animals do
(נִמְשַׁל כַּבְּהֵמוֹת נִדְמוּ)

This is the second occurrence of the refrain in this psalm. We recommend that you show this to your readers by translating the phrases here the same way that you translated them in the first occurrence of this refrain in 49:12. Alternate translation: [he is like the beasts, which perish]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| in honor | is great |
| he does … understand | does … understand these things |
| to the beasts | animals |
| they are destroyed | he will die |

# Psalms 50

## Psalm 50 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 50 is like a wisdom psalm in that it describes the difference between how righteous people and wicked people live and the difference between what happens to them. But it is a particular type of psalm that depicts God assembling and addressing the Israelites, commending those who are faithfully obeying his covenant but warning those who are acting wickedly. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. God powerfully summons the Israelites (1–6)
2. God addresses faithful Israelites (7–15)
3. God addresses wicked Israelites (16–22)
4. God reassures faithful Israelites (23)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Who was Asaph?

Asaph was an Israelite man from the tribe of Levi who was an important singer and musician during the reigns of David and Solomon. He played instruments and led people to sing songs to worship Yahweh. In addition to leading music, he also wrote songs. A dozen of the psalms are attributed to him. Psalm 50 is the psalm by Asaph that comes earliest in the book of Psalms.

#### What was a “thank offering” (verses 14, 23), and why does God encourage the Israelites to make this offering?

A thank offering was one type of fellowship offering, as Leviticus 7:12–15 describes. A worshiper would sacrifice an animal from his flock, and together with other food that he would bring, this would provide a celebration meal for his family and friends. At this meal, the worshiper would describe publicly how God had helped him when he was in trouble. When God encourages the Israelites to make this offering, he is

effectively encouraging them to pray to him for help when they are in trouble, as verse 15 describes, so that he can rescue them and they can honor him in this way. The Israelites were already offering all of the sacrifices that the law of Moses required, but God wanted them to go beyond what was required and live in a relationship of active devotion to him. He wanted them to experience his help and offer sacrifices freely in gratitude.

## Translation Issues in This Psalm

### Repeated phrases

For poetic effect, Asaph repeats some key terms in this psalm. He says in verse 3 that God "is not silent," showing that the situation in verse 21, where God says "I was silent," no longer holds. In verse 8, God tells the Israelite people, "I do not accuse you regarding your sacrifices," but in verse 21, God tells a representative wicked person, "I will accuse you" of moral wrongdoing. To help your readers appreciate these connections, we recommend that in your translation, you translate the verbs that the ULT represents as "be silent" and "accuse" the same way in both of their occurrences.

# Psalms 50:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A Psalm of Asaph The God of gods, Yahweh, has spoken, and he has summoned the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.* | *A Levite from the clan of Asaph wrote this song. Yahweh is the only true God. He has decreed that people from all over the world should come to him.* |

ULT **The God of gods**
UST is the only true God
(אֵל ו אֱלֹהִֽים)

Asaph is using a possessive form to express a superlative meaning. If a speaker of your language would not use a possessive form as a superlative, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [The Supreme God] or [The God who is greater than all other gods]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting**
UST people from all over the world
(אֶ֥רֶץ מִמִּזְרַח־שֶׁ֗מֶשׁ עַד־מְבוֹאֽוֹ)

Here, **the earth** represents the people who live on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people of the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting**
UST people from all over the world
(אֶ֥רֶץ מִמִּזְרַח־שֶׁ֗מֶשׁ עַד־מְבוֹאֽוֹ)

Asaph is referring to the entire earth by naming two extremes, the east, where **the sun** rises, and the west, where the sun sets. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people who live everywhere on earth]

**Support Reference:** Merism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A Psalm of | this song |
| Asaph | A Levite from the clan of Asaph wrote |
| The God of | is the … God |
| gods | only true |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and he has summoned | that … should come to him |
| the earth | people from … the world |

# Psalms 50:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *From Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shined forth.* | *Mount Zion is as wonderful as a place can be {because God's temple is there}. God's presence there is like a light that shines brightly.* |

**ULT the perfection of beauty**
**UST** is as wonderful as a place can be {because God's temple is there}
(מִכְלַל־יֹפִי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **perfection** and **beauty**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [the perfectly beautiful place]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT God has shined forth**
**UST** God's presence there is like a light that shines brightly
(אֱלֹהִים הוֹפִיעַ)

Asaph is speaking as if God had actually **shined forth** from Zion. He is using the image of light to represent God's presence radiating out from Zion. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [God's presence radiates out]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| From Zion | Mount Zion |
| the perfection of | is as wonderful as a place can be {because God's temple is there} |
| God | God's presence there |

# Psalms 50:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Our God comes, and he is not silent. A fire devours to his face, and around him it is stormed greatly.* | *Our God is approaching us {to judge us}. He will now tell us {what we have done right and what we have done wrong}. He is coming very powerfully, as he did at Mount Sinai, when there was a great thunderstorm and a burning fire on the mountain as he approached it.* |

ULT **Our God**
UST Our God
(אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

By **Our**, the psalmist means to include both himself and those he is addressing, so use the inclusive form of that word if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **and he is not silent**
UST He will now tell us {what we have done right and what we have done wrong}
(וְאַל־יֶחֱרַשׁ)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word **silent**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [and he is going to speak]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

ULT **A fire devours to his face, and around him it is stormed greatly**
UST He is coming very powerfully, as he did at Mount Sinai, when there was a great thunderstorm and a burning fire on the mountain as he approached it
(אֵשׁ־לְפָנָיו תֹּאכֵל וְסְבִיבָיו נִשְׁעָרָה מְאֹד)

Asaph is using images from God's appearance on Mount Sinai, where he made a covenant with the Israelites, to describe God's approach to judge his people in light of that covenant on this occasion. Exodus 19:16–18 describes how a great thunderstorm and a burning fire preceded Yahweh's descent onto Mount Sinai. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. The UST models one way to do that.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **A fire devours to his face**
UST and a burning fire on the mountain as he approached it
(אֵשׁ־לְפָנָיו תֹּאכֵל)

Here, **to his face** represents "in front of him." If you decide to retain this image in your translation, if it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [A fire devours in front of him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **A fire devours to his face**
UST and a burning fire on the mountain as he approached it
(אֵשׁ־לְפָנָיו תֹּאכֵל)

Asaph is speaking as if this **fire** were actually devouring or eating what was in front of God. If you decide to retain this image in your translation, if it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [A fire burns up everything in front of him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **it is stormed greatly**
UST a great thunderstorm
(נִשְׂעָרָה מְאֹד)

The expression **it is stormed** is a passive verbal form. If you decide to retain this image in your translation, if your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [a great storm rages]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Our God | Our God |
| devours | burning |

# Psalms 50:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He calls to the heavens above and to the earth so that he may judge his people.* | *He calls upon the sky and the land {to serve as witnesses of his covenant with the Israelites}. This demonstrates that he will judge them fairly {according to that covenant}.* |

**ULT He calls to the heavens above and to the earth**
UST He calls upon the sky and the land {to serve as witnesses of his covenant … }
(יִקְרָא אֶל־הַשָּׁמַיִם מֵעָל וְאֶל־הָאָרֶץ)

Asaph assumes that listeners will understand that he means that God **calls** the **heavens** and the **earth** to serve as witnesses of what the Israelites promised to do when they made a covenant with Yahweh. Deuteronomy 4:26 and Deuteronomy 30:19 describe how Moses called upon the heavens and the earth to serve as witnesses in this way. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [He calls to the heavens above and to the earth as witnesses]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He calls | He calls … to serve as witnesses of his covenant |
| the heavens | the sky |
| so that he may judge | This demonstrates that he will judge … fairly {according to that covenant} |

# Psalms 50:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“Gather my faithful {ones} to me, the cutters of my covenant by sacrifice.”* | *He says, “Summon those who worship me faithfully, those who made a covenant with me that involved offering sacrifices to me.”* |

**ULT Gather my faithful {ones} to me**
**UST** He says, “Summon those who worship me faithfully
(אִסְפוּ־לִי חֲסִידָי)

This verse is a direct quotation of God. The ULT indicates that by putting the verse inside quotation marks. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could also use a natural way of introducing direct quotations in your language. Alternate translation: [He says, “Gather my faithful ones to me]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

**ULT Gather my faithful {ones} to me**
**UST** He says, “Summon those who worship me faithfully
(אִסְפוּ־לִי חֲסִידָי)

Asaph does not identify to whom God is giving this command. (God is not addressing the heavens and the earth. Their role is to serve as witnesses.) The focus is more on the results than on the agents. It may be more natural in your language to express this with a form other than a command form. Alternate translation: [Let my faithful ones be gathered to me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Gather**
**UST** He says, “Summon
(אִסְפוּ)

The implied “you” in the imperative **Gather** is plural, so if you retain the command form, use its plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of ‘You’ — Singular

ULT **my faithful {ones}**
UST those who worship me faithfully
(חֲסִידָי)

Asaph is using the adjective **faithful** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. (The ULT indicates this by supplying the word **ones**.) Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can use an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the ones who are faithful to me]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the cutters of my covenant**
UST those who made a covenant with me
(כֹּרְתֵי בְרִיתִי)

God is using **the cutters of my covenant** as a common expression of this culture to mean "those who made a covenant with me." He is using the term "cut" because in some covenant ceremonies, the participants would cut up animals and then walk between the pieces. This was to indicate, "If I break this covenant, may I be destroyed in this same way." It is not necessary to understand this background to covenant ceremonies in order to understand what God says in the rest of this psalm, so you do not have to use the term "cut" in your translation. You could simply say "make," or you could use an expression from your own language and culture. Alternate translation: [those who made a covenant with me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **by sacrifice**
UST that involved offering sacrifices to me
(עֲלֵי־זָבַח)

God is not using the phrase **by sacrifice** to refer to animals that were slaughtered and cut up when he made his covenant with the Israelites. (There is no description in the Bible of such a ceremony connected with that covenant.) He means that this covenant was sealed and was to be continually acknowledged by sacrificial worship, which is the main theme of this psalm. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [that was sealed and was to be continually acknowledged by sacrificial worship]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Gather | He says, "Summon |
| my faithful {ones} | those who worship me faithfully |
| my covenant | a covenant with me |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| sacrifice | offering sacrifices to me |

# Psalms 50:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The heavens declare his righteousness, that God, he is judge. Selah* | *The sky displays the character of God so clearly, it is as though it is saying, "God is righteous, and he is the supreme judge." Selah* |

**ULT The heavens declare his righteousness**
**UST** The sky displays the character of God so clearly … is righteous
(וַיַּגִּידוּ שָׁמַיִם צִדְקוֹ)

Asaph is speaking of the **heavens** as if they were a living thing that could **declare** God's righteousness. This conveys two ideas. In the immediate context, the heavens witness that God has kept his part of the covenant. In the broader biblical context, as in 19:1 and 97:6, the characteristics of the heavens display the righteous character of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the broader meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The heavens display his righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT his righteousness**
**UST** is righteous
(צִדְקוֹ)

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: [that he is righteous]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT that God, he is judge**
**UST** it is as though it is saying, God … and he is the supreme judge
(כִּי־אֱלֹהִים | שֹׁפֵט הוּא)

Asaph is stating the pronoun **he** separately, even though it could be omitted, in order to emphasize that the heavens declare that God is the supreme **judge** of everyone on earth. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the emphasis here. Alternate translation: [that it is God who is judge]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Selah**
UST Selah
(סֶלָה)

See how your translation team decided at 3:2 to represent the term **Selah**.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The heavens | The sky |
| declare | displays the character of God so clearly |
| his righteousness | is righteous |
| God | God |
| is judge | is the supreme judge |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 50:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“Hear, my people, and I will speak; Israel, and I will testify against you. I {am} God, your God.* | *God says, “You Israelite people who belong to me, listen as I speak to you. I am the God whom you worship. I am going to tell you what you have done right and what you have done wrong.* |

ULT **Hear, my people, and I will speak**
UST God says … who belong to me, listen as I speak to you
(שְׁמָעָה עַמִּי ו וַאֲדַבֵּרָה)

This verse begins a direct quotation of God that continues through verse 15. The ULT indicates that by putting these verses inside quotation marks. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could also use a natural way of introducing direct quotations in your language. Alternate translation: [He says, “Hear, my people, and I will speak]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **Hear … against you … your God**
UST God says … listen … whom you worship … you
(שְׁמָעָה & בֶּךָּ & אֱלֹהֶיךָ)

The pronouns **you** and **your** and the implied “you” in imperatives are singular here and through verse 15 because God is addressing his **people** as if they were a single individual. So use singular forms in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of ‘You’ — Singular

ULT **Israel**
UST You Israelite people
(יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Asaph 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: [listen, Israel]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **Israel**
UST You Israelite people
(יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **Israel** represents the nation that consisted of the descendants of Jacob, whom God renamed Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [you Israelites]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Israel | You Israelite people |
| and I will testify | I am going to tell … what you have done right and what you have done wrong |
| {am} God | am the God |
| your God | whom you worship |

# Psalms 50:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I do not accuse you regarding your sacrifices, for your burnt offerings are always before me.* | *You continually burn animals completely on the temple altar as sacrifices to me, so I have no complaint that you have failed to offer sacrifices to me.* |

**ULT I do not accuse you regarding your sacrifices, for your burnt offerings are always before me**

**UST** You continually burn animals completely on the temple altar as sacrifices to me, so I have no complaint that you have failed to offer sacrifices to me

(לֹ֤א עַל־זִבְחֶ֨יךָ֙ אוֹכִיחֶ֔ךָ וְעוֹלֹתֶ֖יךָ לְנֶגְדִּ֥י תָמִֽיד)

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: [Your burnt offerings are always before me, so I do not accuse you regarding your sacrifices]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your sacrifices | that you have failed to offer sacrifices to me |
| for your burnt offerings | You … burn animals completely on the temple altar … so |

# Psalms 50:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will not take a bull from your house, goats from your folds.* | *However, I do not really need the bulls from your herds or the goats from your pens {that you sacrifice to me}.* |

**ULT I will not take a bull from your house, goats from your folds**
**UST** However, I do not really need the bulls from your herds or the goats from your pens {that you sacrifice to me … }
(לֹא־אֶקַּח מִבֵּיתְךָ פָּר מִמִּכְלְאֹתֶיךָ עַתּוּדִים)

Asaph 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 will not take a bull from your house, and I will not take goats from your folds] or [I will not take a bull from your house or goats from your folds]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT I will not take a bull from your house, goats from your folds**
**UST** However, I do not really need the bulls from your herds or the goats from your pens {that you sacrifice to me … }
(לֹא־אֶקַּח מִבֵּיתְךָ פָּר מִמִּכְלְאֹתֶיךָ עַתּוּדִים)

God is not saying that he will not accept bulls or goats from the Israelites as sacrifices. This psalm as a whole is supportive of the sacrificial system. However, its emphasis is on offering sacrifices for the right reasons. They are not something that God needs; they are a way of living in relationship with God (as verses 14 and 15 especially emphasize). You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I do not need to take a bull from your house or goats from your folds]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT from your house**
**UST** from your herds
(מִבֵּיתְךָ)

Here, a person's **house** represents his "household" or "possessions." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from among your possessions]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **goats**
UST or the goats … that you sacrifice to me
(עַתּוּדִים)

Here and in v. 13, the psalmist is using a specific term that means male goats. If your language does not have a general term for goats but must specify whether a goat is male or female, use your term for male goats in these places.

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| a bull | the bulls |
| from your house | from your herds |
| goats | or the goats … that you sacrifice to me |

# Psalms 50:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For every beast of the forest {is} to me, the cattle on a thousand hills.* | *I do not need them, because all of the animals that live in the forests belong to me. All of the cattle everywhere on earth also belong to me.* |

ULT **For**
UST I do not need them, because
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **every beast of the forest {is} to me, the cattle on a thousand hills**
UST all of the animals that live in the forests belong to me. All of the cattle everywhere on earth also belong to me
(לִי כָל־חַיְתוֹ־יָעַר בְּהֲמוֹת בְּהַרְרֵי־אֶלֶף)

Asaph 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: [every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills are mine] or [every beast of the forest and the cattle on a thousand hills belong to me]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **the cattle on a thousand hills**
UST All of the cattle everywhere on earth
(בְּהֲמוֹת בְּהַרְרֵי־אֶלֶף)

God is using the number **a thousand** in a way that was common in this culture to mean a very large, uncountable number, not a precise figure. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the cattle on every hill] or [all cattle everywhere]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| beast of | the animals that live in |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the cattle | All of the cattle |

# Psalms 50:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I know all the birds of the mountains, and the creature of the field {is} with me.* | *I own all the birds that live in the mountains. All the little creatures that move around in the fields also belong to me.* |

ULT **I know**
UST I own
(יָדַעְתִּי)

God is using the term **know** in a particular sense to mean that he owns **all the birds**. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I own]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and the creature of the field {is} with me**
UST All the little creatures that move around in the fields also belong to me
(וְזִיז שָׂדַי עִמָּדִי)

In this context, the phrase **with me** expresses a relationship of possession. Alternate translation: [and the creature of the field is mine]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **and the creature of the field {is} with me**
UST All the little creatures that move around in the fields also belong to me
(וְזִיז שָׂדַי עִמָּדִי)

God is not referring to a specific **creature**. He means field creatures in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and every field creature is mine]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **and the creature of the field {is} with me**
UST All the little creatures that move around in the fields also belong to me
(וְזִיז שָׂדַי עִמָּדִי)

The term that the ULT translates as **creature** refers to a "moving thing," and in this context, it probably means a "swarming thing" or insect. (In the previous verse, God described how large animals belonged to him, and in this verse, he makes the focus much smaller and thus even more comprehensive.) You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and even the insects in the fields are mine]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| I know | I own |
| and the creature of | All the little creatures that move around in |

# Psalms 50:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *If I were hungry, I would not say {that} to you, for the world and its fulness {are} to me.* | *Because everything in the world belongs to me, if I were hungry, I would not tell you {so that you would bring me some food to eat}.* |

ULT **If I were hungry, I would not say {that} to you, for the world and its fulness {are} to me**

UST Because everything in the world belongs to me, if I were hungry, I would not tell you so that you would bring me some food to eat
(אִם־אֶרְעַב לֹא־אֹמַר לָךְ כִּי־לִי תֵבֵל וּמְלֹאָהּ)

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: [Since the world and its fulness are mine, I would not tell you if I were hungry]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **and its fulness**

UST everything in
(וּמְלֹאָהּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **fulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and what fills it] or [and everything in it]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the world | the world |

# Psalms 50:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do I eat the flesh of bulls, or do I drink the blood of goats?* | *When you sacrifice bulls to me, I do not eat their flesh, and when you offer goats to me, I do not drink their blood.* |

**ULT Do I eat the flesh of bulls, or do I drink the blood of goats**
UST When you sacrifice bulls to me, I do not eat their flesh, and when you offer goats to me, I do not drink their blood
(הַאוֹכַל בְּשַׂר אַבִּירִים וְדַם עַתּוּדִים אֶשְׁתֶּה)

God is using the question form to emphasize that what he is describing is certainly not true. 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 certainly do not eat the flesh of bulls, and I do not drink the blood of goats!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| bulls | When you sacrifice bulls to me |
| goats | when you offer goats to me |

# Psalms 50:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sacrifice a thank offering to God, and pay your vows to the Most High.* | *I want you to offer sacrifices to me, your God, because you have promised to do that to thank me for helping you. I am the God who is greater than all other spirit beings.* |

**ULT Sacrifice a thank offering to God, and pay your vows to the Most High**
**UST** I want you to offer sacrifices to me, your God, because you have promised to do that to thank me for helping you. I am the God who is greater than all other spirit beings
(זַבַּח לֵאלֹהִים תּוֹדָה וְשַׁלֵּם לְעֶלְיוֹן נְדָרֶיךָ)

God is speaking of himself in the third person because he is giving an authoritative command. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: [Sacrifice a thank offering to me, God, and pay your vows to me, the Most High]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Sacrifice | I want you to offer sacrifices |
| a thank offering | to thank me for helping you |
| to God | to me, your God |
| your vows | because you have promised to do that |
| to the Most High | I am the God who is greater than all other spirit beings |

# Psalms 50:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will glorify me.”* | *So pray to me when you are in trouble. If you do that, I will rescue you, and then you will honor me {publicly by offering a sacrifice}.”* |

**ULT in the day of trouble**
**UST** when you are in trouble
(בְּיוֹם צָרָה)

Asaph is using the term **day** to mean “time,” since time consists of days. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in any time of trouble]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Call on me | So pray to me |
| trouble | trouble |
| I will deliver you | If you do that, I will rescue you |
| and you will glorify me | and then you will honor me {publicly by offering a sacrifice} |

# Psalms 50:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But to the wicked {one} God says, "What to you to recount my statutes, or that you should lift up my covenant onto your mouth?* | *But God says to wicked people, "You should not be reciting my commandments or talking about the covenant that I made with you!* |

ULT **But to the wicked {one} God says, What to you to recount my statutes, or that you should lift up my covenant onto your mouth … For you, you hate instruction, and you cast my words behind you**

UST But God says to wicked people, You should not be reciting my commandments or talking about the covenant that I made with you … You should not do that, because you hate it when I correct you, and when I tell you to do something, you refuse to obey me

(וְלָרָשָׁע ו אָמַר אֱלֹהִים מַה־לְּךָ לְסַפֵּר חֻקָּי וְתִשָּׂא בְרִיתִי עָלַי־פִּיךָ׃ וְאַתָּה שָׂנֵאתָ מוּסָר וַתַּשְׁלֵךְ דְּבָרַי אַחֲרֶיךָ׃) (50:16-17)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine 50:16, which describes a result, and 50:17, which gives a reason, into a verse bridge in order to put the reason before the result. Alternate translation: [But to the wicked one God says, "Since you, you hate instruction, and you cast my words behind you, what to you to recount my statutes, or that you should lift up my covenant onto your mouth?]

**Support Reference:** Verse Bridges

ULT **But to the wicked {one}**

UST But … to wicked people

(וְלָרָשָׁע)

Asaph is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. (The ULT indicates this by supplying the word **one**.) Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can use an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [But to every wicked person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **to you … or that you should lift up … your mouth**

UST You … or talking about

(לְךָ & וַתִּשָּׂא & פִּיךָ)

The pronouns **you** and **your** are singular here and through verse 21 because God is addressing a representative **wicked** individual. So use singular forms in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

ULT **What to you to recount my statutes, or that you should lift up my covenant onto your mouth**
UST You should not be reciting my commandments or talking about the covenant that I made with you
(מַה־לְּךָ֤ לְסַפֵּ֣ר חֻקָּ֣י וַתִּשָּׂ֣א בְרִיתִ֣י עָלַ֖י־פִּֽיךָ)

God is using the question form to rebuke wicked people who speak as if they were loyal to his covenant but who disobey its commandments. 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: [It is not to you to recount my statutes, and you should not lift up my covenant onto your mouth!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **What to you to recount my statutes, or that you should lift up my covenant onto your mouth**
UST You should not be reciting my commandments or talking about the covenant that I made with you
(מַה־לְּךָ֤ לְסַפֵּ֣ר חֻקָּ֣י וַתִּשָּׂ֣א בְרִיתִ֣י עָלַ֖י־פִּֽיךָ)

God is using **What to you** as a common expression of this culture to mean that the person he is addressing has no valid connection with what he describes next. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You have no business recounting my statutes or lifting up my covenant onto your mouth!] or [It is not appropriate for you to recount my statutes or to lift up my covenant onto your mouth.]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **or that you should lift up my covenant onto your mouth**
UST or talking about the covenant that I made with you
(וַתִּשָּׂ֣א בְרִיתִ֣י עָלַ֖י־פִּֽיךָ)

God is speaking as if his **covenant** were an object that this wicked person could actually **lift up** and put on his **mouth**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [or that you should say that you are loyal to my covenant]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| But to the wicked {one} | But … to wicked people |
| God | God |
| to recount | reciting |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my statutes | my commandments |
| my covenant | the covenant that I made with you |

# Psalms 50:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you, you hate instruction, and you cast my words behind you.* | *You should not do that, because you hate it when I correct you, and when I tell you to do something, you refuse to obey me.* |

**ULT For you, you hate instruction**
**UST** You should not do that, because you hate it when I correct you
(וְאַתָּה שָׂנֵאתָ מוּסָר)

God is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you have** already includes this meaning. He is doing that in order to emphasize a contrast between what faithful people are doing, as described in the previous part of this psalm, and what this wicked individual is doing. Alternate translation: [for your part, you hate]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and you cast my words behind you**
**UST** and when I tell you to do something, you refuse to obey me
(וַתַּשְׁלֵךְ דְּבָרַי אַחֲרֶיךָ)

God is speaking as if his **words** were objects that this wicked person could actually **cast behind** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and you disregard my words]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT my words**
**UST** when I tell you to do something
(דְּבָרַי)

God is using the term **words** to represent what he says by using words. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what I say to you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| instruction | when I correct you |

# Psalms 50:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *When you see a thief, you approve of him, and you partake with adulterers.* | *When you see someone stealing, you decide that it is acceptable for him to steal. When you learn that people are having sexual relations with people other than their spouses, you do the same thing.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a thief | someone stealing |
| adulterers | you learn that people are having sexual relations with people other than their spouses |

# Psalms 50:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You send your mouth in evil, and your tongue frames deceit.* | *You do not restrain yourselves from saying wicked things, and you make up things to say to deceive people.* |

**ULT You send your mouth in evil**
**UST** You do not restrain yourselves from saying wicked things
(פִּיךָ שִׁלַּחְתָּ בְרָעָה)

God is using the term **send** in a specific sense to mean "release" or "set free," as in Deuteronomy 15:12. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [You release your mouth in evil]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT You send your mouth in evil**
**UST** You do not restrain yourselves from saying wicked things
(פִּיךָ שִׁלַּחְתָּ בְרָעָה)

God is speaking of this wicked person's **mouth** as if it were itself a person that the wicked one could **send** away or release. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You say evil things without restraint]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT and your tongue frames deceit**
**UST** and you make up things to say to deceive people
(וּלְשׁוֹנְךָ תַּצְמִיד מִרְמָה)

God is speaking of this wicked person's **tongue** as if it were itself a person who could **frame** (form or put together) **deceit**, which God is speaking of as if it were an object that could be assembled. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and you make up deceitful things to say]

**Support Reference:** Personification

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in evil | wicked things |
| and your tongue | to say |
| deceit | to deceive people |

# Psalms 50:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You sit, you speak against your brother; you impute slander against the son of your mother.* | *You consistently say bad things about members of your own family, even about your closest relatives.* |

ULT **You sit, you speak**
UST You consistently say bad things
(תֵּשֵׁב & תְּדַבֵּר)

God is using **You sit** as a common expression of this culture to indicate that the action he describes next, **you speak**, is something that this wicked person does deliberately and continuously. If this expression does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You sit around speaking] or [You habitually speak]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **against your brother … against the son of your mother**
UST about members of your own family, even about your closest relatives
(בְּאָחִיךָ & בֶּן־אִמְּךָ)

The word that the ULT translates as **brother** is a general term that in various contexts can mean a full brother or a half-brother, a kinsman, or a fellow Israelite. The phrase **the son of your mother** explicitly describes a full brother. (It is characteristic of Hebrew poetry for the second part of a line to intensify and sharpen the first part of a line.) If your language has a general term for a relative that can include a brother, it would be appropriate to use it to translate **brother**. If not, if your language has a term for a half-brother (a son of the same father but not of the same mother), you might use that to translate **brother**, and you might use your term for a full brother (a son of the same mother and father) in the second part of the verse.

**Support Reference:** Kinship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| slander | You … say bad things |

# Psalms 50:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have done these {things}, but I have been silent. You thought the being of I AM {was} like you. I will accuse you, and let me array to your eyes.* | *You do all those things, and I have not said anything to you about them, so you think that I do not care about them any more than you do. But now I am going to show you {all the wicked things you have done}, and I am going to judge and punish you for doing them.* |

ULT **You thought the being of I AM {was} like you**
UST so you think that I do not care about them any more than you do
(דִּמְּיתָ֣ הֱיוֹת־אֶ֭הְיֶה כָּמ֑וֹךָ)

This could mean: (1) that God is referring to himself in the third person by the name he revealed to Moses in Exodus 3:14. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: [You thought that I, the I AM, was like you in my being] or (2) that God is repeating forms of the verb "to be" in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. Another way to translate the original text is, "You thought that being, I was like you." Alternate translation: [You thought that surely I was like you]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **You thought the being of I AM {was} like you**
UST so you think that I do not care about them any more than you do
(דִּמְּיתָ֣ הֱיוֹת־אֶ֭הְיֶה כָּמ֑וֹךָ)

This sentence indicates the result of the reason that the previous sentence describes. It may be helpful to use a connector in your language that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [Therefore, you thought the being of I AM was like you]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **I will accuse you, and let me array to your eyes**
UST But now I am going to show you {all the wicked things you have done}, and I am going to judge and punish you for doing them
(אוֹכִיחֲךָ֥ וְאֶעֶרְכָ֖ה לְעֵינֶֽיךָ)

God is using the term **array**, which often describes armies forming battle lines, in a legal sense to mean that he will present evidence in a compelling order. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and I will marshal the evidence against you]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **to your eyes**
> UST But now I am going to show you
> (לְעֵינֶיךָ)

Here, **eyes** represent sight. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [for you to see]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

# Psalms 50:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Consider this now, forgetters of God, lest I tear and none be delivering!* | *Many of you have been ignoring me. Pay attention to what I am saying now! If you do not, I will destroy you. No one will be able to rescue you.* |

ULT **Consider**
UST Pay attention
(בִּינוּ)

The implied "you" in the imperative **Consider** is plural because God is addressing everyone who does not pay attention to his commandments, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

ULT **forgetters of God**
UST Many of you have been ignoring me
(שֹׁכְחֵי אֱלֹוהַּ)

God is speaking of himself in the third person because he is giving an authoritative command. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: [you who forget me, God] or [you who disregard me, God]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

ULT **lest I tear and none be delivering**
UST If you do not, I will destroy you. No one will be able to rescue you
(פֶּן־אֶטְרֹף וְאֵין מַצִּיל)

God is using the word translated as **lest** to introduce an outcome that he does not want to happen. Because of this, he first gives the people he is addressing an instruction to follow so that this will not happen. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that avoiding this outcome is the purpose of the instruction. Alternate translation: [Otherwise, I will tear you, and no one will be able to deliver you]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **I tear**
UST I will destroy you
(פֶּן־אֶטְרֹף)

God is speaking as if he would actually **tear** wicked people into pieces the way a lion tears its victim apart. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I punish you severely]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Consider | Pay attention |
| God | me |
| be delivering | will be able to rescue you |

# Psalms 50:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one sacrificing a thank offering glorifies me, and the one placing a way, I will make him look upon the salvation of God.”* | *When people publicly offer sacrifices to thank me for helping them, that honors me greatly. If people live as I want people to live, I will rescue them when they are in trouble.”* |

**ULT and the one placing a way**
**UST** If people live as I want people to live
(וְשָׂם דָּרֶךְ)

God is speaking as if the person he is describing were actually **placing** or preparing a **way** or path on which he would walk. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the one ordering his conduct rightly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT I will make him look upon the salvation of God**
**UST** I will rescue them when they are in trouble
(אַרְאֶנּוּ בְּיֶשַׁע אֱלֹהִים)

In this context, to **look upon** salvation means to “experience” it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will make him experience the salvation of God]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT I will make him look upon the salvation of God**
**UST** I will rescue them when they are in trouble
(אַרְאֶנּוּ בְּיֶשַׁע אֱלֹהִים)

God is speaking of himself in the third person because he is making an authoritative promise. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: [I will make him experience my salvation]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The one sacrificing | When people publicly offer |
| a thank offering | sacrifices to thank me for helping them |
| glorifies me | that honors me greatly |
| upon the salvation of | will rescue them when they are in trouble |
| God | I |

# Psalms 51

## Psalm 51 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 51 is a specific kind of psalm of supplication, a “penitential psalm” in which the psalmist is deeply troubled by guilt and asks God to forgive him and restore him. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. David’s plea for forgiveness (1–9)
2. David’s plea for restoration (10–15)
3. Rightly offered sacrifices (16–19)

# Psalms 51:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician. A psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him after he had gone in to Bathsheba.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: King David wrote this song after the prophet Nathan came and rebuked him for having sexual relations with {another man's wife,} Bathsheba.* |

**ULT For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. See how you translated the term "chief musician" in the superscription to Psalm 4. Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**ULT he had gone in to Bathsheba**
UST having sexual relations with {another man's wife,} Bathsheba
(בָּא אֶל־בַּת־שָׁבַע)

This superscription, referring to events described in 2 Samuel 11:1–12:25, describes sexual relations in a polite way by using the phrase **had gone in to**. Depending on what is helpful in your language, you could use a polite way of referring to this in your language, or you could state this plainly, as the UST does. Alternate translation: [he had slept with Bathsheba]

**Support Reference:** Euphemism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm of | this song |
| David | King David wrote |
| Nathan | Nathan |
| the prophet | the prophet |
| Bathsheba | Bathsheba |

# Psalms 51:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Be merciful to me, God, according to your covenant faithfulness. According to the multitude of your compassions, wipe away my transgressions.* | *Oh God, since you promised to faithfully love me, please act mercifully toward me. You gently love people in many ways, so please forgive me for disobeying you so badly.* |

> ULT **according to your covenant faithfulness**
> UST since you promised to faithfully love me
> (כְּחַסְדֶּךָ)

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: [according to all the ways you are faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

> ULT **your compassions, wipe away my transgressions**
> UST You gently love people … so please forgive me for disobeying you so badly
> (רַחֲמֶיךָ מְחֵה פְשָׁעָי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **compassions** and **transgressions**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [of ways you care for me, forgive all the ways I have sinned against you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

> ULT **wipe away my transgressions**
> UST so please forgive me for disobeying you so badly
> (מְחֵה פְשָׁעָי)

David is speaking of his **transgressions** as if they were words written in ink on a scroll that God could **wipe away** to erase them and make them disappear. The basic idea is that David wants God to regard his transgressions as if they had never occurred; that is, he wants God to forgive him for committing them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [completely forgive my transgressions]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Be merciful to me | please act mercifully toward me |
| God | Oh God |
| according to your covenant faithfulness | since you promised to faithfully love me |
| your compassions | You gently love people |
| wipe away | so please forgive me |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my transgressions | for disobeying you so badly |

# Psalms 51:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Make great, wash me from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.* | *Remove my sin completely, as if it were dirt that you were washing off me to make me clean.* |

**ULT Make great, wash me from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin**
**UST** Remove my sin completely, as if it were dirt that you were washing off me to make me clean
(הֶרֶב כַּבְּסֵנִי מֵעֲוֹנִי וּמֵחַטָּאתִי טַהֲרֵנִי)

The expressions **Make great** and **wash me** together express a single idea. The expression **Make great** tells in what way David wants God to **wash**him. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

**ULT Make great, wash me from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin**
**UST** Remove my sin completely, as if it were dirt that you were washing off me to make me clean
(הֶרֶב כַּבְּסֵנִי מֵעֲוֹנִי וּמֵחַטָּאתִי טַהֲרֵנִי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and do that here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Wash me thoroughly to cleanse me of my sin] or [Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, yes, cleanse me from my sin]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Make great, wash me from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin**
UST Remove my sin completely, as if it were dirt that you were washing off me to make me clean
(הֶרֶב כַּבְּסֵנִי מֵעֲוֹנִי וּמֵחַטָּאתִי טַהֲרֵנִי)

This could mean (both meanings may be present): (1) that David is speaking of his **iniquity** or **sin** as if it were actually dirt or a stain that God could **wash** off of him in order to **cleanse** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Completely take away my iniquity, yes, remove all of my sin] or (2) that David is speaking as if his **iniquity** or **sin** had made him ritually unclean and so unable to participate in the worship of God until he became ritually clean again through ceremonial washing. Alternate translation: [Take away all of my iniquity to make me acceptable to you again so that I can worship you freely]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| from my iniquity | my sin |
| and … from my sin | my sin |
| cleanse me | to make me clean |

# Psalms 51:3

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *For I, I know my transgressions, and my sin {is} always before me.* | *I ask this because I know that I have disobeyed you in many ways. I am continually aware of that.* |

ULT **For**
UST I ask this because
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an admission. Alternate translation: [Indeed,] or [Admittedly,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **I, I know my transgressions**
UST I know that I have disobeyed you in many ways
(פָּשָׁעַי אֲנִי אֵדָע)

David is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **I know** already includes this meaning. He is doing that because he is confronting himself with the fact of his **transgressions**. Alternate translation: [I know very well that I have committed transgressions]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and my sin {is} always before me**
UST I have disobeyed you in many ways. I am continually aware of that
(וְחַטָּאתִי נֶגְדִּי תָמִיד)

David is speaking of his **sin** as if it were actually an object that was **always before** him or in front of him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I am always conscious of my sin]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| I know | know that |
| my transgressions | I have disobeyed you in many ways |
| and my sin | I have disobeyed you in many ways |

# Psalms 51:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Against you, you only, I have sinned and done evil in your eyes, so you are right in your speaking, you are blameless in your judging.* | *What grieves me most is how I have sinned against you. I have done things that you consider to be very wrong. So when you declare that I am guilty, you are right. When you judge me, you are completely fair.* |

ULT **Against you, you only, I have sinned**
UST What grieves me most is how I have sinned against you
(לְךָ לְבַדְּךָ ׀ חָטָאתִי)

David is repeating the pronoun **you** for emphasis. If your language can repeat pronouns for emphasis, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the intensification. Alternate translation: [You are the only one I have sinned against]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Against you, you only, I have sinned**
UST What grieves me most is how I have sinned against you
(לְךָ לְבַדְּךָ ׀ חָטָאתִי)

David is saying **only** as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [You are the one I have essentially sinned against]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **and … evil**
UST things … very wrong
(וְהָרַע)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evil**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what is evil]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in your eyes**
UST that you consider to be
(בְּעֵינֶיךָ)

Here, **eyes** represents "perspective." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in your perspective]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I have sinned | I have sinned |
| and … evil | things … very wrong |
| you are right | you are right |
| you are blameless | you are completely fair |
| in your judging | When you judge me |

# Psalms 51:5

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Behold, I was born in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.* | *Indeed, I have been a sinner from birth. In fact, I have been a sinner since my mother conceived me.* |

ULT **Behold**
UST Indeed
(הֵן)

David is using the term **Behold** to focus attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, here and in the next verse.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **I was born in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me**
UST I have been a sinner from birth. In fact, I have been a sinner since my mother conceived me
(בְּעָוֹן חוֹלָלְתִּי וּבְחֵטְא יֶחֱמַתְנִי אִמִּי)

David does not mean that his **mother conceived** him as the result of a sinful act. Instead, he means that as a human being, he has been characterized by **iniquity** and **sin** for his entire life. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I have been iniquitous since I was born; indeed, I have been sinful from the time my mother conceived me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **I was born in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me**
UST I have been a sinner from birth. In fact, I have been a sinner since my mother conceived me
(בְּעָוֹן חוֹלָלְתִּי וּבְחֵטְא יֶחֱמַתְנִי אִמִּי)

The expression **was born** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I was in iniquity when my mother gave birth to me; indeed, I was in sin when my mother conceived me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| in iniquity | I have been a sinner |
| and in sin | In fact, I have been a sinner since |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| conceived me | conceived me |

# Psalms 51:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Behold, you desire truth in the kidneys, and you teach me wisdom in the closed {place}.* | *I know that you want me to have honest intentions. You help me understand very well how to act wisely.* |

ULT **truth**
UST honest
(אֱמֶת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **truth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [trustworthiness] or [integrity]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in the kidneys**
UST me to have … intentions
(בַּטֻּחוֹת)

Here the **kidneys** represents a person's motives and intentions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in a person's motives]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and … in the closed {place}**
UST very well
(וּבְסָתֻם)

The expression **closed** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [in the place that people close up]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and … in the closed {place}**
UST very well
(וּבְסָתֻם)

David is using the verbal form **closed**, which functions here as an adjective, as a noun to mean a certain place. (The ULT indicates this by supplying the word **place**.) Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [in my inner being]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| you teach me | You help me understand |
| wisdom | how to act wisely |

# Psalms 51:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May you purify me with hyssop, that I may be clean. May you wash me, that I may be whiter than snow.* | *Make me acceptable to you again, as if you were using hyssop to sprinkle water on me to purify me. Remove my sin as if it were dirt that you were washing off me. Then I will be completely pure, like snow that has just fallen.* |

ULT **May you purify me with hyssop, that I may be clean**
UST Make me acceptable to you again, as if you were using hyssop to sprinkle water on me to purify me
(תְּחַטָּאֵנִי בְאֵזוֹב וְאֶטְהָר)

David is speaking as if he wanted God to perform the ceremony that the law of Moses describes in Numbers 19:18, in which a ceremonially clean person would dip a **hyssop** branch in water and sprinkle water with it to **purify** a person or place that had become ritually unclean. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. The UST models one way to do that.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **with hyssop**
UST as if you were using hyssop to sprinkle water on me
(בְאֵזוֹב)

The term **hyssop** describes a leafy plant, an herb that was common in Israel. Its large and numerous leaves made it ideal for use in sprinkling, especially in ceremonial contexts. If your language does not have a word for this plant, consider using a general expression. Alternate translation: [with leafy branches]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **May you wash me**
UST Remove my sin as if it were dirt that you were washing off me
(תְּכַבְּסֵנִי)

As in verse 2, David is speaking of his sin as if it were dirt that God could **wash** off of him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. See how you translated the similar image in verse 2. Alternate translation: [May you take away my sin]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **that I may be whiter than snow**
UST Then I will be completely pure, like snow that has just fallen
(וּמִשֶּׁלֶג אַלְבִּין)

David is speaking as if he would become bright white in color if God were to wash him. He is using the uniform whiteness of newly fallen snow to represent complete purity. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that I may be purer than snow]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| May you purify me | Make me acceptable to you again |
| that I may be clean | to purify me |
| that … than snow | Then … like snow that has just fallen |

# Psalms 51:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Make me hear joy and gladness; may the bones you have crushed rejoice.* | *Please tell me {that you have forgiven me}. That would make me very happy. My guilt feels like a heavy weight on me, but may I rejoice {in your forgiveness}.* |

> ULT **Make me hear joy and gladness**
> UST Please tell me {that you have forgiven me}. That would make me very happy
> (תַּשְׁמִיעֵנִי שָׂשׂוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה)

David is using the expression **joy and gladness** to represent things that God would say to him that would make him feel those emotions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Make me hear things that will cause me to feel joy and gladness] or [Say things to me that will make me feel joy and gladness]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **Make me hear joy and gladness**
> UST Please tell me {that you have forgiven me}. That would make me very happy
> (תַּשְׁמִיעֵנִי שָׂשׂוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה)

David means specifically that he wants God to tell him that he has forgiven him. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Assure me that you have forgiven me, that I may feel joy and gladness]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **joy and gladness**
> UST That would make me very happy
> (שָׂשׂוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה)

The terms **joy** and **gladness** mean similar things. David 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 joy]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **may the bones you have crushed rejoice**
UST My guilt feels like a heavy weight on me, but may I rejoice {in your forgiveness … }
(תָּגֵ֣לְנָה עֲצָמ֣וֹת דִּכִּיתָ)

David is using one part of himself, his **bones**, to mean all of him in the act of being **crushed**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [may I, whom you have crushed, rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **may the bones you have crushed rejoice**
UST My guilt feels like a heavy weight on me, but may I rejoice {in your forgiveness … }
(תָּגֵ֣לְנָה עֲצָמ֣וֹת דִּכִּיתָ)

David is speaking as if God had actually **crushed** him by convicting him of his sin. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [may I, whom you have deeply convicted of sin, rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| joy | That would make me very happy |
| and gladness | That would make me very happy |
| may … rejoice | but may I rejoice {in your forgiveness} |

# Psalms 51:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hide your face from my sins, and wipe away all of my iniquities.* | *Please forgive all the wrong things I have done so that it will be as if I never did them.* |

**ULT Hide your face from my sins**
**UST** the wrong things I have done so that it will be as if I never did them
(הַסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מֵחַטֹּאָי)

David is speaking as if he wanted God to position his **face** so that it would not be visible from the place where his **sins** were. Effectively this means that he wants God not to look at his sins. However, he does not mean that he wants God to leave his sins in place but not regard them. He wants God to make his sins nowhere to be seen; that is, he wants God to forgive the sins so that it is as if he had not committed them. Alternate translation: [Make my sins nowhere to be seen]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and wipe away all of my iniquities**
**UST** Please forgive all the wrong things I have done
(וְכָל־עֲוֹנֹתַי מְחֵה)

See how you translated the same image in verse 1. Alternate translation: [and forgive all of my iniquities]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from my sins | the wrong things I have done |
| wipe away | Please forgive |
| my iniquities | the wrong things I have done |

# Psalms 51:10

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Create for me a clean heart, God, and renew an established spirit within me.* | *O God, please make me want to do only things that please you. Help me to be loyal to you consistently.* |

ULT **Create for me a clean heart**
UST please make me want to do only things that please you
(לֵב טָהוֹר בְּרָא־לִי)

Here the **heart** represents a person's thoughts or motives. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Give me a new capacity for pure thoughts] or [Give me a new capacity for right motives]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and renew an established spirit within me**
UST Help me to be loyal to you consistently
(וְרוּחַ נָכוֹן חַדֵּשׁ בְּקִרְבִּי)

The expression **established** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and renew a steadfast spirit within me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and renew an established spirit within me**
UST Help me to be loyal to you consistently
(וְרוּחַ נָכוֹן חַדֵּשׁ בְּקִרְבִּי)

Here a person's **spirit** represents his attitude, in this case, one of determination. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and enable me once again to be steadfastly determined to obey you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Create | please make |
| God | O God |
| and … an … spirit | to be loyal to you |
| established | consistently |

# Psalms 51:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May you not cast me away from your face, and may you not take the Spirit of your holiness from me.* | *Please allow me to come into your presence. Please do not make your Holy Spirit leave me.* |

ULT **May you not cast me away from your face**
UST Please allow me to come into your presence
(אַל־תַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי מִלְּפָנֶיךָ)

Here God's **face** represents his "presence." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [May you not cast me away from your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **May you not cast me away from your face**
UST Please allow me to come into your presence
(אַל־תַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי מִלְּפָנֶיךָ)

David is speaking as if God might actually **cast** or throw him away from his presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May you not banish me from your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and may you not take the Spirit of your holiness from me**
UST Please do not make your Holy Spirit leave me
(וְרוּחַ קָדְשְׁךָ אַל־תִּקַּח מִמֶּנִּי)

David is using the possessive form to describe how God's **Spirit** is characterized by **holiness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and may you not take your Holy Spirit from me]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and … the Spirit of | Spirit |
| your holiness | your Holy |

# Psalms 51:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and support me {with} a willing spirit.* | *Please save me {from the guilt and punishment of my sin}. That will make me very happy again. Please make me eager to obey you so that I do not sin again.* |

**ULT Restore to me the joy of your salvation**
UST Please save me {from the guilt and punishment of my sin}. That will make me very happy again
(הָשִׁיבָה לִּי שְׂשׂוֹן יִשְׁעֶךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **joy** and **salvation**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Make me joyful again that you have saved me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and support me {with} a willing spirit**
UST Please make me eager to obey you so that I do not sin again
(וְרוּחַ נְדִיבָה תִסְמְכֵנִי)

David is speaking as if he wanted God to use a **willing spirit** like a cane or walking stick to **support** him, that is, to keep him from falling down. Within this image, falling down represents disobeying and sinning. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and to keep me from sinning, make me willing to obey you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Restore | again |
| the joy of | That will make … very happy |
| your salvation | Please save me {from the guilt and punishment of my sin} |
| and … {with} a … spirit | me |

# Psalms 51:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let me teach transgressors your ways, that sinners may return to you.* | *Please make me so obedient that I can even teach people who are doing wrong things how you want them to live instead. That way people who have been disobeying you will start obeying you again.* |

ULT **your ways**
UST how you want them to live instead
(דְּרָכֶיךָ)

David is speaking of the manners in which God wants people to live as if they were **ways** or paths that people would be walking along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [how you want people to live]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **that sinners may return to you**
UST That way people who have been disobeying you will start obeying you again
(וְחַטָּאִים אֵלֶיךָ יָשׁוּבוּ)

David is speaking as if **sinners** had actually gone to some place away from God from which they would **return** to him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that sinners may repent]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| that sinners | That way people who have been disobeying you |
| may return | will start obeying … again |

# Psalms 51:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Deliver me from blood, God, the God of my salvation, may my tongue sing {about} your righteousness.* | *God, I admit that I deserve to die because I murdered someone, but please rescue me from that punishment. You can save me {from the guilt and punishment of my sin} because you are God. When you do that, I will sing joyfully about how good you are.* |

ULT **from blood**
UST I admit that I deserve to die because I murdered someone
(מִדָּמִים)

Here, **blood** represents "bloodguiltiness," that is, legal liability to punishment by death for murdering another person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from the death penalty I deserve for killing someone]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **God, the God of my salvation**
UST God … You can save me {from the guilt and punishment of my sin} because you are God
(אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי תְּשׁוּעָתִי)

David is repeating the word **God** to emphasize that the basis of his plea is the merciful, saving character of God. If your language can repeat words for emphasis, 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 who are God my Savior]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

ULT **may my tongue sing**
UST When you do that, I will sing joyfully
(תְּרַנֵּן לְשׁוֹנִי)

David is using one part of himself, his **tongue**, to mean all of him in the act of singing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [may I sing]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **{about} your righteousness**
UST about how good you are
(צִדְקָתֶךָ)

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: [about how righteous you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Deliver me | but please rescue me from that punishment |
| God | God |
| the God of | because you are God |
| my salvation | You can save me {from the guilt and punishment of my sin} |
| my tongue | I |
| {about} your righteousness | about how good you are |

# Psalms 51:15

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Lord, may you open my lips, that my mouth may declare your praise.* | *Lord, {please do these things so that} I will have a reason to speak publicly and say things to praise you.* |

**ULT Lord, may you open my lips**
**UST** Lord, {please do these things so that} I will have a reason to speak publicly
(אֲדֹנָי שְׂפָתַי תִּפְתָּח)

David is not asking God physically to **open** his **lips**. He means that he wants God to do something (forgive and restore him, as he has asked) that will cause him to open his lips and declare God's praise with his mouth. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Do this, Lord, so that I may open my lips]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT may you open my lips**
**UST** {please do these things so that} I will have a reason to speak publicly
(שְׂפָתַי תִּפְתָּח)

Here David's **lips** represent him speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [give me something to speak about]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT that my mouth may declare your praise**
**UST** and say things to praise you
(וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתֶךָ)

David is using one part of himself, his **mouth**, to mean all of him in the act of praising God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that I may declare your praise]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Lord | Lord |
| may declare | and say |
| your praise | things to praise you |

# Psalms 51:16

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *For you do not delight in sacrifice, or I would give {it}; you do not accept a burnt offering.* | *If you had wanted me to offer a sacrifice {because of the sin I committed}, I would certainly have done that. But you do not accept burnt offerings {from people who bring them to try to make things right with you after committing murder}.* |

ULT **For**
UST If
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** does not introduce a reason for what immediately precedes. Instead, it introduces a general explanation for what David has been asking throughout this psalm. You may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [After all,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **you do not delight in sacrifice … you do not accept a burnt offering**
UST If you had wanted me to offer a sacrifice {because of the sin I committed} … But you do not accept burnt offerings from people who bring them to try to make things right with you after committing murder
(לֹא־תַחְפֹּץ זֶבַח & עוֹלָה לֹא תִרְצֶה)

David means specifically that God does not want a **sacrifice** and that God does not **accept a burnt offering** as the grounds on which to pardon someone who has committed murder. (The law of Moses provides for no such sacrifice.) You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [you do not delight in sacrifice in cases of murder … you do not accept a burnt offering to pardon a murderer]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| you do … delight in | you had wanted |
| sacrifice | me to offer a sacrifice {because of the sin I committed} |
| a burnt offering | burnt offerings from people who bring them to try to make things right with you after committing murder |

# Psalms 51:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The sacrifices of God {are} a broken spirit. A broken and crushed heart, God, you will not despise.* | *What you really want is for people to pray to you in genuine humility {and ask for forgiveness}. When a person is very sorrowful for his sin, you, God, do not reject him.* |

ULT **The sacrifices of God**
UST What you really want
(זִבְחֵי אֱלֹהִים)

David is using this possessive form not to describe **sacrifices** that **God** makes but sacrifices that God wants and accepts. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [The sacrifices that God wants] or [The sacrifices that God accepts]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **{are} a broken spirit**
UST is for people to pray to you in genuine humility {and ask for forgiveness}
(רוּחַ נִשְׁבָּרָה)

The expression **broken** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [are a spirit that has broken]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **{are} a broken spirit**
UST is for people to pray to you in genuine humility {and ask for forgiveness}
(רוּחַ נִשְׁבָּרָה)

David is speaking as if a person's **spirit** were actually an object that could be **broken**. The image is of something that is broken so that it has fallen down in pieces, with lowliness representing humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [are a humble spirit]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{are} a broken spirit**
UST is for people to pray to you in genuine humility {and ask for forgiveness}
(רֽוּחַ נִשְׁבָּרָה)

As in verse 10, here a person's **spirit** represents his attitude. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [are a humble attitude]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **A broken and crushed heart**
UST When a person is very sorrowful for his sin
(לֵב־נִשְׁבָּר וְנִדְכֶּה)

The expressions **broken** and **crushed** are passive verbal forms. If your language would not use those forms, you could express the ideas in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [A heart that an awareness of the seriousness of sin has broken and crushed]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **A broken and crushed heart**
UST When a person is very sorrowful for his sin
(לֵב־נִשְׁבָּר וְנִדְכֶּה)

The terms **broken** and **crushed** mean similar things. David 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: [A completely broken heart] or [A heart that an awareness of the seriousness of sin has completely broken]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **A broken and crushed heart**
UST When a person is very sorrowful for his sin
(לֵב־נִשְׁבָּר וְנִדְכֶּה)

Here the **heart** represents a person's inner being. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [A person who is deeply humbled by an awareness of the seriousness of his sin]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The sacrifices of God | What … really want you |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {are} a … spirit | is for people to pray to you in genuine humility {and ask for forgiveness} |

# Psalms 51:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do good to Zion in your acceptance; build the walls of Jerusalem.* | *Please regard us Israelites favorably and help us. Protect us from our enemies.* |

ULT **Zion**
UST us Israelites
(צִיּוֹן)

David is using Mount **Zion**, the location of the Israelite capital city of Jerusalem, to represent the people of Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in your acceptance**
UST Please regard … favorably
(בִּרְצוֹנְךָ)

The noun that the ULT translates as **acceptance** here comes from the same root as the verb that it translates as "accept" in verse 16. However, the perspective is broader here. David is not asking God to **Do good to Zion** based on God's **acceptance** of him personally as a penitent and forgiven sinner. Instead, he is asking that all of the people of Israel would experience God's renewed favor now that he, as their king, has repented. Your language may have a term that you can use in your translation to indicate this. Alternate translation: [in your favor]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **build the walls of Jerusalem**
UST Protect us from our enemies
(תִּבְנֶה חוֹמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָ͏ִם)

David is speaking as if **Jerusalem** did not have **walls**, and he wanted God to **build** some for the city. He is using Jerusalem to represent the people of Israel and walls to represent their protection. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [strengthen the defenses of Israel] or [strongly protect us Israelites]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Do good | and help us |
| Zion | us Israelites |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in your acceptance | Please regard … favorably |
| Jerusalem | us |

# Psalms 51:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then you will delight in sacrifices of righteousness, a burnt offering and a whole {one}. Then they will offer bulls on your altar.* | *Then people will offer sacrifices to you for the right reasons. They will bring animals that they will burn completely as offerings to you. They will completely burn up young bulls on your altar. You will gladly accept these sacrifices.* |

ULT **sacrifices of righteousness**
UST people will offer sacrifices to you for the right reasons … these sacrifices
(זִבְחֵי־צֶ֭דֶק)

David is using the possessive form to describe **sacrifices** that are characterized by the **righteousness** of those offering them. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [rightly offered sacrifices]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **a burnt offering and a whole {one}**
UST They will bring animals that they will burn completely as offerings to you
(עוֹלָ֥ה וְכָלִ֑יל)

David is using the adjective **whole** as a noun to mean a certain kind of sacrifice. (The ULT indicates this by supplying the word **one**.) Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [a burnt offering and a wholly consumed sacrifice]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **a burnt offering and a whole {one}**
UST They will bring animals that they will burn completely as offerings to you
(עוֹלָ֥ה וְכָלִ֑יל)

Together, the expressions **a burnt offering** and **a whole one** express a single idea. The word **whole** tells to what extent this **offering** would be **burnt**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [a wholly burnt offering]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

ULT **a burnt offering and a whole {one}**
UST They will bring animals that they will burn completely as offerings to you
(עוֹלָה וְכָלִיל)

David is not referring to a specific wholly burnt offering. He means such offerings in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [wholly burnt offerings]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **Then they will offer bulls**
UST Then … They will completely burn up young bulls
(אָז יַעֲלוּ & פָּרִים)

Here David is using the pronoun **they** in a general sense, not to refer to specific people. Use an expression for this that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Then people will offer bulls] or [Then bulls will be offered]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| you will delight in | You will gladly accept |
| sacrifices of | people will offer sacrifices to you … these sacrifices |
| righteousness | for the right reasons |
| a burnt offering | They will bring animals that they will burn completely as offerings to you |
| bulls | young bulls |
| your altar | your altar |

# Psalms 52

## Psalm 52 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 52 is a specific kind of psalm of supplication, an “imprecatory psalm” in which the psalmist describes the actions of wicked people and asks God to judge and punish them. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Description of Doeg’s wickedness (1–4)
2. Declaration that God will punish Doeg (5–7)
3. David’s statement of his confidence in God (8–9)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a “maskil.” See the discussion of that term in the introduction to Psalms.

As its superscription indicates, the background to this psalm is an episode related in 1 Samuel 22:6–23, in which Doeg the Edomite, one of King Saul’s officers, killed Yahweh’s priests and their families. It may be helpful to read that episode before translating this psalm.

# Psalms 52:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician. A maskil of David. When Doeg the Edomite came and declared to Saul and said to him, "David came to the house of Ahimelech."* | *This is a note for the worship leader: David wrote this song when Doeg the Edomite went to King Saul and told him, "David went to Ahimelech's house."* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. See how you translated the term "chief musician" in the superscription to Psalm 4. Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **A maskil of**
UST this song
(מַשְׂכִּיל)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **maskil**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **When Doeg the Edomite came and declared to Saul and said to him, "David came to the house of Ahimelech**
UST when Doeg the Edomite went to King Saul and told him, "David went to Ahimelech's house
(בְּבוֹא ׀ דוֹאֵג הָאֲדֹמִי וַיַּגֶּד לְשָׁאוּל וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ בָּא דָוִד אֶל־בֵּית אֲחִימֶלֶךְ)

This superscription is referring to events related in 1 Samuel 22:6–23. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could describe these events more fully. Alternate translation: [David wrote this song when Doeg the Edomite, an officer of King Saul, came and told Saul that David, whom Saul was trying to kill, had gone to the high priest Ahimelech and that he had received help from him]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and said to him**
UST and told him
(וַיֹּ֥אמֶר לָ֑וֹ)

This phrase introduces a direct quotation. In your translation, use a natural way of introducing direct quotations in your language. It may not be necessary to represent this phrase explicitly.

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **A maskil of David. When Doeg the Edomite came and declared to Saul and said to him, "David came to the house of Ahimelech**
UST David wrote this song when Doeg the Edomite went to King Saul and told him, "David went to Ahimelech's house
(לַמְנַצֵּ֗חַ מַשְׂכִּ֥יל לְדָוִ֑ד בְּב֣וֹא ׀ דוֹאֵ֣ג הָאֲדֹמִ֗י וַיַּגֶּד֮ לְשָׁאוּל֒ וַיֹּ֣אמֶר לוֹ֮ בָּ֤א דָוִד֙ אֶל־בֵּ֣ית אֲחִימֶ֔לֶךְ)

This superscription is referring to events related in 1 Samuel 23:19–23. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could describe these events more fully. Alternate translation: [This is a maskil that David wrote when he was hiding in the wilderness of Ziph from King Saul, who wanted to kill him, and the people who lived there went and told Saul that he was hiding among them]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| David | David wrote |
| the Edomite | the Edomite |
| and declared | and told |
| to Saul | to King Saul |
| David | David |
| the house of | house |

# Psalms 52:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Why do you boast about harm, O warrior? The covenant faithfulness of God all of the day.* | *{Doeg,} you are boasting as if you were a great warrior because you killed so many people{, but you are wrong to boast, because they were helpless}. God always protects me because he is kind to me.* |

ULT **Why do you boast about harm, O warrior**
UST Doeg,} you are boasting as if you were a great warrior because you killed so many people{, but you are wrong to boast, because they were helpless … }
(מַה־תִּתְהַלֵּל בָּרָעָה הַגִּבּוֹר)

David actually means to communicate the opposite of the literal meaning of what he is saying here. While Doeg had caused great **harm** by killing all of Yahweh's priests and their families (1 Samuel 22:18–19), those were harmless, defenseless people, so this was not the kind of feat that a true **warrior** would **boast** about. If a speaker of your language would not say the opposite of what he meant as a way of showing how he felt about what he was saying, you could translate the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Why do you boast about killing defenseless people as if that made you a great warrior?]

**Support Reference:** Irony

ULT **Why do you boast about harm, O warrior**
UST Doeg,} you are boasting as if you were a great warrior because you killed so many people{, but you are wrong to boast, because they were helpless … }
(מַה־תִּתְהַלֵּל בָּרָעָה הַגִּבּוֹר)

David is using the question form to mock and ridicule Doeg. 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: [You should not boast about killing defenseless people as if that made you great warrior!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Why do you boast about harm, O warrior**
UST Doeg,} you are boasting as if you were a great warrior because you killed so many people{, but you are wrong to boast, because they were helpless … }
(מַה־תִּתְהַלֵּל בָּרָעָה הַגִּבּוֹר)

Here and through verse 5, David addresses Doeg directly, even though he knows Doeg cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to himself and to anyone who hears this song that he feels very strongly about how Doeg killed the priests of Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, here and through verse 5 you could translate what David says to Doeg as if he were speaking to other people about him. Alternate translation: [Doeg should not boast about killing defenseless people as if that made him great warrior!]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

ULT **The covenant faithfulness of God all of the day**
UST God always protects me because he is kind to me
(חֶסֶד אֵל כָּל־הַיּוֹם)

David 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 covenant faithfulness of God lasts all of the day]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **The covenant faithfulness of God all of the day**
UST God always protects me because he is kind to me
(חֶסֶד אֵל כָּל־הַיּוֹם)

David is using the term **day** to mean “time,” since time consists of days. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The covenant faithfulness of God lasts all the time]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **The covenant faithfulness of God all of the day**
UST God always protects me because he is kind to me
(חֶסֶד אֵל כָּל־הַיּוֹם)

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: [God is always faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| do you boast | {Doeg,} you are boasting |
| about harm | because you killed so many people |
| O warrior | as if you were a great warrior |
| The covenant faithfulness of | protects me because he is kind to me |
| God | God |

# Psalms 52:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Like a sharpened razor, your tongue devises calamities, worker of betrayal!* | *You say things that you know will cause great harm to other people. It is as if your tongue is a sharp knife slashing people. People did something innocently, but you reported it in such a way that they seemed to be guilty.* |

ULT **Like a sharpened razor**
UST a sharp knife slashing people
(כְּתַעַר מְלֻטָּשׁ)

The expression **sharpened** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Like a sharp razor] or [Like a razor that someone has sharpened]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **Like a sharpened razor**
UST a sharp knife slashing people
(כְּתַעַר מְלֻטָּשׁ)

The point of this comparison is that just as a **sharpened razor** is dangerous and potentially destructive, so is Doeg's **tongue**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [Like a dangerous sharpened razor] or [Like a dangerously sharp razor]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **your tongue devises calamities**
UST You say things that you know will cause great harm to other people. It is as if your tongue is
(הַוּוֹת תַּחְשֹׁב לְשׁוֹנֶךָ)

David is speaking of Doeg's **tongue** as if it were a living thing that could devise calamities. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what you say causes calamities]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **worker of betrayal**
UST People did something innocently, but you reported it in such a way that they seemed to be guilty
(עֹשֵׂה רְמִיָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **betrayal**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [you who have betrayed innocent people to their deaths]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your tongue | You … It is as if your tongue is |
| calamities | things that you know will cause great harm to other people |

# Psalms 52:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You love evil more than good, lying more than speaking righteousness. Selah* | *You like to do what is wrong more than you like to do what is right. You like to tell lies more than you like to tell the truth. Selah* |

**ULT lying more than speaking righteousness**
UST You like to tell lies more than you like to tell the truth
(שֶׁ֥קֶר ׀ מִדַּבֵּ֖ר צֶֽדֶק)

David 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 you love lying more than speaking righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT righteousness**
UST the truth
(צֶֽדֶק)

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: [what is right] or [truthfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Selah**
UST Selah
(סֶֽלָה)

To translate the term **Selah** here and in verse 5, see how your translation team decided to represent that term in 3:2.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You love | You like |
| evil | to do what is wrong |
| more than good | more than you like to do what is right |
| righteousness | the truth |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 52:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You love all words of destruction, tongue of betrayal!* | *You like to say anything that will cause harm to people. What you say causes innocent people to suffer.* |

ULT **all words of destruction**
UST to say anything that will cause harm to people
(כָּל־דִּבְרֵי־בָלַע)

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: [all words that destroy others]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **all words of destruction**
UST to say anything that will cause harm to people
(כָּל־דִּבְרֵי־בָלַע)

David is using the term **words** to represent what Doeg says by using words. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to say anything that will destroy other people]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **tongue of betrayal**
UST What you say causes innocent people to suffer
(לְשׁוֹן מִרְמָה)

David is using one part of Doeg, his **tongue**, to represent all of him in the act of saying things that betrayed innocent people to their deaths. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you treacherous person]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You love | You like |
| destruction | that will cause harm to people |
| tongue of | What you say |

# Psalms 52:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God will also tear you down forever. He will take you away and tear you from the tent and uproot you from the land of the living. Selah* | *But God will destroy you permanently, just as you have destroyed others. You may feel safe in your home, but God will take you from there and remove you from this world in which people are alive. Selah* |

ULT **God will also tear you down forever. He will take you away and tear you from the tent and uproot you from the land of the living**
UST But God will destroy you permanently, just as you have destroyed others. You may feel safe in your home, but God will take you from there and remove you from this world in which people are alive
(גַּם־אֵ֭ל יִתְּצֵ֣ךָ לָנֶ֑צַח יַחְתְּךָ֥ וְיִסָּחֲךָ֗ מֵאֹ֫הֶל וְשֶׁרְשְׁךָ֥ מֵאֶ֥רֶץ חַיִּ֗ים)

The verbs in this verse are in a form that Hebrew writers could use to express either a statement or a wish. It would be consistent with the usual pattern of an imprecatory psalm (see the introduction to this psalm) for David to express a wish at this point that God would judge and punish this wicked person. However, he may also be making a confident statement about what God will do. The original audience would have heard both nuances. Use the verbal form in your language that seems most suitable. Alternate translation: [May God also tear you down forever! May he take you away and tear you from the tent and uproot you from the land of the living!]

**Support Reference:** Irregular Use of Tenses

ULT **God will also tear you down**
UST But God will destroy you … just as you have destroyed others
(גַּם־אֵ֭ל יִתְּצֵ֣ךָ)

David is speaking of Doeg as if he were actually a building or wall that God would **tear down**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [God will also destroy you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **He will take you away and tear you from the tent**
UST You may feel safe in your home, but God will take you from there
(יַחֲתֹתְךָ וְיִסָּחֲךָ מֵאֹהֶל)

David is describing one event before describing another event that would precede it. If it would be helpful your language, you may wish to relate these events in the order in which they would happen. Alternate translation: [He will tear you from the tent and take you away]

**Support Reference:** Order of Events

ULT **He will take you away and tear you from the tent**
UST You may feel safe in your home, but God will take you from there
(יַחֲתֹתְךָ וְיִסָּחֲךָ מֵאֹהֶל)

David is speaking as if Doeg were actually attached to or part of the **tent** in which he lived and as if God would physically **tear** him from the tent. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He will remove you from the tent you live in and take you away]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and uproot you**
UST and remove you
(וְשֶׁרֶשְׁךָ)

David is speaking as if Doeg were a plant that God would **uproot** from the soil. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and remove you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **from the land of the living**
UST from this world in which people are alive
(מֵאֶרֶץ חַיִּים)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [from the land of people who are alive]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **from the land of the living**
UST from this world in which people are alive
(מֵאֶרֶץ חַיִּים)

Here the **land of the living** represents the people who figuratively inhabit that land. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from among people who are alive]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | But God |
| forever | permanently |
| from the tent | You may feel safe in your home |
| from the land of | from this world in which |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 52:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And the righteous will see and fear, and they will laugh at him.* | *When good people see that, they will respect God {for being just}. They will laugh at you.* |

ULT **And the righteous will see**
UST When good people see that
(וְיִרְאוּ צַדִּיקִים)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [And righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **at him**
UST at you
(וְעָלָיו)

Since David has been addressing Doeg directly (even though he cannot hear him) to show that he feels strongly about what he did, you may wish to use the pronoun “you” here instead of the pronoun **him**. However, there is poetic effect in the change of pronoun. David describes in the previous verse how God will destroy Doeg, and in this verse it is as if that has already happened, so that Doeg is no longer around to address directly. Use the pronoun that will be most natural and effective in your language.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the righteous | good people |
| and fear | they will respect God {for being just} |

# Psalms 52:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“Behold, the man did not make God his refuge, but he trusted in the abundance of his wealth; he was strong in his calamity.”* | *{They will say,} “Look what happened to this man who did not trust God to protect him. He thought that because he had a lot of money, he could avoid trouble. He believed that harming other people would make him powerful.”* |

ULT **Behold, the man**
UST {They will say,} “Look what happened to this man
(הִנֵּה הַגֶּבֶר)

This verse is a direct quotation of the righteous people described in the previous verse. The ULT indicates that by putting this verse inside quotation marks. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could also use a natural way of introducing direct quotations in your language. Alternate translation: [They will say, “Behold, the man]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **Behold**
UST {They will say,} “Look what happened to
(הִנֵּה)

These righteous people are using the term **Behold** to focus their listeners’ attention on what they are about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Listen]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the man did not make God his refuge**
UST this man who did not trust God to protect him
(הַגֶּבֶר לֹא יָשִׂים אֱלֹהִים מָעוּזּוֹ)

These people are speaking of Doeg as if he should actually have made God his **refuge**, that is, the place where he could go to be safe from danger. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. See how you translated the term “refuge” in 14:6. Alternate translation: [the man did not depend on God for protection]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the man**
UST this man
(הַגֶּבֶר)

The term that the ULT translates as **man** refers to a full-grown male. It is related to the word that the ULT translates as “warrior” in verse 1, and it can refer to a soldier. The people may be using it in a mocking sense, like David did in verse 1. Your language may have a word or phrase that you can use to bring out this sense in your translation. Alternate translation: [the big man]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| his refuge | to protect him |
| but he trusted | He thought that because he had … he could avoid trouble |
| in his calamity | harming other people |

# Psalms 52:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But I {am} like a green olive tree in the house of God. I will trust in the covenant faithfulness of God forever and ever.* | *But I am safe, just like the olive trees that the priests plant and care for in the courtyard of the place where we worship God. I know that God will always be kind to me.* |

**ULT But I {am} like a green olive tree in the house of God**
**UST** But I am safe, just like the olive trees that the priests plant and care for in the courtyard of the place where we worship God
(וַאֲנִי ׀ כְּזֵית רַעֲנָן בְּבֵית אֱלֹהִים)

The point of this comparison is that just as such a **tree** was secure and carefully tended, so God keeps David safe and cares for him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [But I am secure and well cared for, like a green olive tree in the house of God]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT {am} like a green olive tree**
**UST** am safe, just like the olive trees that the priests plant and care for
(כְּזֵית רַעֲנָן)

David is using the term **green** not to describe the color of this **tree** but to indicate that it is alive. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [like a living olive tree] or [like a thriving olive tree]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT in the house of God**
**UST** in the courtyard of the place where we worship God
(בְּבֵית אֱלֹהִים)

David is speaking of God's sanctuary as if it were actually a **house** in which he lived. He does not mean that the tree to which he is comparing himself is actually within the sanctuary itself. There was probably a courtyard around the tent that David set up for the Box of Yahweh (2 Samuel 6:17), just as there was a courtyard around the temple that his son Solomon later built on the same site. In such courtyards there were trees that priests planted and tended. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in the courtyard of the sanctuary of God]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the covenant faithfulness of**
UST will … be kind to me
(בְּחֶסֶד)

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: [in all the ways he is faithful to the covenant of]

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {am} like a … olive tree | am safe, just like the olive trees |
| in the house of God | in the courtyard of the place where we worship God |
| God | God |
| I will trust | I know that |
| in the covenant faithfulness of | will … be kind to me |
| forever | always |

# Psalms 52:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will thank you forever, for you have done {this}. I will await your name, for {it is} good before your faithful {ones}.* | *I am confident that you, God, are going to do what I have described, and I will always praise you for that. You have demonstrated to the people who are faithful to you that you are good. So I will wait patiently for you to act according to your good character.* |

ULT **I will thank you forever, for you have done {this … }**
UST I am confident that you, God, are going to do what I have described, and I will always praise you for that
(אוֹדְךָ֥ לְעוֹלָ֗ם כִּ֣י עָשִׂ֑יתָ)

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 you have done this, I will praise you forever]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **you have done {this}**
UST I am confident that you, God, are going to do what I have described
(עָשִׂ֑יתָ)

David is using a verbal form that typically describes action completed in the past. While verbal forms are more flexible in poetry, he may be using this form to describe something that is going to happen in the future in order to show that the event will certainly happen. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use the future tense. Alternate translation: [you will do this]

**Support Reference:** Irregular Use of Tenses

ULT **I will await your name, for {it is} good before your faithful {ones … }**
UST You have demonstrated to the people who are faithful to you that you are good. So I will wait patiently for you to act according to your good character
(וַאֲקַוֶּ֥ה שִׁמְךָ֗ כִּֽי־טֽוֹב נֶ֣גֶד חֲסִידֶֽיךָ׃)

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 your name is good before your faithful ones, I will await it]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **I will await your name**
UST I will wait patiently for you to act according to your good character
(וַאֲקַוֶּה שְׁמֶךָ)

Here God's **name** represents his reputation. David means that he will wait for God to confirm his reputation for being just by judging and punishing Doeg. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I will wait for you to confirm your reputation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **it is} good before your faithful {ones}**
UST You have demonstrated to the people who are faithful to you that you are good
(טֹוב נֶגֶד חֲסִידֶיךָ)

Here God's name being **before** his **faithful ones** represents it being where they can see it. In other words, God has shown them that his name is good, that is, that he deserves his good reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [you have shown your faithful ones that it is good]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **your faithful {ones}**
UST the people who are faithful to you
(חֲסִידֶיךָ)

David is using the adjective **faithful** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. The ULT indicates this by supplying 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: [your faithful people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| forever | always |
| {it is} good | that you are good |
| your faithful {ones} | the people who are faithful to you |

# Psalms 53

## Psalm 53 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 53 is a slightly modified version of Psalm 14, which is a wisdom psalm that describes the difference between how righteous people and wicked people live and the difference between what happens to them. The editor of this psalm reworked Psalm 14:5–6 into Psalm 53:5 in such a way that a foreign army that attacked the Israelites serves as a specific example of wicked people seeking to oppress innocent people, and God's destruction of that army provides a specific example of how God judges and punishes wicked people. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. A description of wicked people (1–4)
2. God punishes wicked people but helps his own people (5–6)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a "maskil." See the discussion of that term in the introduction to Psalms.

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Why does Psalm 53 say "God" in the places where Psalm 14 says "Yahweh"?

Except for the reworking of Psalm 14:5–6 into Psalm 53:5, Psalm 53 is essentially the same as Psalm 14, with only minor differences (such as saying "and they do" rather than just "they do" in verse 1). However, one significant difference is that in the four places where Psalm 14 uses the divine name "Yahweh," Psalm 53 says "God." Many interpreters believe that this is to show that God's judgment against wicked people and help for innocent people extend beyond the community of those who are in a specific covenant relationship with him. They apply to the entire world, as the destruction of this foreign army demonstrates.

# Psalms 53:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on “Weakness.” A maskil of David.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: David wrote this song to the tune of “Weakness.”* |

**ULT For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

See how you translated the term “chief musician” in the superscription to Psalm 4. Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**ULT on “Weakness**
UST to the tune of “Weakness
(עַל־מָחֲלַת)

The term that the ULT translates as **Weakness** could be the name of the tune of this psalm. It might also be a musical instruction indicating that singers should perform the song in a minor key or in a somber tone. Alternate translation: [perform in a minor key] or [perform in a somber tone]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

**ULT A maskil of**
UST wrote this song
(מַשְׂכִּיל)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **maskil**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| David | David |

# Psalms 53:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The fool says in his heart, "No God." They are corrupt, and they do iniquity abominably. {There is} none doing good.* | *People who do not want to obey God tell themselves that God does not exist. People like that are bad. They do terrible things. Every one of them acts wickedly.* |

**ULT The fool**
**UST** People who do not want to obey God
(נָבָל)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **fool**. He means foolish people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [A foolish person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**ULT says in his heart**
**UST** tell themselves
(אָמַר & בְּלִבּוֹ)

Here the **heart** represents a person's thoughts. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [thinks]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT No God**
**UST** that God does not exist
(אֵין אֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist 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 is no God]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT They are corrupt**
**UST** People like that are bad
(הִשְׁחִיתוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to foolish people who deny God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Such foolish people are corrupt]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **good**
UST Every one of them acts wickedly
(טֽוֹב)

The psalmist is using the adjective **good** as a noun to mean a certain kind of action. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase, here and in verse 3. Alternate translation: [good things]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The fool | People who do not want to obey God |
| God | God |
| They are corrupt | People like that are bad |
| iniquity | They do terrible things |
| good | Every one of them acts wickedly |

# Psalms 53:2

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *God looks down from the heavens on the sons of man to see whether there is one understanding, one seeking God.* | *God looks down from heaven at the people on the earth. He wants to find out whether any of them are wise and want to know him.* |

ULT **the sons of man**
UST the people on the earth
(בְּנֵי אָדָם)

The psalmist is using **sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "human beings." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [human beings]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **one seeking God**
UST and want to know him
(דֹּרֵשׁ אֶת־אֱלֹהִים)

Since the psalmist has already used the name "God" earlier in this sentence, it may be more natural in your language to use a pronoun here. Alternate translation: [one seeking him]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| from the heavens | from heaven |
| one understanding | are wise |
| one seeking | and want to know |
| God | him |

# Psalms 53:3

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *All of him has turned away. Together they have corrupted themselves. {There is} none doing good, not even one.* | *But they have all chosen to disobey God. They have all become bad people. Every single one of them acts wickedly.* |

**ULT All of him has turned away**
**UST** But they have all chosen to disobey God
(כֻּלּוֹ סָג)

The pronoun **him** refers back to "man" in the previous verse. It may be helpful to use a term in your translation that will clarify this for your readers. Another possibility would be to use a plural pronoun, as the psalmist does in the next sentence. Alternate translation: [All of mankind has turned away] or [All of them have turned away]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT All of him has turned away**
**UST** But they have all chosen to disobey God
(כֻּלּוֹ סָג)

The psalmist is speaking as if people had physically **turned away** from God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [All of them have abandoned God]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT {There is} none doing good, not even one**
**UST** Every single one of them acts wickedly
(אֵין עֹשֵׂה־טּוֹב אֵין גַּם־אֶחָד)

The psalmist is saying **none** and **not even one** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [All people are sinful]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| they have corrupted themselves | They have … become bad people |
| good | Every … one of them acts wickedly |

# Psalms 53:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do they not know, the doers of iniquity, the ones eating my people {as} they eat bread? They do not call {upon} God.* | *They take away people's possessions until they have nothing left. They do that as easily as they would eat a loaf of bread. The people who do such bad things ought to realize {that God is going to punish them}. But they do not worship God.* |

ULT **Do they not know, the doers of iniquity, the ones eating my people {as} they eat bread**

UST They take away people's possessions until they have nothing left. They do that as easily as they would eat a loaf of bread. The people who do such bad things ought to realize {that God is going to punish them … }

(הֲלֹא יָדְעוּ֮ פֹּ֤עֲלֵי אָ֨וֶן ׀ אֹכְלֵ֣י עַמִּ֣י אָכְל֣וּ לֶ֑חֶם)

The psalmist is using the question form to express amazement that wicked people oppress others without recognizing that God will judge and punish them for doing that. 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: [They ought to know better, the doers of iniquity, the ones eating my people as they eat bread!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **the ones eating my people {as} they eat bread**

UST They take away people's possessions until they have nothing left. They do that as easily as they would eat a loaf of bread

(אֹכְלֵ֣י עַמִּ֣י אָכְל֣וּ לֶ֑חֶם)

The point of this comparison is that just as someone can **eat bread** easily and quickly, so these **doers of iniquity** readily oppress and exploit vulnerable people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [the ones eating my people as readily as they eat bread]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **the ones eating my people {as} they eat bread**

UST They take away people's possessions until they have nothing left. They do that as easily as they would eat a loaf of bread

(אֹכְלֵ֣י עַמִּ֣י אָכְל֣וּ לֶ֑חֶם)

The psalmist is speaking as if these **doers of iniquity** were actually **eating** the **people** of his nation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the ones exploiting my people as readily as they eat bread]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Do they … know | ought to realize {that God is going to punish them} |
| iniquity | such bad things |
| the ones eating | They take away … until they have nothing left |
| bread | a loaf of bread |
| call | But they do … worship |
| {upon} God | God |

# Psalms 53:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *There they feared a fear {when} no fear was, because God scattered the bones of the one encamping against you. You have shamed {them}, for God despises them.* | *An army came and attacked the Israelites. Its soldiers did not have to be afraid that the Israelites would defeat them. But God made them lose in battle so badly that the survivors were not even able to bury the dead soldiers. This made them very afraid. God regarded this army as insignificant {compared with his great power}. {He helped} the Israelites{, and so they} were able to humiliate those soldiers {by defeating them}.* |

ULT **they feared a fear**
UST made them very afraid
(פָּחֲדוּ־פָחַד)

The psalmist 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 another way of saying this. Alternate translation: [they feared greatly]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **God scattered the bones of the one encamping against you. You have shamed {them}, for God despises them**
UST An army came and attacked the Israelites … God made them lose in battle so badly that the survivors were not even able to bury the dead soldiers … God regarded this army as insignificant {compared with his great power}. He helped} the Israelites{, and so they} were able to humiliate those soldiers {by defeating them … }
(אֱלֹהִים פִּזַּר עַצְמוֹת חֹנֶךָ הֱבִשֹׁתָה כִּי־אֱלֹהִים מְאָסָם)

The psalmist is addressing the nation of Israel as if it were an individual, even though he knows that it cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to anyone who hears this song that he feels very strongly about how God defeated and destroyed this attacking army. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if the psalmist were speaking objectively about this army. Alternate translation: [God scattered the bones of the ones encamping against Israel. The Israelites have shamed them, for God despises them]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

ULT **God scattered the bones of**
UST God made them lose in battle so badly that the survivors were not even able to bury the dead soldiers
(אֱלֹהִים פִּזַּר עַצְמוֹת)

The psalmist is using the fact that the surviving soldiers of this army were not able to bury their fellow soldiers who were killed, so that their **bones** were left **scattered** on the field of battle, to represent how completely God defeated this army. Alternate translation: [God completely defeated and destroyed]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the one encamping against you**
UST An army came and attacked the Israelites
(חֹנֶה)

The psalmist is using one person who was involved in **encamping** against the Israelites, probably the king who commanded this army, to mean everyone who was involved. (This is clear from the way the psalmist says **them** later in this verse.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the ones encamping against you] or [the soldiers who attacked you]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **the one encamping against you. You have shamed {them … }**
UST An army came and attacked the Israelites … they} were able to humiliate those soldiers {by defeating them}
(חֹנֶה הֲבִשֹׁתָה)

The word “you” is singular in both instances in this verse, so use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of ‘You’ — Singular

ULT **the one encamping against you. You have shamed {them … }**
UST An army came and attacked the Israelites … they} were able to humiliate those soldiers {by defeating them}
(חֹנֶה הֲבִשֹׁתָה)

The pronoun **you** seems to refer in context to “Israel” in the next verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [against you, Israel. You have shamed them]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| they feared | made them … afraid |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a fear | very |
| God | God |
| scattered | made them lose in battle so badly that the survivors were not even able to bury the dead soldiers |
| You have shamed {them} | they} were able to humiliate those soldiers {by defeating them} |

# Psalms 53:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Who will give the salvation of Israel from Zion? When God restores the prosperity of his people, Jacob will be glad, Israel will rejoice.* | *I wish that God, whose sanctuary is on Mount Zion, would rescue the Israelite people! When God makes his people prosperous again, the Israelites, those descendants of Jacob, will be very happy.* |

ULT **Who will give the salvation of Israel from Zion**
UST I wish that God, whose sanctuary is on Mount Zion, would rescue the Israelite people
(מִ֤י יִתֵּ֣ן מִצִּיּ֣וֹן יְשׁוּעֹ֣ות יִשְׂרָאֵ֑ל)

The psalmist 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: [Who will give that the salvation of Israel will come from Zion?]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **Who will give the salvation of Israel from Zion**
UST I wish that God, whose sanctuary is on Mount Zion, would rescue the Israelite people
(מִ֤י יִתֵּ֣ן מִצִּיּ֣וֹן יְשׁוּעֹ֣ות יִשְׂרָאֵ֑ל)

The psalmist is using **Who will give** as a common expression of his culture to introduce a fervent wish. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [O that salvation for Israel would come from Zion!] or [I fervently wish that salvation for Israel would come from Zion!]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Who will give the salvation of Israel from Zion**
UST I wish that God, whose sanctuary is on Mount Zion, would rescue the Israelite people
(מִ֤י יִתֵּ֣ן מִצִּיּ֣וֹן יְשׁוּעֹ֣ות יִשְׂרָאֵ֑ל)

The psalmist is using Mount **Zion**, the location of God's sanctuary, to represent God himself in the act of providing **salvation** for **Israel**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [O that God would act from his sanctuary on Mount Zion to provide for the salvation of Israel!] or [I fervently wish that God would act from his sanctuary on Mount Zion to provide for the salvation of Israel!]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Who will give the salvation of Israel from Zion**
UST I wish that God, whose sanctuary is on Mount Zion, would rescue the Israelite people
(מִי יִתֵּן מִצִּיּוֹן יְשׁוּעוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל)

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: [O that God would act from his sanctuary on Mount Zion to save Israel!] or [I fervently wish that God would act from his sanctuary on Mount Zion to save Israel!]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **When God restores the prosperity of his people**
UST When God makes his people prosperous again
(בְּשׁוּב אֱלֹהִים שְׁבוּת עַמּוֹ)

The word that the ULT translates as **prosperity** can also mean "captivity." If that is the meaning, then this verse could have been added to the psalm later, after the Israelites were conquered and taken into captivity. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to follow the translation 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: [When God restores the captivity of his people] or [When God brings his people back from captivity]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Jacob will be glad, Israel will rejoice**
UST the Israelites, those descendants of Jacob, will be very happy
(יָגֵל יַעֲקֹב יִשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms. Alternate translation: [Israel will rejoice greatly] or [Jacob will be glad; indeed, Israel will rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Jacob will be glad, Israel will rejoice**
UST the Israelites, those descendants of Jacob, will be very happy
(יָגֵל יַעֲקֹב יִשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist is using the two names of the ancestor of the Israelites, **Jacob** and **Israel**, to represent the Israelites themselves. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The descendants of Jacob will be glad; indeed, the Israelites will rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the salvation of | would rescue |
| Israel | the Israelite people |
| from Zion | God, whose sanctuary is on Mount Zion |
| When … restores | When … makes … again |
| God | God |
| the prosperity of | prosperous |
| Jacob | those descendants of Jacob |
| will be glad | will be very happy |
| will rejoice | will be very happy |

# Psalms 54

## Psalm 54 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 54 is a psalm of supplication or lament. It includes all the basic elements of that type of psalm. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Cry for help (1–2)
2. Description of troubles (3)
3. Statement of trust (4–5a)
4. Petition (5b)
5. Vow of praise (6)
6. Renewed statement of trust (7)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a "maskil." See the discussion of that term in the introduction to Psalms.

As its superscription indicates, the background to this psalm is an episode related in 1 Samuel 23:19–23 in which the people who lived in the wilderness of Ziph went and told Saul, who wanted to kill David, that he was hiding among them. It may be helpful to read that episode before translating this psalm.

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Variation between "you" and "he"

In verses 1, 2, 6, and the second part of verse 5, David addresses Yahweh directly as "you." In verses 3, 4, 7, and the first part of verse 5, he speaks about Yahweh as "he." This variation of pronouns reflects the flow of a psalm of supplication from a cry for help ("you") to a description of troubles and statement of trust ("he") to a petition and vow of praise ("you") to a renewed statement of trust ("he"). However, if it would not be natural in your language to switch back and forth between second-

person and third-person pronouns, you could use second-person pronouns throughout the psalm, as some versions do. For example, in verse 3, you might say, “They do not set you, God, before them”; in verse 4, you might say, “you, God, are a helper to me”; and in verse 7, you might say, “you deliver me from every trouble.”

# Psalms 54:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; with stringed instruments. A maskil of David. When the Ziphites came and said to Saul, "Is not David hiding himself among us?"* | *This is a note for the worship leader: Musicians playing stringed instruments should accompany this song. David wrote this song when the people of the region of Ziph went to Saul and told him that David was hiding in their area.* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

See how you translated the term "chief musician" in the superscription to Psalm 4. Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **A maskil of**
UST this song
(מַשְׂכִּיל)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **maskil**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Is not David hiding himself among us**
UST that David was hiding in their area
(הֲלֹא דָוִד מִסְתַּתֵּר עִמָּנוּ)

The Ziphites were using the question form to show that they were certain about what they were saying. 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: [David is definitely hiding among us]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| David | David wrote this song |
| to Saul | to Saul |
| David | David |

# Psalms 54:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Save me, God, by your name, and vindicate me by your might.* | *God, please use your power to save me {from my enemies}! If you do that, people will realize that I have not done anything wrong.* |

ULT **Save me, God, by your name, and vindicate me by your might**
UST God, please use your power to save me {from my enemies}! If you do that, people will realize that I have not done anything wrong
(אֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁמְךָ הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי וּבִגְבוּרָתְךָ תְּדִינֵנִי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Deliver me, God, by your mighty name] or [Save me, God, by your name; yes, vindicate me by your might]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Save me … and vindicate me by your might**
UST please use … to save me {from my enemies}! If you do that, people will realize that I have not done anything wrong
(הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי וּבִגְבוּרָתְךָ תְּדִינֵנִי)

The terms **Save** and **vindicate** are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than a commands. Use a form in your language that communicates a polite request in these cases and in the next verse. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make the meaning clear. Alternate translation: [Please save me … yes, please vindicate me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **by your name**
UST your power
(בְּשִׁמְךָ)

David is using God’s **name** to represent the qualities that people associate with God when they hear his name; specifically in this context, his power. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [by your power] or [by the power for which you have a well-deserved reputation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Save me | please use … to save me {from my enemies} |
| God | God |
| and … by your might | If you do that |

# Psalms 54:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hear my prayer, God; listen to the words of my mouth.* | *God, please listen to what I say as I pray to you.* |

> ULT **to the words of my mouth**
> UST to what I say
> (לְאִמְרֵי־פִֽי)

David is using his **mouth** to represent what he is saying by using his mouth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [to the words that I am speaking]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my prayer | as I pray to you |
| God | God |

# Psalms 54:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For foreigners have arisen against me, and violent {ones} seek my life. They do not set God before them. Selah* | *I am praying for your help because even my fellow Judeans are treacherously acting against me. These are violent men, and they want to kill me. They do not respect you. Selah* |

ULT **For**
UST I am praying for your help because
(כִּ֤י)

Here the word **For** does not introduce the reason why God should listen to David. It introduces David's explanation of why he is praying to God for help. Use a connecting word or phrase in your language that will make this clear. Alternate translation: [You see,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **foreigners**
UST even my fellow Judeans … treacherously
(זָרִ֥ים)

David is speaking as if the Ziphites were actually **foreigners**, even though he and they belong to the same Israelite tribe of Judah, because they are not acting toward him with the loyalty that one would expect of kinsmen. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [treacherous people]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **have arisen against me**
UST are … acting against me
(קָ֣מוּ עָלַ֣י)

When David says that these people **have arisen**, he does not mean that they have stood up from a sitting or lying position. He means that they have taken action, in this context hostile action. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [have taken hostile action against me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and violent {ones}**
UST These are violent men
(וְעָרִיצִים)

David is using the adjective **violent** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. The ULT indicates this by supplying 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 violent men]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **They do not set God before them**
UST They do not respect you
(לֹא שָׂמוּ אֱלֹהִים לְנֶגְדָּם)

David is speaking as if **God** were an object that these people could **set** in front of them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They have no regard for God] or [They are not mindful of God]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Selah**
UST Selah
(סֶלָה)

See how your translation team decided at 3:2 to represent the term **Selah**.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| foreigners | even my fellow Judeans … treacherously |
| seek | and they want to kill me |
| God | you |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 54:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Behold, God is a helper to me; the Lord {is} with the sustainers of my life.* | *But God is helping me. The Lord is helping the people who are protecting me so that I stay alive.* |

ULT **Behold**
UST But
(הִנֵּה)

David is using the term **Behold** to focus attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Listen]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the Lord {is} with the sustainers of my life**
UST The Lord is helping the people who are protecting me so that I stay alive
(אֲדֹנָי בְּסֹמְכֵי נַפְשִׁי)

David is using a common expression of his culture to mean that **the Lord** helps the **sustainers** of his **life**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the Lord helps the sustainers of my life]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| the Lord | The Lord |

# Psalms 54:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He will return harm to my enemies. In your faithfulness, destroy them!* | *My enemies want to do harmful things to me, but God will cause those things to happen to them instead. Because you faithfully do what you promise, destroy them {so that they do not kill me}!* |

**ULT In your faithfulness**

**UST** Because you faithfully do what you promise … that
(בַּאֲמִתְּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Because you are faithful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to my enemies | My enemies |
| In your faithfulness | Because you faithfully do what you promise … that |
| destroy them | destroy them {so … } … they do not kill me |

# Psalms 54:6

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *With a freewill offering, I will sacrifice to you. I will praise your name, Yahweh, for {it is} good.* | *I promise that {when you rescue me,} I will publicly offer a sacrifice to honor you. I will praise you, Yahweh, for how good you are.* |

**ULT I will praise your name, Yahweh, for {it is} good**
**UST** I will praise you, Yahweh, for how good you are
(אוֹדֶה שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה כִּי־טוֹב)

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 your name is good, Yahweh, I will praise it]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT I will praise your name**
**UST** I will praise you
(אוֹדֶה שִׁמְךָ)

See how you translated the term “name” in verse 1. Alternate translation: [I will praise you for your character]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| With a freewill offering | I promise that {when you rescue me … } |
| I will sacrifice | I will publicly offer a sacrifice |
| I will praise | I will praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {it is} good | how good you are |

# Psalms 54:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For he delivers me from every trouble, and my eye looks at my enemies.* | *I will be able to do this because he rescues me from all my troubles and, as a result, I see that he has defeated my enemies.* |

ULT **For**
UST I will be able to do this because
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** does not introduce the reason why David is going to praise Yahweh and sacrifice to him. It introduces an explanation of why David is going to be able to do that. Use a connecting word or phrase in your language that will make this clear. Alternate translation: [After all,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **and my eye looks at my enemies**
UST and, as a result, I see that he has defeated my enemies
(וּבְאֹיְבַי רָאֲתָה עֵינִי)

David is using one part himself, his **eye**, to mean all of him in the act of looking upon his enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I look at my enemies] or [and I personally see my enemies]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **and my eye looks at my enemies**
UST and, as a result, I see that he has defeated my enemies
(וּבְאֹיְבַי רָאֲתָה עֵינִי)

David means specifically that he sees that Yahweh has defeated his enemies. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and I personally see that Yahweh has defeated my enemies]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he delivers me | he rescues me |
| trouble | my troubles |
| and … at my enemies | and, as a result … that he has defeated my enemies |

# Psalms 55

## Psalm 55 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 55 is a psalm of supplication or lament. It includes all the basic elements of that type of psalm except a vow of praise. (Some elements are repeated.) See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Cry for help (1–2)
2. Description of troubles (3–8)
3. Petition (9)
4. Description of troubles (10–14)
5. Petition (15)
6. Statement of trust (16–19a)
7. Description of troubles (19b–21)
8. Statement of trust (22–23)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a "maskil." See the discussion of that term in the introduction to Psalms.

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### What former "companion" or friend is David describing in verses 12–14 and 20–21?

Many interpreters believe that David wrote this psalm after his counselor and friend Ahithophel turned against him and supported David's son Absalom in his rebellion against him. (These events are described in 2 Samuel 15:12–36.) If so, then Ahithophel would be the former friend whom David describes in these verses. However, throughout the centuries, Christian interpreters have also seen this psalm as prophetic of Judas's betrayal of Jesus (even though no New Testament writer directly

quotes it as a Messianic prophecy that was fulfilled in the life of Jesus). For that reason, we recommend that translators take care not to translate it in a way that limits its potential meaning to the original circumstances, such as by saying in verse 13, for example, “But it was you, Ahithophel” rather than simply “But it was you.” Instead, a translation can use footnotes to describe the likely historical background of this psalm.

## Translation Issues in This Psalm

### Intentionally repeated terms

In two cases, David uses the same terms near the beginning and end of this psalm. In the first case, he does this to draw a contrast. In verse 3 he says that the wicked try to “shake” trouble onto the righteous, but in verse 22 he says that God will never allow their “shaking.” In the second case, he repeats terms to reassert something he said earlier that he would do. In verse 2, he says, “I am restless in my complaint, and let me moan.” In verse 17, after describing the trouble he is in, he says “let me complain and moan,” showing that his response to the trouble is to plead with God for help. So that your readers can appreciate these things, we encourage you, if possible, to use the same terms in your language in the later verses that you use in the earlier verses.

# Psalms 55:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; with stringed instruments. A maskil of David.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: Musicians playing stringed instruments should accompany this song. David wrote this song.* |

**ULT For the chief musician**
**UST** This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

See how you translated the term “chief musician” in the superscription to Psalm 4.
Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**ULT A maskil of**
**UST** this song
(מַשְׂכִּיל)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **maskil**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| David | David wrote |

# Psalms 55:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Listen {to} my prayer, God, and do not hide yourself from my plea.* | *God, please listen to me as I pray to you. Please do not ignore me as I am pleading with you.* |

ULT **Listen {to} my prayer, God, and do not hide yourself from my plea**
UST God, please listen to me as I pray to you. Please do not ignore me as I am pleading with you
(הַאֲזִינָה אֱלֹהִים תְּפִלָּתִי וְאַל־תִּתְעַלַּם מִתְּחִנָּתִי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Listen carefully, God, as I plead with you in prayer] or [Listen {to} my prayer, God! Indeed, do not hide yourself from my plea!]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Listen … and do not hide yourself**
UST please listen … Please do not ignore me
(הַאֲזִינָה & וְאַל־תִּתְעַלַּם)

The expressions **Listen** and **do not hide** are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than a commands. Use a form in your language that communicates a polite request in these cases and in the next verse. It may be helpful to add an expression such as "please" to make the meaning clear. Alternate translation: [Please listen … and please do not hide]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **and do not hide yourself from my plea**
UST Please do not ignore me as I am pleading with you
(וְאַל־תִּתְעַלַּם מִתְּחִנָּתִי)

David is speaking as if God might actually **hide** himself so that David could not find him and make a **plea** to him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and do not disregard my plea]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {to} my prayer | to me as I pray to you |
| God | God |
| from my plea | as I am pleading with you |

# Psalms 55:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Attend to me and answer me. I am restless in my complaint, and let me moan* | *Please pay attention to me and do what I ask. The things I am praying about are agitating me and making me moan {in distress}.* |

**ULT and answer me**
**UST** and do what I ask
(וַעֲנֵנִי)

In this context, the expression **answer me** means more than "say something in response to me." It means "do what I ask." In this case, David is asking God specifically to protect him. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and protect me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT and let me moan**
**UST** and making me moan {in distress}
(וְאָהֵימָה)

David is using a verbal form in which he is addressing himself and suggesting a course of action. (It is common in psalms of supplication for the psalmist to move back and forth between calling to God for help and making observations to himself about his own situation.) If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this with the same kind of statement form that David uses in the first part of this sentence when he says **I am restless**. Alternate translation: [and I moan]

**Support Reference:** Irregular Use of Tenses

# Psalms 55:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *from the voice of the enemy, from the face of the oppression of the wicked. For they shake trouble onto me, and in nose they persecute me.* | *This is because my enemies are saying things {to threaten me}. Wicked people are attacking me. They are causing me to have great troubles. Because they are so hostile to me, they never stop trying to harm me.* |

ULT **from the voice of the enemy**
UST This is because my enemies are saying things {to threaten me}
(מִקּוֹל אוֹיֵב)

David is not referring to a specific **enemy**. He means all of the enemies who are threatening him on this occasion, as his use of the plural pronoun **they** later in this verse indicates. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [from the voice of my enemies]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **from the voice of the enemy**
UST This is because my enemies are saying things {to threaten me}
(מִקּוֹל אוֹיֵב)

Here a person's **voice** represents what he is saying by using his voice. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [because of what my enemies are saying]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **from the face of the oppression of the wicked**
UST Wicked people are attacking me
(מִפְּנֵי עֲקַת רָשָׁע)

David is using **from the face of** as a common expression of the culture to mean "because of" or "on account of." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [because of the oppression of the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **from the face of the oppression of the wicked**
UST Wicked people are attacking me
(מִפְּנֵי עֲקַת רָשָׁע)

David 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: [because of the oppression of wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **from the face of the oppression of the wicked**
UST Wicked people are attacking me
(מִפְּנֵי עֲקַת רָשָׁע)

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: [because wicked people are oppressing me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **For**
UST They are causing … to have
(כִּי)

Here the expression **For** introduces more detailed information about what David's wicked enemies are doing. Use a connecting word or phrase in your language that will make this clear. It may not be necessary to represent this expression explicitly in your translation. Alternate translation: [You see,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **they shake trouble onto me**
UST They are causing me to have great troubles
(יָמִיטוּ עָלַי אָוֶן)

David is speaking as if **trouble** were an object such as a large rock that his enemies could **shake** loose so that it would fall **onto** him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: [they stir up trouble for me] or [they trouble me greatly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and in nose**
UST Because they are so hostile to me
(וּבְאַף)

Here the **nose** represents anger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and in anger]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **they persecute me**
UST they never stop trying to harm me
(יִשְׂטְמוּנִי)

The verb that the ULT translates here as **persecute** means generally to "hold a grudge." The focus in this context is not on an inner feeling of resentment but on a relentless attempt by someone holding a grudge to harm another person. If your language has a verb or phrase that describes this action, it would be appropriate to use it in your translation. Alternate translation: [they try relentlessly to harm me] or [they pursue a vendetta against me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the enemy | my enemies |
| the wicked | Wicked people |
| they shake | They are causing … to have |
| trouble | great troubles |
| they persecute me | they never stop trying to harm me |

# Psalms 55:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My heart writhes in the midst of me, and the terrors of death have fallen onto me.* | *My heart is pounding inside me because I am so upset. I strongly feel many fears because I know that my enemies are trying to kill me.* |

ULT **My heart writhes in the midst of me**
UST My heart is pounding inside me because I am so upset
(לִבִּי יָחִיל בְּקִרְבִּי)

This statement could have a figurative meaning or a literal meaning or both. If your language has a term such as “heart” that describes an internal organ and can also represent emotions, it would be appropriate to use it here in your translation. This could mean: (1) that David is using his **heart** to represent his emotions. Alternate translation: [I feel very distressed inside] or (2) that David is describing physical symptoms that he is experiencing. Alternate translation: [My heart is pounding inside me] or [My heart is racing fast]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the terrors of death have fallen onto me**
UST I strongly feel many fears because I know that my enemies are trying to kill me
(וְאֵימוֹת מָוֶת נָפְלוּ עָלָי)

David is speaking as if the **terrors of death** were actually objects that could have **fallen onto** him. He means that he is feeling them immediately and forcefully, as if they had struck him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I feel the terrors of death strikingly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the terrors of death have fallen onto me**
UST I strongly feel many fears because I know that my enemies are trying to kill me
(וְאֵימוֹת מָוֶת נָפְלוּ עָלָי)

David may be using the plural form **terrors**: (1) to indicate that the prospect of dying is making him feel a combination of fears. Alternate translation: [I feel strikingly all the fears that the prospect of dying makes a person feel] or (2) to emphasize that the fear of death is a very great fear. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a singular form and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [I feel strikingly the great fear of death]

**Support Reference:** Unusual Uses of the Plural

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and the terrors of | many fears |

# Psalms 55:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Fear and trembling have come on me, and horror has covered me.* | *I am shaking because I am so afraid. The only thing I feel is fear.* |

ULT **Fear and trembling have come on me**
UST I am shaking because I am so afraid
(יִרְאָה וָרַעַד יָבֹא בִּי)

David is speaking of **Fear and trembling** as if they were living things that could have **come** upon him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I cannot help feeling afraid and trembling]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **and horror has covered me**
UST The only thing I feel is fear
(וַתְּכַסֵּנִי פַּלָּצוּת)

David is speaking as if **horror** had physically **covered** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and horror has overwhelmed me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Fear and | so afraid |
| trembling | I am shaking |
| horror | is fear |

# Psalms 55:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have said, "Who will give the wing of a dove to me? Let me fly away and let me dwell.* | *I have been thinking, "How good it would be if I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and find a place to rest.* |

ULT **I have said**
UST I have been thinking
(וְאֹמַר)

David has not **said** this to anyone else. He has said it to himself. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I have said to myself] or [I have thought]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Who will give the wing of a dove to me**
UST How good it would be if I had wings like a dove
(מִֽי־יִתֶּן־לִ֣י אֵבְר כַּיּוֹנָ֑ה)

Here the word **wing** is singular in form, but it refers to both of the two wings that a dove has. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the plural or dual form of "wing." Alternate translation: [Who will give, the wings of a dove are to me?]

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

ULT **Who will give the wing of a dove to me**
UST How good it would be if I had wings like a dove
(מִֽי־יִתֶּן־לִ֣י אֵבְר כַּיּוֹנָ֑ה)

David is using **Who will give** as a common expression of his culture to introduce a fervent wish. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [O that I had the wings of a dove!] or [I fervently wish that I had the wings of a dove!]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

> ULT **and let me dwell**
> UST and find a place to rest
> (וְאֶשְׁכְּנָה)

David means implicitly that he wishes he could **dwell** somewhere safe. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and let me dwell somewhere safe]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a dove | like a dove |

# Psalms 55:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Behold, I would make distance, wandering; I would lodge in the wilderness. Selah* | *If I could, I would go far away and stay in a desolate area. Selah* |

ULT **Behold**
UST If I could
(הִנֵּה)

David is using the term **Behold** to focus attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Listen]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **I would make distance, wandering**
UST I would go far away
(אַרְחִיק נֶדֶד)

The verbs **make distance** and **wandering** together express a single idea. The verb **wandering** tells in what way David would **make distance** between himself and his enemies. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [I would wander far away]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

ULT **Selah**
UST Selah
(סֶלָה)

To translate the term **Selah** here and in verse 19, see how your translation team decided to represent that term in 3:2.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the wilderness | in a desolate area |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 55:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let me hasten for myself {to} an escape from the storming wind, from the tempest.”* | *I would quickly find a safe place where my enemies could not harm me in the way that a powerful storm causes damage.”* |

ULT **{to} an escape**
UST a safe place
(מְפַלָּֽט)

Here, **an escape** represents “a place of escape.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [to a place of escape] or [to a place where I am safe]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **from the storming wind, from the tempest**
UST where my enemies could not harm me in the way that a powerful storm causes damage
(מֵרוּחַ סָעָה מִסָּעַר)

The terms **storming wind** and **tempest** mean similar things. David 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: [from the raging tempest]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **from the storming wind, from the tempest**
UST where my enemies could not harm me in the way that a powerful storm causes damage
(מֵרוּחַ סָעָה מִסָּעַר)

David is speaking as if the hostile opposition of his wicked enemies were actually a **storming wind** or **tempest**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from these looming calamities]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 55:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Swallow {them}, Lord, divide their tongue! For I have seen violence and strife in the city.* | *Lord, please destroy my enemies! Make them disagree about what to do {so that they cannot make successful plans against me}. I ask this because I know that they are fighting with people in the city and hurting them.* |

ULT **Swallow {them}, Lord, divide their tongue**
UST Lord, please destroy my enemies! Make them disagree about what to do {so that they cannot make successful plans against me … }
(בַּלַּע אֲדֹנָי פַּלַּג לְשׁוֹנָם)

The verb that the ULT translates as **Swallow** means "to swallow" in every other instance in the Hebrew Bible. (For example, Jonah 1:17, "Yahweh appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah.") However, many biblical scholars believe, based on languages similar to Hebrew, that there was another verb with the same consonants that meant "confuse" and that David was using that verb here. 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: [Confuse, Lord, divide their tongue] or [Lord, confuse and divide their tongue]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Swallow {them}**
UST please destroy my enemies
(בַּלַּע)

If this verb means **Swallow**, then David is speaking as if he wants the **Lord** actually to eat his enemies and swallow them. See how you translated the similar term "devour" in 35:25. Alternate translation: [Destroy them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **divide their tongue**
UST Make them disagree about what to do {so that they cannot make successful plans against me}
(פַּלַּג לְשׁוֹנָם)

Here the word **tongue** is singular in form, but it refers to the tongues of all of David's enemies as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the plural form of "tongue." Alternate translation: [divide their tongues]

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

ULT **divide their tongue**
UST Make them disagree about what to do {so that they cannot make successful plans against me}
(פַּלַּג לְשׁוֹנָם)

David is using the term **tongue** to represent what his enemies would by using their tongues. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [make them disagree in what they say]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **For**
UST I ask this because
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces an explanation for what David asks in the previous sentence. Use a connecting word or phrase in your language that will make this clear.

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **violence and strife**
UST they are fighting with people … and hurting them
(חָמָס וְרִיב)

The terms **violence** and **strife** mean similar things. David 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: [much violence]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **in the city**
UST in the city
(בָּעִיר)

To decide whether to be more specific in your translation about what **city** David is referring to, see the discussion in the introduction to this psalm of when and why he probably wrote it.

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Lord | Lord |
| their tongue | so that they cannot make successful plans against me |
| and strife | they are fighting with people … and |

# Psalms 55:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Day and night they go around it on its walls, and iniquity and trouble {are} in the midst of it.* | *The fighting is constant, and the people in the city cannot get away from it. Bad people are causing much trouble right in the middle of the city.* |

**ULT Day and night**
**UST** The fighting is constant
(יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה)

David is referring to all of time by naming its two major components, **Day** and **night**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [All the time] or [Constantly]

**Support Reference:** Merism

**ULT they go around it on its walls**
**UST** The fighting is constant, and the people in the city cannot get away from it
(יְסוֹבְבֻהָ עַל־חוֹמֹתֶיהָ)

David is speaking of the "violence" and "strife" he mentioned in the previous verse (referring back to them here as **they**) as if they were living things that could **go around** on the walls of a city. He is speaking of them as if they were watchmen who were supposed to make sure that there was good order in the city but who instead are making sure that there is continual fighting in the city. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [there is violence all around the city]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT and iniquity and trouble {are} in the midst of it**
**UST** Bad people are causing much trouble right in the middle of the city
(וְאָוֶן וְעָמָל בְּקִרְבָּהּ)

David is speaking of **iniquity** and **trouble** as if they were living things that could dwell **in the midst of** a city. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and wicked people cause trouble in the midst of it]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and iniquity | Bad people |
| and trouble | are causing much trouble |

# Psalms 55:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Calamity {is} in the midst of it, and oppression and deceit do not depart from its open square.* | *These bad people harm others right in the middle of the city. Dishonest people continually deceive and cheat others in the marketplace.* |

**ULT and oppression and deceit do not depart from its open square**

**UST** Dishonest people continually deceive and cheat others in the marketplace

(וְלֹא־יָמִישׁ מֵרְחֹבָהּ תֹּךְ וּמִרְמָה)

David is speaking of **oppression** and **deceit** as if they were living things that could **depart** from the open square of a city. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and oppression and deceit are continually present in it]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Calamity | These bad people harm others |

# Psalms 55:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For an enemy does not reproach me; then I would bear {it}. One hating me has not made great against me; then I would hide myself from him.* | *If it were an enemy who was saying bad things about me, I could endure it. If it were someone who hated me who was powerfully opposing me, I could hide from him.* |

ULT **For**
UST If it were
(כִּ֤י)

Here the expression **For** introduces more detailed information about the identify of one of David's enemies. Use a connecting word or phrase in your language that will make this clear. It may not be necessary to represent this expression explicitly in your translation.
Alternate translation: [You see,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| an enemy | an enemy |
| does … reproach me | who was saying bad things about me |
| then I would bear {it} | I could endure it |
| has … made great | who was powerfully opposing me |

# Psalms 55:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But {it was} you, a man according to my valuation, my companion and my acquaintance,* | *But the person who is doing those things to me is someone I treated not as a subject but as an equal. I knew him well, and we were together often.* |

**ULT But {it was} you, a man according to my valuation, my companion and my acquaintance**

UST But the person who is doing those things to me is someone I treated not as a subject but as an equal. I knew him well, and we were together often

(וְאַתָּה אֱנוֹשׁ כְּעֶרְכִּי אַלּוּפִי וּמְיֻדָּעִי)

Here and in the next verse, David addresses this former **companion** directly, even though he knows cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to himself and to anyone who hears this song that he feels very strongly about how this former friend has betrayed him. If it would be helpful in your language, here and in the next verse you could translate what David says to this former friend as if he were speaking to other people about him. Alternate translation: [But it was a man according to my valuation, my companion and my acquaintance]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

**ULT a man according to my valuation**

UST is someone I treated not as a subject but as an equal

(אֱנוֹשׁ כְּעֶרְכִּי)

David is speaking as if someone had vowed both him and his former friend to God (as Leviticus 27:1–8 describes) and a priest had determined that they had the same **valuation**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a man equal to me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT a man according to my valuation**

UST is someone I treated not as a subject but as an equal

(אֱנוֹשׁ כְּעֶרְכִּי)

Since David was the king of Israel, this **man** could not have been his actual equal in rank. David is probably describing the regard in which he held this man. Alternate translation: [a man whom I esteemed as my equal]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **my companion and my acquaintance**
UST I knew him well, and we were together often
(אַלּוּפִי וּמְיֻדָּעִי)

To decide whether to be more specific in your translation about what **companion** and **acquaintance** David is referring to, see the discussion in the introduction to this psalm of when and why he probably wrote it.

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my companion | we were together often |
| and my acquaintance | I knew him well, and |

# Psalms 55:14

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *we who together made counsel sweet; we walked in the house of God with the throng.* | *We used to talk together in a wonderful way. We also used to go to the temple courtyard together {to worship God} with the other Israelites who gathered there.* |

ULT **we who together made counsel sweet; we walked**
UST We used to talk together in a wonderful way. We also used to go … together
(אֲשֶׁר־יַחְדָּו נַמְתִּיק סּוֹד & נְהַלֵּךְ)

By **we** in both instances, David means himself and his former friend, whom he is addressing, so use the inclusive form of that word in your translation if your language marks that distinction. However, if you translated verse 13 as if David were speaking about his friend rather than to him, then **we** would not include the people to whom he is speaking (anyone else hearing this song), so use the exclusive form of that word in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **we who together made counsel sweet**
UST We used to talk together in a wonderful way
(אֲשֶׁר־יַחְדָּו נַמְתִּיק סּוֹד)

David is speaking as if he and his former friend had actually **made** the **counsel** they formerly shared together **sweet**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [we who spoke together very pleasantly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the house of God**
UST to the temple courtyard … to worship God
(בְּבֵית אֱלֹהִים)

David is speaking as if God's temple were actually a **house** in which he lived. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Since only priests could enter the temple building, David is referring to the courtyard of the temple. Alternate translation: [in the courtyard of the temple of God]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| counsel | used to talk |
| in the house of God | to the temple courtyard … to worship God |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | to worship God |

# Psalms 55:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{May} desolations {be} upon them; may they go down {to} Sheol alive, for evils {are} in their dwelling, in the midst of them.* | *My enemies are so wicked in their inner beings that it is as if wickedness lives in their homes {and influences what they do}. So I hope that bad things happen to them that destroy them! I wish that {the earth would open up under them so that} they would go down alive to the place where dead people are.* |

**ULT { … May} desolations {be} upon them; may they go down {to} Sheol alive, for evils {are} in their dwelling, in the midst of them**

UST My enemies are so wicked in their inner beings that it is as if wickedness lives in their homes {and influences what they do}. So I hope that bad things happen to them that destroy them! I wish that {the earth would open up under them so that} they would go down alive to the place where dead people are

(יְשִׁימוֹת עָלֵ֤ימוֹ יֵרְדוּ שְׁאוֹל֙ חַיִּ֔ים כִּֽי־רָעוֹת֙ בְּמְגוּרָ֔ם בְּקִרְבָּֽם)

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 evils {are} in their dwelling, in the midst of them, may desolations be upon them; may they go down to Sheol alive]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT { … May} desolations {be} upon them; may they go down**

UST I hope that bad things happen to them that destroy them! I wish that {the earth would open up under them so that} they would go down

(יְשִׁימוֹת עָלֵ֤ימוֹ יֵרְדוּ)

The pronouns **them** and **they** refer to the enemies whom David first described in verse 3. He is talking about them as a group again after focusing on a specific one of them in verses 12–14. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [May desolations be upon my enemies; may they go down]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **{May} desolations {be} upon them**
UST I hope that bad things happen to them that destroy them
(יְשִׁימוֹת עָלֵימוֹ)

This phrase is a translation of the written Hebrew text. Later Hebrew scribes, however, have recommended a correction in the margin of the text. You may want to follow this correction in your translation. Alternate translation: [May death seize upon them]

**Support Reference:** Alternative Readings

ULT **{May} desolations {be} upon them**
UST I hope that bad things happen to them that destroy them
(יְשִׁימוֹת עָלֵימוֹ)

If this is the correct reading, David would be speaking of **desolations** as if they were objects that could be **upon** his enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May things happen to them that desolate them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{May} desolations {be} upon them**
UST I hope that bad things happen to them that destroy them
(יְשִׁימוֹת עָלֵימוֹ)

If the correct reading is "May death seize upon them," David would be speaking of death as if it were a living thing that could seize his enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May they die without being able to resist dying]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **may they go down {to} Sheol alive**
UST I wish that {the earth would open up under them so that} they would go down alive to the place where dead people are
(יֵרְדוּ שְׁאוֹל חַיִּים)

David is alluding to the episode described in Numbers 16:1–33 in which men named Korah, Dathan, and Abiram rebelled against Moses, and Yahweh judged and punished them by having the ground open up so that they "went down to Sheol alive." You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [may they go down to Sheol alive, just like the people who rebelled against Moses]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **evils {are} in their dwelling**
UST My enemies are so wicked … that it is as if wickedness lives in their homes {and influences what they do}
(רָעוֹת בְּמְגוּרָם)

David is speaking as if **evils** actually lived with his enemies in their **dwelling**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: [evil is at home with them] or [they live in an environment that is constantly evil]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **{are} in their dwelling**
UST that it is as if wickedness lives in their homes {and influences what they do}
(בְּמְגוּרָם)

Here the word **dwelling** is singular in form, but it refers to the dwellings of all of David's enemies as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the plural form of "dwelling." Alternate translation: [are in their dwellings]

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {May} desolations | I hope that bad things … that destroy them |
| {to} Sheol | to the place where dead people are |
| evils | My enemies are so wicked |

# Psalms 55:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I, I will call to God, and Yahweh will save me.* | *But I will ask Yahweh, my God, to help me, and he will rescue me.* |

**ULT I, I will call to God**
**UST** But I will ask … my God, to help me
(אֲנִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים אֶקְרָא)

David is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **I will call** already includes this meaning. He is doing that in order to emphasize a contrast between what his enemies are doing (living wickedly, without regard for God), and what he will do. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [But as for me, I will call to God]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will call | will ask … to help me |
| God | my God |
| and Yahweh | Yahweh |
| will save me | and he will rescue me |

# Psalms 55:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Evening and morning and noon, let me complain and moan, and he will hear my voice.* | *I will continually pray to him, whether I can express my concerns in words or whether I am only able to moan {as a plea to him}. He will answer my prayer by helping me.* |

ULT **Evening and morning and noon**
UST continually
(עֶרֶב וָבֹקֶר וְצָהֳרַיִם)

David is referring to an entire day by naming three significant times in it, **Evening** (probably meaning sundown), **morning** (probably meaning dawn), and **noon**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Throughout the day]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **and he will hear my voice**
UST He will answer my prayer by helping me
(וַיִּשְׁמַע קוֹלִי)

David is using the term **voice** to represent what he would say by using his voice. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he will hear what I say]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and he will hear my voice**
UST He will answer my prayer by helping me
(וַיִּשְׁמַע קוֹלִי)

David is using the term **hear** to mean that God will do what he is asking him to do, as he states confidently in the next verse. The meaning of "hear" is the same in verse 19. Alternate translation: [and he will do what I ask]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

# Psalms 55:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He redeems my life in peace from the battle against me, for with many they are against me.* | *My enemies are coming with many soldiers to fight against me, but God will keep me safe and save my life when we fight a battle.* |

ULT **He redeems my life in peace from the battle against me**
UST God will keep me safe and save my life when we fight a battle
(פָּדָה בְשָׁלוֹם נַפְשִׁי מִקְּרֹב־לִי)

David is speaking as if God actually **redeems** him or pays a price to free him from slavery or captivity. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He rescues my life in peace from the battle against me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **He redeems my life in peace from the battle against me**
UST God will keep me safe and save my life when we fight a battle
(פָּדָה בְשָׁלוֹם נַפְשִׁי מִקְּרֹב־לִי)

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 context, that term has the sense of "well-being." Alternate translation: [He rescues me, alive and well, from the battle against me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **they are**
UST My enemies are coming
(הָיוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to David's enemies. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [my enemies are]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He redeems | God will … save |
| in peace | keep me safe and |

# Psalms 55:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God will hear and answer them, even the one sitting {from} antiquity, Selah to whom {there are} no changes, so they do not fear God.* | *My enemies have no difficulties in life, so they do not respect God. Selah But God, who has ruled forever, will answer my prayer and punish them as they deserve.* |

ULT **and answer them**
UST and punish them as they deserve
(וְיַעֲנֵם)

This phrase is a translation of the written Hebrew text. This reading, however, does not seem to make sense, since in contexts like this, the term “answer” usually means “do what they ask” (as in verse 2). You may want to follow an alternative reading from the ancient Greek translation. Alternate translation: [and afflict them]

**Support Reference:** Alternative Readings

ULT **even the one sitting**
UST who has ruled
(וְיֹשֵׁב)

David is referring specifically to God **sitting** on his throne, and he is using that action to represent God ruling. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the one enthroned] or [the one ruling]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to whom {there are} no changes**
UST My enemies have no difficulties in life
(אֲשֶׁר אֵין חֲלִיפוֹת לָמוֹ)

The relative pronoun **whom** refers to David’s enemies. It may be more natural in your language to use a personal pronoun and begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [There are no changes to them]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **to whom {there are} no changes**
UST My enemies have no difficulties in life
(אֲשֶׁר אֵין חֲלִיפוֹת לָמוֹ)

By **changes**, David means misfortunes, losses, and disappointments in life. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: [They have no reversals of fortune] or [They enjoy continuous prosperity]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | But God |
| Selah | Selah |
| they do … fear | they do … respect |
| God | God |

# Psalms 55:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He stretches out his hands against his friends; he defiles his covenant.* | *The man I knew well is attacking me even though I was his friend. He should have remained loyal to me, but he has not.* |

**ULT He stretches out**
**UST** The man I knew well is attacking me
(שָׁלַח)

The pronoun **He** refers to David's former friend. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [My former friend stretches out]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT He stretches out his hands against his friends**
**UST** The man I knew well is attacking me even though I was his friend
(שָׁלַח יָדָיו בִּשְׁלֻמָּיו)

David is using **stretches out his hands** as a common expression of his culture to mean "commits violent acts." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [My former friend lays violent hands on his friends] or [My former friend commits violent acts against his friends]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT he defiles his covenant**
**UST** He should have remained loyal to me, but he has not
(חִלַּל בְּרִיתוֹ)

The word "defile" means to treat something sacred as if it were common. The implication is that this former friend did not consider his **covenant** with David a sacred obligation that God would enforce. (David could be referring to a formal covenant or the implicit obligations of friendship.) As a result, he was not concerned that God would punish him if he broke the covenant. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [he breaks his covenant] or [he disregards the obligations of friendship]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| against his friends | even though I was his friend |
| he defiles | but he has not |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his covenant | He should have remained loyal to me |

# Psalms 55:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The curds of his mouth were smooth, but his heart {was} war. His words were softer than oil, but they {were} unsheathed {swords}.* | *What he said was as easy to believe as butter is easy to swallow, but secretly he hated me. The words he spoke were as soothing as olive oil, but all along he intended to use words to hurt people as sharp swords do.* |

**ULT The curds of his mouth were smooth**
UST What he said was as easy to believe as butter is easy to swallow
(חָלְקוּ ו מַחְמָאֹת פִּיהוּ)

David is speaking as if the things that this former friend said with his **mouth** had actually been **curds**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this image as a comparison. Alternate translation: [The things that he said were so smooth, it was as if they were curds] or [What he said caused no concern, just as a person can swallow curds without difficulty because they are smooth]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT but his heart {was} war**
UST but secretly he hated me
(וְקֶרֶב־לֹּבּוֹ)

David is speaking as if this former friend's **heart**, which represents his feelings, had actually been **war**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but secretly he felt hostile toward me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT His words were softer than oil**
UST The words he spoke were as soothing as olive oil
(רַכּוּ דְבָרָיו מִשֶּׁמֶן)

The point of this comparison is that while soft olive **oil** is soothing to the skin, the **words** of this former friend were even more soothing and reassuring to David. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [His words were even more soothing to me than soft olive oil is to the skin]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **but they {were} unsheathed {swords}**
UST but all along he intended to use words to hurt people as sharp swords do
(וְהֵמָּה פְּתִחוֹת)

David is speaking as if this former friend's words had actually been **swords** that soldiers had **unsheathed** so that they were ready to use. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but they were actually dangerous and deadly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **were} unsheathed {swords}**
UST to hurt people as sharp swords do
(פְּתִחוֹת)

The expression **unsheathed** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [were bare swords]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| than oil | as olive oil |
| were} unsheathed {swords} | to hurt people as sharp swords do |

# Psalms 55:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Cast your burden on Yahweh, and he, he will sustain you. Forever he will not allow shaking to the righteous.* | *Depend on Yahweh to help you when you are in trouble, and he will take care of you. He will never allow anyone to destroy people who are righteous.* |

ULT **Cast your burden on Yahweh, and he, he will sustain you**
UST Depend on Yahweh to help you when you are in trouble, and he will take care of you
(הַשְׁלֵךְ עַל־יְהוָה ׀ יְהָבְךָ֗ וְהוּא יְכַלְכְּלֶךָ)

The words **you** and **your** and the implied "you" in the imperative **Cast** are singular because David is addressing himself and any individual in a similar situation who hears this song. So, use singular forms in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

ULT **Cast your burden on Yahweh**
UST Depend on Yahweh to help you when you are in trouble
(הַשְׁלֵךְ עַל־יְהוָה ׀ יְהָבְךָ֗)

David is speaking of the difficulties that a person might have as if they were actually a **burden** that a person was carrying and that he could **Cast** onto **Yahweh** so that he would carry it instead. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Trust Yahweh to help you with your difficulties]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and he, he will sustain you**
UST and he will take care of you
(וְהוּא יְכַלְכְּלֶךָ)

David is stating the pronoun **he** separately, even though the verb translated as **he will sustain** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize the personal role that Yahweh will take in sustaining a person who trusts him. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [and he will personally sustain you]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **he will not allow shaking to the righteous**
> UST He will never allow anyone to destroy people who are righteous
> (לֹא־יִתֵּן & מוֹט לַצַּדִּיק)

David is using the image of **shaking** something loose so that it falls from its position (he uses the same image in verse 3) to represent other people ruining righteous people. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: [he will not let the righteous down] or [he will not allow anyone to ruin the righteous]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **he will not allow shaking to the righteous**
> UST He will never allow anyone to destroy people who are righteous
> (לֹא־יִתֵּן & מוֹט לַצַּדִּיק)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [he will not allow shaking to righteous people] or [he will not allow anyone to ruin righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Forever | never |
| shaking | anyone to destroy |
| to the righteous | people who are righteous |

# Psalms 55:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But you, God, will make them go down to the pit of the grave. Men of blood and treachery will not halve their days. But I, I will trust in you.* | *God, you will cause people who deceive and kill others to die before they have lived half as long as most people do. But as for me, I will trust you {to protect me}.* |

ULT **to the pit of the grave**
UST will cause … to die
(לְבְאֵר שַׁחַת)

David is using the term **grave** to represent the decay and destruction of physical bodies that occurs in a grave. By characterizing this **pit** in that way, he is indicating that it is the chasm beneath the earth where his culture understood dead people to be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [to the pit of destruction] or [to the pit where dead people go]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Men of blood and treachery**
UST people who deceive and kill others
(אַנְשֵׁי דָמִים וּמִרְמָה)

Here, **blood** represents violently shedding blood. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Men of bloodshed and treachery] or [Murderous, treacherous men]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **will not halve their days**
UST before they have lived half as long as most people do
(לֹא־יֶחֱצוּ יְמֵיהֶם)

David is using **will not halve their days** as a common expression of his culture to mean "will not even live half as long as they otherwise would have." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [will not reach middle age] or [will not even live half as long as they otherwise would have]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **But I, I will trust**
UST But as for me, I will trust
(וַאֲנִי אֶבְטַח)

David is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **I will trust** already includes this meaning. He is doing that in order to emphasize a contrast between what will happen to the wicked people he has just described and what he will do himself. Alternate translation: [But for my part, I will trust]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| to the pit of | will cause … to die |
| the grave | will cause … to die |
| I will trust | I will trust |

# Psalms 56

## Psalm 56 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 56 is a psalm of supplication or lament. It includes all the basic elements of that type of psalm. (Some elements are repeated.) See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Cry for help (1a)
2. Description of troubles (1b–2)
3. Statement of trust (3–4)
4. Description of troubles (5–6)
5. Petition (7–8)
6. Statement of trust (9–11)
7. Vow of praise (12–13)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a "miktam." See the discussion of that term in the introduction to Psalms.

As its superscription indicates, the background to this psalm is an episode related in 1 Samuel 21:10–15 in which David fled from King Saul to the Philistine city of Gath, and the Philistines, recognizing that he was a great Israelite military commander, imprisoned him. It may be helpful to read that episode before translating this psalm.

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Variation between "you" and "he"

In verses 1–3, 8, and 12, David addresses God directly as "you." In verses 4 and 9–11, he speaks about him as "God." This variation of pronouns reflects the flow of a psalm of supplication from a cry for help to a description of troubles and statement of trust to a petition to a vow of praise. However, if it would not be natural in your

language to switch back and forth between second-person and third-person pronouns, you could use second-person pronouns throughout the psalm, as some versions do. For example, in verses 4, 10, and 11, you might say “I praise your word” and “in you, God, I trust.” In verse 9, you might say “you, God, are for me.”

# Psalms 56:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on “A Faraway Silent Dove.” Of David. A miktam. When the Philistines seized him in Gath.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: David wrote this song when the Philistines made him their prisoner in the city of Gath. The tune is “A Faraway Silent Dove.”* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

See how you translated the term “chief musician” in the superscription to Psalm 4. Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **on “A Faraway Silent Dove**
UST The tune is “A Faraway Silent Dove
(עַל־יוֹנַת אֵלֶם רְחֹקִים)

See how you translated the similar expression “On Sheminith” in the superscription to Psalm 6. Alternate translation: [Set to the tune Yonath Elem Rehoqim] or [Perform in the Yonath Elem Rehoqim style]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **A Faraway Silent Dove**
UST A Faraway Silent Dove
(יוֹנַת אֵלֶם רְחֹקִים)

The words that the ULT translates as **A Faraway Silent Dove** could also mean “A Dove on Distant Oaks.” 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: [A Dove on Distant Oaks]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **A miktam**
UST this song
(מִכְתָּם)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **miktam**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

**ULT When the Philistines seized him in Gath**
**UST** when the Philistines made him their prisoner in the city of Gath
(בֶּאֱחֹז אֹתוֹ פְלִשְׁתִּים בְּגַת)

This superscription is referring to events related in 1 Samuel 21:10–15. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could describe these events more fully. Alternate translation: [David wrote this song when he fled from Saul to the Philistine city of Gath, hoping he would be safe there, but the Philistines seized him]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| A … Dove | A … Dove |
| Of David | David wrote |
| the Philistines | the Philistines |
| When … seized | when … made … their prisoner |
| in Gath | in the city of Gath |

# Psalms 56:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Be gracious to me, God, for man tramples me! All of the day, fighting, he oppresses me.* | *O God, men are attacking me, so please help me! They keep fighting me and making me suffer.* |

ULT **Be gracious to me, God, for man tramples me**
UST O God, men are attacking me, so please help me
(חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים כִּי־שְׁאָפַנִי אֱנוֹשׁ)

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: [Man tramples me, so be gracious to me, God!]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **Be gracious to me**
UST please help me
(חָנֵּנִי)

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, here and in verses 7 and 8. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please be gracious to me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **man tramples me**
UST men are attacking me
(שְׁאָפַנִי אֱנוֹשׁ)

David is not referring to a specific **man**. He means all of the Philistines who have captured him. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [men are trampling me] or [people are trampling me]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **man tramples me**
UST men are attacking me
(שְׁאָפַנִי אֱנוֹשׁ)

David is speaking as if the Philistines were actually trampling on him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly, here and in the next verse. Alternate translation: [men are harassing me] or [people are harassing me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **All of the day**
UST keep
(כָּל־הַיּוֹם)

David is using the term **day** to mean "time," since time consists of days. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly, here and in verses 2 and 5. Alternate translation: [All the time] or [Continually]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **fighting, he oppresses me**
UST They … fighting me and making me suffer
(לֹחֵם יִלְחָצֵנִי)

The words **fighting** and **oppresses** together express a single idea. David is using the word **fighting** to tell in what way **man** (representing his human opponents) **oppresses** him. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [he oppresses me hostilely] or [they oppress me hostilely]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Be gracious to me | please help me |
| God | O God |
| tramples me | are attacking me |

# Psalms 56:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My enemies trample me all of the day, for many are fighting against me arrogantly.* | *Many proud enemies are fighting against me, so there is continually someone attacking me.* |

ULT **My enemies trample me all of the day, for many are fighting against me arrogantly**
UST Many proud enemies are fighting against me, so there is continually someone attacking me
(שָׁאֲפוּ שׁוֹרְרַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם כִּי־רַבִּים לֹחֲמִים לִי מָרוֹם)

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 many are fighting against me arrogantly, my enemies trample me all of the day]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My enemies | enemies |
| trample me | there is … someone attacking me |

# Psalms 56:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The day I fear, I, I will trust in you.* | *But whenever I am afraid, I trust you {to help me}.* |

> **ULT The day I fear, I, I will trust in you**
> **UST** But whenever I am afraid, I trust you {to help me … }
> (יוֹם אִירָא אֲנִי אֵלֶיךָ אֶבְטָח)

David is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **I will trust** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to express a commitment or resolve. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [I am resolved that the day I fear, I will trust in you]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

> **ULT The day**
> **UST** But whenever
> (יוֹם)

David is using **The day** as a common expression of his culture to describe the occasion on which something might happen. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [If ever] or [When]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I fear | I am afraid |
| I will trust | trust … to help me |

# Psalms 56:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In God—I praise his word—in God I trust. I will not fear. What will flesh do to me?* | *I praise you, God, because you have promised {to take care of me}. I trust you to do that, so I am not afraid. I know that mere humans will not be able to harm me!* |

ULT **In God—I praise his word—in God I trust**
UST I praise you, God, because you have promised {to take care of me}. I trust you to do that
(בֵּאלֹהִים֮ אֲהַלֵּל דְּבָרוֹ בֵּאלֹהִים בָּטָחְתִּי)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put David's statement **I praise his word** at the beginning of this verse so that it does not interrupt his statement **In God … I trust**. However, it is for emphasis and emotional impact that David introduces the information that he praises God's word in the middle of the information that he trusts God, so if you move the former information to the beginning of the verse, you should try to convey the emphasis and emotional impact in another way. Alternate translation: [I praise God's word, so I trust completely in him] or [I celebrate God's promises, so I trust completely in him]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **I praise his word**
UST I praise you … because you have promised {to take care of me}
(אֲהַלֵּל דְּבָרוֹ)

David is using the term **word** to represent **God** speaking to him by using words. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I praise him for what he has said to me] or [I praise him for his promise to me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **What will flesh do to me**
UST I know that mere humans will not be able to harm me
(מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה בָשָׂר לִי)

Here, **flesh** represents human beings, who are made of flesh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [What will human beings do to me?]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **What will flesh do to me**
UST I know that mere humans will not be able to harm me
(מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה בָשָׂר לִי)

David 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: [Human beings can certainly do nothing to me!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| In God | God |
| I praise | I praise you |
| I trust | I trust … to do that |
| I will … fear | so I am … afraid |

# Psalms 56:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *All of the day they vex my matters; all of their thoughts {are} against me for harm.* | *My enemies are continually trying to interfere in my activities. They keep planning ways to harm me.* |

ULT **they vex my matters**
UST My enemies are … trying to interfere in my activities
(דְּבָרַי יְעַצְּבוּ)

The term that the ULT translates as **matters** can also mean "words." So this could mean: (1) that the people David is describing are causing trouble in his affairs. Alternate translation: [they cause trouble in my affairs] or (2) that these people are figuratively reshaping, that is, distorting, what David says. Alternate translation: [they twist my words]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **all of their thoughts**
UST They keep planning
(כָּל־מַחְשְׁבֹתָם)

David is saying **all** as an overstatement for emphasis. He is referring not to every thought that his Philistine captors have but to **all of their thoughts** about him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [all of their thoughts about me]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

# Psalms 56:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They gather together, they hide; they, they watch my heels because they await my life.* | *Together they secretly watch where I am going because they are looking for an opportunity to kill me.* |

**ULT they, they watch**
**UST** they … watch
(הֵמָּה & יִשְׁמֹרוּ)

David is stating the pronoun **they** separately, even though the verb translated as **they watch** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize the personal role that his enemies are taking in watching him. (They are not appointing others as spies but doing the spying themselves.) If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [they personally watch] or [it is they who watch]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT they watch my heels**
**UST** watch where I am going
(עֲקֵבַי יִשְׁמֹרוּ)

David is using his **heels** to represent how he walks on his feet to go places. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: [they watch my steps] or [they observe where I go]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT they await my life**
**UST** they are looking for an opportunity to kill me
(קִוּוּ נַפְשִׁי)

Here, David's **life** represents an opportunity to take his life or kill him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. The UST models one way to do that.

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| They gather together | Together |

# Psalms 56:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Upon iniquity {shall there be} an escape for them? In nose, make the peoples go down, God.* | *They should not be able to avoid punishment for the wicked things they are doing. O God, in your anger, please defeat all of our foreign enemies!* |

**ULT Upon iniquity {shall there be} an escape for them**
**UST** They should not be able to avoid punishment for the wicked things they are doing
(עַל־אָ֭וֶן פַּלֵּ֣ט־לָ֑מוֹ)

The word that the ULT translates as **Upon** could indicate: (1) that **iniquity** characterizes David's enemies. Alternate translation: [Because of their iniquity, shall there be an escape for them] or (2) that **iniquity** is the means that David's enemies would use to **escape** from the just consequences of their actions. Alternate translation: [Shall there be an escape for them by iniquity]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT Upon iniquity {shall there be} an escape for them**
**UST** They should not be able to avoid punishment for the wicked things they are doing
(עַל־אָ֭וֶן פַּלֵּ֣ט־לָ֑מוֹ)

David 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: [Because of their iniquity, there should not be an escape for them!] or [There should not be an escape for them by iniquity!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT In nose**
**UST** in your anger
(בְּאַ֝ף)

Here the **nose** represents anger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [In anger]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **make the peoples go down**
UST please defeat all of our foreign enemies
(עַמִּים ו הוֹרֵד)

David is speaking as if the **peoples** were actually in an elevated position and God would **make** them **go down** from there. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [destroy the peoples]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| iniquity | the wicked things they are doing |
| God | O God |

# Psalms 56:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You, you record my wandering. Put my tears in your bag. {Are they} not in your record?* | *You have watched me carefully as I have wandered to this place. Please stay close to me as I have sad experiences here. I know that you have watched me closely as I have had these experiences.* |

**ULT You, you record**
**UST** You have watched me carefully
(סָפַרְתָּה אָתָּה)

David is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you record** already includes this meaning. He is doing that in order to emphasize a contrast between what his enemies are doing to try to harm him and what God is doing to watch over him and care for him. Alternate translation: [But for your part, you record]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT you record my wandering**
**UST** have watched me carefully as I have wandered to this place
(נדי סָפַרְתָּה)

David is speaking as if God had actually recorded his **wandering**, that is, as if God had written down that at this point David had left Israel to live among the Philistines. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you are aware of my wandering]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Put my tears in your bag**
**UST** Please stay close to me as I have sad experiences here
(שִׂימָה דִמְעָתִי בְנֹאדֶךָ)

David is speaking as if God actually had a leather **bag** that held fluids, such as people in this culture used to hold water or wine when traveling through arid regions, and that he wanted God to put his **tears** in it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Keep my tears close to you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Put my tears in your bag**
UST Please stay close to me as I have sad experiences here
(שִׂימָה דִמְעָתִי בְנֹאדֶךָ)

David is using his **tears** to represent the sorrows he has experienced. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Always be mindful of my sorrows]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **{Are they} not in your record**
UST I know that you have watched me closely as I have had these experiences
(הֲלֹא בְסִפְרָתֶךָ)

David is using the question form to make a confident affirmation. 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: [After all, they are in your record.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **{Are they} not in your record**
UST I know that you have watched me closely as I have had these experiences
(הֲלֹא בְסִפְרָתֶךָ)

Earlier in this verse, David portrays God as recording the details of his **wandering**. Here he speaks as if God had actually written in that **record** about the tears he has shed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [After all, you are aware of them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 56:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then my enemies will turn back on the day I call. This I know, for God {is} for me.* | *When I cry to God for help, my enemies will stop attacking me. I know that will happen because God favors me.* |

ULT **Then my enemies will turn back on the day I call**
UST When I cry to God for help, my enemies will stop attacking me
(אָ֤ז יָשֻׁ֖בוּ אוֹיְבַ֣י אָח֑וֹר בְּי֥וֹם אֶקְרָ֗א)

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: [On the day I call, then my enemies will turn back]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **Then my enemies will turn back on the day I call**
UST When I cry to God for help, my enemies will stop attacking me
(אָ֤ז יָשֻׁ֖בוּ אוֹיְבַ֣י אָח֑וֹר בְּי֥וֹם אֶקְרָ֗א)

See how you translated the similar expression “The day” in verse 3. Alternate translation: [When I call, then my enemies will turn back]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Then my enemies will turn back on the day I call**
UST When I cry to God for help, my enemies will stop attacking me
(אָ֤ז יָשֻׁ֖בוּ אוֹיְבַ֣י אָח֑וֹר בְּי֥וֹם אֶקְרָ֗א)

David saying both **Then** and **on the day** (meaning “when”) for emphasis. However, in some languages this might seem to express extra information in a way that would not be natural. If so, you can use only one of these expressions. Alternate translation: [When I call, my enemies will turn back]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

ULT **I call**
UST I cry to God for help
(אֶקְרָ֗א)

David means implicitly that he will **call** to God for help. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I call to you for help]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **This I know, for God {is} for me**
UST I know that will happen because God favors me
(זֶה־יָּדַעְתִּי כִּי־אֱלֹהִים לִי)

The word that the ULT translates as **for** could introduce: (1) the reason why David knows that what he has just said is true. Alternate translation: [I know this because God is for me] or (2) the content of what David knows. Alternate translation: [This I know, that God is for me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **This I know, for God {is} for me**
UST I know that will happen because God favors me
(זֶה־יָּדַעְתִּי כִּי־אֱלֹהִים לִי)

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 God is for me, I know this]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my enemies | my enemies |
| I call | I cry to God for help |
| I know | I know |
| God | God |

# Psalms 56:10

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *In God—I praise his word— in Yahweh—I praise his word—* | *I praise you, Yahweh my God, because you have promised {to take care of me}.* |

ULT **In God—I praise his word— in Yahweh—I praise his word … in God I trust. I will not fear. What will man do to me**
UST I praise you, Yahweh my God, because you have promised {to take care of me … } … I trust you to do that, so I am not afraid. I know that mere humans will not be able to harm me
(בֵּאלֹהִים אֲהַלֵּל דָּבָר בַּיהוָה אֲהַלֵּל דָּבָר: בֵּאלֹהִים בָּטַחְתִּי לֹא אִירָא מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה אָדָם לִי) (56:10-11)

This is the second instance of the refrain in this psalm. (It occurs here in an expanded form.) We recommend that you show this to your readers by translating the phrases here the same way that you translated them in the first occurrence of this refrain in 56:4.

**Support Reference:** Poetry

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| In God | my God |
| I praise | I praise you |
| in Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 56:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *in God I trust. I will not fear. What will man do to me?* | *I trust you to do that, so I am not afraid. I know that mere humans will not be able to harm me!* |

**ULT What will man do to me**
**UST** I know that mere humans will not be able to harm me
(מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה אָדָם לִי)

See how you translated the term “man” in 56:1. (Although David says **man** here where he said “flesh” in verse 4, the meaning is the same in both instances of this refrain.) Alternate translation: [What will people do to me?] or [Human beings can certainly do nothing to me!]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in God | you |
| I trust | I trust … to do that |
| I will … fear | I am … afraid |

# Psalms 56:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your vows {are} on me, God. I will pay a thank-offering to you.* | *God, I have vowed {that I will thank you publicly when you help me}, so I will offer a sacrifice to thank you.* |

ULT **Your vows {are} on me**
UST I have vowed {that I will thank you publicly when you help me}
(עָלַי & נְדָרֶיךָ)

David is using **Your vows {are} on me** as a common expression of his culture to mean that he has made vows to God that he will publicly thank him for helping him and that he is bound by those vows to keep that promise. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am under vows to you] or [I have made vows to you]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Your vows**
UST I have vowed {that I will thank you publicly when you help me}
(נְדָרֶיךָ)

David is using the possessive form to describe not vows that God has made but **vows** that he has made to **God**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [The vows I have made to you]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **Your vows**
UST I have vowed {that I will thank you publicly when you help me}
(נְדָרֶיךָ)

David is probably not referring to several different vows he has made to God. He probably means that he has made the same vow several times, that he will sacrifice a thank-offering to God when God delivers him. If your language uses a different plural form for a repeated action than it does for separate actions, it would be appropriate to use that form here. In some languages it may be natural to use a singular form. Alternate translation: [The vow I have made to you]

**Support Reference:** Unusual Uses of the Plural

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Your vows | I have vowed {that I will thank you publicly when you help me} |
| God | God |
| a thank-offering | a sacrifice to thank |

# Psalms 56:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you deliver my life from death. {Are} not my feet from stumbling, that I may walk about to the face of God in the light of the living?* | *I will be able to do that because you will have rescued me. No one will have killed me. Because you protect me, I will be able to live in your presence here in this world where people are alive.* |

ULT **For**
UST I will be able to do that because
(כִּ֤י)

Here the word **For** does not introduce the reason why David is going to make a thank-offering to God. It introduces an explanation of why David is going to be able to do that. Use a connecting word or phrase in your language that will make this clear. Alternate translation: [I will be able to do this because]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **you deliver my life from death**
UST you will have rescued me. No one will have killed me
(הִצַּלְתָּ֣ נַפְשִׁ֣י מִמָּ֑וֶת)

It might seem that this expression contains extra information that would not be natural to express in your language. If so, you can shorten it. Alternate translation: [you deliver me from death] or [you rescue my life]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

ULT **{ … Are} not my feet from stumbling, that I may walk about to the face of God in the light of the living**
UST Because you protect me, I will be able to live in your presence here in this world where people are alive
(הֲלֹ֤א רַגְלַ֨י מִדֶּ֗חִי לְ֭הִתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵ֣י אֱלֹהִ֑ים בְּא֖וֹר הַחַיִּֽים)

David is using the question form to make a confident assertion. 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: [My feet are from stumbling, so I may walk about to the face of God in the light of the living!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **{Are} not my feet from stumbling**
UST Because you protect me
(הֲלֹא רַגְלַי מִּדֶּחִי)

David 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: [Are not my feet kept from stumbling] or, as an assertion, [You keep my feet from stumbling]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **{Are} not my feet from stumbling**
UST Because you protect me
(הֲלֹא רַגְלַי מִּדֶּחִי)

David is speaking as if God actually kept his **feet** from **stumbling**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Do you not keep me safe] or, as an assertion, [You keep me safe]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **that I may walk about**
UST I will be able to live
(לְהִתְהַלֵּךְ)

David is using the image of walking to represent living. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that I may live]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to the face of**
UST in … presence
(לִפְנֵי)

Here, **to the face of** represents being in the presence of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in the presence of]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **in the light of the living**
> UST here in this world where people are alive
> (בְּאוֹר הַחַיִּים)

Here, **light** represents the earth, which people of this culture considered to be a light place, by contrast with Sheol, the realm of the dead, which was a dark place. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in the world of the living] or [on this earth, where people are alive]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **the living**
> UST people are alive
> (הַחַיִּים)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [living people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| you deliver | you will have rescued |
| from stumbling | Because you protect |
| God | your |

# Psalms 57

## Psalm 57 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 57 begins as a psalm of supplication or lament. It presents several of the basic elements of that type of psalm. But after the statement of trust, instead of a petition and a vow of praise, it turns into a psalm of worship. David experiences such confidence in God that instead of asking him to do something specific for him and promising to thank him publicly, David calls himself to praise God and says why he should do that. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Cry for help (1–3)
2. Description of troubles (4)
3. Refrain (5)
4. Description of troubles (6)
5. Statement of trust (7)
6. Call to worship (8–9)
7. Reason to worship (10)
8. Refrain (11)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a “miktam.” See the discussion of that term in the introduction to Psalms.

As its superscription indicates, the background to this psalm is one of two episodes in which David fled from King Saul and hid in a cave. This could have been the cave of Adullam, as described in 1 Samuel 22:1–2, or the cave of En Gedi, as described in 1 Samuel 24:1–22. It may be helpful to read those episodes before translating this psalm.

## Translation Issues in This Psalm

### Variation between “you” and “he”

In verses 1, 5, 7, and 9–11, David addresses God directly as “you.” In verses 2–3, he speaks about him as “God.” This variation of pronouns reflects the flow of psalm of supplication from a cry for help to a description of troubles to a statement of trust. This psalm then becomes a psalm of worship in which David continues to address God directly. However, if it would not be natural in your language to switch back and forth between second-person and third-person pronouns, you could use second-person pronouns throughout the psalm, as some versions do. For example, in verse 2 you might say “I call to you, God Most High,” and in verse 9, you might say “May you send” and “May you reproach.”

# Psalms 57:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; “May You Not Destroy.” Of David; a miktam. When he fled from the face of Saul, in the cave.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: David wrote this song when he fled into a cave to escape from Saul. The tune is “Do Not Destroy.”* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

See how you translated the term “chief musician” in the superscription to Psalm 4.
Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **a miktam**
UST this song
(מִכְתָּם)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **miktam**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **When he fled from the face of Saul, in the cave**
UST when he fled into a cave to escape from Saul
(בְּבָרְחוֹ מִפְּנֵי־שָׁאוּל בַּמְּעָרָה)

This superscription is referring to one of two episodes in which David **fled** from King **Saul**, who wanted to kill him, and hid in a **cave**. This could have been the cave of Adullam, as described in 1 Samuel 22:1–2, or the cave of En Gedi, as described in 1 Samuel 24:1–22. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could describe these events more fully, even though the identity of this cave is not certain. Alternate translation: [David wrote this song while he was hiding in a cave to which he had fled in order to be safe from King Saul]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **from the face of Saul**
> UST to escape from Saul
> (מִפְּנֵי־שָׁאוּל)

The superscription is using one part of Saul, his **face**, to mean all of him in his determination to kill David. Alternate translation: [from Saul, who wanted to kill him]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| May You … Destroy | The tune is “Do … Destroy |
| Of David | David wrote |
| Saul | Saul |

# Psalms 57:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Be gracious to me, God, be gracious to me, for in you my soul takes refuge, and in the shadow of your wings I take refuge until the calamities have passed by.* | *O God, please help me! I ask you to do that because I depend on you to protect me. I pray that you will protect me just as a mother bird protects her chicks under her wings. I ask you to do that until the troubles I am having are over.* |

ULT **Be gracious to me, God, be gracious to me**
UST O God, please help me
(חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים ׀ חָנֵּנִי)

These are imperatives, but they 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: [Please be gracious to me; God, please be gracious to me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Be gracious to me, God, be gracious to me**
UST O God, please help me
(חָנֵּנִי אֱלֹהִים ׀ חָנֵּנִי)

David is repeating a phrase in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. If speakers of your language can repeat phrases for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the intensification. Alternate translation: [I ask you earnestly to be gracious to me, God]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

ULT **for**
UST I ask you to do that because
(כִּי)

Here the word **for** does not introduce the reason why God should be gracious to David. It introduces David’s explanation of why he wants God to be gracious to him. Use a connecting word or phrase in your language that will make this clear. It may not be necessary to represent this expression explicitly in your translation.

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **in you my soul takes refuge, and in the shadow of your wings I take refuge until the calamities have passed by**
UST I depend on you to protect me. I pray that you will protect me just as a mother bird protects her chicks under her wings. I ask you to do that until the troubles I am having are over
(בְּךָ֤ חָסְתָ֣ה נַפְשִׁ֣י וּבְצֵל־כְּנָפֶ֣יךָ אֶחְסֶ֑ה עַ֥ד יַעֲבָר־הַוּֽוֹת)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [my soul takes refuge in the shadow of your wings until the calamities have passed by] or [in you my soul takes refuge, indeed, in the shadow of your wings I take refuge until the calamities have passed by]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **in you my soul takes refuge**
UST I depend on you to protect me
(בְּךָ֤ חָסְתָ֣ה נַפְשִׁ֣י)

David is using one part of himself, his **soul**, to mean all of him in the act of taking refuge in God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in you I take refuge]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **in you my soul takes refuge**
UST I depend on you to protect me
(בְּךָ֤ חָסְתָ֣ה נַפְשִׁ֣י)

David is speaking as if God were actually a **refuge** or place where he could go to be safe. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you are the one who keeps me safe]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and in the shadow of your wings I take refuge**
UST I pray that you will protect me just as a mother bird protects her chicks under her wings
(וּבְצֵל־כְּנָפֶיךָ אֶחְסֶה)

Here the **shadow** that wings cast represents the area under the wings that they shelter. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and in the shelter of your wings I take refuge] or [and under your wings I take refuge]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and in the shadow of your wings I take refuge**
UST I pray that you will protect me just as a mother bird protects her chicks under her wings
(וּבְצֵל־כְּנָפֶיךָ אֶחְסֶה)

David is speaking as if God were actually a bird that had **wings** and as if he were one of that bird's chicks that would **take refuge** under those wings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this image as a comparison. The UST models one way to do that.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **until the calamities have passed by**
UST I ask you to do that until the troubles I am having are over
(עַד יַעֲבָר הַוּוֹת)

David is speaking of the **calamities** he is experiencing as if it were living things that could pass by him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [until these calamities end]

**Support Reference:** Personification

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Be gracious to me | please help me |
| God | O God |
| my soul | I |
| takes refuge | depend on … to protect me |
| I take refuge | I pray that you will protect me just as a mother bird protects her chicks |
| the calamities | the troubles I am having |

# Psalms 57:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I call to God Most High, to God, the one accomplishing for me.* | *I am crying {for help} to God, who is greater than all other spirit beings. God will complete what he has begun to do for me.* |

ULT **the one accomplishing for me**
UST will complete what he has begun to do for me
(גֹּמֵר עָלָי)

David assumes that his listeners will understand that by **accomplishing**, he means that God accomplishes the purposes that he has for him. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the one accomplishing his purposes for me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I call | I am crying {for help} |
| to God | to God |
| Most High | who is greater than all other spirit beings |
| to God | God |

# Psalms 57:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May he send from the heavens and save me. May he reproach the one trampling me. Selah May God send his covenant faithfulness and his truth.* | *May he act from where he is in heaven to rescue me. Someone is trying to harm me; may God prevent him from doing that. Selah God is kind and loyal to the people who trust him, so may he help me.* |

ULT **May he send from the heavens and save me. May he reproach the one trampling me … May God send his covenant faithfulness and his truth**
UST May he act from where he is in heaven to rescue me. Someone is trying to harm me; may God prevent him from doing that … God is kind and loyal to the people who trust him, so may he help me
(יִשְׁלַח מִשָּׁמַיִם ׀ וְיוֹשִׁיעֵנִי חֵרֵף שֹׁאֲפִי & יִשְׁלַח אֱלֹהִים חַסְדּוֹ וַאֲמִתּוֹ)

The two instances of the verb **send** in this verse are in a form that Hebrew writers could use to express either a statement or a wish. The verb **reproach** would conform to whichever sense the writer intended. At this point in this psalm of supplication, David still seems to be expressing his cry for help, so the ULT translates these verbs as expressing a wish. (See the introduction to this psalm.) However, David may also be making an anticipatory confident statement about what God will do. The original audience may have heard both nuances. Use the verbal form in your language that seems most suitable. Alternate translation: [He will send from the heavens and save me. He will reproach the one trampling me. … God will send his covenant faithfulness and his truth]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **May he send from the heavens and save me**
UST May he act from where he is in heaven to rescue me
(יִשְׁלַח מִשָּׁמַיִם ׀ וְיוֹשִׁיעֵנִי)

David is speaking as if he wanted God actually to **send** someone or something **from the heavens** to **save** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May he act from the heavens to save me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **May he send from the heavens and save me**
UST May he act from where he is in heaven to rescue me
(יִשְׁלַח מִשָּׁמַיִם ׀ וְיוֹשִׁיעֵנִי)

If you decide to retain the image of sending in your translation, it may be helpful to specify what God would **send**. Alternate translation: [May he send help from the heavens and save me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **May he reproach the one trampling me**
UST Someone is trying to harm me; may God prevent him from doing that
(חֵרֵף שֹׁאֲפִי)

David is speaking as if someone were actually **trampling** on him and as if he wanted God to say something to make the person ashamed of doing that so that he would stop. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May he stop the person who is harassing me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Selah**
UST Selah
(סֶלָה)

To translate the term **Selah** here and in verse 7, see how your translation team decided at 3:2 to represent that term.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **May God send his covenant faithfulness and his truth**
UST God is kind and loyal to the people who trust him, so may he help me
(יִשְׁלַח אֱלֹהִים חַסְדּוֹ וַאֲמִתּוֹ)

David is speaking as if **covenant faithfulness** and **truth** were living things that God could **send** to help him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May God act in covenant faithfulness and truth to help me]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **his covenant faithfulness and his truth**
UST is kind and loyal to the people who trust him
(חַסְדּוֹ וַאֲמִתּוֹ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **truth** and **covenant faithfulness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways, here and in verse 10. Alternate translation: [the ways he is faithful to his covenant and his trustworthiness]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| from the heavens | from where he is in heaven |
| and save me | to rescue me |
| May he reproach | may God prevent him from doing that |
| the one trampling me | Someone is trying to harm me |
| Selah | Selah |
| God | God |
| his covenant faithfulness | is kind |

# Psalms 57:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My soul {is} in the midst of lions; I must lie down {among} blazing ones, sons of man. Their teeth {are} a spear and arrows, and their tongue {is} a sharp sword.* | *Men who are as dangerous as lions are all around me. I have no safe place to sleep far away from those men who are trying to kill me. They say things about me that make other people want to harm me.* |

> ULT **My soul {is} in the midst of lions**
> UST Men who are as dangerous as lions are all around me
> (נַפְשִׁי ׀ בְּתוֹךְ לְבָאִם)

David is using one part of himself, his **soul** or inner being, to mean all of him in the situation of being **in the midst of lions**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am in the midst of lions]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

> ULT **My soul {is} in the midst of lions**
> UST Men who are as dangerous as lions are all around me
> (נַפְשִׁי ׀ בְּתוֹךְ לְבָאִם)

The word that the ULT translates as **soul** can also mean “life.” The original audience would have heard both nuances. The implication is that David’s life is in danger, that is, he is in danger of being killed. Alternate translation: [My life is in danger because I am in the midst of lions]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **My soul {is} in the midst of lions**
> UST Men who are as dangerous as lions are all around me
> (נַפְשִׁי ׀ בְּתוֹךְ לְבָאִם)

David is speaking as if he were actually surrounded by **lions**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this image as a comparison. Alternate translation: [I am in the midst of men who are as dangerous as lions]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **I must lie down {among} blazing ones, sons of man**
UST I have no safe place to sleep far away from those men who are trying to kill me
(אֶשְׁכְּבָה לְּהָטִים בְּנֵי־אָדָם)

By putting the phrase **sons of man** right after **blazing ones**, David is indicating that he is making a comparison between these people and things that are **blazing** and set other things on fire. The point of this comparison is that just as fire is destructive, so these people are trying to destroy him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [I must lie down among people who are trying to destroy me]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **sons of man**
UST those men
(בְּנֵי־אָדָם)

David is using **sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "human beings." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [human beings]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Their teeth {are} a spear and arrows, and their tongue {is} a sharp sword**
UST They say things about me that make other people want to harm me
(שִׁנֵּיהֶם חֲנִית וְחִצִּים וּלְשׁוֹנָם חֶרֶב תָּדָה)

David is using the **teeth** and **tongue** of these men to represent them speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Their speech is a spear and arrows; yes, what they say is a sharp sword]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Their teeth {are} a spear and arrows, and their tongue {is} a sharp sword**
UST They say things about me that make other people want to harm me
(שִׁנֵּיהֶם חֲנִית וְחִצִּים וּלְשׁוֹנָם חֶרֶב תָּדָה)

David is speaking as if what these men say with their **teeth** and **tongue** were actually **a spear and arrows** and **a sharp sword**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this image as a comparison. Alternate translation: [What they say about me is as dangerous as a spear or arrows or a sharp sword]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and their tongue {is} a sharp sword**
**UST** They say things about me that make other people want to harm me
(וּלְשׁוֹנָם חֶרֶב תְּדָה)

Here the word **tongue** is singular in form, but it refers to the tongues of all of David's enemies as a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the plural form of "tongue." Alternate translation: [and their tongues are sharp swords]

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| My soul | me |
| lions | Men who are as dangerous as lions |
| {are} a spear | that make other people want to harm me |
| and their tongue | They say things about me |
| {is} a … sword | that make other people want to harm me |

# Psalms 57:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Be high above the heavens, God, {may} your glory {be} above all of the earth.* | *May you have the most glory, God, of anyone in heaven or on earth!* |

ULT **{ … Be high above the heavens, God, may} your glory {be} above all of the earth**
UST May you have the most glory, God, of anyone in heaven or on earth
(רוּמָה עַל־הַשָּׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדֶךָ)

The expression **Be high** is an imperative, but it communicates a fervent wish rather than a command. Use a form in your language that will indicate this. Alternate translation: [Oh may you be high above the heavens, God, may your glory be above all of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **{ … Be high above the heavens, God, may} your glory {be} above all of the earth**
UST May you have the most glory, God, of anyone in heaven or on earth
(רוּמָה עַל־הַשָּׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדֶךָ)

David is speaking as if he actually wanted **God** and his **glory** to be in a physically high position relative to the **heavens** and the **earth**. In this context, God's **glory** refers to the honor that he receives. The second part of this verse specifies in what way David wants the first part to be true. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May people honor you, God, more than anyone else in heaven or on earth]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{ … Be high above the heavens, God, may} your glory {be} above all of the earth**
UST May you have the most glory, God, of anyone in heaven or on earth
(רוּמָה עַל־הַשָּׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדֶךָ)

David is referring to the entire created realm by naming its two main components, **the heavens** and **the earth**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [May people honor you, God, more than anyone else anywhere]

**Support Reference:** Merism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the heavens | heaven |
| God | God |
| {may} your glory | glory |

# Psalms 57:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They prepare a net for my steps; my soul bows down. They dig a pit to my face; they fall into the midst of it. Selah* | *My enemies are trying to capture me, as if they had set out a net to trap me. This has distressed me greatly. Yes, they are trying to capture me, as if they had dug a deep pit along the path where I walk, hoping that I would fall into it. But I believe that God will use what they are doing against them, as if they had fallen into that pit themselves. Selah* |

ULT **They prepare a net for my steps**
UST My enemies are trying to capture me, as if they had set out a net to trap me
(רֶשֶׁת ׀ הֵכִ֣ינוּ לְפְעָמַ֑י)

The pronoun **They** refers to the enemies whom David describes in verse 4. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [My enemies prepare a net for my steps]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **They prepare a net for my steps**
UST My enemies are trying to capture me, as if they had set out a net to trap me
(רֶשֶׁת ׀ הֵכִ֣ינוּ לְפְעָמַ֑י)

Here, David's **steps** represent his feet walking along a path. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [They prepare a net for my feet] or [They preparee a net, hoping I will walk into it and it will trap my feet]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **They prepare a net for my steps**
UST My enemies are trying to capture me, as if they had set out a net to trap me
(רֶשֶׁת ׀ הֵכִ֣ינוּ לְפְעָמַ֑י)

David is speaking as if his enemies physically **prepare a net** to trap him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They take measures to capture me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my soul bows down**
UST This has distressed me greatly
(כָּפַף נַפְשִׁי)

David is using one part of himself, his **soul** or inner being, to mean all of him in the act of bowing down. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I bow down]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **my soul bows down**
UST This has distressed me greatly
(כָּפַף נַפְשִׁי)

David is speaking as if he physically **bows down** when he realizes that his enemies are trying to capture him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I feel despair]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **They dig a pit to my face; they fall into the midst of it**
UST Yes, they are trying to capture me, as if they had dug a deep pit along the path where I walk, hoping that I would fall into it. But I believe that God will use what they are doing against them, as if they had fallen into that pit themselves
(כָּרוּ לְפָנַי שִׂיחָה נָפְלוּ בְתוֹכָהּ)

Here, **to my face** represents “in front of me.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [They dig a pit in front of me; they fall into the midst of it] or [They dig a pit where they expect me to walk, hoping I will fall into it, but they fall into it instead]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **They dig a pit to my face; they fall into the midst of it**
UST Yes, they are trying to capture me, as if they had dug a deep pit along the path where I walk, hoping that I would fall into it. But I believe that God will use what they are doing against them, as if they had fallen into that pit themselves
(כָּרוּ לְפָנַי שִׂיחָה נָפְלוּ בְתוֹכָהּ)

David is speaking as if his enemies physically **dig a pit** (covering it to conceal it) in order to trap him, but that they fall into it themselves. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly (indicating that David is elaborating on the idea he expressed in the first part of this verse). Alternate translation: [Indeed, they do things to try to capture me, but what they do only hurts them instead]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my soul | me |
| bows down | This has distressed … greatly |
| a pit | a deep pit |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 57:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My heart is established, God, my heart is established. Let me sing and make music.* | *God, I trust you completely. So {instead of worrying,} I will sing praises to you.* |

ULT **My heart is established, God, my heart is established**
UST God, I trust you completely
(נָכוֹן לִבִּי אֱלֹהִים נָכוֹן לִבִּי)

The expression **established** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [My heart is steadfast, God, my heart is steadfast]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **My heart is established, God, my heart is established**
UST God, I trust you completely
(נָכוֹן לִבִּי אֱלֹהִים נָכוֹן לִבִּי)

David is repeating a phrase in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. If speakers of your language can repeat phrases for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the intensification. Alternate translation: [My heart is firmly established, God] or [My heart is firmly steadfast, God]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

ULT **My heart is established, God, my heart is established**
UST God, I trust you completely
(נָכוֹן לִבִּי אֱלֹהִים נָכוֹן לִבִּי)

Here the **heart** represents a person's feelings and intentions. David means that his confidence in God is unwavering. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I have confidence in you, God, I have confidence in you] or [I have resolute confidence in you, God]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **Let me sing and make music**
> UST So {instead of worrying,} I will sing praises to you
> (אָשִׁירָה וַאֲזַמֵּרָה)

David is using a verbal form in which he is addressing himself and suggesting a course of action that is appropriate in light of what he has just said. In your translation, use an appropriate verbal form to indicate this, here and in the next verse. Alternate translation: [So I will sing and make music]

**Support Reference:** Irregular Use of Tenses

> ULT **Let me sing and make music**
> UST So {instead of worrying,} I will sing praises to you
> (אָשִׁירָה וַאֲזַמֵּרָה)

The terms **sing** and **make music** mean similar things. David 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: [Let me surely sing] or [So I will surely sing]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| is established | trust you completely |
| God | God |

# Psalms 57:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Awake, my glory! Awake, lyre and harp! Let me awaken the dawn.* | *I will do that enthusiastically. I will begin the day by praising you as I play my harp and lyre.* |

**ULT Awake, my glory**
**UST** I will do that enthusiastically
(עוּרָה כְבוֹדִי)

David is using the term **glory** to represent his soul. People of this culture spoke of the soul or inner being as the most noble or glorious part of a person. (The use of this term here is similar to its use in 16:9, “my heart rejoices and my glory is glad,” and 30:12, “my glory will make music to you.”) If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Awake, my soul]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT Awake, my glory**
**UST** I will do that enthusiastically
(עוּרָה כְבוֹדִי)

David is addressing one part of himself, his **glory** or soul, to tell all of himself to wake up. If your language has a verbal form that is marked for self-address, you could use it here. Other languages may have other ways of showing the meaning. Alternate translation: [I must wake up] or (self-address form) [Wake up!]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT Awake, my glory**
**UST** I will do that enthusiastically
(עוּרָה כְבוֹדִי)

David is speaking as if he were actually asleep and needed to wake up. He is actually urging himself to apply vitality and creativity to the work of praising God in song. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [I must sing in a lively way] or (self-address form) [Come on, sing in a lively way]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Awake, lyre and harp**
UST as I play my harp and lyre
(עוּרָה הַנֵּבֶל וְכִנּוֹר)

David is speaking of his **lyre** and **harp** as if they were living things that could wake up from sleep. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will start making music with my lyre and harp]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **Let me awaken the dawn**
UST I will begin the day by praising you
(אָעִירָה שָׁחַר)

David is speaking of the **dawn** as if it were a living thing that he could **awaken**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will play them before the sun comes up]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my glory | I |
| lyre | lyre |
| and harp | my harp and |

# Psalms 57:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will thank you, Lord, among the peoples; I will make music to you among the nations.* | *I will sing songs to praise you, Lord, so that people of other nations can find out about you.* |

**ULT I will thank you, Lord, among the peoples; I will make music to you among the nations**

UST I will sing songs to praise you, Lord, so that people of other nations can find out about you

(אוֹדְךָ בָעַמִּים ׀ אֲדֹנָי אֲזַמֶּרְךָ בַּל־אֻמִּים)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [I will sing praises to you, Lord, among the peoples of other nations]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Lord | Lord |
| the nations | of other nations |

# Psalms 57:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For your covenant faithfulness {is} great to the heavens, and your truth to the clouds.* | *You deserve this praise because your kindness and loyalty are much greater than anything on earth, just as the clouds in the sky are much higher than anything on earth.* |

ULT **For**
UST You deserve this praise because
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces more detailed information about the reasons David has for singing the Lord's praises. Use a connecting word or phrase in your language that will make this clear. It may not be necessary to represent this word explicitly in your translation. Alternate translation: [I will do this because]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **your covenant faithfulness {is} great to the heavens, and your truth to the clouds**
UST your kindness and loyalty are much greater than anything on earth, just as the clouds in the sky are much higher than anything on earth
(גָּדֹל עַד־שָׁמַיִם חַסְדֶּךָ וְעַד־שְׁחָקִים אֲמִתֶּךָ)

David is speaking of God's **covenant faithfulness** and **truth** as if they were physical things that could extend from the earth to the **clouds** and the **heavens**. He means that these qualities of God are immeasurably great. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. The UST models one way to do that.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **your covenant faithfulness {is} great to the heavens**
UST your kindness … are much greater than anything on earth … in the sky are much higher than anything on earth
(גָּדֹל עַד־שָׁמַיִם חַסְדֶּךָ)

David is using **is great to** as a common expression of his culture to mean "is as high as." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your covenant faithfulness reaches to the heavens] or [your covenant faithfulness is as high as the sky]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **your covenant faithfulness … and your truth to the clouds**
UST your kindness and loyalty are … than anything on earth, just as the clouds … are … than anything on earth
(חַסְדֶּךָ וְעַד־שְׁחָקִים אֲמִתֶּךָ)

See how you translated the abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant faithfulness** and **truth** in verse 3.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and your truth to the clouds**
UST and loyalty are … than anything on earth, just as the clouds … are … than anything on earth
(וְעַד־שְׁחָקִים אֲמִתֶּךָ)

David 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 your truth is great to the clouds] or [and your truth is as high as the clouds]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your covenant faithfulness | your kindness |
| the heavens | in the sky |

# Psalms 57:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Be high above the heavens, God, {may} your glory {be} above all of the earth.* | *May you have the most glory, God, of anyone in heaven or on earth!* |

ULT **{ … Be high above the heavens, God, may} your glory {be} above all of the earth**
UST May you have the most glory, God, of anyone in heaven or on earth
(רוּמָה עַל־שָׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים עַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדֶךָ)

This is the second instance of the refrain in this psalm. We recommend that you show this to your readers by translating the phrases here the same way that you translated them in the first occurrence of this refrain in 57:5.

**Support Reference:** Poetry

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the heavens | heaven |
| God | God |
| {may} your glory | glory |

# Psalms 58

## Psalm 58 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 58 is a wisdom psalm that describes the difference between how righteous people and wicked people live and the difference between what happens to them. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Introduction: rebuke of wicked judges (1–2)
2. Description of wicked people (3–5)
3. Prayer that God will punish the wicked (6–8)
4. Assertion that God will punish the wicked and reward the righteous (9–11)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a "miktam." See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

# Psalms 58:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; “May You Not Destroy.” Of David; a miktam.* | *Here is a note to the worship leader: The tune is “Do Not Destroy.” David wrote this song.* |

**ULT For the chief musician**
UST Here is a note to the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

See how you translated the term “chief musician” in the superscription to Psalm 4.
Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**ULT a miktam**
UST this song
(מִכְתָּם)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **miktam**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May You … Destroy | Do … Destroy |
| Of David | David wrote |

# Psalms 58:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Truly {in} silence do you speak righteousness? Do you judge uprightly, sons of man?* | *You {judges} should not think that you can ensure justice if you do not speak out {to condemn wickedness}. You are not judging cases fairly, and that shows that you are acting only as humans{, not as God's representatives}.* |

ULT **Truly {in} silence do you speak righteousness? Do you judge uprightly, sons of man**
UST You {judges} should not think that you can ensure justice if you do not speak out {to condemn wickedness}. You are not judging cases fairly, and that shows that you are acting only as humans{, not as God's representatives … }
(הַאֻמְנָם אֵלֶם צֶדֶק תְּדַבֵּרוּן מֵישָׁרִים תִּשְׁפְּטוּ בְּנֵי אָדָם)

David 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: [Truly in silence you do not speak righteousness! You do not judge uprightly, sons of man!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **righteousness**
UST justice
(צֶדֶק)

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: [what is right]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **sons of man**
UST and that shows that you are acting only as humans{, not as God's representatives}
(בְּנֵי אָדָם)

David is using **sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "human beings." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [human beings]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Truly | You {judges} should not think that |
| righteousness | justice |
| Do you judge | You are not judging cases |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| uprightly | fairly |

# Psalms 58:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *No, in the heart you do wickedness. Your hands weigh out violence on the earth.* | *In fact, you keep thinking about doing things that are wrong. The decisions that you make encourage people to commit violent crimes.* |

ULT **in the heart**
UST you keep thinking about
(בְּלֵבָב)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts and intentions exist. The psalmist means that they are planning and deciding to do wickedness. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in your thoughts] or [inwardly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **wickedness**
UST things that are wrong
(עוֹלָה)

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] or [evil]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Your hands weigh out violence**
UST The decisions that you make encourage … to commit violent crimes
(חֲמַס יְדֵיכֶם תְּפַלְּסוּן)

Here, **hands** represents the actions of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You intentionally commit violent acts]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **violence**
UST encourage … to commit violent crimes
(חֲמַס)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **violence**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [violent acts] or [violent deeds]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| wickedness | things that are wrong |
| on the earth | people |

# Psalms 58:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The wicked turn aside from the womb; they stray from the belly, speaking falsehood.* | *Wicked people do wrong things and tell lies from the time when they are born.* |

ULT **The wicked**
UST Wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist 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: [Those who act wickedly]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **turn aside from the womb**
UST do wrong things … from the time when they are born
(זָרוּ & מֵרֶחֶם)

The psalmist is using **turn aside from the womb** as a common expression to mean "go astray from birth." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [go astray from birth] or [are wicked from the day they are born]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **they stray from the belly**
UST do wrong things … from the time when they are born
(תָּעוּ מִבֶּטֶן)

The psalmist is using **stray from the belly** as a common expression of the culture to mean "go astray from birth." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they err from birth] or [they go astray from the day they are born]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **The wicked turn aside from the womb; they stray from the belly, speaking falsehood**
UST Wicked people do wrong things and tell lies from the time when they are born
(זָרוּ רְשָׁעִים מֵרֶחֶם תָּעוּ מִבֶּטֶן דִּבְּרֵי כָזָב)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [The wicked turn aside from the womb, indeed, they stray from the belly, speaking falsehood.]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **speaking falsehood**
UST and tell lies
(דִּבְּרֵי כָזָב)

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: [speaking lies] or [saying things that are false]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The wicked | Wicked people |
| from the womb | from the time when they are born |
| falsehood | lies |

# Psalms 58:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The poison to them {is} like the likeness of the poison of a serpent. {They are} like a deaf adder {that} shuts its ears,* | *Wicked people harm other people just as poisonous snakes harm people. They do not pay attention to God's commandments, as if they were cobras that refused to listen* |

ULT **The poison to them {is} like the likeness of the poison of a serpent**
UST Wicked people harm other people just as poisonous snakes harm people
(חֲמַת־לָ֭מוֹ כִּדְמ֣וּת חֲמַת־נָ֑חָשׁ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the poison of a serpent** is harmful and deadly, so is the speech or nature of the wicked. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [Their words are as harmful as serpent venom] or [They are as poisonous as a serpent]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **{They are} like a deaf adder**
UST They do not pay attention to God's commandments, as if they were cobras that refused to listen
(כְּמ֣וֹ־פֶ֭תֶן חֵ֣רֵ֑שׁ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a deaf adder** does not listen, so the wicked do not listen to correction. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [They are as unheeding as a deaf adder]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **{They are} like**
UST as if they were
(כְּמ֣וֹ)

The psalmist 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 wicked people are like]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **{that} shuts its ears**
UST They do not pay attention to God's commandments … that refused to listen
(יַאֲטֵם אָזְנוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of the wicked as if they were snakes that could **shut** their **ears**. He means that they willfully refuse to listen. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that refuses to listen] or [that will not listen]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {is} like the likeness of | just as |
| a serpent | snakes |

# Psalms 58:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *that does not listen to the voice of charmers, one charming charms, being made wise.* | *and so did not respond to the music that snake charmers were playing. Even the most skillful charmer could not get them to respond to music.* |

**ULT to the voice of charmers**
**UST** to the music that snake charmers were playing
(לְקוֹל מְלַחֲשִׁים)

The psalmist is using **the voice of charmers** as a common expression of the culture to mean "the music or incantations of snake charmers." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to the music of snake charmers] or [to the incantations of those who charm snakes]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT one charming charms**
**UST** charmer could not get them to respond to music
(חוֹבֵר חָבֶר)

The psalmist 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 another way of saying this. Alternate translation: [one who is charming them expertly] or [one who skillfully charms]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

**ULT being made wise**
**UST** Even the most skillful
(מֻחָכָם)

The expression **being made wise** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [a skilled charmer] or [an expert charmer]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| being made wise | Even the most skillful |

# Psalms 58:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God, break their teeth in their mouth! Break out the fangs of the young lions, Yahweh!* | *Yahweh my God, wicked people are as dangerous as young lions, but destroy them as if you were breaking the large teeth of such lions.* |

ULT **God, break their teeth in their mouth! Break out the fangs of the young lions, Yahweh**

UST Yahweh my God, wicked people are as dangerous as young lions, but destroy them as if you were breaking the large teeth of such lions

(אֱלֹהִים הֲרָס־שִׁנֵּימוֹ בְּפִימוֹ מַלְתְּעוֹת כְּפִירִים נְתָץ ׀ יְהוָה)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [God, break their teeth in their mouth; indeed, break out the fangs of the young lions, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **God, break their teeth in their mouth! Break out the fangs of the young lions, Yahweh**

UST Yahweh my God, wicked people are as dangerous as young lions, but destroy them as if you were breaking the large teeth of such lions

(אֱלֹהִים הֲרָס־שִׁנֵּימוֹ בְּפִימוֹ מַלְתְּעוֹת כְּפִירִים נְתָץ ׀ יְהוָה)

The psalmist is speaking of the wicked people as if they were dangerous animals with **teeth** and **fangs** that could harm others. He is asking God to destroy their power to harm people, as if God were breaking the teeth of dangerous animals. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [God, destroy the power of the wicked! Take away their ability to harm people, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **break their teeth**
UST but destroy them as if you were breaking the large teeth of
(הֲרָס־שִׁנֵּימוֹ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a request rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates a request. Alternate translation: [I ask you to break their teeth] or [please break their teeth]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Break out the fangs of**
UST but destroy them as if you were breaking the large teeth of
(מַלְתְּעוֹת & נְתָץ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a request rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates a request. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “Please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please break out the fangs of]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | Yahweh my God |
| the young lions | wicked people are as dangerous as young lions … such lions |
| Yahweh | Yahweh my God |

# Psalms 58:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May they be melted like waters {that} run off to them. {When} he treads his arrows, {may they be} as if they are cut off.* | *Make them disappear like water that flows away. When they try to harm people as if they were shooting arrows at them, keep them from hurting those people, as if those arrows had no heads!* |

ULT **May they be melted**
UST Make them disappear
(יִמָּאֲסוּ)

The expression **May they be melted** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [May God melt them] or [May Yahweh cause them to melt]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **like waters {that} run off**
UST like water that flows away
(כְּמוֹ־מַ֥יִם יִתְהַלָּכוּ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **waters that run off** quickly disappear, so the psalmist wants his enemies to disappear. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [like waters that vanish from sight]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **{When} he treads his arrows**
UST When they try to harm people as if they were shooting arrows at them
(יִדְרֹךְ֥ חִצָּ֑יו)

The psalmist 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 the wicked person treads his arrows] or [When each wicked person treads his arrows]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **{When} he treads his arrows**
UST When they try to harm people as if they were shooting arrows at them
(יִדְרֹךְ֥ חִצָּ֑יו)

Here, **treads** represents "shoots." Ancient archers would step on their bows in order to bend them so that they could string them. David means "when he steps on his bow to string it and then shoots arrows from it." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [When he launches his arrows] or [When he shoots his arrows]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **{may they be} as if they are cut off**
UST keep them from hurting those people, as if those arrows had no heads
(כְּמֹ֖ו יִתְמֹלָֽלוּ)

The point of this comparison is that just as something that is **cut off** or blunted is ineffective, so the wicked person's **arrows** would be ineffective. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [may they be as if they were blunted] or [may they be as if they had no points]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **they are cut off**
UST those arrows had no heads
(יִתְמֹלָֽלוּ)

The expression **they are cut off** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh cuts them off] or [they break off]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

# Psalms 58:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{May they be} like a snail {that} melts; it goes away. {May they be like} the miscarriage of a woman; they do not see the sun.* | *May they be like a snail that dissolves as it moves along. May they be like a baby that never lives on earth because it dies before its mother gives birth to it.* |

ULT **{May they be} like a snail {that} melts**
UST May they be like a snail that dissolves
(כְּמוֹ שַׁבְּלוּל תֶּמֶס)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a snail that melts** dissolves and disappears as it moves along, so the psalmist desires that his enemies would perish and vanish. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [May they be like a snail that liquifies and disappears]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **{May they be} like**
UST May they be like
(כְּמוֹ)

The psalmist 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 they be destroyed like] or [May they perish like]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **{May they be like} the miscarriage of a woman**
UST May they be like a baby … it dies before its mother gives birth to it
(נֵפֶל אֵשֶׁת)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the miscarriage of a woman** never sees the light of day, so David's enemies will never see **the sun**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [May they be like a stillborn baby which never experiences life]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **{May they be like} the miscarriage of**
UST May they be like a baby … it dies before … gives birth to it
(נֵפֶל)

The psalmist is referring to a stillborn child in a polite way by using the term **miscarriage**. Depending on what is helpful for your readers, you could use a polite way of referring to this in your language, or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [May they be like a stillborn baby] or [May they be like a child who dies at birth]

**Support Reference:** Euphemism

# Psalms 58:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Before your pots perceive the thorn, like the living, like the burning, he will whirlwind it away.* | *God will punish and destroy them as powerfully as if a whirlwind were carrying them away. He will do that more quickly than thorns can catch fire and heat a pot, even if the thorns are dry, not fresh.* |

ULT **Before your pots perceive the thorn**
UST He will do that more quickly than thorns can catch fire and heat a pot
(בְּטֶרֶם יָבִינוּ סִירֹתֵיכֶם אָטָד)

The psalmist is using **Before your pots perceive the thorn** as a common expression of the culture to mean "very swiftly" or "before something can even begin." The image refers to using thorns as quick-burning fuel to heat cooking pots, and the expression means that something will happen before the cooking process can even start. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [In an instant] or [More swiftly than you can imagine]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **like the living, like the burning**
UST even if the thorns are dry, not fresh
(כְּמוֹ־חַי כְּמוֹ־חָרוֹן)

The psalmist is speaking of the thorns as if they could be **the living** or **the burning** (that is, either green or dry). If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [whether green or dry]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the burning**
UST even if the thorns are dry
(חָרוֹן)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **burning**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what burns easily]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **he will whirlwind it away**
UST God will punish and destroy them as powerfully as if a whirlwind were carrying them away
(יְשַׂעֲרֶנּוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of God's judgment as if it were a powerful **whirlwind** that sweeps things away. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he will sweep it away with great force] or [he will lift it from sight with a strong wind]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| perceive | can catch fire and heat |
| the thorn | thorns |

# Psalms 58:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The righteous will rejoice when he sees vengeance. He will wash his feet in the blood of the wicked.* | *Righteous people will celebrate when they see God punish wicked people. It will be as if wicked people were an army that God destroyed and righteous people were walking triumphantly through the battlefield afterwards.* |

ULT **The righteous**
UST Righteous people
(צַדִּיק)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [Righteous people] or [Those who are righteous]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **vengeance**
UST God punish wicked people
(נָקָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **vengeance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [God punish the wicked] or [the wicked being punished]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **He will wash his feet in the blood of the wicked**
UST It will be as if wicked people were an army that God destroyed and righteous people were walking triumphantly through the battlefield afterwards
(פְּעָמָיו יִרְחַץ בְּדַם הָרָשָׁע)

David is speaking of the righteous person as if he were a warrior who could **wash his feet in the blood** that covered a battlefield after defeating enemies. This image expresses the idea of complete victory. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He will triumph completely over the wicked] or [He will celebrate total victory over the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **when he sees vengeance**
UST when they see God punish wicked people
(כִּי־חָזָה נָקָם)

By **when he sees vengeance**, the psalmist means when he sees God punish the wicked. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [when he sees God take vengeance on the wicked] or [when he sees God punish those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the wicked**
UST It will be as if wicked people were an army that God destroyed and righteous people were walking triumphantly through the battlefield afterwards
(הָרָשָׁע)

The psalmist 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] or [those who act wickedly]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The righteous | Righteous people |
| will rejoice | will celebrate |
| vengeance | God punish wicked people |
| the wicked | It will be as if wicked people were an army that God destroyed and righteous people were walking triumphantly through the battlefield afterwards |

# Psalms 58:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then man will say, "Truly, fruit {is} to the righteous. Truly, there is a God judging the earth."* | *Then people will say, "It is true that there is a reward for righteous people! It is true that God judges fairly the people who live on the earth!"* |

**ULT Then man will say**
**UST** Then people will say
(וְיֹאמַר אָדָם)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Then someone will say]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**ULT fruit {is} to the righteous**
**UST** there is a reward for righteous people
(פְּרִי לַצַּדִּיק)

The psalmist is using **fruit is to the righteous** as a common expression of the culture to mean "there is a reward for the righteous." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the righteous have a reward] or [the righteous are rewarded]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT fruit**
**UST** there is a reward
(פְּרִי)

The psalmist is speaking of the reward or outcome that righteous people receive as if it were **fruit** such as that which a tree produces. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [benefit]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{is} to the righteous**
UST for righteous people
(לַצַּדִּֽיק)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [is to those who act righteously] or [comes to people who are righteous]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **a God judging the earth**
UST God judges fairly the people who live on the earth
(אֱלֹהִ֥ים שֹׁפְטִ֗ים בָּאָֽרֶץ)

The implication is that God actively judges the earth in contrast to the unjust judges mentioned earlier in the psalm. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [a God who actively judges the earth] or [a God who really does judge the earth]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Truly | It is true that |
| fruit | there is a reward |
| {is} to the righteous | for righteous people |
| a God | God |
| judging | judges fairly |
| the earth | the people who live on the earth |

# Psalms 59

## Psalm 59 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 59 is a psalm of supplication or lament. It includes all the basic elements of that type of psalm. (Some elements are repeated.) See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Cry for help (1–2)
2. Description of troubles (3–4)
3. Petition (5)
4. Refrain (6)
5. Description of troubles (7)
6. Statement of trust (8–10)
7. Petition (11–13)
8. Refrain (14–15)
9. Vow of praise (16–17)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a “miktam.” See the discussion of that term in the introduction to Psalms.

As its superscription indicates, the background to this psalm is an episode related in 1 Samuel 19:8–12 in which King Saul sent men to watch David’s house so that they could kill him when he left it. It may be helpful to read that episode before translating this psalm.

# Psalms 59:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; “May You Not Destroy.” Of David; a miktam. When Saul sent and they watched the house to kill him.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: David wrote this song when Saul sent men to watch his house so that they could kill him {when he left it}. The tune is “Do Not Destroy.”* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

See how you translated the term “chief musician” in the superscription to Psalm 4. Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **a miktam**
UST this song
(מִכְתָּם)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **miktam**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **When Saul sent and they watched the house to kill him**
UST when Saul sent men to watch his house so that they could kill him {when he left it}
(בִּשְׁלַח שָׁאוּל וַיִּשְׁמְרוּ אֶת־הַבַּיִת לַהֲמִיתוֹ)

The implication is that Saul sent men to watch David’s house in order to kill him, as recorded in 1 Samuel 19:11. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [When Saul sent men to watch David’s house to kill him]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May You … Destroy | The tune is “Do … Destroy |
| Of David | David wrote |
| Saul | Saul |
| the house | his house |
| to kill him | so that they could kill him {when he left it} |

# Psalms 59:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Deliver me from my enemies, my God! Set me on high, away from the ones rising up against me.* | *My God, please rescue me from my enemies! Protect me from those who want to attack me!* |

> ULT **Set me on high**
> UST Protect me
> (תְּשַׂגְּבֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates an urgent request to God rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates an urgent request. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please set me on high] or [I beg you to set me on high]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

> ULT **Set me on high**
> UST Protect me
> (תְּשַׂגְּבֵנִי)

David is speaking of protection as if Yahweh could **Set** him **on high** in an unreachable place above his enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Keep me safe from them] or [Put me beyond their reach]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **away from the ones rising up against me**
> UST from those who want to attack me
> (מִמִּתְקוֹמְמָי)

The pronoun **ones** refers to David’s enemies. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [away from the enemies rising up against me]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Deliver me | please rescue me |
| from my enemies | from my enemies |
| my God | My God |

# Psalms 59:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Deliver me from workers of iniquity, and save me from men of blood.* | *Rescue me from wicked men who are trying to kill me!* |

ULT **Deliver me**
UST Rescue me
(הַצִּילֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please deliver me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **from workers of iniquity**
UST wicked … who are trying
(מִפֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן)

David is using the possessive form to describe **workers** who are characterized by **iniquity**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from people who do wicked things] or [from those who practice evil]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **from workers of iniquity**
UST wicked … who are trying
(מִפֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן)

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: [from people who do evil things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **save me**
UST Rescue me
(הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates an urgent request rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates an urgent request. It may be helpful to add an expression such as "please" to make this clear. Alternate translation: [please save me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **and save me from men of blood**
UST Rescue me from … men … to kill me
(וּמֵאַנְשֵׁי דָמִים הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **men** who are characterized by **blood**. This refers to people who are violent or who commit murder. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and save me from violent men] or [and save me from murderers]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **and save me from men of blood**
UST Rescue me from … men … to kill me
(וּמֵאַנְשֵׁי דָמִים הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי)

Here, **blood** represents violence and murder. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and save me from violent men] or [and save me from murderous men]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Deliver me | Rescue me |
| iniquity | wicked |
| save me | Rescue me |

# Psalms 59:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For behold, they lie in wait for my life; the mighty gather against me. Not {for} my transgression and not {for} my sin, Yahweh,* | *Look! They are hiding and waiting for a chance to kill me! Fierce men have gathered to harm me. Yahweh, they are doing that even though I have not done anything that is wrong!* |

ULT **behold**
UST Look
(הִנֵּה)

The psalmist is using **behold** as a common expression to draw the reader's attention to what he is about to say. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [notice] or [see]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **for my life**
UST to kill me
(לְנַפְשִׁי)

Here, **life** represents the whole person as the target of an attack. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to attack me] or [to murder me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the mighty**
UST Fierce men
(עַזִּים)

David 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 men] or [very strong men]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **Not {for} my transgression and not {for} my sin**
UST they are doing that even though I have not done anything that is wrong
(לֹא־פִשְׁעִי וְלֹא־חַטָּאתִי)

David 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: [They gather against me not for my transgression and not for my sin] or [This is happening not for my transgression and not for my sin]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **{for} my transgression**
UST I have … done anything that is wrong
(פִּשְׁעִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **transgression**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [because I transgressed against you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{for} my sin**
UST I have … done anything that is wrong
(חַטָּאתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **sin**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [because I have sinned]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the mighty | Fierce men |
| gather | have gathered |
| {for} my transgression | I have … done anything that is wrong |
| {for} my sin | I have … done anything that is wrong |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 59:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *without iniquity, they run and prepare themselves. Awake to meet me, and see!* | *I have not committed any sin, but they are hurrying to get ready to attack me. Please consider my situation and come quickly to help me.* |

**ULT without iniquity**
**UST** I have not committed any sin
(בְּלִי־עָוֹן)

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: [though I have done nothing wrong]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Awake to meet me**
**UST** and come quickly to help me
(עוּרָה לִקְרָאתִי)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were asleep and needed to **Awake**. David means that he wants Yahweh to take action and help him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture or you could express this meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Come to meet me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Awake**
**UST** and come quickly
(עוּרָה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. Use a form in your language that would be used to make a polite request. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please awaken]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **and see**
UST Please consider my situation
(וּרְאֵה)

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: [and please look at my situation]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| iniquity | I have … committed any sin |

# Psalms 59:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *So you, Yahweh, God of armies, the God of Israel, wake up to punish all of the nations! Do not be gracious {to} any treacherous workers of iniquity. Selah* | *Yahweh, you are the God who commands the heavenly armies. You are the God whom we Israelites worship. So I ask you to take action and punish all the people who do not honor you. Do not act mercifully toward those wicked people who have acted treacherously toward me. Selah* |

ULT **God of armies**
UST are the God who commands the heavenly armies
(אֱלֹהִים ׀ צְבָאוֹת)

The expression **God of armies** refers to Yahweh as the commander of the heavenly armies, meaning the angelic hosts. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [God who rules over the angelic hosts]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the God of Israel**
UST You are the God whom we Israelites worship
(אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist is not using this possessive form **the God of Israel** to indicate that the Israelites possess or control God. Rather the psalmist is using these words to indicate that God is the one whom Israel worships. Alternate translation: [who is the God whom Israel worships]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **wake up to punish**
UST So I ask you to take action and punish
(הָקִיצָה לִפְקֹד)

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: [please arise to punish] or [I beg you to arise and punish]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **wake up**
UST So I ask you to take action
(הָקִיצָה)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were asleep and needed to **wake up**. He means that he wants Yahweh to begin to intervene and punish the nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [come and act]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **all of the nations**
UST all the people who do not honor you
(כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם)

David says **all of the nations** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [the hostile nations] or [these enemy nations]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **Do not be gracious**
UST Do not act mercifully toward
(אַל־תָּחֹן)

The word translated as **Do not be gracious** is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please do not show favor] or [I beg you not to be gracious]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **treacherous workers of iniquity**
UST wicked people who have acted treacherously toward me
(בֹּגְדֵי אָוֶן)

David is using the possessive form to describe **workers** who are characterized by **iniquity**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [people who are treacherous and who do wicked things] or [treacherous people who do evil]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **Selah**
UST Selah
(סֶלָה)

The word **Selah** is a Hebrew word. You will need to decide if you will use this word in its Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew word, you could spell it the way it sounds in your language and then put the translation in a footnote.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| God of armies | are the God who commands the heavenly armies |
| God | are the God |
| the God of | You are the God whom … worship |
| Israel | we Israelites |
| to punish | and punish |
| the nations | the people who do not honor you |
| be gracious | Do … act mercifully toward |
| iniquity | wicked people |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 59:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They return at evening, they growl like a dog and go around the city.* | *They are like wild dogs that come out in {the cool of} the evening and growl as they roam around this city {looking for scraps of food}.* |

**ULT They return**
**UST** that come out
(יָשֻׁובוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to the enemies introduced in verses 1–3. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The psalmist's enemies return]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT they growl like a dog**
**UST** They are like wild dogs … and growl
(יְהֻמּוּ כַכֶּלֶב)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a dog** is threatening and aggressive, so are the psalmist's enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [they make threatening sounds] or [they snarl aggressively]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT and go around the city**
**UST** as they roam around this city {looking for scraps of food}
(וְיסֹובְבוּ עִיר)

By **go around the city**, the psalmist means that David's enemies are roaming around Jerusalem looking for victims. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [roam around the city looking for prey] or [prowl around the city seeking victims]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

# Psalms 59:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Behold, they belch out with their mouth, swords {are} in their lips, for, "Who is hearing?"* | *They make violent threats so loudly that it is as if they are belching. They think, "No one who hears us {will stop us}!"* |

ULT **Behold**
UST They make … threats
(הִנֵּה)

The psalmist is using **Behold** as a common expression to draw attention to what follows. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Look] or [Pay attention]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **they belch out with their mouth**
UST They make … threats so loudly that it is as if they are belching
(יַבִּֽיעוּן בְּפִיהֶם)

The psalmist is using **they belch out with their mouth** as a common expression of the culture to mean that his enemies speak violently or arrogantly. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they speak violent threats] or [they pour out arrogant words]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **swords {are} in their lips**
UST They make violent threats
(חֲרָבוֹת בְּשִׂפְתוֹתֵיהֶם)

The psalmist is speaking of his enemies' words as if they were **swords** that could physically harm people. This image emphasizes how dangerous and hurtful their speech is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [their lips speak harmful words] or [their words are as dangerous as swords]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{are} in their lips**
UST They make … threats
(בְּשִׂפְתוֹתֵיהֶם)

Here, **lips** represents speech. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in their speech] or [in what they say]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Who is hearing**
UST No one who hears us {will stop us}
(מִי שֹׁמֵעַ)

The psalmist's enemies are using the question form for emphasis. They assume that no one hears or cares what they say. 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 is hearing] or [No one hears us!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| swords | violent |

# Psalms 59:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But you, Yahweh, laugh at them. You mock all of the nations.* | *But you mock them, Yahweh. You scoff at people who do not honor you.* |

ULT **But you, Yahweh**
UST But you … Yahweh
(וְאַתָּה יְהוָה)

The psalmist uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between the threats of his enemies and God's response to them. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [You, however, Yahweh] or [You, Yahweh, on the other hand]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **laugh at them**
UST mock them … at
(תִּשְׂחַק־לָמוֹ)

The psalmist is using **laugh at them** as a common expression of the culture to mean "scorn them" or "treat them with contempt." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [ridicule them] or [look upon them with contempt]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **But you, Yahweh, laugh at them. You mock all of the nations**
UST But you mock them, Yahweh. You scoff at people who do not honor you
(וְאַתָּה יְהוָה תִּשְׂחַק־לָמוֹ תִּלְעַג לְכָל־גּוֹיִם)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [But you, Yahweh, laugh at them, indeed, you mock all of the nations]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| You mock | You scoff |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the nations | people who do not honor you |

# Psalms 59:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let me wait for you, his strength, for God {is} my stronghold.* | *Because you, God, are the one who protects me and makes me strong, I will depend on you.* |

ULT **his strength**
UST and makes me strong
(עֻזּוֹ)

The pronoun **his** may refer to God, but some Hebrew manuscripts and many translations understand it as **my**. This would make the psalmist say that God is **my strength**, which fits better with the context where he calls God **my stronghold**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could clarify this. Alternate translation: [my strength] or [you, my strength]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **his strength**
UST and makes me strong
(עֻזּוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [you who are strong] or [you who strengthen me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **God {is} my stronghold**
UST you, God, are the one who protects me
(אֱלֹהִים מִשְׂגַּבִּי)

The psalmist is speaking of God as if he were a **stronghold**, that is, a fortified place of safety. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [God protects me] or [God is my place of safety]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | you, God |
| {is} my stronghold | are the one who protects me |

# Psalms 59:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The God of my covenant faithfulness will meet me. God will make me look upon my enemies.* | *You, God, are faithfully loving to me, and you will come to help me. You will defeat my enemies so that I can look triumphantly at them.* |

**ULT The God of my covenant faithfulness**
**UST** You, God, are faithfully loving to me
(אֱלֹהֵי חַסְדִּי)

David is using the possessive form to describe **the God** who is characterized by **covenant faithfulness** toward him. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [God, who is faithful to his covenant with me] or [God, who keeps his covenant promises to me]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT my covenant faithfulness**
**UST** are faithfully loving to me
(חַסְדִּי)

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: [who is faithfully loyal to me in his covenant] or [who faithfully keeps his covenant with me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT will make me look upon my enemies**
**UST** will defeat my enemies so that I can look triumphantly at them
(יַרְאֵנִי בְשׁוּרָרָי)

The psalmist is using **will make me look upon my enemies** as a common expression of the culture to mean “will cause me to see my enemies defeated” or “will enable me to see my enemies humiliated.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [will let me see my enemies defeated] or [will enable me to see myself humiliating my enemies]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The God of | You, God |
| my covenant faithfulness | are faithfully loving to me |
| God | You |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| upon my enemies | will defeat my enemies … at them |

# Psalms 59:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not slay them, lest my people forget. Scatter them by your power and bring them down, Lord, our shield.* | *But do not kill them {right away}. Otherwise, the Israelite people might forget how you punished them. Instead, use your power to make them wander around helplessly, and then destroy them. Lord, you are like a shield that protects us.* |

ULT **Do not slay them**
UST But do not kill them {right away}
(אַל־תַּהַרְגֵם)

The expression translated as **Do not slay them** is an imperative, but it communicates a request rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates a request. Alternate translation: [Please do not kill them] or [I ask that you not kill them]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **lest my people forget**
UST Otherwise, the Israelite people might forget how you punished them
(פֶּן־יִשְׁכְּחוּ עַמִּי)

David is using the word translated as **lest** to introduce an outcome that he does not want to happen. Because of this, he first gives God an instruction to follow so that this will not happen. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that avoiding this outcome is the purpose of the instruction. Alternate translation: [so that my people will not forget] or [because if you do, my people will forget]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **my people**
UST the Israelite people
(עַמִּי)

Here David is using the pronoun **my** with **people** to refer to the nation of Israel, over whom he reigns as king. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the Israelites] or [the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT Scatter them**
**UST** Instead … to make them wander around helplessly
(הֲנִיעֵמוֹ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a request to God rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates a request to God. It may be helpful to use a word such as "please." Alternate translation: [Please scatter them] or [We ask that you scatter them]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT by your power**
**UST** use your power
(בְּחֵילְךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **power**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [because you are powerful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and bring them down**
**UST** and then destroy them
(וְהוֹרִידֵמוֹ)

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: [please bring them down] or [I ask you to humble them]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT our shield**
**UST** you are like a shield that protects us
(מָגִנֵּנוּ)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **shield** that protects the Israelites. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [our protector]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| slay them | do … kill them {right away} |
| Scatter them | Instead … to make them wander around helplessly |
| by your power | use your power |
| Lord | Lord |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| our shield | you are like a shield that protects us |

# Psalms 59:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{For} the sin of their mouth, the word of their lips, may they be taken in their pride, and for the curse and for the lying they tell.* | *The things that they say are sinful. They curse people falsely. May their pride be like a trap that catches them {and keeps them from doing what they are planning}.* |

ULT **{For} the sin of their mouth**
UST that they say are sinful
(חַטַּאת־פִּימוֹ)

David is using the possessive form to describe a **sin** that is characterized by **their mouth**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the sin characterized by their mouth] or [the sin that comes from their mouth]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **{For} the sin of**
UST are sinful
(חַטַּאת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **sin**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [For what they say that is sinful] or [For the sinful words]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **their mouth, the word of their lips**
UST The things that they say
(פִּימוֹ דְּבַר־שְׂפָתֵימוֹ)

Here the phrases **their mouth** and **their lips** represent what the psalmist's enemies say. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what they say] or [their spoken words]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **may they be taken in their pride**
UST May their pride be like a trap that catches them and keeps them from doing what they are planning
(וְיִלָּכְדוּ בִגְאוֹנָם)

The expression **may they be taken in their pride** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [may their pride trap them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **in their pride**
UST May their pride
(בִגְאוֹנָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **pride**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [because they are proud]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and for the curse**
UST They curse people
(וּמֵאָלָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **the curse**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how they curse people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and for the lying**
UST falsely
(וּמִכְחַשׁ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **lying**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and for the untruthful stories]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {For} the sin of | are sinful |
| in their pride | May their pride |
| and for the curse | They curse people |
| and for the lying | falsely |
| they tell | They curse people |

# Psalms 59:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Consume {them} in wrath; consume {them} that they {may} not {be}, that they may know that God is ruling in Jacob to the ends of the earth. Selah* | *Become angry with them and destroy them so that they do not exist anymore. That way people will know that you, God, rule over the Israelite people and the entire world. Selah* |

**ULT Consume {them} in wrath**
**UST** Become angry with them and destroy them
(כַּלֵּה בְחֵמָה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a request rather than a command for God to destroy his enemies. If the imperative does not communicate a request for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates a request. Alternate translation: [I ask that you consume them in wrath] or [Please consume them in wrath]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Consume {them} in wrath; consume {them … }**
**UST** Become angry with them and destroy them
(כַּלֵּה בְחֵמָה כַּלֵּה)

The psalmist is repeating forms of the verb **Consume** in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [Completely consume them in wrath]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

**ULT in wrath**
**UST** Become angry with them
(בְחֵמָה)

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: [because you are angered] or [wrathfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **that they {may} not {be}**
UST so that they do not exist anymore
(וְאֵינֵמוֹ)

David is using the phrase **that they may not be** to introduce the goal or purpose of consuming his enemies in wrath. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that they will no longer exist] or [in order that they will be destroyed]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **that they may know**
UST That way people will know
(וְיֵדְעוּ)

Here, **that they may know** marks **that God is ruling in Jacob to the ends of the earth** as a further goal or purpose of **Consume them in wrath; consume them that they may not be**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that people may know] or [in order that all may know]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **in Jacob**
UST over the Israelite people
(בְּיַעֲקֹב)

Here, **Jacob** represents the people of Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [over Israel] or [the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to the ends of the earth**
UST and the entire world
(לְאַפְסֵי הָאָרֶץ)

The phrase **to the ends of the earth** was a common expression meaning “everywhere” or “throughout the entire world.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [everywhere] or [throughout the whole world]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Selah**
UST Selah
(סֶלָה)

The word **Selah** is a Hebrew word. You will need to decide if you will use this word in its Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew word, you could spell it the way it sounds in your language and then put the translation in a footnote.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Consume {them} | and destroy them |
| in wrath | Become angry with them |
| that they may know | That way people will know |
| God | you, God |
| is ruling | rule |
| in Jacob | over the Israelite people |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 59:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They return at evening; they growl like a dog and go around the city.* | *They are like wild dogs that come out in {the cool of} the evening and growl as they roam around this city {looking for scraps of food}.* |

**ULT They return at evening**
**UST** that come out in {the cool of} the evening
(וְיָשֻׁובוּ לָעֶרֶב)

This is poetic language. If your language has a way to indicate poetry, you could use it here. Alternate translation: [In the evening they return]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

**ULT they growl like a dog**
**UST** They are like wild dogs … and growl
(יְהֻמּוּ כַכָּלֶב)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a dog** growls when it is threatening or angry, so the psalmist's enemies make threatening sounds. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [they make threatening sounds like an angry dog]

**Support Reference:** Simile

# Psalms 59:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They, they wander around to eat. If they are not full, then they lodge.* | *They roam around searching for food. If they do not get enough to eat, they keep roaming around all night.* |

**ULT They, they wander around**
**UST** They roam around
(הֵמָּה ינועון)

Here the psalmist is stating the pronoun **They** separately, even though the verb translated as **they wander** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize the contrast between him and his enemies. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT If they are not full, then they lodge**
**UST** If they do not get enough to eat, they keep roaming around all night
(אִם־לֹ֣א יִשְׂבְּע֣וּ וְיָלִ֑ינוּ)

David is speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it is actually true. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, or if your readers might think that what David is saying is uncertain, then you could translate this as a confident statement. Alternate translation: [When they are not full, they lodge]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Factual Conditions

# Psalms 59:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But I, I will sing {about} your strength, and I will sing aloud in the morning {about} your covenant faithfulness! For you are a stronghold to me and a refuge in the day of trouble to me.* | *But as for me, I will sing each morning about how powerful you are. I will sing joyfully about how faithfully loving you are to me. I will sing about how you protect me when I am in danger.* |

ULT **But I, I will sing**
UST But as for me, I will sing
(וַאֲנִי ׀ אָשִׁיר)

Here David is using the pronoun **I** twice for emphasis. He is doing this to contrast his response to God with the actions of his enemies, which he described earlier in the psalm. If a speaker of your language would repeat a pronoun in this way for emphasis, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing this emphasis. Alternate translation: [But as for me, I]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **But I**
UST But as for me
(וַאֲנִי)

David uses the words **But I** here to indicate a strong contrast between the enemies described in the previous verses and himself. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [As for me, however, I] or [In contrast to them, I]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **{about} your strength**
UST about how powerful you are
(עֻזּוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [about how strong you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{about} your covenant faithfulness**
UST about how faithfully loving you are to me
(חַסְדֶּךָ)

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: [about how you are faithful to your covenant] or [about how faithful you are to me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **you are a stronghold to me**
UST how you protect me
(הָיִיתָ מִשְׂגָּב לִי)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **stronghold** that protected him from enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable figure of speech or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you are like a fortified place to me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and a refuge**
UST how you protect
(וּמָנוֹס)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were **a refuge** in which he could find safety from danger. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [and a place of safety]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the day of trouble**
UST when … am in danger
(בְּיוֹם צַר)

David is using **in the day of trouble** as a common expression to mean “when I am in trouble.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when I am in trouble] or [in times of distress]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **in the day of trouble to me**
UST when I am in danger
(בְּיוֹם צַר־לִי)

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: [when I am troubled] or [when I experience troubles]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {about} your strength | about how powerful you are |
| {about} your covenant faithfulness | about how faithfully loving you are to me |
| a stronghold | how you protect |
| and a refuge | how you protect |
| trouble | am in danger |

# Psalms 59:17

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Let me make music to you, my strength, for God {is} my stronghold, the God of my covenant faithfulness.* | *I will praise you, who enables me to be strong, because you, God, protect me and faithfully love me as you promised.* |

ULT **my strength**
UST who enables me to be strong
(עֻזִּי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [you who make me strong] or [you who strengthen me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **God {is} my stronghold**
UST because you, God, protect me
(אֱלֹהִים מִשְׂגַּבִּי)

David is speaking of God as if he were a **stronghold**, a fortified place where David could be protected from his enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [God protects me] or [God keeps me safe from my enemies]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the God of my covenant faithfulness**
UST and faithfully love me as you promised
(אֱלֹהֵי חַסְדִּי)

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 God who is faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my strength | who enables me to be strong |
| God | because you, God |
| {is} my stronghold | protect me |
| the God of | and faithfully love me as you promised |
| my covenant faithfulness | and faithfully love me as you promised |

# Psalms 60

## Psalm 60 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 60 is a psalm of supplication or lament. It includes all the basic elements of that type of psalm except a vow of praise. (Some elements are repeated.) See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Cry for help (1)
2. Description of troubles (2–3)
3. Statement of trust (4–5a)
4. Petition (5b)
5. Statement of trust (6–8)
6. Petition (9–11)
7. Statement of trust (12)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a "miktam." See the discussion of that term in the introduction to Psalms.

As its superscription indicates, the background to this psalm consists of two episodes related in 2 Samuel 8:3–8 and 2 Samuel 8:13–14 in which David was leading the Israelite army to fight against Aramean armies northeast of Israel and his general Joab had to leave and fight against the Edomite army to the south of Israel. It may be helpful to read those episodes before translating this psalm.

# Psalms 60:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on “The Lily.” A testimony. A miktam of David, for teaching. When he fought with Aram Naharaim and with Aram Zobah, and Joab returned and struck Edom in the Valley of Salt, 12, 000.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: The tune is “The Lily.” David wrote this song when he was leading the Israelite army to fight against Aramean armies from Naharaim and Zobah and his general Joab had to leave and fight the Edomites in the Valley of Salt, where he killed 12, 000 of their soldiers. David wanted to testify to the Israelite people so that they would learn from this song {that they should depend on God to help them}.* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

See how you translated the term “chief musician” in the superscription to Psalm 4. Alternate translation: [For the leader of worship music] or [For the music director]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **A testimony**
UST David wanted to testify to the Israelite people
(עֵדֻת)

The superscription to this psalm describes it as a **testimony**. This most likely means that the psalm is presenting the sufferings and defeats of the Israelites to Yahweh as a plea for him to help them on the basis that they are his covenant people. Alternate translation: [An appeal for help]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **A miktam**
UST this song
(מִכְתָּם)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **miktam**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **Aram Naharaim**
UST Aramean armies from Naharaim
(אֲרַם נַהֲרַיִם)

The words **Aram Naharaim** are the name of a place.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **Aram Zobah**
UST Aramean armies from … Zobah
(אֲרַם צוֹבָה)

The words **Aram Zobah** are the name of a place.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **in the Valley of Salt**
UST in the Valley of Salt, where
(בְּגֵיא־מֶלַח)

The phrase **Valley of Salt** is the name of a place.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **12, 000**
UST 12, 000 of their soldiers
(שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר אָלֶף)

The number **12,000** should be translated according to the conventions of your own language and culture. Alternate translation: [twelve thousand]

**Support Reference:** Numbers

ULT **When he fought with Aram Naharaim**
UST when he was leading the Israelite army to fight against Aramean armies from Naharaim
(בְּהַצּוֹתוֹ ׀ אֶת אֲרַם נַהֲרַיִם)

Here the psalmist is providing background information about the historical circumstances in which David wrote this psalm. In your translation, introduce this information in a way that would be natural in your own language and culture.

**Support Reference:** Background Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| A testimony | David wanted to testify to the Israelite people |
| of David | David wrote |
| for teaching | so that they would learn from this song {that they should depend on God to help them} |
| Aram Naharaim | Aramean armies from Naharaim |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Joab | his general Joab |
| Edom | the Edomites |

# Psalms 60:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God, you have rejected us; you have broken through us. You have become angry; restore us!* | *God, you have stopped helping us Israelites! Because you have become angry with us, our enemies have been able to break through our ranks. Please enable us to fight victoriously again!* |

ULT **you have broken through us**
UST our enemies have been able to break through our ranks
(פָּרַצְתָּנוּ)

David is speaking of God as if he had **broken through** the defenses of Israel like an enemy army that is breaching a wall or battle line. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you have allowed our enemies to overcome our defenses] or [you have let our defenses collapse]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **restore us**
UST Please enable us to fight victoriously again
(תְּשׁוֹבֵב לָנוּ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please restore us]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| you have rejected us | you have stopped helping us Israelites |
| restore | Please enable … to fight victoriously again |

# Psalms 60:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have made the earth tremble; you have broken it. Heal its breaches, for it shakes.* | *It is as if you have caused a great earthquake that has split open the ground. Our army is struggling, but please make it strong again.* |

ULT **You have made the earth tremble; you have broken it**
UST It is as if you have caused a great earthquake that has split open the ground
(הִרְעַשְׁתָּה אֶרֶץ פְּצַמְתָּהּ)

David is speaking of the nation of Israel as if it were **the earth** that Yahweh had caused to **tremble** and **broken** as in an earthquake. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You have brought disaster on our nation; you have shattered it]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Heal its breaches**
UST please make it strong again
(רְפָה שִׁבָרֶיהָ)

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: [Please heal its breaches]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Heal its breaches**
UST please make it strong again
(רְפָה שִׁבָרֶיהָ)

David is speaking of the nation of Israel as if it were land that had been damaged by an earthquake and needed to be **healed**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Restore it] or [Repair the damage]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You have made … tremble | It is as if you have caused a great earthquake |
| the earth | It is as if you have caused a great earthquake |
| it shakes | Our army is struggling |

# Psalms 60:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have made your people see the difficult. You have made us drink the wine of staggering.* | *You have caused us Israelites to experience great difficulties. It is as if you have made us drink strong wine that is making us fall down as if we were drunk.* |

**ULT the difficult**
**UST** great difficulties
(קָשֶׁה)

The psalmist is using the adjective **difficult** as a noun to mean difficult things or hardship. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [difficult things] or [hardship]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT You have made us drink the wine of staggering**
**UST** It is as if you have made us drink strong wine that is making us fall down as if we were drunk
(הִשְׁקִיתָ֥נוּ יַ֝יִן תַּרְעֵלָֽה)

The psalmist is speaking of God causing his people to be confused and helpless as if he had **made** them **drink wine** that caused **staggering**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [made us confused and helpless]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the wine of | strong wine |
| staggering | that is making us fall down as if we were drunk |

# Psalms 60:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have given a banner to the ones fearing you, to be displayed from the face of the bow. Selah* | *But you have raised a battle flag for those who honor you. They can rally around it when their enemies attack them. Selah* |

ULT **a banner**
UST a battle flag
(נֵּס)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **a banner** is a military flag used to mark a rallying point where troops assemble for safety and coordination during battle. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [a rallying flag] or [a flag to gather around for safety]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **to the ones fearing you**
UST for those who honor you
(לִירֵאֶיךָ)

The psalmist is using **the ones fearing you** as a common expression of the culture to mean "the ones who worship and honor you with reverence." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those who worship you] or [those who approach you with reverence]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **from the face of the bow**
UST when their enemies attack them
(מִפְּנֵי קָשֶׁט)

The psalmist is using **from the face of** as a common expression of the culture to mean "because of" or "on account of." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [because of the bow] or [on account of the bow]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Selah**
UST Selah
(סֶלָה)

The word **Selah** is a Hebrew word. You will need to decide if you will use this word in its Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew word, you could spell it the way it sounds in your language and then put the translation in a footnote.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| to the ones fearing you | for those who honor you |
| the bow | their enemies attack them |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 60:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *So that your beloved may be delivered, save {us} {with} your right hand and answer me.* | *That way you will rescue the people whom you love. Please answer my prayer and use your power to save us.* |

ULT **your beloved may be delivered**
UST you will rescue the people whom you love
(יֵחָלְצ֣וּן יְדִידֶ֑יךָ)

The expression **may be delivered** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [you, God, may deliver your beloved]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **save {us}**
UST to save us
(הוֹשִׁ֖יעָה)

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: [please save us]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **{with} your right hand**
UST and use your power
(וְ֝מִינְךָ)

Here, **right hand** represents power or strength. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with your might] or [with your strength]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **and answer me**
> UST Please answer my prayer
> (וענבו)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please answer me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

> ULT **and answer me**
> UST Please answer my prayer
> (וענבו)

The pronouns shift from **us** to **me** in this verse. The psalmist is speaking as an individual representative of the people, first using "us" to refer to the collective group, then using "me" to refer to himself as their leader. If it would be helpful in your language, you could clarify this shift. Alternate translation: [answer me, your servant who speaks for your people]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your beloved | the people whom you love |
| may be delivered | you will rescue |
| save {us} | to save us |

# Psalms 60:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God has spoken in his holiness, "I will rejoice; I divide Shechem and measure out the Valley of Succoth.* | *God is holy {and does not lie}, and he has said, "I delight in the territory that I have measured and divided up for you Israelites to live in. That territory includes land on the east side of the Jordan River, where the Valley of Succoth is, and land on the west side of the Jordan River, where Shechem is.* |

ULT **in his holiness**
UST is holy {and does not lie}
(בְּקָדְשׁוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **holiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [by his holy character]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **I will rejoice**
UST I delight in
(אֶעְלֻזָה)

This is the beginning of what God said. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could mark that this is a direct quote of God. Alternate translation: [God has spoken in his holiness, saying, "I will rejoice] or [God has spoken in his holiness, from which he says, "I will rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **I divide Shechem**
UST and divided up for you Israelites to live in … and land on the west side of the Jordan River, where Shechem is
(אֲחַלְּקָה שְׁכֶם)

The implication is that David will divide Shechem as an inheritance among God's people, demonstrating God's sovereignty over the land. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I divide Shechem as an inheritance] or [I apportion Shechem to God's people]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| in his holiness | is holy {and does not lie} |
| I will rejoice | I delight in |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Shechem | and land on the west side of the Jordan River, where Shechem is |
| Succoth | Succoth |

# Psalms 60:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To me {is} Gilead, and to me {is} Manasseh. And Ephraim {is} the protection of my head; Judah, my scepter.* | *I own the region of Gilead {east of the Jordan River}, and I own the territory of Manasseh {west of the Jordan River}. The mighty soldiers of the tribe of Ephraim {who fight to protect Israel} are like my helmet, and I have given Israel a ruler from the tribe of Judah.* |

ULT **And Ephraim {is} the protection of my head**
UST The mighty soldiers of the tribe of Ephraim {who fight to protect Israel} are like my helmet
(וְאֶפְרַיִם מָעֻוז רֹאשִׁי)

David is speaking of **Ephraim** as if it were **the protection of** his **head**, that is, as if the tribe were a helmet that protected him in battle. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [Ephraim protects me like a helmet] or [Ephraim is my military defense]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **And Ephraim**
UST The mighty soldiers of the tribe of Ephraim {who fight to protect Israel}
(וְאֶפְרַיִם)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that while **Ephraim** was the name of one of the sons of Joseph, he and his brother, Manasseh, became patriarchs of two of the twelve tribes of Israel. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [And the tribe of Ephraim]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **my head**
UST my
(רֹאשִׁי)

Here, **head** represents the person himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Judah, my scepter**
UST and I have given Israel a ruler from the tribe of Judah
(יְהוּדָה מְחֹקְקִי)

David is speaking of **Judah** as if it were **my scepter**, the symbol of royal authority. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Judah, the source of my royal authority] or [Judah, the tribe from which my kingship comes]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {is} Gilead | the region of Gilead {east of the Jordan River} |
| {is} Manasseh | the territory of Manasseh {west of the Jordan River} |
| And Ephraim | The mighty soldiers of the tribe of Ephraim {who fight to protect Israel} |
| Judah | from the tribe of Judah |
| my scepter | and I have given Israel a ruler |

# Psalms 60:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Moab is the tub of my washing. Over Edom I throw my sandal. Over me, Philistia, shout triumphantly."* | *The Moabites are my servants, like slaves who wash my feet. I own the land of Edom; it is as if I have thrown my sandal onto it to show that it belongs to me. And you Philistines might shout your battle cry against me{, but I will defeat you}."* |

**ULT Moab is the tub of my washing**
UST The Moabites are my servants, like slaves who wash my feet
(מוֹאָב ׀ סִ֥יר רַחְצִֽי)

David is speaking of **Moab** as if it were **the tub of his washing**, a basin used by a servant to wash his master's feet. This image expresses that Moab has been reduced to servant status under God's authority. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Moab is my servant] or [I will make Moab serve me like a slave]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Over Edom I throw my sandal**
UST I own the land of Edom; it is as if I have thrown my sandal onto it to show that it belongs to me
(עַל־אֱד֣וֹם אַשְׁלִ֣יךְ נַעֲלִ֑י)

Throwing a sandal **over Edom** was a symbolic action by which the psalmist showed that God was claiming ownership and dominion over that nation. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [I claim Edom as my own by throwing my sandal over it]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

**ULT Over me, Philistia, shout triumphantly**
UST And you Philistines might shout your battle cry against me{, but I will defeat you}
(עָלַ֖י פְּלֶ֣שֶׁת הִתְרֹעָֽעִי)

The psalmist is speaking to **Philistia**, which he knows cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about God's power over the Philistines. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about Philistia. Alternate translation: [Philistia will shout triumphantly over me] or [Let Philistia shout triumphantly over me]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

ULT **shout triumphantly**
UST might shout your battle cry
(הִתְרֹעֲעִי)

The psalmist actually means to communicate the opposite of the literal meaning of what he is saying here. If a speaker of your language would not do that, you could translate the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you have nothing to shout about]

**Support Reference:** Irony

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Moab | The Moabites |
| Edom | I own the land of Edom … it |
| my sandal | my sandal |
| Philistia | And you Philistines |

# Psalms 60:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Who will bring me {into} the city of fortification? Who will lead me to Edom?* | *But I still need someone to lead my army to the land of Edom and conquer their {capital} city that has strong walls around it.* |

**ULT Who will bring me {into} the city of fortification**
**UST** But I still need someone … and conquer their {capital} city that has strong walls around it
(מִי יְבַלָּנִי עִיר מָצוֹר)

David is using the question form to express his need for God's help to conquer the fortified city. 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 need someone to bring me into the city of fortification!] or [Only you can bring me into the city of fortification.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT {into} the city of fortification**
**UST** their {capital} city that has strong walls around it
(עִיר מָצוֹר)

The implication is that **the city of fortification** refers to a well-fortified Edomite city, likely Petra or Bozrah. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Edom's fortified capital city]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT Who will lead me to Edom**
**UST** But I still need someone to lead my army to the land of Edom
(מִי נָחָנִי עַד־אֱדוֹם)

David 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: [Only you will lead me to Edom!] or [You alone will lead me to Edom.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| fortification | that has strong walls around it |
| Edom | the land of Edom |

# Psalms 60:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You, God, have you not rejected us? And you do not go out with our armies, God.* | *It seems that you, God, have stopped helping us Israelites. It seems that you do not enable our armies to defeat our enemies when they march out to fight them.* |

ULT **have you not rejected us**
UST It seems that … have stopped helping us Israelites
(הֲלֹא זְנַחְתָּנוּ &)

The psalmist is using the question form to express his complaint to God. 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: [you have rejected us!] or [it seems you have rejected us.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **And you do not go out with our armies**
UST It seems that … do not enable our armies to defeat our enemies when they march out to fight them
(וְלֹא־תֵצֵא & בְּצִבְאוֹתֵינוּ)

The psalmist is using **go out with our armies** as a common expression of the culture to mean “accompany our armies into battle” or “help us fight our enemies.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And you do not accompany our armies into battle] or [And you do not help us fight our enemies]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| have you … rejected us | have stopped helping us Israelites |

# Psalms 60:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Give help against the enemy to us, for the salvation of man {is} futility.* | *Any help that human beings could give us would not be at all sufficient. So we need you to help us to defeat our enemies.* |

ULT **Give help against the enemy to us**
UST So we need you to help us to defeat our enemies
(הָבָה־לָּנוּ עֶזְרַת מִצָּר)

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 to God. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please give us help against the enemy] or [We beg you to give us help against the enemy]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **the salvation of**
UST Any help that … could give us
(תְּשׁוּעַת)

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: [man cannot save us] or [people cannot rescue us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **man**
UST human beings
(אָדָם)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [humankind] or [people]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **for the salvation of man {is} futility**
UST Any help that human beings could give us would not be at all sufficient
(וְשָׁוְא תְּשׁוּעַת אָדָם)

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: [for the salvation of man is useless] or [for the salvation of man cannot help]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the enemy | to defeat our enemies |
| the salvation of | Any help that … could give us |

# Psalms 60:12

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *With God we will do valor, for he, he will trample our adversaries.* | *If you, God, help us defeat our enemies, then we will be able to fight very valiantly.* |

ULT **we will do valor**
UST then we will be able to fight very valiantly
(נַעֲשֶׂה־חָיִל)

The psalmist is using **do valor** as a common expression of the culture to mean "act valiantly" or "accomplish mighty deeds." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [we will act valiantly] or [we will accomplish mighty deeds]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **he will trample our adversaries**
UST help us defeat our enemies
(יָבוּס צָרֵינוּ)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he would literally **trample** Israel's enemies with his feet. He means that Yahweh will decisively defeat them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he will crush our adversaries] or [he will give us complete victory over our adversaries]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **for he, he will trample**
UST If you … help us defeat
(וְהוּא יָבוּס)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **he** twice for emphasis. He is doing this to stress that God alone will defeat the enemies. If a speaker of your language would use a repeated pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing this emphasis. Alternate translation: [he himself will trample our adversaries] or [it is he who will trample our adversaries]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| With God | God |
| valor | very valiantly |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he will trample<br>our adversaries | help us defeat<br>our enemies |

# Psalms 61

## Psalm 61 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 61 is a psalm of trust and petition in which the psalmist calls out to God from a distant place and expresses confidence in God as his protector.

1. Petition: The psalmist cries out for God to hear from far away (1–2)
2. Confidence: God has been a refuge and strong tower (3)
3. Desire: To dwell forever in God's tent and under his wings (4)
4. Assurance: God has heard the psalmist's vows and given an inheritance (5)
5. Prayer for the king: Long life in God's presence, guarded by covenant faithfulness and truth (6–7)
6. Response: Perpetual praise and vow fulfillment (8)

The word "Selah" at the end of verse 4 marks a structural break between the personal petition (1–4) and the assurance and royal prayer (5–8).

### About the Psalm

The superscription attributes this psalm to David and directs it to the music director with stringed instruments. The psalmist speaks as someone far from God's dwelling place ("the end of the earth," verse 2), calling out in a time of emotional weakness. The psalm moves from personal petition to a prayer for "the king" in the third person (verses 6–7), which likely refers to David speaking of himself as king, though some interpreters see a broader reference to the Davidic line.

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### God as refuge and shelter

The psalm uses a series of protection images to describe God: a high rock (verse 2), a refuge (verse 3), a tower of strength (verse 3), a tent (verse 4), and sheltering wings

(verse 4). Translators should be aware that these are distinct metaphors drawn from different areas of Israelite life—geography, military defense, hospitality, and nature—all conveying the idea of safety in God's presence. (See: refuge, refugee, shelter, sheltered)

### Covenant faithfulness and truth

In verse 7, the Hebrew words "hesed" (covenant faithfulness) and "emeth" (truth, faithfulness) appear together as a pair and are personified as guardians who preserve the king. When these two terms appear together, each enriches the other, expressing God's loyal, reliable love. (See: covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, covenant love)

### Vows

Vows (solemn promises made to God) frame the second half of the psalm, appearing in both verse 5 and verse 8. In Israelite worship, a person in distress would make a vow to God, promising praise or offerings in return for deliverance. The psalmist's commitment to fulfill these vows "day by day" reflects ongoing, not one-time, worship. (See: oath, vow, swear, swearing, swear by, sworn)

## Translation Issues

### Person shift: first person to third person

The psalmist speaks in the first person through verses 1–5 ("I call," "my vows") but shifts to the third person in verses 6–7 ("the king," "he," "his years"), then returns to first person in verse 8. This is likely David referring to himself as king, but some languages may need to make the referent explicit to avoid confusion.

# Psalms 61:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on a stringed instrument. Of David.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: A musician playing a stringed instrument should accompany this song. David wrote this song.* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

**For the chief musician** is an instruction about who should lead people in singing or playing music with this psalm. This could refer to the person in charge of music for temple worship. If your readers would not be familiar with this role, you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the worship leader]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **a stringed instrument**
UST A musician playing a stringed instrument should accompany this song
(נְגִינֹת)

**On a stringed instrument** refers to a type of stringed musical instrument used in worship. This may indicate how the psalm was to be accompanied. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of instrument, you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [To be accompanied by stringed instruments] or [With music from stringed instruments]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Of David | David wrote this song |

# Psalms 61:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hear my cry, God; listen {to} my prayer.* | *O God, I am calling to you for help. Please do what I ask.* |

ULT **Hear my cry, God; listen {to} my prayer**
UST O God, I am calling to you for help. Please do what I ask
(שִׁמְעָה אֱלֹהִים רִנָּתִי הַקְשִׁיבָה תְּפִלָּתִי)

These two phrases, **Hear my cry, God** and **listen to my prayer**, mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [God, hear my cry; yes, listen to my prayer]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Hear my cry, God; listen {to} my prayer**
UST O God, I am calling to you for help. Please do what I ask
(שִׁמְעָה אֱלֹהִים רִנָּתִי הַקְשִׁיבָה תְּפִלָּתִי)

These are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than commands. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates a polite request. Alternate translation: [Please hear my cry, God; please listen to my prayer]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **my prayer**
UST what I ask
(תְּפִלָּתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **prayer**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what I pray]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my cry | I am calling to you for help |
| God | O God |
| my prayer | what I ask |

# Psalms 61:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *From the end of the earth I call to you when my heart is faint. Lead me to the rock {that} is higher than me.* | *I am far from home, and I feel sad, so I am calling out to you {for help}. Please keep me safe, as if you had put me on top of a high rock.* |

ULT **From the end of the earth I call to you**
UST I am far from home … so I am calling out to you {for help}
(מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ ׀ אֵלֶיךָ אֶקְרָא)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put the information about where David calls from after the information about calling to God. Alternate translation: [I call to you from the end of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **From the end of the earth**
UST I am far from home
(מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ)

David is using **From the end of the earth** as a common expression to mean from a very distant or remote place. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [From a faraway place] or [From distant lands]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **when my heart is faint**
UST and I feel sad
(בַּעֲטֹף לִבִּי)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts and feelings exist. David is speaking of his emotions as if they were physically weak. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when I am discouraged] or [when I feel weak]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **when my heart is faint**
UST and I feel sad
(בַּעֲטֹף לִבִּי)

The word that the ULT translates as **when** indicates that David calls to God at the same time as **my heart is faint**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could describe the time relationship more explicitly. Alternate translation: [at times when my heart is faint] or [during the times that my heart is faint]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

ULT **to the rock {that} is higher than me**
UST Please keep me safe, as if you had put me on top of a high rock
(בְּצוּר & מִמֶּנִּי תַנְחֵנִי)

David is speaking of God as if God were a high **rock** that David could climb up to reach safety from danger. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [to a place of safety that is like a high rock]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Lead me to the rock**
UST on top of a high rock
(בְּצוּר־יָרוּם)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates a polite request. Alternate translation: [Please lead me to the rock]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| I call | so I am calling out … for help |

# Psalms 61:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you are a refuge to me, a strong tower from the face of the enemy.* | *You protect me. You are like a strong tower into which I can go so that my enemies cannot harm me.* |

ULT **you are a refuge to me, a strong tower from the face of the enemy**
UST You protect me. You are like a strong tower into which I can go so that my enemies cannot harm me
(הָיִיתָ מַחְסֶה לִי מִגְדַּל־עֹז מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב)

The psalmist 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 are a refuge to me, you are a strong tower from the face of the enemy]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **you are a refuge to me, a strong tower from the face of the enemy**
UST You protect me. You are like a strong tower into which I can go so that my enemies cannot harm me
(הָיִיתָ מַחְסֶה לִי מִגְדַּל־עֹז מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [you are a refuge to me, indeed, you are a strong tower from the face of the enemy]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **For you are a refuge to me**
UST You protect me
(כִּי־הָיִיתָ מַחְסֶה לִי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Because you are a refuge to me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **you are a refuge to me**
UST You protect me
(הָיִיתָ מַחְסֶה לִּי)

Here David is speaking as if God were a physical shelter. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you are a place of protection for me] or [you are a place of safety for me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **a strong tower from the face of the enemy**
UST You are like a strong tower into which I can go so that my enemies cannot harm me
(מִגְדַּל־עֹז מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב)

Here David is speaking as if God were a fortified **tower**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a fortress that protects me from the enemy]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **from the face of the enemy**
UST so that my enemies cannot harm me
(מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב)

David is using **from the face of** as a common expression to mean “away from the presence of.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the enemy] or [when the enemy comes]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| a refuge | You protect |
| a … tower | You are like a … tower into which I can go |
| the enemy | my enemies |

# Psalms 61:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let me sojourn in your tent forever! I will take refuge in the shelter of your wings. Selah* | *I wish I could always be a guest in your home! Keep me as safe as a baby bird is under its mother's wings. Selah* |

ULT **Let me sojourn in your tent forever! I will take refuge in the shelter of your wings**
UST I wish I could always be a guest in your home! Keep me as safe as a baby bird is under its mother's wings
(אָגוּרָה בְאָהֳלְךָ עוֹלָמִים אֶחֱסֶה בְסֵתֶר כְּנָפֶיךָ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Let me always live in your presence, taking refuge in the shelter of your wings]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **in your tent**
UST in your home
(בְאָהֳלְךָ)

Here David is speaking as if God's presence and protection were a **tent** where he could stay as a guest. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in your presence] or [with you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the shelter of your wings**
UST under its mother's wings
(בְסֵתֶר כְּנָפֶיךָ)

Here David is speaking as if God were a bird sheltering its young under its **wings**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [under your care] or [in your protection]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **in the shelter of your wings**
> UST under its mother's wings
> (בְּסֵתֶר כְּנָפֶיךָ)

David is using this possessive form to mean the shelter that God's wings provide. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [in the shelter that your wings provide]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let me sojourn | I wish I could … be a guest |
| in your tent | in your home |
| forever | always |
| I will take refuge | Keep me as safe as a baby bird is |
| in the shelter of | under … wings |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 61:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you, God, have listened to my vows. You have given {me} the inheritance of the fearers of your name.* | *God, you know that I have solemnly promised to offer sacrifices to acknowledge you, so please help me. You have given me the blessings that belong to people who honor you.* |

ULT **For you, God, have listened to my vows**
UST God, you know that I have solemnly promised to offer sacrifices to acknowledge you, so please help me
(כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים שָׁמַעְתָּ לִנְדָרָי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Because you, God, have listened to my vows]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **the inheritance of**
UST the blessings that belong to
(יְרֻשַּׁת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **inheritance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what is passed to]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the inheritance of the fearers of your name**
UST the blessings that belong to people who honor you
(יְרֻשַּׁת יִרְאֵי שְׁמֶךָ)

David is using this possessive form to mean the inheritance that belongs to those who fear God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [what you give to those who fear your name]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **your name**
UST you
(שְׁמֶךָ)

Here, **your name** represents God's reputation and character. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [who you are] or [your reputation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| to my vows | that I have solemnly promised to offer sacrifices to acknowledge you |
| the inheritance of | the blessings that belong to |

# Psalms 61:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Days upon days of the king, may you add {to} his years, as generation and generation.* | *Please allow me, the king of Israel, to live and rule for many years. Please allow my descendants to rule also.* |

ULT **Days upon days of**
UST Please allow … to live and rule
(יָמִים עַל־יְמֵי)

The psalmist is using **Days upon days** as a common expression of the culture to mean "many days." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May you add many days to the king's lifetime]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **the king**
UST me, the king of Israel
(מֶֽלֶךְ)

The phrase **the king** refers to David himself, who is speaking of himself in the third person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [me, the king]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **may you add {to} his years**
UST for many years
(תּוֹסִ֣יף שְׁנוֹתָ֑יו)

The pronoun **you** refers to God, while the pronoun **his** refers to the king. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [may you, God, add to the king's years]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **{to} his years**
UST for … years
(שְׁנוֹתָ֑יו)

Here, **his years** represents "his lifetime." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [to his lifetime]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **as generation and generation**
UST Please allow my descendants to rule also
(כְּמוֹ־דֹר וָדֹר)

The point of this comparison is that just as **generation and generation** spans a very long time, so should the king's years be extended. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [as if he would live for many generations]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **generation and generation**
UST Please allow my descendants to rule also
(דֹר וָדֹר)

David is using **to generation and generation** as a common expression of his culture to mean "throughout all generations" or "forever." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [throughout all generations]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the king | me, the king of Israel |
| {to} his years | for … years |
| generation | Please allow my descendants to rule also |
| and generation | Please allow my descendants to rule also |

# Psalms 61:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May he dwell forever to the face of God. Appoint covenant faithfulness and truth; may they preserve him.* | *May I reign for a long time as you watch over me. You are faithful, and you keep your promises, so please protect me.* |

**ULT May he dwell forever**
**UST** May I reign for a long time
(יֵשֵׁב עוֹלָם)

The pronoun **he** refers to the king mentioned in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [May the king dwell forever]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT to the face of God**
**UST** as you watch over me
(לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים)

Here, **to the face of God** represents being in the presence of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in the presence of God] or [before God]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT covenant faithfulness and truth**
**UST** You are faithful, and you keep your promises
(חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת)

The phrase **covenant faithfulness and truth** expresses a single idea. The word **truth** tells more about **covenant faithfulness**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [true covenant faithfulness] or [faithful covenant love]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

ULT **Appoint covenant faithfulness and truth**
UST You are faithful, and you keep your promises, so
(חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת מַן)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please appoint covenant faithfulness and truth]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **covenant faithfulness and truth**
UST You are faithful, and you keep your promises
(חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant faithfulness** and **truth**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [evidences that you are truly faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **covenant faithfulness and truth; may they preserve him**
UST You are faithful, and you keep your promises … please protect me
(חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת & יִנְצְרֻהוּ)

David speaks of **covenant faithfulness and truth** as if they were living things that could **preserve** the king. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [ways to show the king covenant faithfulness and truth so that he is preserved]

**Support Reference:** Personification

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| forever | for a long time |
| God | you |
| Appoint | so |
| covenant faithfulness | you keep your promises |

# Psalms 61:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Thus let me make music {to} your name forever, that I may pay my vows day, day.* | *If you do that, I will always sing songs to praise you, and each day I will offer the sacrifices that I promised to give you.* |

ULT **{to} your name**
UST to praise you
(שִׁמְךָ)

Here, **name** represents God himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [to you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **that I may pay my vows day, day**
UST and each day I will offer the sacrifices that I promised to give you
(לְשַׁלְּמִי נְדָרַי יוֹם ׀ יוֹם)

The phrase **that I may pay my vows** indicates the purpose or goal for which David will make music to God's name. Use a connector in your language that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [in order to pay my vows day after day] or [so that I may pay my vows day after day]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **that I may pay my vows**
UST I will offer the sacrifices that I promised to give you
(לְשַׁלְּמִי נְדָרָי)

David is using **pay my vows** as a common expression to mean "fulfill my vows" or "do what I have vowed to do." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [fulfill my vows] or [do what I have promised]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **day, day**
UST and each day
(יוֹם ו יְוֹם)

David repeats the word **day** to emphasize the idea of continually or constantly. If your language can repeat words for emphasis, it would be appropriate to do that here. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the emphasis. Alternate translation: [day after day] or [continually]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| forever | always |
| my vows | the sacrifices that I promised to give you |

# Psalms 62

## Psalm 62 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 62 is a specific kind of psalm of supplication, a psalm of trust. It is a calm affirmation of reliance on God, with the troubles of the psalmist mostly in the background. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Statement of trust (1–2)
2. Description of opponents (3–4)
3. Statement of trust (5–6)
4. Exhortation to listeners (8–10)
5. Affirmation of God’s power and goodness (11–12)

# Psalms 62:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on Jeduthun. A psalm of David.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: Perform in the style of Jeduthun. David wrote this psalm.* |

**ULT For the chief musician**
**UST** This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**ULT on Jeduthun**
**UST** Perform in the style of Jeduthun
(עַל־יְדוּתוּן)

See how you translated the expression “on Jeduthun” in the superscription to Psalm 39.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm of | this psalm |
| David | David wrote |

# Psalms 62:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Truly toward God my soul {is in} silence. From him {is} my salvation.* | *God is the one who saves me from my enemies, and I am waiting quietly for him to do that.* |

**ULT my soul**
**UST** and I
(נַפְשִׁי)

David is using **my soul** to represent all of himself in the act of waiting silently for God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all of myself]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT From him {is} my salvation**
**UST** who saves me from my enemies
(מִמֶּנּוּ יְשׁוּעָתִי)

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: [He is the one who saves me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Truly | is the one |
| God | God |
| my soul | and I |
| {is} my salvation | who saves me from my enemies |

# Psalms 62:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He alone {is} my rock and my salvation, my stronghold. I will not be greatly shaken.* | *He is the only one who can save me. He protects me as if he were a rock I could climb onto in order to be safe. No one would harm me at all.* |

**ULT {is} my rock**
**UST** He protects me as if he were a rock I could climb onto
(צוּרִי)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **rock** that provided stability and protection. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my foundation] or [my protector]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT my stronghold**
**UST** in order to be safe
(מִשְׂגַּבִּי)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **stronghold**, a fortified place that protects people from danger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my place of safety] or [my protector]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT I will not be greatly shaken**
**UST** No one would harm me at all
(לֹא־אֶמּוֹט רַבָּה)

The expression **I will not be greatly shaken** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Nothing will shake me greatly] or [I will remain stable]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and my salvation | is the … one who can save me |
| my stronghold | in order to be safe |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will … be … shaken | would harm me |

# Psalms 62:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Until when will you shout at a man? You will be smashed, all of you, like a leaning wall, an overthrown fence.* | *My enemies are threatening me, but they will not be able to keep doing that. God will destroy all of them, just as a leaning wall falls down and just as people can push a fence onto the ground.* |

ULT **Until when will you shout at a man**
UST My enemies are threatening me, but they will not be able to keep doing that
(עַד־אָנָה ׀ תְּהוֹתְתוּ עַל אִישׁ)

David is using the question form to express his frustration at his enemies for attacking him. 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: [You have attacked me far too long!] or [Stop attacking me!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **a man**
UST me
(אִישׁ)

Here the masculine term **a man** refers to the psalmist himself. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that makes this clear as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **You will be smashed**
UST God will destroy
(תְּרֻצָּחוּ)

The expression **You will be smashed** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [God will smash you] or [God will crush you]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **like a leaning wall, an overthrown fence**
UST just as a leaning wall falls down and just as people can push a fence onto the ground
(כְּקִ֣יר נָט֣וּי גָּדֵ֑ר הַדְּחוּיָֽה)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a leaning wall** and **an overthrown fence** will collapse, so the psalmist's enemies will be destroyed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and will collapse like a leaning wall or an overthrown fence]

**Support Reference:** Simile

# Psalms 62:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They consult only to cast {him} down from his elevation. They delight {in} a lie; with his mouth, they bless, but in their inside, they curse. Selah* | *My enemies are plotting together to do one thing. They want to remove me from my important position. They enjoy telling lies. They say things to bless people, but in their inner beings, they are cursing those people. Selah* |

ULT **to cast {him} down from his elevation**
UST They want to remove me from my important position
(לְהַדִּיחֹ֗ & מִשְׂגַּבָּתֹו)

The pronoun **him** refers to the psalmist. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [to cast me down from my elevation]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **from his elevation**
UST from my important position
(מִשְׂגַּבָּתֹו)

The psalmist is speaking of the author's honor and status as if it were **his elevation**, a high position from which he could be cast down. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from his honored position] or [from his high status]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **with his mouth**
UST They say things
(בְּפִיו)

David is using one part of a person, 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: [with their words] or [in their speech]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **with his mouth, they bless, but in their inside, they curse**
UST They say things to bless people, but in their inner beings, they are cursing those people
(בְּפִיו יְבָרֵכוּ וּבְקִרְבָּם יְקַלְלוּ)

These two clauses, **with his mouth, they bless** and **in their inside, they curse**, mean basically opposite things. The psalmist is contrasting what his enemies say outwardly with what they feel inwardly. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition and contrast, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both clauses in your translation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make the contrast more explicit. Alternate translation: [they say kind things, but they really wish harm]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **but in their inside**
UST but in their inner beings
(וּבְקִרְבָּם)

Here, **inside** represents their hearts or inner thoughts. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in their hearts] or [in their thoughts]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Selah**
UST Selah
(סֶלָה)

The word **Selah** is a Hebrew word. You will need to decide if you will use this word in its Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew word, you could spell it the way it sounds in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Pause and praise]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| They consult | My enemies are plotting together |
| They delight | They enjoy |
| {in} a lie | telling lies |
| they bless | to bless people |
| they curse | they are cursing those people |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 62:5

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Be silent, my soul, toward God alone, for my hope is from him.* | *Because I am expecting God to help me, I will wait quietly for him alone to do that.* |

ULT **Be silent, my soul**
UST I will wait quietly for him … to do that
(דֳּמִי נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is speaking to **his own soul** as if he were speaking to another person who could hear him. He is doing this to emphasize how strongly he feels about waiting for God alone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to himself or expressing his own determination. Alternate translation: [I shall be silent before God alone] or [I tell myself to wait quietly for God alone]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

ULT **my soul**
UST I
(נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using **my soul** to represent all of himself in the act of waiting for God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I tell myself] or [self]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **my hope**
UST I am expecting … to help me
(תִּקְוָתִי)

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: [what I await] or [what I confidently wait for]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my soul | I |
| toward God | God |
| my hope | I am expecting … to help me |

# Psalms 62:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He alone {is} my rock and my salvation, my stronghold. I will not be shaken.* | *He is the only one who can save me. He protects me as if he were a rock I could climb onto in order to be safe. No one would harm me.* |

**ULT {is} my rock and my salvation, my stronghold**
**UST** who can save me. He protects me as if he were a rock I could climb onto in order to be safe
(צוּרִי וְיִשׁוּעָתִי מִשְׂגַּבִּי)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **rock** and a **stronghold**, solid structures that could protect him from danger. If these images communicate well in your language, please use them. If not, you could express these as comparisons. Alternate translation: [the one who protects me as would a rock and a stronghold]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT I will not be shaken**
**UST** No one would harm me
(לֹא אֶמּוֹט)

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: [Nothing will shake me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and my salvation | who can save me |
| my stronghold | in order to be safe |
| I will … be shaken | would harm me |

# Psalms 62:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In God {is} my salvation and my glory; the rock of my strength, my refuge, {is} in God.* | *God is the one who saves me and honors me. God is like a huge rock to which I can go to be safe. He makes me strong.* |

ULT **{is} my salvation**
UST who saves me
(יְשָׁעִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **salvation**, you could express the same idea in another way, as modeled by the UST.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and my glory**
UST and honors me
(וּכְבוֹדִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and what makes me honored]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the rock of my strength**
UST is like a huge rock … He makes me strong
(צוּר־עֻזִּי)

David is speaking of God as if he were **the rock of** his **strength**, that is, a high rock that he could climb up to reach safety from danger. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [God, who is like a rock that protects me and makes me strong] or [my strong protector]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the rock of my strength**
UST is like a huge rock … He makes me strong
(צוּר־עֻזִּי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the rock that strengthens me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **my refuge**
UST to which I can go to be safe
(מַחְסִי)

David is speaking of God as if he were a **refuge**, a place where he could go to be safe from danger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my place of safety] or [my place of protection]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| {is} my salvation | who saves me |
| and my glory | and honors me |
| my strength | He makes me strong |
| my refuge | to which I can go to be safe |
| {is} in God | God |

# Psalms 62:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Trust in him in every time, people. Pour out your heart to his face. God {is} a refuge for us. Selah* | *You Israelite people should always trust in God. Pray earnestly to him in his presence. He is the one who keeps us safe. Selah* |

**ULT Trust in him in every time, people**
**UST** You Israelite people should always trust in God
(בִּטְחוּ בוֹ בְכָל־עֵת ׀ עָם)

The word translated as **Trust** is an imperative, but it communicates an exhortation rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates an exhortation. Alternate translation: [I urge you to trust in him at all times, people]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Pour out your heart**
**UST** Pray earnestly to him
(שִׁפְכוּ & לִבַּכֶם)

The psalmist is using **Pour out your heart** as a common expression of the culture to mean "express your emotions openly." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Tell him honestly how you feel] or [Share your deepest emotions with him]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT to his face**
**UST** in his presence
(לְפָנָיו)

Here, **to his face** represents being in the presence of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [before him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **{is} a refuge for us**
UST is the one who keeps us safe
(מַחֲסֶה־לָּנוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of God as if he were **a refuge**, a safe place to which people can go to escape danger. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [is a safe place for us] or [is the one who protects us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Selah**
UST Selah
(סֶלָה)

The word **Selah** is a Hebrew word. You will need to decide if you will use this word in its Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew word, you could spell it the way it sounds in your language and then put the translation in a footnote.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Trust | should … trust |
| God | He |
| {is} a refuge | is the one who keeps … safe |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 62:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Surely sons of a human {are} vapor, sons of a man {are} a lie. To go up on the scales, they together {would be lighter} than vapor.* | *Certainly, ordinary people lack the power to help, and important people are not as powerful as they seem. If you put them all on a scale, it would be as if they weighed less than air.* |

ULT **sons of a human {are} vapor, sons of a man {are} a lie**
UST ordinary people lack the power to help, and important people are not as powerful as they seem
(הֶ֤בֶל בְּנֵי־אָ֨דָם֮ כָּזָ֪ב בְּנֵי אִ֫ישׁ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [all people are vapor; indeed, they are a lie]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **sons of a human … sons of a man**
UST ordinary people … and important people
(בְּנֵי־אָ֨דָם֮ & בְּנֵי אִ֫ישׁ)

The psalmist is using **sons of a human** and **sons of a man** as common expressions of the culture to mean "people" or "human beings." If these phrases do not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [people … people] or [human beings … human beings]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **{are} vapor**
UST lack the power to help
(הֶ֤בֶל)

The psalmist is speaking of people as if they were **vapor**. He means that people are transient and insubstantial. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [are fleeting] or [have no substance]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{are} a lie**
UST are not as powerful as they seem
(כְּזָב)

When the psalmist says that people **are a lie**, he means that humans are deceptive in appearance and cannot be relied upon. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [are unreliable] or [are deceptive]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **they together {would be lighter} than vapor**
UST them all … it would be as if they weighed less than air
(הֶ֭בֶל יַחַד)

The psalmist says **they together would be lighter than vapor** as an extreme statement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [together they would weigh almost nothing] or [all of them together have no weight at all]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {are} a lie | are not as powerful as they seem |
| together | all |

# Psalms 62:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not trust in oppression, and do not hope vainly in robbery. Wealth, if it increases, do not set the heart.* | *It is foolish to expect to get rich by cheating other people or by stealing from them. If you become wealthy, do not rely on your money.* |

ULT **in oppression**
UST by cheating other people
(בָּעֹשֶׁק)

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: [in oppressing others]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and … in robbery**
UST or by stealing from them
(וּבְגָזֶל)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **robbery**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [by robbing people] or [in what you rob from others]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Wealth**
UST you become wealthy
(חַיִל)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **Wealth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Should you become wealthy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **do not set the heart**
UST do not rely on your money
(אַל־תָּשִׁיתוּ לֵב)

Here, **heart** represents a person's desires and focus of attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [do not fix your desires on it] or [do not focus your attention on it]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Do … trust | to expect to get rich |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| do … hope vainly | It is foolish |
| and … in robbery | or by stealing from them |
| Wealth | you become wealthy |

# Psalms 62:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Once God has spoken, twice I have heard this, that power {is} to God.* | *God has said very reliably that he is the one who truly has power.* |

**ULT Once … twice**
**UST** very reliably
(אַחַת & שְׁתַּיִם)

The psalmist is using **Once** and **twice** as a common expression to mean "repeatedly" or "with certainty." The phrase emphasizes that God's declaration is reliable and sure. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Repeatedly] or [Most certainly]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT power**
**UST** who truly has power
(עֹז)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **power**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [God is powerful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| {is} to God | he is the one |

# Psalms 62:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Also to you, Lord, {is} covenant faithfulness, for you, you repay to a man according to his doing.* | *God is also the one who always keeps his promises. He punishes people who do wrong things but rewards people who do good things.* |

ULT **{is} covenant faithfulness**
UST who always keeps his promises
(חֶסֶד)

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: [you are faithful to your covenant] or [you are loyal and faithful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **you, you repay**
UST He punishes … but rewards
(אַתָּה תְשַׁלֵּם)

The psalmist is repeating the pronoun **you** in order to intensify his expression of the idea that God is the one who repays. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [you yourself repay] or [you alone repay]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **to a man**
UST people … people
(לְאִישׁ)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [to each person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **according to his doing**
UST who do wrong things … who do good things
(כְּמַעֲשֵׂהוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **doing**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [according to what he does]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Lord | God |
| {is} covenant faithfulness | who always keeps his promises |

# Psalms 63

## Psalm 63 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 63 is a psalm of praise. David is specifically encouraging himself to praise God for what he will do to help him. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. David’s longing for God (1–2)
2. Reason to worship (3a)
3. Call to worship (3b–6)
4. Reason to worship (7a)
5. Call to worship (7b–8)
6. God will punish David’s enemies (9–10)
7. Call to worship (11a)
8. Reason to worship (11b)

# Psalms 63:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.* | *David wrote this song when he was in the desolate area that belongs to the tribe of Judah.* |

**ULT A psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah**
**UST** David wrote this song when he was in the desolate area that belongs to the tribe of Judah
(מִזְמ֥וֹר לְדָוִ֗ד בְּהִיוֹתוֹ֮ בְּמִדְבַּ֪ר יְהוּדָ֫ה)

This is a superscription to a psalm. It is written in poetic language and provides historical context for the psalm. If your language has a way to indicate poetry, you could use it here. Alternate translation: [A song of David written while he was in the wilderness of Judah]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm of | this song |
| David | David wrote |
| in the wilderness of | in the desolate area that belongs to |
| Judah | the tribe of Judah |

# Psalms 63:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God, you {are} my God. I seek you earnestly. My soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you in a land of dryness and weary, without water.* | *God, you are the God whom I worship. I greatly desire to be with you. It is as if my body aches for you, just as a person in a dry, hot wilderness greatly desires water.* |

ULT **My soul thirsts for you**
UST just as a person … greatly desires water
(צָמְאָה לְךָ ו נַפְשִׁי)

David is speaking of his intense desire for God as if his **soul** were physically **thirsting** for water. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [My soul longs for you] or [I deeply desire to be near you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **My soul thirsts**
UST just as a person … greatly desires water
(צָמְאָה & נַפְשִׁי)

David is using **My soul** to represent all of himself in the act of thirsting for God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I thirst]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **my flesh faints for you**
UST It is as if my body aches for you
(כָּמַהּ לְךָ בְשָׂרִי)

The psalmist is speaking of his intense longing for God as if his body were physically **fainting** from weakness or exhaustion. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my whole being aches for you] or [my body grows weak with longing for you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my flesh**
UST It is as if my body
(בְּשָׂרִי)

David is using one part of a person, his **flesh**, to mean all of him in the act of longing for God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my whole being faints for you] or [I faint for you]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **My soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you**
UST It is as if my body aches for you, just as a person … greatly desires water
(צָמְאָה לְךָ נַפְשִׁי כָּמַהּ לְךָ בְּשָׂרִי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [My whole being longs for you]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **dryness and weary**
UST dry, hot
(צִיָּה וְעָיֵף)

The terms **dryness** and **weary** mean similar things. David 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 dry] or [extremely parched]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| {are} my God | are the God whom I worship |
| I seek you earnestly | I greatly desire to be with you |
| My soul | just as a person |
| in a land of | in a … wilderness |
| dryness | dry |

# Psalms 63:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Thus in the sanctuary I have gazed {at} you to see your power and your glory.* | *I have worshiped you in your sanctuary and recognized how powerful and glorious you are.* |

ULT **Thus**
UST I have worshiped you
(כֵּן)

The word translated as **Thus** indicates that what follows is a result of what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a result of what came before. Alternate translation: [So] or [Because of this,]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **your power**
UST how powerful
(עֻזְּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **power**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how powerful you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and your glory**
UST and glorious you are
(וּכְבוֹדֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how glorious you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your power and your glory**
UST how powerful and glorious you are
(עֻזְּךָ וּכְבוֹדֶךָ)

The terms **power** and **glory** mean similar things. David 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: [your awesome power] or [your magnificent strength]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the sanctuary | in your sanctuary |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and your glory | and glorious you are |

# Psalms 63:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Because your covenant faithfulness {is} better than life, my lips will praise you.* | *You are always kind to me, as you promised in your covenant. This is worth more to me than even being alive, so I will always praise you.* |

ULT **Because**
UST so
(כִּי)

The word translated as **Because** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came after. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came after. Alternate translation: [Since]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **your covenant faithfulness**
UST You are always kind to me, as you promised in your covenant
(חַסְדְּךָ)

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: [how faithful you are to your covenant] or [how faithfully you keep your covenant promises]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{is} better than life**
UST This is worth more to me than even being alive
(טֽוֹב & מֵֽחַיִּים)

The psalmist says **better than life** as an extreme statement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [more valuable than anything] or [extremely valuable]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **my lips will praise you**
UST I will always praise you
(שְׂפָתַי יְשַׁבְּחוּנְךָ)

The psalmist is using one part of a person, his **lips**, to mean all of him in the act of praising God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will praise you]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your covenant faithfulness | You are always kind to me, as you promised in your covenant |
| {is} better | This is worth more to me |
| will praise you | will always praise you |

# Psalms 63:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Thus I will bless you in my life; I will lift up my palms in your name.* | *I will praise you for as long as I am alive. I will lift up my hands and pray to you.* |

**ULT Thus**
**UST** I will praise you
(כֵּן)

The word **Thus** indicates that what follows is a result of what came before. David will bless God because of what he has just expressed in the previous verses. Use a connector in your language that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [Because of this,] or [Therefore,]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT I will lift up my palms in your name**
**UST** I will lift up my hands and pray to you
(בְּשִׁמְךָ אֶשָּׂא כַפָּי)

Lifting up one's palms was a symbolic action by which David showed his worship and prayer to God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [I will lift up my palms to worship you] or [I will lift up my palms in prayer to you]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

**ULT in your name**
**UST** and pray to you
(בְּשִׁמְךָ)

The psalmist is using the term **name** to represent who God is, particularly God's character and authority. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [because of who you are] or [because of your character]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will bless you | I will praise you |

# Psalms 63:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *As {with} fat and fatness my soul will be full, and {with} lips of joyful shouts my mouth will praise {you}.* | *You satisfy me as if I had just eaten a delicious banquet of rich foods. I will praise you very joyfully.* |

ULT **As {with} fat and fatness**
UST as if I had just eaten a delicious banquet of rich foods
(כְּמוֹ חֵלֶב וָדָשֶׁן)

The point of this comparison is that just as **fat and fatness** are deeply satisfying, so God's presence satisfies the psalmist's soul. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [My soul will be completely satisfied, just as if I had eaten the richest foods]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **{with} fat and fatness**
UST I had just eaten a delicious banquet of rich foods
(חֵלֶב וָדָשֶׁן)

The terms **fat** and **fatness** mean similar things. The psalmist 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 richest food]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **my soul will be full**
UST You satisfy me
(תִּשְׂבַּע נַפְשִׁי)

By using the phrase **my soul will be full**, David is speaking as if Yahweh could satisfy him in the same way that rich food satisfies hunger. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [I will be as satisfied as if I had eaten the richest foods]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my soul**
UST me
(נַפְשִׁי)

David is using **my soul** to represent all of himself in the act of being satisfied. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **and {with} lips of joyful shouts**
UST I … very joyfully
(וְשִׂפְתֵ֣י רְנָנ֣וֹת)

The psalmist is using one part of a person, his **lips**, to mean all of him in the act of praising God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and with my joyful shouts]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **and {with} lips of joyful shouts my mouth will praise {you}**
UST I will praise you very joyfully
(וְשִׂפְתֵ֣י רְנָנ֣וֹת יְהַלֶּל־פִּֽי)

These two phrases, **lips of joyful shouts** and **my mouth will praise**, mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [and my mouth will praise you with lips of joyful shouts]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **my mouth**
UST I
(פִּֽי)

David is using one part of a person, his **mouth**, to mean all of him in the act of praising God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my soul | me |
| joyful shouts | very joyfully |
| will praise {you} | will praise you |

# Psalms 63:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *When I remember you on my bed, I meditate on you in the night watches.* | *Sometimes I think about you when I am lying in bed. When that happens, I reflect during the night on how wonderful you are.* |

**ULT When I remember you on my bed**
**UST** Sometimes I think about you when I am lying in bed
(אִם־זְכַרְתִּיךָ עַל־יְצוּעָי)

The word **When** indicates that David **remembering** God occurred at the same time as when he **meditates** on God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could describe the time relationship more explicitly. Alternate translation: [As I remember you on my bed]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

**ULT in the night watches**
**UST** during the night
(בְּאַשְׁמֻרוֹת)

The term **night watches** refers to the divisions of the night during which guards were on duty. In ancient Israel, the night was typically divided into three or four such periods. If your readers would not be familiar with this, you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [during the night] or [in the hours of the night]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**ULT When I remember you on my bed, I meditate on you in the night watches**
**UST** Sometimes I think about you when I am lying in bed. When that happens, I reflect during the night on how wonderful you are
(אִם־זְכַרְתִּיךָ עַל־יְצוּעָי בְּאַשְׁמֻרוֹת אֶהְגֶּה־בָּךְ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [When I remember you on my bed, yes, when I meditate on you in the night watches]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I meditate | When that happens, I reflect |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the night watches | during the night |

# Psalms 63:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you have been a help to me, and in the shadow of your wings I shout joyfully.* | *{I realize that you are wonderful} because you have always helped me. I sing to you joyfully because I am aware that you protect me just as a mother bird protects her chicks under her wings.* |

ULT **For**
UST {I realize that you are wonderful} because
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Because] or [Since]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **a help**
UST you have always helped
(עֶזְרָתָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **help**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [one who gives help] or [helpful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and in the shadow of your wings**
UST you protect me just as a mother bird protects her chicks under her wings
(וּבְצֵל כְּנָפֶיךָ)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a bird protecting him **in the shadow of** his **wings**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [while you protect me] or [as you shelter me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **your wings**
> UST her wings
> (כְּנָפֶיךָ)

David is speaking of God as if he had **wings** that cast a shadow providing protection. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your protective shelter] or [your protection]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 63:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My soul clings after you; your right hand upholds me.* | *I remain completely loyal to you, and you protect me by your power.* |

**ULT My soul**
**UST** I
(נַפְשִׁי)

David is using **My soul** to represent all of himself in the act of clinging to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT clings after you**
**UST** remain completely loyal to you
(דָּבְקָה אַחֲרֶיךָ)

David is speaking of his devotion to God as if his soul physically **clings** to him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [remains devoted to you] or [holds tightly to you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT your right hand**
**UST** by your power
(יְמִינֶךָ)

Here, **right 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: [your strength]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My soul | I |

# Psalms 63:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But they, they seek my life for devastation; they will come into the lowest parts of the earth.* | *Some people are trying to kill me, but they will die and go to the place where dead people are.* |

**ULT But they, they seek**
**UST** Some people are trying
(וְהֵמָּה & יְבַקְשֻׁנִי)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **they** separately, even though the verb translated as **they seek** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that his enemies seek his life. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [But my enemies truly seek]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT But they**
**UST** Some people
(וְהֵמָּה)

The pronoun **they** refers to David's enemies, who have not been mentioned previously in this psalm. If it would be helpful in your language, you could clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [But those who are my enemies]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT my life**
**UST** me
(נַפְשִׁי)

David is using **my life** to represent his entire person in the act being killed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to kill me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT for devastation**
**UST** to kill
(לְשׁוֹאָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **devastation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to destroy me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **into the lowest parts of the earth**
UST to the place where dead people are
(בְּתַחְתִּיּוֹת הָאָרֶץ)

David is referring to death in a polite way by using the phrase **the lowest parts of the earth**. Depending on what is helpful for your readers, you could use a polite way of referring to this in your language, or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [to the grave] or [to Sheol]

**Support Reference:** Euphemism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| they seek | are trying |
| for devastation | to kill |

# Psalms 63:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They will pour him into the hands of the sword; they will be a portion of jackals.* | *They may die in a battle, and then wild dogs will eat their corpses.* |

**ULT They will pour him into the hands of the sword**
**UST** They may die in a battle
(יַגִּירֻהוּ עַל־יְדֵי־חָרֶב)

The psalmist is using **pour him into the hands of the sword** as a common expression of the culture to mean "cause him to be killed by the sword." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They will hand him over to be slain by the sword] or [They will cause him to die by the sword]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT the hands of the sword**
**UST** They may die in a battle
(יְדֵי־חָרֶב)

The psalmist is speaking of **the sword** as if it were a living thing that could have **hands**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the destructive power of the sword] or [death by the sword]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT they will be a portion of jackals**
**UST** and then wild dogs will eat their corpses
(מָנָת שֻׁעָלִים יִהְיוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of his enemies' dead bodies as if they were **a portion of jackals**, that is, food that would be given to scavenging animals. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they will become food for wild animals]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **jackals**
UST and then wild dogs
(שֻׁעָלִֽים)

A **jackal** is a kind of wild scavenging animal. If your readers would not be familiar with what a jackal is, you could use the name of a similar animal that your readers would recognize, or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation [scavengers]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **They will pour him**
UST They may die in a battle
(יַגִּירֻ֖הוּ)

The pronoun **him** is singular, but it refers to the psalmist's enemies, who are plural. David may be referring to them collectively. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a plural form. Alternate translation: [them]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the sword | They may die in a battle |

# Psalms 63:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But the king will rejoice in God; all of the swearers by him will exult, for the mouth of speakers of falsehood will be shut.* | *But I, the king {of Israel}, will rejoice in what God has done for me. All those who swear oaths in the name of God will praise him because he will have stopped people from saying things that are not true.* |

ULT **But the king**
UST But I, the king {of Israel}
(וְהַמֶּלֶךְ)

By **the king**, David means himself. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I, the king,]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **by him**
UST in the name of God
(בּוֹ)

The pronoun **him** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [by God]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **for the mouth of speakers of falsehood will be shut**
UST because he will have stopped people from saying things that are not true
(כִּי יִסָּכֵר פִּי דֹּבְרֵי־שָׁקֶר)

The psalmist is using one part of a person, **the mouth**, to mean all of him in the act of speaking lies. The phrase **will be shut** means that they will be stopped or silenced. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [speakers of falsehood will be silenced] or [those who speak falsehood will be stopped]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **falsehood**
UST things that are not true
(שָׁקֶר)

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: [false things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **will be shut**
UST he will have stopped
(יִסָּכֵֽר׃)

The expression **will be shut** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [God will shut the mouth of speakers of falsehood] or [will stop speaking]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| But the king | But I, the king {of Israel} |
| will rejoice | will rejoice |
| in God | in what God has done for me |
| will exult | will praise him |

# Psalms 64

## Psalm 64 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 64 is a wisdom psalm that describes the difference between how righteous people and wicked people live and the difference between what happens to them. However, it begins like a psalm of supplication, with a cry for help. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Introduction: cry for help (1–3a)
2. What wicked people do (3b–6)
3. How God will judge and punish wicked people (6–8a)
4. How other people will respond when they see this (8b–10)

# Psalms 64:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician. A psalm of David.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: David wrote this song.* |

> ULT **For the chief musician**
> UST This is a note for the worship leader
> (לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm | this song |
| of David | David wrote |

# Psalms 64:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hear my voice, God, in my complaint.*<br>*Preserve my life from fear of the enemy.* | *God, please listen to me as I tell you about what worries me. I am afraid of my enemies; please save me from them.* |

**ULT Hear my voice, God**
**UST** God, please listen to me
(שְׁמַע־אֱלֹהִים קוֹלִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please hear my voice, God] or [I ask you to hear my voice, God]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT my voice**
**UST** me
(קוֹלִי)

Here, **voice** represents what David is saying in prayer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my prayer] or [my words]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT in my complaint**
**UST** as I tell you about what worries me
(בְּשִׂיחִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **complaint**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [as I complain to you] or [as I tell you what troubles me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Preserve my life**
UST please save me from them
(תִּצֹּר חַיָּי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please preserve my life]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **from fear of**
UST I am afraid of
(מִפַּחַד)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **fear**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [so that I will not be afraid of]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| from fear of | I am afraid of |
| the enemy | my enemies |

# Psalms 64:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hide me from the council of evildoers, from the throng of the workers of iniquity,* | *Protect me from what wicked men are planning to do to me. Protect me from that group of men who do evil things.* |

ULT **Hide me**
UST Protect me … Protect me
(תַּסְתִּירֵנִי)

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: [Please hide me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **from the council of evildoers, from the throng of the workers of iniquity**
UST from what wicked men are planning to do to me … from that group of men who do evil things
(מִסּוֹד מְרֵעִים מֵרִגְשַׁת פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן)

The phrases **the council of evildoers** and **the throng of the workers of iniquity** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [from the large group of wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **iniquity**
UST evil things
(אָוֶן)

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: [iniquitous things] or [perverted acts]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from the council of | from what … are planning to do to me |
| evildoers | wicked men |
| from the throng of | from that group of men |
| iniquity | evil things |

# Psalms 64:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *who have sharpened their tongue like a sword. They tread their arrow, a bitter word,* | *The hostile things they say are like sharp swords; their cruel words are like arrows.* |

ULT **have sharpened their tongue like a sword. They tread their arrow, a bitter word**
UST The hostile things they say are like sharp swords; their cruel words are like arrows
(שָׁנְנוּ כַחֶרֶב לְשׁוֹנָם דָּרְכוּ חִצָּם דָּבָר מָר)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [have sharpened their tongue like a sword, yes, they tread their arrow, a bitter word]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **have sharpened their tongue like a sword**
UST The hostile things they say are like sharp swords
(שָׁנְנוּ כַחֶרֶב לְשׁוֹנָם)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a sword** is sharp and able to cut and wound, so the **tongue** of the enemies is able to harm others with their words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [sharpened their tongue to wound like a sharp sword]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **their tongue**
UST The hostile things they say
(לְשׁוֹנָם)

Here, **their tongue** represents what they say. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [their words] or [what they say]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **They tread their arrow, a bitter word**
UST their cruel words are like arrows
(דָּרְכוּ חִצָּם דָּבָר מָר)

The psalmist is speaking of **a bitter word** as if it were **their arrow**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They tread their cruel words as arrows]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **They tread**
UST are like arrows
(דָּרְכוּ)

Here, **tread** represents "shoot." Ancient archers would step on their bows in order to bend them so that they could string them. David means "they step on their bows to string them and then shoot arrows from them." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [They shoot]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| their tongue | The hostile things they say |
| like a sword | are like … swords |

# Psalms 64:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to shoot the innocent from secret places; suddenly they shoot, and they do not fear.* | *They are not afraid of anyone. They falsely accuse people who have done nothing wrong. They are like a person who suddenly jumps up from a hiding place and shoots an arrow at someone.* |

ULT **the innocent**
UST people who have done nothing wrong
(תָּם)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [innocent people] or [people who are innocent]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **to shoot the innocent**
UST people who have done nothing wrong … and shoots an arrow at someone
(תָּם & לִירוֹת)

The psalmist is speaking of **the innocent** as if they were targets that the wicked could **shoot** with arrows. He means that the wicked attack innocent people with harmful words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to attack the innocent with their words]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and they do not fear**
UST They are not afraid of anyone
(וְלֹא יִירָאוּ)

The psalmist 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 they do not fear judgment] or [and they do not fear consequences]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the innocent | people who have done nothing wrong |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they do … fear | They are … afraid |

# Psalms 64:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They strengthen for themselves an evil matter; they recount hiding snares. They say, "Who will see them?"* | *They encourage each other to do the evil things they are planning. They boast about how they have deceived people. They say, "No one will realize what we are doing!"* |

**ULT They strengthen for themselves an evil matter**
**UST** They encourage each other to do the evil things they are planning
(יְחַזְּקוּ־לָמוֹ ׀ דָּבָר רָע)

The psalmist is using **strengthen for themselves an evil matter** as a common expression of the culture to mean "encourage each other in their evil plans." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [embolden one another to do evil] or [make each other more determined to carry out wicked schemes]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT Who will see them**
**UST** No one will realize what we are doing
(מִי יִרְאֶה־לָּמוֹ)

The evildoers are 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 will see them.] or [No one will see our schemes!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT them**
**UST** what we are doing
(לָמוֹ)

The pronoun **them** refers to the snares, not to the evildoers. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Who will see the snares]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| evil | evil |
| they recount | They boast about |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| snares | how they have deceived people |

# Psalms 64:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They devise iniquities. “We have perfected a well-devised device!” Both the inside of man and the heart {are} deep.* | *They carefully plan the wicked things they want to do. They brag, “We have planned this out perfectly!” It is very difficult to know what people are thinking privately.* |

**ULT iniquities**
**UST** the wicked things they want to do
(עוֹלֹת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **iniquities**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [iniquitous things] or [things that are evil]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Both the inside of man and the heart {are} deep**
**UST** It is very difficult to know what people are thinking privately
(וְקֶרֶב אִישׁ וְלֵב עָמֹק)

The terms **inside of man** and **the heart** mean similar things. The psalmist 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. [The human heart is very deep] or [Man’s private thoughts are beyond knowing]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT Both the inside of man**
**UST** what people are thinking privately
(וְקֶרֶב אִישׁ)

Here, **the inside of man** represents a person’s inner thoughts and motives. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The thoughts of man] or [Man’s inner motives]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and the heart**
UST what … are thinking privately
(וְלֵב)

Here, **the heart** represents a person's thoughts and motives. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a person's thoughts] or [people's motives]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and the heart {are} deep**
UST It is very difficult to know what … are thinking privately
(וְלֵב עָמֹק)

The psalmist is speaking of **the heart** as if it were something **deep** that cannot be easily explored or understood. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the heart are hidden] or [and the heart are unfathomable]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| iniquities | the wicked things they want to do |
| We have perfected | They brag, "We have planned … out |

# Psalms 64:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But God will shoot an arrow; suddenly their wounds will happen.* | *But God will suddenly judge and punish them, as if he were shooting an arrow at them and wounding them.* |

**ULT But God will shoot an arrow**
**UST** But God will … judge and punish them, as if he were shooting an arrow at them
(וַיֹּרֵם אֱלֹהִים חֵץ)

David is speaking of God judging his enemies as if he were **shooting an arrow** at them. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [God will strike his enemies suddenly, like a warrior who shoots an arrow at them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT But God will shoot**
**UST** But God will … judge and punish them, as if he were shooting
(וַיֹּרֵם אֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between the evildoers' plans and God's response. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [However, God will shoot] or [In contrast, God will shoot]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

**ULT suddenly their wounds will happen**
**UST** suddenly … and wounding them
(פִּתְאֹום הָיוּ מַכּוֹתָם)

The psalmist actually means to communicate the opposite of the literal meaning of what he is saying here. He describes the wounding of the wicked as happening **suddenly**, just as the wicked planned to wound the innocent suddenly (verse 4). If a speaker of your language would not do that, you could translate the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they will receive the sudden wounds they planned for others]

**Support Reference:** Irony

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |

# Psalms 64:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they will make it stumble over them, their tongue. Everyone seeing them will flee.* | *The deceitful things they say will get them into trouble. Everyone who sees what happens to them will stay away from them.* |

**ULT And they will make it stumble**
**UST** will get … into trouble
(וַיַּכְשִׁילוּהוּ)

The pronoun **it** could refer to: (1) their tongue or (2) the arrow (see 64:7). If it would be helpful in your language, you could clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [And their tongue will make them stumble] or [And the arrow will make them stumble]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT their tongue**
**UST** The deceitful things they say
(לְשׁוֹנָם)

Here, **their tongue** represents their harmful words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [their own words] or [what they themselves have said]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT Everyone seeing them will flee**
**UST** Everyone who sees what happens to them will stay away from them
(יִתְנֹדְדוּ כָּל־רֹאֵה בָם)

The psalmist is saying **Everyone seeing them will flee** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [All who see them will flee] or [People who see them will flee]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And they will make it stumble | will get … into trouble |
| their tongue | The deceitful things they say |

# Psalms 64:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And all of mankind will fear, and they will declare the work of God, for they will consider his deed.* | *People will think about how God has punished them, and they will tell others about it. As a result, people will not dare to be wicked.* |

ULT **all of mankind**
UST people
(כָּל־אָדָם)

The psalmist is saying **all of mankind** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [all people who see this] or [everyone who observes these things]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **and they will declare the work of God, for they will consider his deed**
UST People will think about how God has punished them, and they will tell others about it
(וַיַּגִּידוּ פֹּעַל אֱלֹהִים וּמַעֲשֵׂהוּ הִשְׂכִּילוּ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The first phrase states the general idea, and then the second phrase gives a specific example. Translate these phrases according to the decisions your team has made regarding translating parallelism in Hebrew poetry. Alternate translation: [and they will declare the work of God, certainly, they will consider his deed]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And … will fear | As a result … will not dare to be wicked |
| and they will declare | and they will tell others |
| God | God |
| for they will consider | People will think about |

# Psalms 64:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The righteous will rejoice in Yahweh and take refuge in him, and all of the upright of heart will celebrate.* | *People who do what is right will be very happy that Yahweh has punished those wicked people. They will trust Yahweh to protect them. Yes, those who really want to do good things will be glad.* |

ULT **The righteous**
UST People who do what is right
(צַדִּיק)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [Righteous people] or [Those who do the right thing]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **The righteous will rejoice in Yahweh and take refuge in him, and all of the upright of heart will celebrate**
UST People who do what is right will be very happy that Yahweh has punished those wicked people. They will trust Yahweh to protect them. Yes, those who really want to do good things will be glad
(יִשְׂמַח צַדִּיק בַּיהוָה וְחָסָה בּוֹ וְיִתְהַלְלוּ כָּל־יִשְׁרֵי־לֵב׃)

These two phrases, **The righteous will rejoice** and **the upright of heart will celebrate** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [The righteous will rejoice in Yahweh and take refuge in him; indeed, all of the upright of heart will celebrate.]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **and take refuge in him**
UST They will trust Yahweh to protect them
(וְחָסָה בּוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a safe **refuge** or shelter where the righteous could be protected from danger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and go to him for protection] or [and trust him to keep them safe]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the upright of heart**
UST who really want to do good things
(יִשְׁרֵי־לֵב)

The psalmist is using the adjective phrase **upright 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: [the people who are upright in heart] or [those whose hearts are upright]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **heart**
UST really want to
(לֵב)

Here, **heart** represents a person's inner character and motives. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [character] or [motives]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The righteous | People who do what is right |
| will rejoice | will be very happy |
| in Yahweh | that Yahweh has punished those wicked people |
| and take refuge | They will trust … to protect them |
| and … will celebrate | Yes … will be glad |
| the upright of | who … do good things |

# Psalms 65

## Psalm 65 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 65 begins as a psalm of thanksgiving. David announces that he is paying a vow to God. He says what God has done for him: God has forgiven his sin. He invites people to share in a celebration meal. But after those standard elements, this turns into a psalm of worship. David describes the powerful things that God does, and he describes how people all over the world praise God for them. He then describes how God provides rain so that fields and pastures in meadows, hills, and valleys can produce good crops, and he depicts those places as praising God for that. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. David's declaration that he is paying a vow (1)
2. Statement of what God has done in answer to prayer (2–3)
3. Invitation to share in a celebration meal (4)
4. Reason to worship: God powerfully controls nature and people (5–7)
5. Description of people worshiping God for this (8)
6. Reason to worship: God sends rain to make crops grow (9–11)
7. Description of fields and pastures worshiping God for this (12–13)

# Psalms 65:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician. A psalm of David. A song.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: David wrote this song.* |

**ULT For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

**For the chief musician** is an instruction about who should lead people in singing or playing music with this psalm. This could refer to the person in charge of music for temple worship. If your readers would not be familiar with this role, you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the worship leader]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm | this song |
| of David | David wrote |

# Psalms 65:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Praise {is in} silence toward you, God, in Zion, and to you a vow will be paid.* | *God, when you come to your sanctuary on Mount Zion, you will find that we have been waiting quietly to praise you and to do what we promised we would do to honor you.* |

ULT **Praise {is in} silence toward you**
UST you will find that we have been waiting quietly to praise you
(לְךָ דֳמִיָּה תְהִלָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **Praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [We are praising you in silence]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Praise {is in} silence**
UST you will find that we have been waiting quietly to praise
(דֳמִיָּה תְהִלָּה)

The implication is that the people are waiting silently in reverent worship before they praise God. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Waiting in silence to praise] or [Silent before worship directed]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **in Zion**
UST when you come to your sanctuary on Mount Zion
(בְּצִיּוֹן)

The word **Zion** is the name of a place. It refers to Mount Zion in Jerusalem.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **a vow will be paid**
UST and to do what we promised we would do
(יְשֻׁלַּם־נֶדֶר)

The expression **a vow will be paid** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is the worshipers. Alternate translation: [the worshipers will pay their vows] or [people will fulfill their vows]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Praise | to praise |
| God | God |
| in Zion | when you come to your sanctuary on Mount Zion |
| a vow | what we promised we would do |

# Psalms 65:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hearer of prayer, to you all flesh will come.* | *Because you help people when they pray, people everywhere will pray to you.* |

**ULT Hearer of prayer**
**UST** Because you help people when they pray
(שֹׁמֵעַ תְּפִלָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **prayer**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [You who hear people when they pray;]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT all flesh**
**UST** people everywhere
(כָּל־בָּשָׂר)

Here, **all flesh** represents all people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all people] or [everyone]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| prayer | when they pray |

# Psalms 65:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Matters of iniquities prevail against me; our transgressions, you, you cover them.* | *When we feel very badly because we have done wrong things, you forgive our sins and make it as if we had not committed them.* |

ULT **Matters of iniquities**
UST wrong things
(דִּבְרֵי עֲוֹנֹת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **iniquities**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [The wrong things we have done]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **our transgressions**
UST our sins
(פִּשְׁעֵינוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **transgressions**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the ways we have disobeyed you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **iniquities prevail against me; our transgressions**
UST When we feel very badly because we have done wrong … our sins
(עֲוֹנֹת גָּבְרוּ מֶנִּי פִּשְׁעֵינוּ)

The terms **iniquities** and **transgressions** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [Our many sins overwhelm me but]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **prevail against me**
UST When we feel very badly because we have done
(גָּבְרוּ מֶנִּי)

The pronoun **me** refers to the psalmist, while the pronoun “our” refers to the psalmist along with the rest of God’s people. The psalmist is speaking both personally and on behalf of the community. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [prevail against me and my people]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **you, you cover them**
> UST you forgive … and make it as if we had not committed them
> (אַתָּה תְכַפְּרֵם)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you cover them** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that God, to whom he is speaking, is the one forgiving them. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [you, God, you cover them]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **you cover them**
> UST forgive … and make it as if we had not committed them
> (תְכַפְּרֵם)

The psalmist is using **you cover them** as a common expression of the culture to mean "you forgive them" or "you atone for them." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you forgive them] or [you atone for them]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| iniquities | wrong |
| our transgressions | our sins |

# Psalms 65:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The happinesses of {the one} you choose and bring near, that he may dwell {in} your courts! May we be full of the goodness of your house, the holiness of your temple.* | *When you invite people to come and worship you in your sanctuary, that makes them very happy! When we come to your sanctuary, we realize how good and holy you are, and that satisfies us completely.* |

ULT **The happinesses of**
UST that makes them very happy
(אַשְׁרֵי)

The psalmist is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of joy or blessing. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy is] or [Truly blessed is]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **of the goodness of your house**
UST When we come to your sanctuary, we realize how good … you are
(בְּטוּב בֵּיתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **goodness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the good things in your house] or [how good your house is]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the holiness of your temple**
UST When we come to your sanctuary, we realize how … and holy you are
(קְדֹשׁ הֵיכָלֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **holiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how holy your temple is]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your house … your temple**
UST When we come to your sanctuary, we realize how … you are
(בֵּיתֶךָ & הֵיכָלֶךָ)

Here, **your house** and **your temple** represent God's presence at the temple in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your presence in the temple … your presence in the temple]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **May we be full of the goodness of your house, the holiness of your temple**
UST When we come to your sanctuary, we realize how good and holy you are, and that satisfies us completely
(נִשְׂבְּעָה בְּטוּב בֵּיתֶךָ קְדֹשׁ הֵיכָלֶךָ)

The terms **your house** and **your temple** mean similar things. The psalmist 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 we be full of the goodness and holiness of your holy dwelling place]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {the one} you choose | When you invite people |
| {in} your courts | in your sanctuary |
| of the goodness of | good |
| your house | When we come to your sanctuary, we realize how … you are |
| the holiness of | and holy |
| your temple | When we come to your sanctuary, we realize how … you are |

# Psalms 65:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Doing fearsome things, you answer us in righteousness, God of our salvation, the confidence of all of the ends of the earth and the distant seas,* | *When we pray to you, you do good and powerful things to help us. You are the God who saves us. Even people who live in very remote places on the earth, on the other side of the oceans, trust in you.* |

ULT **in righteousness**
UST good
(בְּצֶדֶק)

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: [by doing what is right] or [in a righteous way]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **God of our salvation**
UST You are the God who saves us
(אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ)

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: [God who is saving us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the confidence of**
UST trust in you
(מִבְטָח)

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: [the trusted one of]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the ends of the earth**
UST Even people who live in very remote places on the earth
(קְצ֖וֹת־אָֽרֶץ)

The psalmist is using **the ends of the earth** as a common expression of the culture to mean "the most distant places on earth" or "people everywhere." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the most remote places] or [people everywhere on earth]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **the ends of the earth and the distant seas**
UST Even people who live in very remote places on the earth, on the other side of the oceans
(קְצ֣וֵי־אֶ֭רֶץ וְיָ֣ם רָחֹֽקִים)

The psalmist is referring to all of the earth by naming two extremes, **the ends of the earth** and **the distant seas**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [everywhere on earth]

**Support Reference:** Merism

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Doing fearsome things | and powerful things |
| in righteousness | good |
| God of | You are the God |
| our salvation | who saves us |
| the earth | on the earth |

# Psalms 65:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the one establishing mountains by his strength, being girded with might;* | *You are so strong, you were able to use your power to set the mountains in their places.* |

ULT **the one establishing mountains by his strength**
UST You are so strong … to set the mountains in their places
(מֵכִין הָרִים בְּכֹחוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of God as if he were a builder who physically **establishes mountains** in place. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one who created the mountains by his great power]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **by his strength**
UST You are so strong
(בְּכֹחוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [by how strong he is]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **being girded with might**
UST you were able to use your power
(נֶאְזָר בִּגְבוּרָה)

The expression **being girded with might** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [who girds himself with might] or [who clothes himself with might]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **with might**
UST your power
(בִּגְבוּרָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **might**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with powerful strength] or [by being mighty]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **by his strength … with might**
UST You are so strong … your power
(בְּכֹחֲוֹ & בִּגְבוּרָה)

The terms **strength** and **might** mean similar things. The psalmist 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 power]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **being girded with might**
UST you were able to use your power
(נֶאְזָר בִּגְבוּרָה)

The psalmist is speaking of might as if it were clothing that God could wear. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [possessing great power] or [having great might]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| by his strength | You are so strong |
| being girded | you were able to use |
| with might | your power |

# Psalms 65:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the one stilling the roar of the seas, the roar of their waves, and the tumult of the peoples.* | *When there is a storm at sea, you can calm it and stop its waves from crashing on the shore. In the same way, you can keep nations from causing trouble.* |

ULT **the roar of the seas, the roar of their waves**
UST When there is a storm at sea … and stop its waves from crashing on the shore
(שְׁאֹון יַמִּים שְׁאֹון גַּלֵּיהֶם)

These two phrases **the roar of the seas** and **the roar of their waves** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [the roar of the seas, yes, the roar of their waves] or [the roaring seas and their waves]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the roar of the seas, the roar of their waves**
UST When there is a storm at sea … and stop its waves from crashing on the shore
(שְׁאֹון יַמִּים שְׁאֹון גַּלֵּיהֶם)

The terms **the roar of the seas** and **the roar of their waves** mean similar things. The psalmist 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 loud roaring of the seas]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **and the tumult of the peoples**
UST In the same way, you can keep nations from causing trouble
(וְהָמֹון לְאֻמִּים)

The psalmist is speaking of **the tumult of the peoples** as if it were roaring like chaotic seas. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the unrest of the nations] or [the agitation of the peoples]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the roar of the seas … and the tumult of the peoples**
UST When there is a storm at sea … In the same way, you can keep nations from causing trouble
(שְׁאוֹן יַמִּים & וַהֲמוֹן לְאֻמִּים)

The phrases **the roar of the seas** and **the tumult of the peoples** mean basically the same thing. The psalmist is speaking of the **peoples** as if they were **seas**, comparing the noise and chaos of nations to crashing waves. The second phrase emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [the roar of the seas, that is, the tumult of the peoples]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

# Psalms 65:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And the dwellers of the ends fear at your signs; you make the goings forth of the morning and the evening shout joyfully.* | *People who live in very remote places on the earth deeply respect you because of the miracles that you perform. People who live all over the world celebrate what you do.* |

ULT **the dwellers of the ends**
UST People who live in very remote places on the earth
(יֹשְׁבֵי קְצָוֹת)

The psalmist is using **the dwellers of the ends** as a common expression of the culture to mean “those who live in the farthest places” or “those who live at the remotest boundaries of the earth.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those who live in the most distant places] or [people in the remotest parts of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **at your signs**
UST because of the miracles that you perform
(מֵאוֹתֹתֶיךָ)

Here, **signs** represents God’s miraculous deeds. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your miraculous works] or [your mighty acts]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **you make the goings forth of the morning and the evening shout joyfully**
UST People who live all over the world celebrate what you do
(מֹוצָאֵי־בֹקֶר וָעֶרֶב תַּרְנִין)

The psalmist is speaking of **the goings forth of the morning and the evening** as if they were living things that could **shout joyfully**. The phrase **the goings forth of the morning and the evening** represents sunrise and sunset. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the places where the sun rises and sets rejoice] or [people everywhere from sunrise to sunset shout joyfully]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **the goings forth of the morning and the evening**
UST People who live all over the world
(מְוֹצָאֵי־בֹקֶר וְעֶרֶב)

The psalmist is using **the goings forth of the morning and the evening** as a common expression of the culture to mean “the east and the west” or “all the earth from sunrise to sunset.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all the earth from the east to the west] or [everywhere the sun rises and sets]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **the morning and the evening**
UST People who live all over the world
(בֹּקֶר וְעֶרֶב)

The psalmist is referring to all times of day by naming two extremes, **the morning** and **the evening**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all day long] or [at all times]

**Support Reference:** Merism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And … fear | deeply respect you |
| at your signs | because of the miracles that you perform |
| you make … shout joyfully | celebrate what you do |

# Psalms 65:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You visit the earth and saturate it; you greatly enrich it. The channel of God {is} full of water; you prepare their grain, for thus you prepare it.* | *You send rain to make the soil fertile so that it will produce good crops. It is as if you bring water to the fields in a stream. That is how you prepare the earth to produce abundant crops.* |

ULT **You visit the earth**
UST You send rain … the soil
(פָּקַדְתָּ הָאָרֶץ)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a person who could come to **visit the earth**. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [You come to the earth and care for it] or [You attend to the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **The channel of God {is} full of water**
UST It is as if you bring water to the fields in a stream
(פֶּלֶג אֱלֹהִים מָלֵא מָיִם)

The psalmist is speaking of the rain that comes from the sky as if it flowed from **the channel of God**, a heavenly waterway. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The sky is full of rain from God] or [God's heavenly reservoir is full of water]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **their grain**
UST abundant crops
(דְּגָנָם)

The pronoun **their** refers to people on earth who benefit from God's provision. If it would be helpful in your language, you could clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [grain for people] or [grain for humanity]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | you |
| their grain | abundant crops |

# Psalms 65:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Watering its furrows, settling its ridges, you soften it with showers; you bless its growth.* | *You send rain on the plowed fields, and you fill their furrows with water. You soften the hard clods of soil with showers, and you help young plants to grow in the fields.* |

**ULT Watering its furrows, settling its ridges**
**UST** You send rain on the plowed fields, and you fill their furrows with water
(תְּלָמֶ֗יהָ רַוֵּ֥ה נַחַ֑ת גְּדוּדֶ֥יהָ)

The psalmist 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 water its furrows, you settle its ridges]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT you bless its growth**
**UST** and you help young plants to grow in the fields
(צִמְחָ֖הּ תְּבָרֵֽךְ)

The psalmist is speaking of the growth of plants as if it were something that receives God's **blessing**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you cause its crops to grow] or [you make it produce a good harvest]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| you bless | and you help |

# Psalms 65:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You crown the year {with} your goodness, and your tracks drip fatness.* | *When harvest time comes, the fields are glorious with crops, as if you had put a golden crown on them. You provide food for people in great abundance.* |

ULT **You crown the year {with} your goodness**
UST When harvest time comes, the fields are glorious with crops, as if you had put a golden crown on them
(עִטַּרְתָּ שְׁנַת טוּבֶתֶךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of God as if he were a king placing a **crown** on the year to adorn it with abundant blessings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You adorn the year with your goodness] or [You make the year wonderful with your goodness]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{with} your goodness**
UST with crops
(טוּבֶתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **goodness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how good you are] or [how generously you provide]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and your tracks drip fatness**
UST You provide food for people in great abundance
(וּמַעְגָּלֶיךָ יִרְעָפוּן דָּשֶׁן)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were driving a cart whose **tracks drip fatness** (that is, whose wheel ruts overflow with abundant crops). If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [you leave abundance behind you wherever you go]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and your tracks**
UST food for people
(וּמַעְגָּלֶיךָ)

Here, **tracks** represents God's presence as he passes by, bringing blessing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [everywhere you pass by] or [the places where you have gone]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **fatness**
UST in great abundance
(דָּשֶׁן)

Here, **fatness** represents abundance and prosperity. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [abundance] or [rich blessings]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| You crown | the fields are glorious … as if you had put a golden crown on them |
| the year | When harvest time comes |
| {with} your goodness | with crops |

# Psalms 65:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The pastures of the wilderness drip, and the hills gird on rejoicing.* | *There is plenty of food for sheep and goats to eat in the pastures where they graze. So many crops grow on the hills that it is as if the hills were celebrating.* |

**ULT The pastures of the wilderness drip**
**UST** There is plenty of food for sheep and goats to eat in the pastures where they graze
(יִרְעֲפוּ נְאוֹת מִדְבָּר)

The psalmist is speaking of **the pastures of the wilderness** as if they were living things that could **drip** with moisture or abundance. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The pastures of the wilderness are covered with dew] or [The pastures of the wilderness are full of water]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT and the hills gird on rejoicing**
**UST** So many crops grow on the hills that it is as if the hills were celebrating
(וְגִיל גְּבָעוֹת תַּחְגֹּרְנָה)

The psalmist is speaking of **the hills** as if they were living things that could put on clothing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the hills are like people who dress themselves in joyful celebration] or [it is as if the hills wear rejoicing]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT rejoicing**
**UST** were celebrating
(וְגִיל)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **rejoicing**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [joy] or [what makes people rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **gird on rejoicing**
UST So many crops grow on the hills … were celebrating
(וְגִיל & תַּחְגֹּרְנָה)

The psalmist is speaking of the hills as if they were people who could **gird on rejoicing** like a person putting on clothing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the hills are clothed with joy] or [the hills seem joyful]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the wilderness | where they graze |
| gird on | So many crops grow on the hills |
| rejoicing | were celebrating |

# Psalms 65:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The meadows put on a flock, and the valleys cover {themselves} {with} grain. They shout joyfully; indeed, they sing.* | *Flocks of sheep and goats cover the meadows like a garment, and there is so much grain in the valleys that the ground is not visible. It is as if the meadows and valleys are singing and shouting joyfully.* |

ULT **The meadows put on a flock**
UST Flocks of sheep and goats cover the meadows like a garment
(לָבְשׁוּ כָרִים ו הַצֹּאן)

The psalmist is speaking of **meadows** as if they were living things that could put on clothing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Flocks cover the meadows]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **put on a flock**
UST Flocks of sheep and goats cover … like a garment
(לָבְשׁוּ & הַצֹּאן)

The psalmist is speaking of the meadows as if they were people who could **put on** flocks as clothing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The flocks cover the meadows] or [Flocks are spread across the meadows]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the valleys cover {themselves} {with} grain**
UST and there is so much grain in the valleys that the ground is not visible
(וַעֲמָקִים יַעֲטְפוּ־בָר)

The psalmist is speaking of **the valleys** as if they were living things that could **cover themselves with grain**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [grain grows abundantly in the valleys] or [the valleys are filled with grain]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **They shout joyfully; indeed, they sing**
UST It is as if the meadows and valleys are singing and shouting joyfully
(יִתְרוֹעָעוּ אַף־יָשִׁירוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of **the meadows** and **the valleys** as if they were living things that could **shout joyfully** and **sing**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [It is as though they shout joyfully; indeed, it is as though they sing] or [They are like people shouting joyfully and singing]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **They shout joyfully … they sing**
UST It is as if the meadows and valleys are singing … shouting joyfully
(יִתְרוֹעָעוּ & יָשִׁירוּ)

The terms **shout joyfully** and **sing** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [rejoice with loud songs]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| a flock | Flocks of sheep and goats |
| {with} grain | and there is so much grain |
| They shout joyfully | shouting joyfully |
| They shout joyfully | shouting joyfully |

# Psalms 66

## Psalm 66 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 66 is a psalm of thanksgiving. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Call to worship (1–3)
2. Reason to worship (5–7)
3. Call to worship (8)
4. Reason to worship (9–12)
5. The psalmist's declaration that he is paying a vow (13–15)
6. The psalmist's declaration that God has answered his prayer (16–20)

# Psalms 66:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; a song; a psalm. Shout to God, all of the earth!* | *This is a note for the worship leader: This is a song, a psalm. Everyone on earth should shout joyfully to praise God!* |

**ULT For the chief musician**
**UST** This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**ULT Shout to God, all of the earth**
**UST** Everyone on earth should shout joyfully to praise God
(הָרִיעוּ לֵאלֹהִים כָּל־הָאָרֶץ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Let everyone on earth shout to God]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a psalm | a psalm |
| Shout | should shout joyfully |
| to God | to praise God |

# Psalms 66:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Make music {to} the glory of his name; make his praise glorious.* | *They should sing songs that tell how glorious God is and how much he deserves praise for being glorious.* |

**ULT Make music {to} the glory of his name**
**UST** They should sing songs that tell how glorious God is
(זַמְּרוּ כְּבוֹד־שְׁמוֹ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please make music to the glory of his name]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT {to} the glory of**
**UST** that tell how glorious … is
(כְּבוֹד)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [glorious character]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT make his praise glorious**
**UST** and how much he deserves praise for being glorious
(שִׂימוּ כָּבוֹד תְּהִלָּתוֹ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please make his praise glorious]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT his praise**
**UST** praise
(תְּהִלָּתוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [praises]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {to} the glory of<br>his praise | that tell how glorious … is<br>praise |

# Psalms 66:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Say to God, "How fearsome {are} your deeds! Because of the greatness of your power, your enemies cringe before you.* | *Everyone should tell God, "You do such amazing things! You are so powerful that your enemies come and bow down fearfully in front of you.* |

**ULT Say to God**
**UST** Everyone should tell God
(אִמְרוּ לֵאלֹהִים)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please say to God]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT How fearsome {are} your deeds**
**UST** You do such amazing things
(מַה־נּוֹרָא מַעֲשֶׂיךָ)

The psalmist is using the question form to express amazement at God's deeds. 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: [Your deeds are very fearsome!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT Because of the greatness of your power**
**UST** You are so powerful
(בְּרֹב עֻזְּךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **greatness** and **power**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [of your very great power]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your enemies cringe before you**
UST that your enemies come and bow down fearfully in front of you
(יְכַחֲשׁוּ לְךָ אֹיְבֶיךָ)

Here, **cringe** represents showing false submission out of fear. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your enemies submit to you in fear]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| to God | God |
| fearsome | amazing |
| your power | You are … powerful |
| your enemies | that your enemies |

# Psalms 66:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *All of the earth bows down to you and makes music to you; they make music {to} your name.” Selah* | *Everyone on earth should worship you and sing to praise you for your excellent character.” Selah* |

ULT **All of the earth bows down to you**
UST Everyone on earth should worship you
(כָּל־הָאָ֥רֶץ ׀ יִשְׁתַּחֲוּ֣וּ לָ֑ךְ)

The psalmist is saying **All of the earth bows down to you** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [Everyone on earth bows down to you]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **All of the earth bows down**
UST Everyone on earth should worship
(כָּל־הָאָ֥רֶץ ׀ יִשְׁתַּחֲוּ֣וּ)

The psalmist is speaking of **the earth** as if it were a living thing that could bow down and worship. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Everyone on earth bows down]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **{to} your name**
UST for your excellent character
(שִׁמְךָ֥)

The psalmist is using the term **name** to represent who God is or to refer to God’s reputation. Alternate translation: [to your reputation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| bows down | should worship |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 66:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Come and see the works of God, fearsome in doing toward the sons of man.* | *Come and consider what God has done! Think about the amazing things that he has done among people.* |

**ULT Come and see the works of God**
**UST** Come and consider what God has done
(לְכוּ וּרְאוּ מִפְעֲלוֹת אֱלֹהִים)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please come and see the works of God]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT fearsome in doing**
**UST** Think about the amazing things that he has done
(נוֹרָא עֲלִילָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **doing**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [fearsome in what he does]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT the sons of man**
**UST** people
(בְּנֵי אָדָם)

The psalmist is using **sons of man** as a common expression of the culture to mean "human beings." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [human beings]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| fearsome | amazing |

# Psalms 66:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He turned the sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot. There let us rejoice in him!* | *He made a dry path through the Sea of Reeds so that our ancestors could walk right through it. They also walked across the Jordan River {when he stopped it from flowing}. After they crossed, they celebrated what God had done, and we should still celebrate that today.* |

**ULT He turned the sea into dry land**
UST He made a dry path through the Sea of Reeds … when he stopped it from flowing
(הָפַךְ יָם ׀ לְיַבָּשָׁה)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if God had literally transformed the sea into solid ground. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He made a way through the sea on dry ground]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT they passed through**
UST right through it
(יַעַבְרוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to the Israelites. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the Israelites passed through]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT let us rejoice in him**
UST they celebrated what God had done, and we should still celebrate that today
(נִשְׂמְחָה־בּוֹ)

The psalmist is using the imperative form to communicate an exhortation. If the imperative does not communicate an exhortation for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates an exhortation. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [we should rejoice in him]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **the sea … the river**
UST the Sea of Reeds … across the Jordan River
(יָ֣ם & בַּנָּהָ֑ר)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **the sea** refers to the Red Sea and **the river** refers to the Jordan River, both of which God miraculously parted for the Israelites to cross. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the Red Sea … the Jordan River]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| into dry land | a dry path … when he stopped it from flowing |
| let us rejoice | they celebrated … and we should still celebrate that today |

# Psalms 66:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He is ruling by his might forever; his eyes watch over the nations. Let the ones rebelling not exalt themselves. Selah* | *He is so powerful that he rules forever. He observes what all the people groups do, so anyone who considers rebelling against him should not think that he will be able to do that. Selah* |

**ULT by his might**
**UST** He is so powerful that
(בִּגְבוּרָתוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **might**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [by being mighty]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT his eyes watch over the nations**
**UST** He observes what all the people groups do
(עֵינָיו בַּגּוֹיִם תִּצָּפֶינָה)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if God had physical **eyes** that could **watch over** the nations. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he observes the nations]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Let the ones rebelling not exalt themselves**
**UST** so anyone who considers rebelling against him should not think that he will be able to do that
(הַסּוֹרְרִים ׀ אַל־יָרוּמוּ לָמוֹ)

See the discussion in the introduction to Psalms about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [The ones rebelling should not exalt themselves]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He is ruling | he rules |
| by his might | He is so powerful that |
| forever | forever |
| watch | observes |
| over the nations | what all the people groups do |
| Let … exalt | should … think that … will be able to do that |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the ones rebelling | so anyone who considers rebelling against him |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 66:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Bless our God, peoples, and make the sound of his praise heard,* | *People from every nation, praise our God! Praise him loudly so that others will hear you as you praise him.* |

**ULT Bless our God, peoples**
**UST** People from every nation, praise our God
(בָּרְכוּ עַמִּים ׀ אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please bless our God, peoples]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT and make the sound of his praise heard**
**UST** Praise him loudly so that others will hear you as you praise him
(וְהַשְׁמִיעוּ קוֹל תְּהִלָּתוֹ)

The expression **make the sound of his praise heard** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and proclaim his praise aloud]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT his praise**
**UST** as you praise him
(תְּהִלָּתוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [praising him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Bless | praise |
| our God | our God |
| his praise | as you praise him |

# Psalms 66:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the one putting our soul among the living, and he does not allow our foot to slip.* | *He has kept us alive, and he has not allowed anyone to destroy us.* |

ULT **the one putting our soul among the living**
UST He has kept us alive
(הַשָּׂם נַפְשֵׁנוּ בַּחַיִּים)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if keeping them alive were **putting** their **soul among the living**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one keeping us alive]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and he does not allow our foot to slip**
UST and he has not allowed anyone to destroy us
(וְלֹא־נָתַן לַמּוֹט רַגְלֵנוּ)

Here, **our foot to slip** represents falling into danger or ruin. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and he does not allow us to stumble into disaster]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| our soul | us |

# Psalms 66:10

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *For you tested us, God; you refined us like the refining of silver.* | *God, you have allowed us to experience great difficulties {in order to make us pure}, just as people put silver in a hot fire so they can purify it.* |

**ULT For you tested us**
**UST** you have allowed us to experience great difficulties
(כִּֽי־בְחַנְתָּנוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the difficulties God allowed as if God had **tested** them as a refiner tests metal. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [For you put us through difficulties to prove us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT you refined us like the refining of silver**
**UST** { … in order to make us pure}, just as people put silver in a hot fire so they can purify it
(צְרַפְתָּנוּ כִּצְרֹף־כָּֽסֶף)

The point of this comparison is that just as silver is purified by being heated in fire to remove impurities, so God allowed the people to go through difficulties to purify them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [you purified us through suffering just as a refiner purifies silver with fire]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT like the refining of silver**
**UST** just as people put silver in a hot fire so they can purify
(כִּצְרֹף־כָּֽסֶף)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **refining**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [just as silver is refined]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| you tested us | you have allowed us to |
| God | God |
| silver | silver |

# Psalms 66:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You brought us into a net; you put pressure on our loins.* | *It is as if you allowed someone to catch us in a trap or made us carry a load that was almost too heavy for us.* |

**ULT You brought us into a net**
**UST** It is as if you allowed someone to catch us in a trap
(הֲבֵאתָנוּ בַמְּצוּדָה)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if the difficult circumstances were a **net** that trapped them. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You allowed us to be captured]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT you put pressure on our loins**
**UST** or made us carry a load that was almost too heavy for us
(שַׂמְתָּ מוּעָקָה בְּמָתְנֵינוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if oppression and hardship were physical **pressure on our loins**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you placed a heavy burden on us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| on our loins | or made us carry |

# Psalms 66:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You made man ride over our head; we went through fire and through waters, but you brought us out to abundance.* | *It is as if you allowed our enemies to trample on us. We experienced troubles that were like walking through fires and floods. But now you have brought us to a place where we are safe and have plenty of food.* |

ULT **You made man ride over our head**
UST It is as if you allowed our enemies to trample on us
(הִרְכַּבְתָּ אֱנוֹשׁ לְרֹאשֵׁנוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if being conquered by enemies were having **man ride over our head**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You let our conquerors trample over us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **we went through fire and through waters**
UST We experienced troubles that were like walking through fires and floods
(בָּאנוּ־בָאֵשׁ וּבַמָּיִם)

The psalmist is referring to all kinds of trials by naming two extremes, **fire** and **waters**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [we went through every kind of danger]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **but you brought us out to abundance**
UST But now you have brought us to a place where we are safe and have plenty of food
(וַתּוֹצִיאֵנוּ לָרְוָיָה)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if prosperity and blessing were a place of **abundance** to which God brought them. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but you brought us to where we prosper]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **to abundance**
> UST to a place where we are safe and have plenty of food
> (לָרְוָיָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **abundance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to a place where we have all that we need]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

# Psalms 66:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will come {into} your house with burnt offerings; I will pay my vows to you,* | *God, I have come to your temple bringing offerings for the priests to burn completely on the altar. I am doing what I promised to do for you.* |

**ULT with burnt offerings**
**UST** bringing offerings for the priests to burn completely on the altar
(בְּעוֹלֹות)

The **burnt offerings** are a kind of sacrifice in which whole animals are burned on an altar as an offering to God. If your readers would not be familiar with what burnt offerings are, you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [with sacrifices that are totally burned on the altar]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {into} your house | to your temple |
| with burnt offerings | bringing offerings for the priests to burn completely on the altar |
| my vows | what I promised to do |

# Psalms 66:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{for} which my lips opened and my mouth spoke when trouble {was} to me.* | *When I was experiencing great trouble, I said that I would bring these offerings to you {if you rescued me}.* |

**ULT {for} which my lips opened**
**UST** I said that I would bring these offerings to you {if you rescued me}
(אֲשֶׁר־פָּצוּ שְׂפָתָי)

Here, **my lips opened** represents the psalmist making vows by speaking them aloud. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [which I voiced]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT my lips opened and my mouth spoke**
**UST** I said
(פָּצוּ שְׂפָתָי וְדִבֶּר־פִּי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [I solemnly vowed]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT { … for} which my lips opened and my mouth spoke when trouble {was} to me**
**UST** When I was experiencing great trouble, I said that I would bring these offerings to you {if you rescued me … }
(אֲשֶׁר־פָּצוּ שְׂפָתָי וְדִבֶּר־פִּי בַּצַּר־לִי)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put the information about when the psalmist was in trouble before the information about what his lips and mouth did. Alternate translation: [{for} which, when trouble {was} to me, my lips opened and my mouth spoke]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| when trouble | great trouble |

# Psalms 66:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will offer up burnt offerings of fatlings to you with the smoke of rams; I will offer cattle with male goats. Selah* | *So I have brought fat sheep to burn on the altar, and I have also brought bulls and goats. When they are burning, you will enjoy the smell of the smoke. Selah* |

ULT **I will offer up burnt offerings of fatlings … I will offer cattle with male goats**
UST So I have brought fat sheep to burn on the altar, and I have also brought bulls and goats
(עֹלֹות מֵחָיִם אַעֲלֶה & אֶעֱשֶׂה בָקָר עִם־עַתּוּדִים)

These two phrases **I will offer up burnt offerings of fatlings** and **I will offer cattle with male goats** mean basically the same thing. The first phrase states the general idea, and then the second phrase gives a specific example. Translate these phrases according to the decisions your team has made regarding translating parallelism in Hebrew poetry. Alternate translation: [I will offer up young animals fattened for burnt offerings … including cattle with male goats]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **burnt offerings of fatlings**
UST fat sheep to burn on the altar
(עֹלֹות מֵחָיִם)

**Fatlings** are young animals that have been fattened for sacrifice. If your readers would not be familiar with what fatlings are, you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [burnt offerings of young, fattened animals]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **with the smoke of rams**
UST When they are burning, you will enjoy the smell of the smoke
(עִם־קְטֹרֶת אֵילִים)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know what he means. The **smoke of rams** is the fragrant smoke that rises when rams are burned as sacrifices on the altar. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [with the fragrant smoke from the burning of rams]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| burnt offerings of | sheep to burn on the altar |
| rams | they |
| cattle | bulls |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| male goats | goats |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 66:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Come, listen, and let me recount, all fearers of God, what he has done for my soul.* | *All you people who deeply respect God, come and listen as I tell you what he has done for me.* |

**ULT Come, listen, and let me recount**
**UST** come and listen as I tell you
(לְכוּ־שִׁמְעוּ וַאֲסַפְּרָה)

These are imperatives, but they communicate a polite request rather than a command. If the imperatives do not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please come, listen, and let me recount]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT what he has done for my soul**
**UST** what he has done for me
(אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְנַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using the term **soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [what he has done for me personally]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and let me recount | as I tell you |
| all fearers of | All you people who deeply respect |
| God | God |
| for my soul | for me |

# Psalms 66:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I called to him {with} my mouth, and he was exalted from my tongue.* | *I called out to him to help me, and I praised him as I was praying to him.* |

**ULT and he was exalted from my tongue**
**UST** and I praised him as I was praying to him
(וְרוֹמַם תַּחַת לְשׁוֹנִי)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if his praise were something physically lifted up from his **tongue**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I praised his greatness with my words]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I called | called out |
| and he was exalted | and I praised him |
| my tongue | as I was praying to him |

# Psalms 66:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *If I had regarded iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have heard.* | *If I had secretly intended to commit sins, the Lord would not have done what I asked.* |

ULT **If I had regarded iniquity in my heart**
UST If I had secretly intended to commit sins
(אָוֶן אִם־רָאִיתִי בְלִבִּי)

The psalmist is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he knows that the condition is not true. He is stating it as a condition to show that the Lord not hearing is also not true. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: [Suppose I had cherished iniquity in my heart]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions

ULT **iniquity**
UST to commit sins
(אָוֶן)

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 wicked]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in my heart**
UST secretly
(בְלִבִּי)

Here, **my heart** represents the psalmist's inner thoughts. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in my mind]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| iniquity | to commit sins |
| the Lord | the Lord |

# Psalms 66:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Surely God has heard; he has attended to the voice of my prayer.* | *{But I did not do that,} so God has done what I asked.* |

**ULT Surely God has heard**
**UST** { … But I did not do that,} so God has done
(אָכֵן שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist uses the word **Surely** here to indicate a contrast between the hypothetical situation in which God would not have heard (verse 18) and the reality that God did hear. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [But indeed God has heard]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

**ULT to the voice of my prayer**
**UST** has done what I asked
(בְּקוֹל תְּפִלָּתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **prayer**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to me as I prayed to him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT to the voice of my prayer**
**UST** has done what I asked
(בְּקוֹל תְּפִלָּתִי)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if his prayer had a **voice** that could speak. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to my words as I prayed]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| my prayer | what I asked |

# Psalms 66:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Blessed {be} God, who has not turned away my prayer or his covenant faithfulness from me.* | *I praise God because he did what I asked him to do. He has continued to be kind to me, as he promised.* |

**ULT Blessed {be} God**
**UST** I praise God
(בָּרוּךְ אֱלֹהִים)

The expression **Blessed be** is a passive verbal form. The psalmist is expressing his desire to praise God. If it would be unnatural to use that form for this purpose, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Let me praise Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT who has not turned away my prayer**
**UST** because he did what I asked him to do
(אֲשֶׁר לֹא־הֵסִיר תְּפִלָּתִי)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word for **turned away**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [who has certainly accepted my prayer]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

**ULT my prayer**
**UST** what I asked him to do
(תְּפִלָּתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **prayer**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [my crying to him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT or his covenant faithfulness from me**
**UST** He has continued to be kind to me, as he promised
(וְחַסְדּוֹ מֵאִתִּי)

The psalmist 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 has he turned away his covenant faithfulness from me]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **or his covenant faithfulness**
UST He has continued to be kind … as he promised
(וְחַסְדּוֹ)

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: [or his loyal love]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Blessed | I praise |
| {be} God | God |
| has not turned away | he did |
| my prayer | what I asked him to do |
| or his covenant faithfulness | He has continued to be kind … as he promised |

# Psalms 67

## Psalm 67 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 67 is a psalm of thanksgiving on the occasion of an abundant harvest. It includes requests at the beginning and end for God to bless the people, but given the occasion, these have the sense of "may God continue to bless us." So while these requests have an element of supplication, the psalm as a whole is a psalm of praise. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Request for God to bless (1–2)
2. Refrain (3)
3. Call to worship (4a)
4. Reason to worship (4b)
5. Refrain (5)
6. Reason to worship (6a)
7. Request for God to bless (6a–7)

### Allusion to Numbers

In verse 1, the psalmist says, "May God be gracious to us and bless us; may he make his face shine on us." In Numbers 6:25, Yahweh told the priests to say this same thing in order to bless the Israelites. So that your readers will be able to recognize this allusion, we recommend that you translate this phrase in the same way here and in Numbers 6:25.

# Psalms 67:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on stringed instruments. A psalm. A song.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: This is a song, a psalm. Musicians playing stringed instruments should accompany this song.* |

**ULT For the chief musician**

UST This is a note for the worship leader

(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm | a psalm |

# Psalms 67:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May God be gracious to us and bless us; may he make his face shine on us, Selah* | *May God always be kind to us and bless us. May he consider us favorably. Selah* |

**ULT may he make his face shine on us**
**UST** May he consider us favorably
(יָאֵר פָּנָיו אִתָּנוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of God showing his favor as if God's **face** were a light that could **shine** on people. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [may he show us his favor]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May … be gracious to us | May … always be kind to us |
| God | God |
| and bless us | and bless us |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 67:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *for the knowing of your way on the earth, your salvation among all of the nations.* | *God, please do that so that all of the people in the world will know how you want them to live and that you are the one who saves them.* |

**ULT for the knowing of your way on the earth**
**UST** God, please do that so that … in the world will know how you want them to live
(לָדַעַת בָּאָרֶץ דַּרְכֶּךָ)

Here the word **for** marks **the knowing of your way** as the goal or purpose of the psalmist's prayer for God's blessing in the previous verse. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that people may know your way]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

**ULT your way**
**UST** how you want them to live
(דַּרְכֶּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of how God acts as if that were a **way** or path that God walks along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [how you act]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT your salvation among all of the nations**
**UST** all of the people … and that you are the one who saves them
(בְּכָל־גּוֹיִם יְשׁוּעָתֶךָ)

The psalmist 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 for the knowing of your salvation among all of the nations]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT your salvation**
**UST** and that you are the one who saves them
(יְשׁוּעָתֶךָ)

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: [how you save people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your way … your salvation among all of the nations**
UST all of the people … how you want them to live and that you are the one who saves them
(דַּרְכֶּךָ בְּכָל־גּוֹיִם יְשׁוּעָתֶךָ)

The pronoun **your** refers to God in both instances. Alternate translation: [God's way … God's salvation among all the nations]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| for the knowing of | God, please do that so that … will know |
| on the earth | in the world |
| your salvation | and that you are the one who saves them |
| the nations | people |

# Psalms 67:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May the peoples thank you, God; may the peoples thank you, all of them.* | *May all the people in the world praise you, God!* |

ULT **May the peoples thank you, God; may the peoples thank you, all of them**
UST May all the people in the world praise you, God
(יוֹדֻךָ עַמִּים ׀ אֱלֹהִים יוֹדוּךָ עַמִּים כֻּלָּם)

These two phrases **May the peoples thank you, God** and **may the peoples thank you, all of them** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with some different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [May all the peoples thank you, God] or [May all the peoples thank you, God; indeed, may everyone in the world thank you]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |

# Psalms 67:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May the nations rejoice and shout joyfully, for you judge the peoples {with} uprightness, and the nations on the earth, you guide them. Selah* | *You judge those nations fairly and show them what they should do. So may they praise you loudly and joyfully! Selah* |

ULT **May the nations rejoice and shout joyfully, for you judge the peoples {with} uprightness, and the nations on the earth, you guide them. Selah**
UST You judge those nations fairly and show them what they should do. So may they praise you loudly and joyfully! Selah
(יִשְׂמְחוּ וִירַנְּנוּ לְאֻמִּים כִּי־תִשְׁפֹּט עַמִּים מִישֹׁר וּלְאֻמִּים ׀ בָּאָרֶץ תַּנְחֵם סֶלָה)

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 you judge the peoples {with} uprightness, and the nations on the earth, you guide them, may the nations rejoice and shout joyfully. Selah]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **you judge the peoples {with} uprightness, and the nations on the earth, you guide them**
UST You judge those nations fairly and show them what they should do
(תִשְׁפֹּט עַמִּים מִישֹׁר וּלְאֻמִּים ׀ בָּאָרֶץ תַּנְחֵם)

These two phrases **you judge the peoples with uprightness** and **the nations on the earth, you guide them** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [you judge and guide all the peoples on the earth with uprightness]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **{with} uprightness**
UST fairly
(מִישֹׁר)

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: [justly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May … rejoice | may … praise you … and joyfully |
| the nations | they |
| and shout joyfully | loudly |
| and shout joyfully | loudly |
| you judge | You judge |
| {with} uprightness | fairly |
| and the nations | and … them |
| on the earth | and … them |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 67:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May the peoples thank you, God; may the peoples thank you, all of them.* | *May all the people in the world praise you, God!* |

**ULT May the peoples thank you, God; may the peoples thank you, all of them**
UST May all the people in the world praise you, God
(יוֹדֻךָ עַמִּים ׀ אֱלֹהִים יוֹדוּךָ עַמִּים כֻּלָּם)

This verse is a refrain that repeats the exact words of 67:3. If your language has a poetic way to indicate a refrain, you could use it here. Alternate translation: [May all the peoples thank you, God]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |

# Psalms 67:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The earth has given its produce; may God, our God, bless us.* | *Good crops have grown on our land. May the God whom we Israelites worship continue to give us good harvests.* |

**ULT The earth has given its produce**
**UST** Good crops have grown on our land
(אֶרֶץ נָתְנָה יְבוּלָהּ)

The psalmist is speaking of **the earth** as if it were a living thing that could **give** produce. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [There has been a good harvest from the earth]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT our God**
**UST** whom we Israelites worship
(אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

The psalmist is not using the possessive form **our God** to indicate that the people of Israel possess or control God. Rather the psalmist is using these words to indicate that God is the one whom they worship. Alternate translation: [the God whom we worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The earth | on our land |
| its produce | Good crops |
| may … bless us | May … continue to give us good harvests |
| God | the God |
| our God | whom we Israelites worship |

# Psalms 67:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May God bless us, and may all of the ends of the earth fear him.* | *May God bless us, and may that cause people throughout the world to respect him greatly.* |

ULT **all of the ends of the earth**
UST people throughout the world
(כָּל־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ)

Here, **all of the ends of the earth** represents people everywhere on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [people everywhere on the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **him**
UST him
(אֹתֽוֹ)

The pronoun **him** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [God]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May … bless us | May … bless us |
| God | God |
| and may … fear | and may that cause … to respect … greatly |
| the earth | people throughout the world |

# Psalms 68

## Psalm 68 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 68 is a divine enthronement psalm. (See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.) Many interpreters believe that David wrote this psalm for the occasion when a great crowd of Israelites brought the Box of the Covenant to a sanctuary that David had prepared for it on Mount Zion. (His son King Solomon later built a temple for Yahweh on that location.) The psalm depicts God leading the people of Israel in a procession starting at Mount Sinai, through the wilderness, into the land of Canaan to conquer it, and finally up Mount Zion to the sanctuary. The psalm then describes the actual procession of Israelites. Finally, it describes how the Israelites will be safe from their enemies now that God will be ruling as their divine king from his sanctuary.

1. The Box of the Covenant sets out (1–2)
2. A call to worship God for his power and goodness (3–6)
3. God leads the Israelites through the desert and provides water (7–10)
4. The conquest of Canaan, viewed through a victory celebration afterwards (11–14)
5. God chooses Mount Zion for his sanctuary (15–18)
6. God will defeat the enemies of the Israelites (19–23)
7. Description of the procession up Mount Zion (24–27)
8. Foreign kingdoms will worship the God of Israel and pay tribute to him (28–35)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Allusion to Numbers

David begins this psalm by saying, “Let God arise, let his enemies scatter, and let the ones hating him flee from his face.” According to Numbers 10:35, whenever the Israelites picked up the Box of the Covenant in order to move to another place in the

wilderness, Moses would say, “Arise, Yahweh, and let your enemies scatter, and let the ones hating you flee from your face.” So that your readers will be able to recognize this allusion, we recommend that you translate this phrase with the same terms here and in Numbers 10:35.

## Mountains

David speaks of mountains in significant ways in this psalm. His overall message is that the same God who first appeared to the Israelites at Mount Sinai is now ruling over them from his sanctuary in Mount Zion. As he says in a compact way in verse 17, “Sinai is in the holy place.” David also speaks of Mount Bashan, a high mountain to the northeast of Israel. In verses 15–16, he says poetically that this great mountain should not be jealous of Mount Zion. In verse 22, he uses it to represent a very high place to which enemies might try to flee, pairing it with the “depths of the sea,” a very low place. Because of the significance of these mountains in the psalm, we recommend that you use the names Sinai and Bashan at each place where they occur, spelling them the way they sound in your language. You may also want to identify Mount Zion as the mountain that David describes in verse 17, as the UST does.

## Walking

The image of walking or marching in a great procession unites all the sections of this psalm. David also uses the image of walking to mean other things. For example, in verse 21, he speaks of “the one walking ahead in his trespasses.” This represents continuing to commit sins, as the UST indicates. It may be most natural to express the idea in that way in your translation. However, if your language can use the image of walking to represent living, we recommend that you do that so that your readers can appreciate how David is using this image.

# Psalms 68:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician. A psalm of David. A song.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: David wrote this psalm. It is a song.* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm of | this psalm. It is a song |
| David | David wrote |

# Psalms 68:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let God arise, let his enemies scatter, and let the ones hating him flee from his face.* | *God, take action and chase away your enemies! Make those who hate you run away from you.* |

**ULT Let God arise, let his enemies scatter, and let the ones hating him flee**
**UST** God, take action and chase away your enemies! Make those who hate you run away
(יָקוּם אֱלֹהִים יָפוּצוּ אוֹיְבָיו וְיָנֻסוּ מְשַׂנְאָיו)

By using **Let**, the psalmist is expressing his wish or prayer. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about "let" and "may" and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [I desire that God should arise and make his enemies scatter and the ones hating him flee]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

**ULT let his enemies scatter, and let the ones hating him flee from his face**
**UST** and chase away your enemies! Make those who hate you run away from you
(יָפוּצוּ אוֹיְבָיו וְיָנֻסוּ מְשַׂנְאָיו מִפָּנָיו)

These two phrases **let his enemies scatter** and **let the ones hating him flee from his face** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [may all who oppose him scatter and flee]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT from his face**
**UST** from you
(מִפָּנָיו)

Here, **from his face** represents being away from God's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from before him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| let … scatter | and chase away |
| God | God |
| his enemies | your enemies |

# Psalms 68:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *As smoke is driven away, drive {them} away; as wax melts from the face of fire, let the wicked perish from the face of God.* | *Chase your enemies away just as wind blows smoke away. Make bad people go away, God, just as wax melts when it is near a fire.* |

ULT **As smoke is driven away, drive {them} away**
UST Chase your enemies away just as wind blows smoke away
(כְּהִנָּדֵף עָשָׁן תִּנְדֹּף)

The point of this comparison is that just as **smoke is driven away** easily and completely by wind, so should God's enemies be easily and completely driven away. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [Scatter them completely, just as smoke is scattered by the wind]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **As smoke is driven away**
UST just as wind blows smoke away
(כְּהִנָּדֵף עָשָׁן)

The expression **smoke is driven away** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [the wind drives smoke away]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **as wax melts from the face of fire, let the wicked perish from the face of God**
UST Make bad people go away, God, just as wax melts when it is near a fire
(כְּהִמַּס דּוֹנַג מִפְּנֵי־אֵשׁ יֹאבְדוּ רְשָׁעִים מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים)

The point of this comparison is that just as **wax melts from the face of fire**, dissolving and disappearing before heat, so will the wicked perish before God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [just as wax dissolves when heat strikes it, let the wicked perish before God]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **from the face of fire**
UST when it is near a fire
(מִפְּנֵי־אֵשׁ)

Here, **from the face of fire** represents being near the front surface of fire. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from the heat of fire]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **let the wicked perish**
UST Make bad people go away
(יֹאבְדוּ רְשָׁעִים)

By using **let**, the psalmist is expressing what he desires or prays will happen. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [the wicked should be destroyed]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **the wicked**
UST bad people
(רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist 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]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **from the face of God**
UST God
(מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים)

Here, **from the face of God** represents being away from God’s presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from before God]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| let … perish | Make … go away |
| the wicked | bad people |
| God | God |

# Psalms 68:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But let the righteous rejoice, let them exult to the face of God, and let them be glad with rejoicing.* | *But make good people happy. May they rejoice when they are in your presence; may they be very joyful.* |

ULT **But let the righteous rejoice, let them exult to the face of God, and let them be glad with rejoicing**
UST But make good people happy. May they rejoice when they are in your presence; may they be very joyful
(וְצַדִּיקִים יִשְׂמְחוּ יַעֲלְצוּ לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים וְיָשִׂישׂוּ בְשִׂמְחָה)

See how your translation team has decided to represent sets of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [But let the righteous celebrate joyfully in God's presence]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **But let the righteous rejoice**
UST But make good people happy
(וְצַדִּיקִים יִשְׂמָחוּ)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [But let righteous people rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **to the face of God**
UST when they are in your presence
(לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים)

Here, **to the face of God** represents being in God's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [before God]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **with rejoicing**
UST very
(בְשִׂמְחָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **rejoicing**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [as they rejoice greatly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| But … the righteous | good people |
| let … rejoice | But make … happy |
| let them exult | May they rejoice |
| God | your |
| and let them be glad | may they be … joyful |
| with rejoicing | very |

# Psalms 68:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sing to God, make music {to} his name, lift up to the one riding over the plains. In Yah {is} his name; yes, exult to his face.* | *Sing praise to God! Sing a song for him who even cares for desolate regions. His name is Yahweh; be glad when you are in his presence.* |

**ULT Sing to God, make music {to} his name**
UST Sing praise to God
(שִׁ֭ירוּ ׀ לֵֽאלֹהִ֗ים זַמְּרוּ־שְׁמֽוֹ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Sing praise to God, making music to him]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT {to} his name**
UST God
(שְׁמֽוֹ)

The psalmist is using the term **his name** to represent who God is and to refer to God's reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [who he is]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT lift up to the one riding over the plains**
UST Sing a song for him who even cares for desolate regions
(סֹ֤לּוּ לָרֹכֵ֖ב בָּעֲרָב֑וֹת)

The psalmist 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: [lift up a song to the one riding over the plains]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **to the one riding over the plains**
UST for him who even cares for desolate regions
(לָרֹכֵב בָּעֲרָבוֹת)

Here the psalmist is speaking of God as if he were **the one riding over the plains**, evoking the image of a powerful warrior or king who commands the open wilderness. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one who moves powerfully through the desert wastelands]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **yes, exult to his face**
UST be glad when you are in his presence
(וְעִלְזוּ לְפָנָיו)

Here, **exult to his face** represents rejoicing in God's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [yes, exult before him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| In Yah | is Yahweh |
| yes, exult | be glad |

# Psalms 68:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A father of orphans and a judge of widows {is} God in the abode of his holiness.* | *God, who is present in his sanctuary, is like a father to those who are orphans, and he protects widows.* |

ULT **A father of orphans**
UST is like a father to those who are orphans
(אֲבִי יְתוֹמִים)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a father who is characterized by caring for orphans. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [A father to orphans]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **A father of orphans**
UST is like a father to those who are orphans
(אֲבִי יְתוֹמִים)

Here the psalmist is speaking of God as if he were **A father of orphans**, meaning God cares for and protects those who have no earthly father. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [One who cares for orphans as a father would]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and a judge of widows**
UST and he protects widows
(וְדַיַּן אַלְמָנוֹת)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a judge who is characterized by defending widows. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a defender of widows]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **his holiness**
UST who is present in his sanctuary
(קָדְשׁוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **his holiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [his holy being]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and a judge of | and he protects |
| {is} God | God |
| his holiness | who is present in his sanctuary |

# Psalms 68:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God is making the lonely dwell in a house; he is bringing out prisoners into prosperity. But the ones rebelling dwell in dryness.* | *He provides families for those who have no one to live with. He frees prisoners and enables them to be successful. But those who rebel against him will not be successful. It will be as if they live in a place where it is very hard to grow crops.* |

ULT **the lonely**
UST for those who have no one to live with
(יְחִידִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **lonely** 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: [those who are lonely]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **But the ones rebelling dwell in dryness**
UST But those who rebel against him will not be successful. It will be as if they live in a place where it is very hard to grow crops
(אַךְ סוֹרְרִים שָׁכְנוּ צָחִיחָה)

The psalmist uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between those whom God blesses and those who rebel against him. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [However, the ones rebelling dwell in dryness]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **dwell in dryness**
UST will not be successful. It will be as if they live in a place where it is very hard to grow crops
(שָׁכְנוּ צָחִיחָה)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if **dryness** were a place where rebels must live, representing the barrenness and hardship of life without God's blessing. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [dwell in a barren land]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | He |
| in a house | families |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| into prosperity | and enables them to be successful |
| the ones rebelling | those who rebel against him |

# Psalms 68:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God, when you went out to the face of your people, when you marched in the wilderness, Selah* | *God, you led your people out of Egypt, and then you marched with them through the desert. Selah* |

ULT **when you went out to the face of your people, when you marched in the wilderness**
UST you led your people out of Egypt, and then you marched with them through the desert
(בְּצֵאתְךָ לִפְנֵי עַמֶּךָ בְּצַעְדְּךָ בְיִשִׁימוֹן)

The psalmist is using the clause **when you went out to the face of your people, when you marched in the wilderness** to describe something that was ongoing. This provides the background for the events he describes in verse 8. Connect this clause to the following verse in a way that makes it clear in your language that this clause is describing something that was ongoing in the background. Alternate translation: [as you went out before your people, as you marched through the wilderness]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Background Information

ULT **when you went out to the face of your people, when you marched in the wilderness**
UST you led your people out of Egypt, and then you marched with them through the desert
(בְּצֵאתְךָ לִפְנֵי עַמֶּךָ בְּצַעְדְּךָ בְיִשִׁימוֹן)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [when you marched before your people through the wilderness]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **to the face of your people**
UST you led your people out of Egypt
(לִפְנֵי עַמֶּךָ)

Here, **to the face of your people** represents going out in front of and leading the people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [before your people]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| in the wilderness | through the desert |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 68:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the earth quaked; indeed, the heavens dripped from the face of God; this Sinai, from the face of God, the God of Israel.* | *After you did that, the earth shook at Mount Sinai when you appeared to your people. Rain poured down from the sky, and your people worshiped you.* |

**ULT the earth quaked**
**UST** After you did that, the earth shook
(אֶ֣רֶץ רָעָ֑שָׁה)

The psalmist is speaking of **the earth quaked** as if the earth were a living thing that could react with fear. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the earth trembled]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT the heavens dripped**
**UST** Rain poured down from the sky
(שָׁמַ֥יִם נָטְפ֗וּ)

The psalmist is speaking of **the heavens dripped** as if the heavens were a living thing that could pour out rain. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [rain fell from the sky]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT from the face of God**
**UST** when you appeared to your people
(מִפְּנֵ֣י אֱלֹהִ֑ים)

Here, **from the face of God** represents being in front of God, that is, in his presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from the presence of God]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **this Sinai, from the face of God, the God of Israel**
UST at Mount Sinai when you appeared to your people … and your people worshiped you
(זֶה סִינַי מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. The verb “quaked” from the previous clause is implied here. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [this Sinai also quaked, from the face of God, the God of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **from the face of God**
UST when you appeared to your people
(מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים)

Here, **from the face of God** represents being in front of God, that is, in his presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from the presence of God]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the God of Israel**
UST and your people worshiped you
(אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist is not using this possessive form **the God of Israel** to indicate that the Israelites possess or control God. Rather the psalmist is using these words to indicate that God is the one whom Israel worships. Alternate translation: [who is the God whom Israel worships]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the earth | After you did that, the earth |
| quaked | shook |
| the heavens | from the sky |
| God | when you appeared to your people |
| Sinai | at Mount Sinai |
| the God of | worshiped you |
| Israel | and your people |

# Psalms 68:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A rain of generosities you shook out, God; your inheritance, when it was wearied, you, you established it.* | *You caused much rain to fall there in the wilderness, and so you enabled good crops to grow again on that land that you gave to us Israelites.* |

ULT **A rain of generosities you shook out**
UST caused much rain to fall
(גֶּ֤שֶׁם נְדָבוֹת֮ תָּנִ֫יף)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **rain** that is characterized by **generosities**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [You poured out abundant rainfall]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **A rain of generosities**
UST much rain
(גֶּ֤שֶׁם נְדָבוֹת֮)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **generosities**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [A generous rainful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your inheritance**
UST there in the wilderness … on that land that you gave to us Israelites
(נַחֲלָתְךָ֥)

David is speaking as if the land of Israel were actually Yahweh's **inheritance**, that is, as if it were something that belonged to him permanently because he inherited it from an ancestor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the land that belongs to you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **when it was wearied**
UST again
(וְנִלְאָֽה)

The expression **when it was wearied** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [when it grew weary]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **you, you established it**
UST and so you enabled good crops to grow
(אַתָּה כֹוֹנַנְתָּהּ)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you established** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that God himself is the one who acted. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [indeed, you established it]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| generosities | much |
| God | You |
| your inheritance | there in the wilderness … on that land that you gave to us Israelites |
| you established it | and so … enabled good crops to grow |

# Psalms 68:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your flock dwelt in it; in your goodness, you prepared for the poor, God.* | *Your people built homes there. You were kind to poor people and provided food for them.* |

ULT **Your flock**
UST Your people
(חַיָּתֶךָ)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if God's people were **your flock**, an animal herd cared for by a shepherd. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Your nation]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in it**
UST there
(בָּהּ)

The pronoun **it** refers to the land, that is, the inheritance mentioned in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [in the land]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **in your goodness**
UST were kind
(בְּטוּבְךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **goodness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [because you are good]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **for the poor**
UST to poor people
(לֶעָנִי)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [for those who are needy]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Your flock | Your people |
| in your goodness | were kind |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| you prepared | and provided food for them |
| God | You |

# Psalms 68:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The Lord utters the word; the {women} proclaiming good news {are} a great army.* | *Kings led their armies to fight against the Israelites, but God defeated them and they ran away. The Lord declared victory over them, and a great crowd of Israelite women sang and danced to celebrate. The men who fought against these enemies captured many valuable possessions and brought them back to the women who were at home. (vv11-12)* |

**ULT The Lord utters the word**
(אֲדֹנָי יִתֵּן־אֹמֶר)

The psalmist is using the term **word** to represent the message or command that the Lord spoke. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The Lord speaks his command]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT the {women} proclaiming good news {are} a great army**
(הַמְבַשְּׂרוֹת צָבָא רָב)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if the women proclaiming good news were **a great army**, a large and powerful fighting force. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the women proclaiming good news are a vast company]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the {women} proclaiming good news**
(הַמְבַשְּׂרוֹת)

The Hebrew word translated as **the women proclaiming good news** is feminine in form, indicating that those who announced the victory were specifically women. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this explicit. Alternate translation: [the female heralds]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The Lord | אֲדֹנָי (ORIG QUOTE) |
| the {women} proclaiming good news | הַמְבַשְּׂרוֹת (ORIG QUOTE) |
| the {women} proclaiming good news | הַמְבַשְּׂרוֹת (ORIG QUOTE) |

# Psalms 68:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Kings of armies flee, they flee, and the habitation of the house, she divides the spoil.* | *Kings led their armies to fight against the Israelites, but God defeated them and they ran away. The Lord declared victory over them, and a great crowd of Israelite women sang and danced to celebrate. The men who fought against these enemies captured many valuable possessions and brought them back to the women who were at home. (vv11-12)* |

**ULT Kings of armies**
(מַלְכֵי צְבָאוֹת)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to mean kings who command armies. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Kings who command armies]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT flee, they flee**
(יִדֹּדֻן יִדֹּדוּן)

The words **flee** and **they flee** mean similar things. The psalmist is using the two words together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [they flee in great haste]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT they flee, and the habitation of the house, she divides**
(יִדֹּדֻן וּנְוַת בַּיִת תְּחַלֵּק)

The pronoun **they** refers to the kings, while the pronoun **she** refers to the woman who stays at home. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the kings flee, and the woman who stays at home divides]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Kings | מַלְכֵי (ORIG QUOTE) |
| the house | בַּיִת (ORIG QUOTE) |
| the spoil | שָׁלָל (ORIG QUOTE) |

# Psalms 68:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Though you lie down between the sheepfolds, the wings of a dove covered with silver and its feathers, with greenness of gold.* | *Some men had to take care of the sheep {instead of fighting}, but the soldiers captured enough valuable possessions to give them some as well. They received treasures such as a dove statue with silver wings and feathers shimmering with fine gold.* |

ULT **Though you lie down**
UST Some men had to take care of … instead of fighting
(אִם־תִּשְׁכְּבוּן)

The pronoun you does not refer to God, as in verses 7–10. It is plural, and it refers to Israelite men who stayed back to care for flocks instead of going into battle. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Even if you were among the Israelite men who lay down between the sheepfolds] or [Even if you were among the Israelite men who cared for flocks instead of going into battle]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the wings of a dove covered with silver**
UST but the soldiers captured enough valuable possessions to give them some as well. They received treasures such as a dove statue with silver wings
(כַּנְפֵי יוֹנָה נֶחְפָּה בַכֶּסֶף)

The psalmist is using **the wings of a dove covered with silver** to represent a dove statue on which the wings are covered with silver. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a dove statue whose wings are covered with silver]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **the wings of a dove covered with silver**
UST but the soldiers captured enough valuable possessions to give them some as well. They received treasures such as a dove statue with silver wings
(כַּנְפֵי יוֹנָה נֶחְפָּה בַכֶּסֶף)

David assumes that his listeners will understand that he is describing the type of plunder that even men who stayed out of battle to care for flocks will receive. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [you will still receive plunder such as a dove statue whose wings are covered with silver]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **covered with silver**
UST silver
(נֻחְפָּ֣ה בַכֶּ֣סֶף)

The expression **covered with silver** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [with a silver covering]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and its feathers, with greenness of gold**
UST and feathers shimmering with fine gold
(וְאֶבְרוֹתֶ֥יהָ בִּירַקְרַ֗ק חָרוּץ)

The psalmist is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. The word “covered” from the previous clause is implied here. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [and its feathers covered with greenness of gold]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the sheepfolds | the sheep |
| a dove | but the soldiers captured enough valuable possessions to give them some as well. They received treasures such as a dove statue |
| with silver | silver |
| gold | fine gold |

# Psalms 68:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *When Shaddai scattered kings in it, it snowed on Zalmon.* | *Shaddai defeated the enemy kings and their armies by making it snow on Mount Zalmon!* |

ULT **When Shaddai scattered kings in it, it snowed on Zalmon**
UST Shaddai defeated the enemy kings and their armies by making it snow on Mount Zalmon
(בְּפָרֵשׂ שַׁדַּי מְלָכִים בָּהּ תַּשְׁלֶג בְּצַלְמוֹן)

The word **When** indicates that the scattering of kings and the snowfall on Zalmon happened at the same time. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could describe the time relationship more explicitly. Alternate translation: [As Shaddai scattered kings in it, it snowed on Zalmon]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

ULT **in it**
UST defeated
(בָּהּ)

The pronoun **it** refers to the land, the region where the battle took place. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [in the place where the enemy army had assembled]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **it snowed on Zalmon**
UST by making it snow on Mount Zalmon
(תַּשְׁלֶג בְּצַלְמוֹן)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if the whitened, fleeing armies were **it snowed on Zalmon**, comparing their scattered flight to snowfall blanketing a dark mountain. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the battlefield was white, like snow on Zalmon]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| When … scattered | defeated |
| Shaddai | Shaddai |
| kings | the enemy kings and their armies |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| it snowed | by making it snow |

# Psalms 68:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Mount Bashan {is} a mountain of God;*<br>*Mount Bashan {is} a mountain of peaks.* | *Mount Bashan is a very high mountain. It has many peaks.* |

**ULT {is} a mountain of God**
**UST** is a very high mountain
(הַר־אֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist is using **a mountain of God** as a common expression of the culture to mean "a very great mountain." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a magnificent mountain]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT {is} a mountain of peaks**
**UST** has many peaks
(הַר גַּבְנֻנִּים)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a mountain that is characterized by having many peaks. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a many-peaked mountain]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Bashan | Bashan |
| God | very high |

# Psalms 68:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Why do you look enviously, mountains, peaks, {at} the mountain God desired for his dwelling? Indeed, Yahweh will inhabit {it} forever.* | *Because it is such a great mountain, if it could think, it might think that God should have chosen it as the place for his sanctuary. But Yahweh chose Mount Zion instead, and he will always be present there.* |

**ULT { … Why do you look enviously, mountains, peaks, at} the mountain God desired for his dwelling**

**UST** Because it is such a great mountain, if it could think, it might think that God should have chosen it as the place for his sanctuary. But Yahweh chose Mount Zion instead

(לָמָּה ׀ תְּרַצְּדוּן הָרִים גַּבְנֻנִּים הָהָר חָמַד אֱלֹהִים לְשִׁבְתּוֹ)

The psalmist is using the question form to assert that God has chosen Mount Zion as his dwelling place, not the impressive Mount Bashan. 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: [You other mountains and peaks should not look enviously at the mountain God desired for his dwelling!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT Why do you look enviously, mountains, peaks**

**UST** Because it is such a great mountain, if it could think, it might think

(לָמָּה ׀ תְּרַצְּדוּן הָרִים גַּבְנֻנִּים)

The psalmist is speaking of **mountains, peaks** as if they were living things that could feel envy. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Why do you look enviously, O rugged mountains]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT mountains, peaks**

**UST** Because it is such a great mountain

(הָרִים גַּבְנֻנִּים)

The psalmist is speaking to **mountains, peaks** that he knows cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about God's choice of Zion. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about the mountains. Alternate translation: [many-peaked mountains] or [dwellers among the many-peaked mountains]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

ULT **for his dwelling**
UST as the place for his sanctuary
(לְשִׁבְתּוֹ)

The pronoun **his** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [for God's dwelling]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| Yahweh | he |
| forever | always |

# Psalms 68:17

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *The chariotry of God {is} two myriads, thousands of repetition. The Lord {is} among them; Sinai {is} in the holy {place}.* | *God is so powerful that it is as if he has thousands and thousands of chariots. In fact, it is as if he has ten thousands and ten thousands of them! The same God who appeared to the Israelites on Mount Sinai is now present in his sanctuary on Mount Zion.* |

ULT **The chariotry of God**
UST God is so powerful that it is as if he has … chariots
(רֶכֶב אֱלֹהִים)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if God's overwhelming power were **the chariotry of God**, a vast military force of chariots. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The armies of God]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{is} two myriads, thousands of repetition**
UST thousands and thousands of … In fact, it is as if he has ten thousands and ten thousands of them
(רִבֹּתַיִם אַלְפֵי שְׁנָאָן)

The psalmist says **two myriads, thousands of repetition** as an extreme statement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [tens of thousands upon thousands]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **{is} among them**
UST is now present
(בָּם)

The pronoun **them** refers to the chariots/myriads. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [is among the chariots]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The chariotry of | it is as if he has … chariots |
| God | God is so powerful that |
| The Lord | The same God |
| Sinai | who appeared to the Israelites on Mount Sinai |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| is} in the holy {place} | in his sanctuary on Mount Zion |

# Psalms 68:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have ascended to the height, you have taken captivity captive, you have received gifts among men and even {among} the ones rebelling, that Yah God might dwell {there}.* | *{After he defeated his enemies,} he went up to the sacred mountain where his sanctuary is. He led many captured prisoners in a victory procession. He received gifts from the enemies whom he had defeated. He even received gifts from those who had rebelled against him. Now Yahweh, our God, will always be present in his sanctuary.* |

ULT **You have ascended to the height**
UST {After he defeated his enemies,} he went up to the sacred mountain where his sanctuary is
(עָלִ֣יתָ לַמָּר֑וֹם)

Here the psalmist is speaking of God's victory as if it were **ascended to the height**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You have risen to supremacy]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **you have taken captivity captive**
UST He led many captured prisoners in a victory procession
(שָׁבִ֣יתָ שֶּׁ֭בִי)

The psalmist is using **you have taken captivity captive** as a common expression of the culture to mean that he has taken a great multitude of prisoners. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you have led a host of captives]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **captivity**
UST many captured prisoners
(שֶּׁ֭בִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **captivity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [captives]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **among men**
UST from the enemies whom he had defeated
(בָּאָדָם)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [among people]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **that Yah God might dwell {there}**
UST Now Yahweh, our God, will always be present in his sanctuary
(לְשָׁכֵן ׀ יָהּ אֱלֹהִים)

Here, **that Yah God might dwell there** marks the entire preceding action of ascending, taking captives, and receiving gifts as the goal or purpose of those acts—namely, that God would establish his dwelling. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that Yah God might dwell there]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| you have taken … captive | He led … in a victory procession |
| captivity | many captured prisoners |
| you have received | He received |
| {among} the ones rebelling | those who had rebelled against him |
| Yah | Yahweh |
| God | our God |

# Psalms 68:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Blessed {be} the Lord! Day, day he bears for us, the God of our salvation. Selah* | *Praise the Lord, who helps us every day as if he were carrying a heavy load for us. He is the God who saves us. Selah* |

**ULT Blessed {be} the Lord**
**UST** Praise the Lord
(בָּרוּךְ אֲדֹנָי)

The expression **Blessed be** is a passive verbal form. The psalmist is expressing his desire to praise the Lord. If it would be unnatural to use that form for this purpose, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [We bless the Lord] or [Let me praise the Lord]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT Day, day**
**UST** every day
(יוֹם ו יוֹם)

The psalmist is repeating the word **Day** in order to intensify the meaning or the emotion that it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [Day after day]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT he bears for us**
**UST** who helps us … as if he were carrying a heavy load for us
(יַעֲמָס־לָנוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the Lord's support as if he **bears** a load on behalf of his people. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he carries our burdens]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the God of our salvation**
UST He is the God who saves us
(הָאֵל יְשׁוּעָתֵנוּ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **the God** who is characterized by saving. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the God who delivers us]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the God of our salvation**
UST He is the God who saves us
(הָאֵל יְשׁוּעָתֵנוּ)

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: [the God who rescues us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Blessed {be} | Praise |
| the Lord | the Lord |
| he bears | who helps us … as if he were carrying a heavy load |
| the God of | He is the God |
| our salvation | who saves us |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 68:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God {is} to us a God of salvations, and to Yahweh the Lord {are} exits from death.* | *Our God is the God who saves us; Yahweh our Lord is the one who rescues us from dying.* |

**ULT God {is} to us a God of salvations, and to Yahweh the Lord {are} exits from death**
**UST** Our God is the God who saves us; Yahweh our Lord is the one who rescues us from dying
(הָאֵל ׀ לָ֭נוּ אֵ֣ל לְמוֹשָׁעוֹת וְלַיהוִה אֲדֹנָ֗י לַמָּ֥וֹת תּוֹצָאֽוֹת)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [God is to us a God of salvations; indeed, Yahweh the Lord delivers us from death]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT a God of salvations**
**UST** is the God who saves
(אֵל לְמוֹשָׁעוֹת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **salvations**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a God who saves]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT {are} exits from death**
**UST** is the one who rescues us from dying
(לַמָּ֥וֹת תּוֹצָאֽוֹת)

Here the psalmist is speaking of escaping death as if it were **exits from** a place called death. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [ways of escaping from death]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | Our God |
| a God of | is the God |
| salvations | who saves |
| and to Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the Lord | our Lord |

# Psalms 68:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Surely God will crush the head of his enemies, the pate of hair of the one walking ahead in his trespasses.* | *But God will completely destroy his enemies. If anyone continues to behave sinfully, God will destroy that person.* |

ULT **will crush the head of his enemies**
UST will completely destroy his enemies
(יִמְחַ֤ץ ׀ רֹ֣אשׁ אֹיְבָ֑יו)

The psalmist is using one part of a person, **the head**, to mean all parts of his enemies in the act of being defeated. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [will crush his enemies]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **the pate of hair of the one walking ahead**
UST If anyone continues … God will destroy that person
(קָדְקֹ֥ד שֵׂעָ֗ר מִתְהַלֵּ֥ךְ)

The psalmist is leaving out the verb **crush** that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply this word from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [crushing the pate of hair of the one walking ahead in his trespasses]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **the one walking ahead in his trespasses**
UST If anyone continues to behave sinfully
(מִתְהַלֵּ֥ךְ בַּאֲשָׁמָ֑יו)

Here the psalmist is speaking of persisting in sin as if it were **walking ahead** in a direction of one's own choosing. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one who continues in his trespasses]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in his trespasses**
UST to behave sinfully
(בַּאֲשָׁמָיו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **trespasses**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [who continues trespassing against God]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **his enemies … in his trespasses**
UST his enemies … to behave sinfully
(אֹיְבָיו & בַּאֲשָׁמָיו)

The pronoun **his** in “his enemies” refers to God, while the pronoun **his** in “his trespasses” refers to the enemy. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [God’s enemies … in the enemy’s trespasses]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| his enemies | his enemies |
| in his trespasses | to behave sinfully |

# Psalms 68:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The Lord said, "I will bring back from Bashan, I will bring back from the depths of the sea,* | *The Lord said, "Even if my enemies try to climb a high mountain to be safe, or even if they try to hide at the bottom of the ocean, I will bring them back* |

**ULT from the depths of the sea**
**UST** or even if they try to hide at the bottom of the ocean
(מְמְּצֻלֹות יָם)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean the deepest part of the sea. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [from the deep sea]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT I will bring back from Bashan, I will bring back from the depths of the sea**
**UST** Even if my enemies try to climb a high mountain to be safe, or even if they try to hide at the bottom of the ocean, I will bring them back
(מִבָּשָׁן אָשִׁיב אָשִׁיב מְמְּצֻלֹות יָם)

The psalmist is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. The object "them" (referring to the enemies) is implied. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [I will bring them back from Bashan, I will bring them back from the depths of the sea]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT from Bashan … from the depths of the sea**
**UST** Even if my enemies try to climb a high mountain to be safe, or even if they try to hide at the bottom of the ocean
(מִבָּשָׁן & מְמְּצֻלֹות יָם)

The psalmist is referring to all places by naming two extremes, **from Bashan** (high ground) and **from the depths of the sea** (the lowest depths). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from the heights … from the depths]

**Support Reference:** Merism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The Lord<br>I will bring back … I will bring back<br>from Bashan | The Lord<br>I will bring them back |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| | Even if my enemies try to climb a high mountain to be safe |

# Psalms 68:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *so that your foot may smash in blood, the tongue of your dogs, its portion from the enemies.”* | *so that you can trample on their heads. Your dogs will lick up the blood that comes out of their heads.”* |

ULT **so that your foot may smash in blood**
UST so that you can trample on their heads … the blood that comes out of … heads
(לְמַעַן ׀ תְּמְתַּץ רַגְלְךָ בְּדָם)

Here, **so that your foot may smash in blood** marks the purpose of the Lord’s bringing the enemies back. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [in order that your foot may smash in blood]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **your foot may smash in blood**
UST you can trample on their heads … the blood that comes out of … heads
(תְּמְתַּץ רַגְלְךָ בְּדָם)

Here the psalmist is speaking of total victory over enemies as if it were to **smash in blood** with one’s foot. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your foot may trample over the defeated enemies]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the tongue of your dogs, its portion from the enemies**
UST Your dogs will lick up the blood that comes out of their heads
(לְשׁוֹן כְּלָבֶיךָ מֵאֹיְבִים מְנָהוּ)

The psalmist is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. A verb such as “will lick” is implied. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [“the tongue of your dogs will taste its portion from the enemies”]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **the tongue of your dogs**
UST Your dogs will lick up
(לְשׁוֹן כְּלָבֶיךָ)

The psalmist is using one part of the dogs, their **tongue**, to mean the dogs in the act of licking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your dogs will lick]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **your foot … your dogs**
UST you … Your dogs
(רַגְלְךָ & כְּלָבֶיךָ)

The pronoun **your** in both "your foot" and "your dogs" refers to God's people, Israel. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Israel's foot … Israel's dogs]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the tongue of | will lick up |
| from the enemies | their |

# Psalms 68:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They see your processions, God, the processions of my God, my king, into the holy {place}.* | *And now you are parading triumphantly into your sanctuary, God. You are our king, and you are leading a great crowd the way a king does.* |

ULT **They see your processions, God, the processions of my God, my king**
UST And now you are parading triumphantly … God. You are our king, and you are leading a great crowd the way a king does
(רָאוּ הֲלִיכוֹתֶיךָ אֱלֹהִים הֲלִיכוֹת אֵלִי מַלְכִּי)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [They see your processions, God —the triumphal march of my God and king]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **They see your processions**
UST And now you are parading triumphantly
(רָאוּ הֲלִיכוֹתֶיךָ)

The pronoun **They** has an unclear referent here; it may refer to the worshipers in Israel generally. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The people see your processions]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| my God | You |
| my king | are our king |
| into the holy {place} | into your sanctuary |

# Psalms 68:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The singers go ahead; the ones playing stringed instruments, behind, maidens playing timbrels, in the midst.* | *There are singers at the front of the parade. Musicians playing stringed instruments are at the back of the parade. In the middle there are girls playing tambourines.* |

**ULT the ones playing stringed instruments, behind**
**UST** Musicians playing stringed instruments are at the back of the parade
(אַחַר נֹגְנִים)

The psalmist is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. The verb “go” from the first clause is implied. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [the ones playing stringed instruments go behind]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT maidens playing timbrels, in the midst**
**UST** In the middle there are girls playing tambourines
(בְּתוֹךְ עֲלָמוֹת תּוֹפֵפוֹת)

The psalmist is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. The verb “go” from the first clause is implied. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [maidens playing timbrels go in the midst]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

# Psalms 68:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Bless God in the assemblies, Yahweh, from the fountain of Israel.* | *Praise God, you who have gathered together! Praise Yahweh, you descendants of Israel!* |

**ULT Yahweh, from the fountain of Israel**
UST Yahweh, you descendants of Israel
(יְהוָ֗ה מִמְּקֹור֥ יִשְׂרָאֵֽל)

The psalmist is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. The verb “Bless” from the first line is implied. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [bless Yahweh, you from the fountain of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT from the fountain of Israel**
UST you descendants of Israel
(מִמְּקֹור֥ יִשְׂרָאֵֽל)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the origin of the people of Israel as if it were a **fountain**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you who come from the stock of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT from the fountain of Israel**
UST you descendants of Israel
(מִמְּקֹור֥ יִשְׂרָאֵֽל)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a fountain that is characterized by being Israel’s source or origin. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Israel’s source]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Bless | Praise … Praise |
| God | God |
| in the assemblies | you who have gathered together |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| from the fountain of | you descendants of |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Israel | Israel |

# Psalms 68:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *There {is} Benjamin, the littlest, ruling them; the princes of Judah, their throngs; the princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali.* | *People from the tribe of Benjamin, the smallest tribe, are marching first. Leaders and many other people from the tribe of Judah come next. There are even leaders from the {far northern} tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali in the parade.* |

ULT **the littlest**
UST the smallest tribe
(צָעִיר)

The psalmist is using the adjective **littlest** as a noun to mean the smallest tribe. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the least significant]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **ruling them**
UST Leaders
(רֹדָם)

The pronoun **them** refers to the tribes of Israel. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [ruling the tribes]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali**
UST There are even leaders from the {far northern} tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali in the parade
(שָׂרֵי זְבֻלוּן שָׂרֵי נַפְתָּלִי)

The psalmist 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 are the princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **{is} Benjamin … the princes of Judah … the princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali**

UST People from the tribe of Benjamin … Leaders … from the tribe of Judah … There are even leaders from the {far northern} tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali in the parade
(בִּנְיָמִן & שָׂרֵי יְהוּדָה & שָׂרֵי זְבֻלוּן שָׂרֵי נַפְתָּלִי)

Here, **Benjamin**, **the princes of Judah**, **the princes of Zebulun**, and **the princes of Naphtali** represent the leaders of those tribes. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the leaders of Benjamin … the chiefs of Judah … the chiefs of Zebulun … the chiefs of Naphtali]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {is} Benjamin | People from the tribe of Benjamin |
| ruling them | Leaders |
| the princes of | Leaders |
| Judah | from the tribe of Judah |
| their throngs | and many other people … come next |
| Zebulun | from the {far northern} tribes of Zebulun |
| the princes of | There are even leaders … in the parade |
| Naphtali | and Naphtali |

# Psalms 68:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your God has commanded your strength. Be strong, God! You have done this for us.* | *Our God has made our Israelite tribes strong. God, continue to help us with your power as you helped us in the past.* |

**ULT your strength**
**UST** our Israelite tribes strong
(עֻזֶּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how strong you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Be strong, God**
**UST** God, continue to help us with your power
(עוּזָּה אֱלֹהִים)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please show your strength, God]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT You have done this for us**
**UST** as you helped us in the past
(זּוּ פָּעַלְתָּ לָּנוּ)

The pronoun **You** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [God, you have done this for us]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT Your God has commanded your strength**
**UST** Our God has made our Israelite tribes strong
(צַוָּה אֱלֹהֶיךָ עֻזֶּךָ)

In both uses, the pronoun **Your** refers to Israel being addressed. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Israel's God has commanded Israel's strength]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Your God | Our God |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your strength. Be strong | our Israelite tribes strong … continue to help us with your power |
| God | God |

# Psalms 68:29

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Because of your temple over Jerusalem, kings will bring a gift to you.* | *Since you have now established your sanctuary on a mountain above Jerusalem, kings will send tribute to you there.* |

ULT **Because of your temple over Jerusalem, kings will bring a gift to you**
UST Since you have now established your sanctuary on a mountain above Jerusalem, kings will send tribute to you there
(מֵהֵיכָלְךָ עַל־יְרוּשָׁלִַם לְךָ יוֹבִילוּ מְלָכִים שָׁי)

The word translated as **Because** indicates that what follows is a reason for the result described. If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the first phrase gives the reason for the result that the second phrase describes. Alternate translation: [Kings will bring a gift to you, for your temple stands over Jerusalem]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **Because of your temple**
UST Since you have now established your sanctuary
(מֵהֵיכָלְךָ)

Here, **your temple** represents God's presence and dwelling place. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Because of your dwelling place]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Because of your temple | Since you have now established your sanctuary |
| Jerusalem | Jerusalem |
| kings | will send |

# Psalms 68:30

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Rebuke the beast of the reed, the assembly of the mighty with the calves of the peoples, humbling himself with pieces of silver. He scatters the peoples {who} delight in battles.* | *Show the king of Egypt that even though he has a powerful army, he cannot defeat you. Many kings who are strong like bulls may gather together. They may form armies from their subject nations, which are like bulls' calves, {but they will not be able to defeat you either}. Instead, they will come submissively and pay you tribute in silver. Some nations are eager to fight wars; make their armies run away!* |

ULT **Rebuke the beast of the reed**
UST Show the king of Egypt that even though he has a powerful army, he cannot defeat you
(גְּעַר חַיַּת קָנֶה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please rebuke the beast of the reed]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **the beast of the reed**
UST the king of Egypt that even though he has a powerful army
(חַיַּת קָנֶה)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Egypt as if Egypt were **the beast of the reed**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the enemy from the reeds]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the assembly of the mighty with the calves of the peoples**
UST Many kings who are strong like bulls may gather together. They may form armies from their subject nations, which are like bulls' calves, but they will not be able to defeat you either
(עֲדַת אַבִּירִים ׀ בְּעֶגְלֵי עַמִּים)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if powerful rulers were **the mighty** and the peoples under them were **the calves**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the assembly of the powerful leaders with the peoples under them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the assembly of the mighty**
UST Many kings who are strong like bulls may gather together … but they will not be able to defeat you either
(עֲדַת אַבִּירִים)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean the assembly that consists of mighty ones. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the assembly made up of mighty rulers]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the mighty**
UST Many kings who are strong like bulls
(אַבִּירִים)

The psalmist 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: [the mighty rulers]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **with the calves of the peoples**
UST They may form armies from their subject nations, which are like bulls' calves
(בְּעֶגְלֵי עַמִּים)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **calves** that are characterized by belonging to **the peoples**—that is, the subject nations. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the peoples' young warriors]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **humbling himself with pieces of silver. He scatters the peoples {who} delight in battles**
UST Instead, they will come submissively and pay you tribute in silver. Some nations are eager to fight wars; make their armies run away
(מִתְרַפֵּס בְּרַצֵּי־כָסֶף בִּזֹּר עַמִּים קְרָבוֹת יֶחְפָּצוּ)

The pronoun **himself** and **He** are ambiguous in this context; they may refer to God scattering the enemy, or to the beast humbling itself before God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the beast humbling itself with pieces of silver. God scatters the peoples who delight in battles]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Rebuke | Show … he cannot defeat you |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the beast of | the king of Egypt that even though he has a powerful army |
| the reed | the king of Egypt that even though he has a powerful army |
| the assembly of | may gather together … but they will not be able to defeat you either |
| the mighty | Many kings who are strong like bulls |
| with the calves of | which are like bulls' calves |
| humbling himself | Instead, they will come submissively |
| silver | and pay you tribute in silver |
| He scatters | make their armies run away |
| {who} delight in | to fight wars |

# Psalms 68:31

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Nobles will come from Egypt; Cush will make its hands run to God.* | *Then envoys will come from Egypt {bringing gifts to you}. The ruler of Cush will hasten to send tribute to God.* |

**ULT Cush will make its hands run to God**
**UST** The ruler of Cush will hasten to send tribute to God
(כּוּשׁ תָּרִיץ יָדָיו לֵאלֹהִים)

The psalmist is speaking of **Cush** as if it were a person who could stretch out its hands toward God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the people of Cush will eagerly bring offerings to God]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT will make its hands run to God**
**UST** will hasten to send tribute to God
(תָּרִיץ יָדָיו לֵאלֹהִים)

The psalmist is using **will make its hands run to God** as a common expression of the culture to mean "will hasten to bring offerings to God." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [will quickly bring tribute to God]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT its hands**
**UST** to send tribute
(יָדָיו)

The pronoun **its** refers to Cush the nation. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [its own hands]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT its hands**
**UST** to send tribute
(יָדָיו)

Here, **its hands** represents the offerings and tribute that Cush's people bring. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [its tribute]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Nobles | envoys |
| Egypt | Egypt |
| Cush | The ruler of Cush |
| to God | to God |

# Psalms 68:32

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Kingdoms of the earth, sing to God! Make music {to} the Lord, Selah* | *People of nations throughout the world, sing praise to God! He is the Lord Selah* |

**ULT Kingdoms of the earth, sing to God**
**UST** People of nations throughout the world, sing praise to God
(מַמְלְכוֹת הָאָרֶץ שִׁירוּ לֵאלֹהִים)

The psalmist is speaking to **Kingdoms of the earth** that he knows cannot literally hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about the worship of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about the kingdoms of the earth. Alternate translation: [All the kingdoms of the world should sing to God]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

**ULT sing to God! Make music {to} the Lord**
**UST** sing praise to God! He is the Lord
(שִׁירוּ לֵאלֹהִים זַמְּרוּ אֲדֹנָי)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [sing praises to the Lord God]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Kingdoms of | People of nations throughout |
| to God | to God |
| {to} the Lord | He is the Lord |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 68:33

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to the rider on the heavens, of the heavens of antiquity. Behold, he utters with his voice, a voice of power.* | *who dwells above the sky that he created long ago. When you hear thunder, it is as if he is shouting with his very powerful voice.* |

ULT **to the rider on the heavens, of the heavens of antiquity**
UST who dwells above the sky that he created long ago
(לָרֹכֵב בִּשְׁמֵי שְׁמֵי־קֶדֶם)

Here the psalmist is speaking of God as if he were **the rider on the heavens, of the heavens of antiquity**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to him who rules over the ancient skies]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the heavens of antiquity**
UST above the sky that he created long ago
(שְׁמֵי־קֶדֶם)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean the highest and most ancient heavens. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the highest ancient heavens]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **Behold, he utters with his voice, a voice of power**
UST When you hear thunder, it is as if he is shouting with his very powerful voice
(הֵן יִתֵּן בְּקוֹלוֹ קוֹל עֹז)

The psalmist is using the term **Behold** to focus his listeners' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Listen! he utters with his voice, a voice of power]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **a voice of power**
UST with his very powerful voice
(קוֹל עֹז)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **power**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a powerful voice]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **with his voice, a voice of power**
UST it is as if he is shouting with his very powerful voice
(בְּקוֹלוֹ קוֹל עֹז)

The psalmist is repeating forms of the word **voice** in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [with his great, powerful voice]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| on the heavens, of | above the sky |
| the heavens of | above the sky |

# Psalms 68:34

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Ascribe strength to God; his majesty {is} over Israel, and his strength {is} in the clouds.* | *Proclaim how powerful God is! He is the king who reigns over Israel as he rules powerfully from the sky.* |

ULT **strength**
UST how powerful … is
(עֹז)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how strong he is]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **his majesty**
UST He is the king who reigns
(גַּאֲוָתוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **majesty**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [his majestic nature]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and his strength**
UST as he rules powerfully
(וְעֻזּוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and his mighty rule]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{is} in the clouds**
UST from the sky
(בַּשְּׁחָקִים)

Here, **in the clouds** represents the heavenly realm where God displays his power. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in the heavens above]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to God | God |
| his majesty | He is the king who reigns |
| Israel | Israel |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and his strength | as he rules powerfully |

# Psalms 68:35

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God, {you are} fearsome from your sanctuary! The God of Israel, he is giving strength and forces to the people. Blessed {be} God!* | *God, you are in your sanctuary, and you are very powerful. This is the God whom we Israelite people worship. He makes us very strong. Praise God!* |

**ULT God, {you are} fearsome from your sanctuary**
**UST** God, you are in your sanctuary, and you are very powerful
(נֹורָא אֱלֹהִים מִמִּקְדָּשֶׁיךָ)

The psalmist switches to addressing Yahweh directly for this line for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the third person for consistency. Alternate translation: [God is fearsome from his sanctuary]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

**ULT from your sanctuary**
**UST** you are in your sanctuary
(מִמִּקְדָּשֶׁיךָ)

Here, **your sanctuary** represents the place where God dwells and from which he makes his power known. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from your holy dwelling place]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT The God of Israel**
**UST** This is the God whom we Israelite people worship
(אֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist is not using this possessive form **The God of Israel** to indicate that the Israelites possess or control God. Rather the psalmist is using these words to indicate that God is the one whom Israel worships. Alternate translation: [You are the God whom Israel worships]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **strength and forces**
UST very strong
(עֹז וְתַעֲצֻמוֹת)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **strength** and **forces**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the power to be strong and courageous]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **strength and forces**
UST very strong
(עֹז וְתַעֲצֻמוֹת)

The terms **strength** and **forces** mean similar things. The psalmist 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 power and might]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **Blessed {be} God**
UST Praise God
(בָּרוּךְ אֱלֹהִים)

The expression **Blessed be** is a passive verbal form. The psalmist is expressing his desire to praise Yahweh. If it would be unnatural to use that form for this purpose, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I bless God] or [Let me praise God]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| {you are} fearsome | and you are very powerful |
| from your sanctuary | you are in your sanctuary |
| The God of | This is the God |
| Israel | whom we Israelite people worship |
| strength | strong |
| Blessed {be} | Praise |

# Psalms 69

## Psalm 69 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 69 is a psalm of supplication or lament. It presents the basic elements of that type of psalm. (Some elements are repeated.) Near its end, it becomes a specific kind of psalm of supplication, an “imprecatory psalm” in which the psalmist describes the actions of wicked people and asks God to judge and punish them. Furthermore, the New Testament writers considered Psalm 69 to be a Messianic psalm that looked forward to the reign of Jesus Christ. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Cry for help (1–3)
2. Description of troubles (4)
3. Confession of sin (5–6)
4. Claim of devotion to God (7–12)
5. Statement of trust (13)
6. Petition (14–18)
7. Description of troubles (19–21)
8. Imprecation (22–28)
9. Vow of praise (29–36)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

While New Testament writers quote this psalm in several places, we encourage translators to translate the words of the Hebrew text as they appear in the Old Testament and the words of the Greek text as they appear in the New Testament, even if, inevitably, there is some difference between the words as the ideas are expressed in different languages. We encourage translators not to try to use similar words in both places so that

readers will recognize the quotations. Instead, translators can use footnotes in the New Testament to identify the source of these quotations.

Here is a list of the places where New Testament writers quote this psalm:

69:4, “The ones hating me gratuitously,” John 15:25

69:9, “zeal for your house has consumed me,” John 2:17

69:9, “the reproaches of the ones reproaching you have fallen on me,” Romans 15:3

69:21, “they made me drink vinegar for my thirst,” Mattew 27:34 and John 19:28

69:22–23, “Let their table become a snare to their faces and a trap for their welfare. Let their eyes darken from seeing, make their loins tremble continually,” Romans 11:9–10

69:25, “Let their encampment be deserted; let there not be a dweller in their tents,” Acts 1:20

# Psalms 69:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on “Lilies”; of David* | *This is a note for the worship leader: David wrote this song. The tune is “Lilies.”* |

> ULT **For the chief musician**
> UST This is a note for the worship leader
> (לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of David | David wrote this song |

# Psalms 69:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Save me, God, for waters have come up to {my} life.* | *Please rescue me, God! I am in great danger, as if I were just about to drown in a flood.* |

**ULT Save me**
UST Please rescue me
(הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please save me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT waters have come up to {my} life**
UST I were just about to drown in a flood
(בָּאוּ מַיִם עַד־נָפֶשׁ)

David is speaking of his danger as if it were **waters** that had **come up** and were threatening his **life**. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my troubles have threatened my life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT {my} life**
UST to drown
(נָפֶשׁ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **life**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [my neck]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Save me | Please rescue me |
| God | God |

# Psalms 69:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have sunk in mire of depth, and there is no standing. I have come into depths of waters, and a flood overflows me.* | *It is as if I am sinking in deep mud where there is no solid ground for me to stand on. It is as if I am in deep water and a flood is swirling around me.* |

ULT **I have sunk in mire of depth**
UST It is as if I am sinking in deep mud
(טָבַעְתִּי ׀ בִּיוֵן מָצוּלָה)

David is speaking of his distress as if he had **sunk in mire of depth**. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am overwhelmed by my troubles]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **depth**
UST deep
(מָצוּלָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **depth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [deep places]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and there is no standing**
UST where there is no solid ground for me to stand on
(וְאֵין מָעָמָד)

David 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 there is no place for me to stand]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **I have come into depths of waters, and a flood overflows me**
UST It is as if I am in deep water and a flood is swirling around me
(בָּאתִי בְמַעֲמַקֵּי־מַיִם וְשִׁבֹּלֶת שְׁטָפָתְנִי)

David is speaking of his danger as if he had **come into depths of waters** and **a flood** were overwhelming him. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am in overwhelming danger, and my troubles overwhelm me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and a flood | and a flood |

# Psalms 69:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I am weary in my calling out; my throat is parched. My eyes fail {as} I am waiting for my God.* | *I am tired and my throat is dry because I have been calling to you for help for so long. I have been looking for so long for you to come and help me that I have worn out my eyes.* |

**ULT I am weary in my calling out**
**UST** I am tired … because I have been calling to you for help for so long
(יָגַעְתִּי בְקָרְאִי)

David 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 am weary from my calling out]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT my throat is parched**
**UST** and my throat is dry
(נִחַר גְּרוֹנִי)

Here, **my throat is parched** represents David being exhausted from calling out to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I am exhausted from calling out]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT My eyes fail**
**UST** that I have worn out my eyes
(כָּלוּ עֵינָי)

David says **My eyes fail** to represent his losing strength and hope as he watches for God to act. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [My strength fails]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in my calling out | because I have been calling to you for help for so long |
| for my God | for you to come and help me |

# Psalms 69:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The ones hating me gratuitously are more than the hairs of my head. The ones destroying me are mighty, my enemies of falsehood. What I did not steal, yet I must restore.* | *There are people who hate me for no reason. There are so many of these people, it is as if there are more of them than there are hairs on my head! The enemies who want to harm me are powerful, and they are telling lies about me. They are demanding that I pay back things that I did not steal!* |

ULT **are more than the hairs of my head**
UST There are so many of these people, it is as if there are more of them than there are hairs on my head
(רַבּוּ ׀ מִשַּׂעֲרוֹת רֹאשִׁי)

David says **more than the hairs of my head** as an extreme statement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [are too many to count]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **of falsehood**
UST and they are telling lies about me
(שֶׁקֶר)

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: [who tell lies]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The ones destroying me | who want to harm me |
| are mighty | are powerful |
| my enemies | The enemies |
| yet … must restore | I pay back |

# Psalms 69:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God, you, you know my foolishness, and my sins are not hidden from you.* | *O God, you know that I have foolishly disobeyed your laws; you are aware of the sins that I have committed.* |

**ULT my foolishness, and my sins**
**UST** that I have foolishly disobeyed your laws … the sins that I have committed
(לְאִוַּלְתִּ֥י אַ֝שְׁמוֹתַ֗י)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **foolishness** and **sins**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [foolish deeds, and my sinful deeds]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and my sins are not hidden from you**
**UST** you are aware of the sins that I have committed
(וַאֲשָׁמוֹתַ֥י מִמְּךָ֗ לֹא־נִכְחָ֫דוּ)

The expression **my sins are not hidden from you** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and you know all my sins]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | O God |
| you know | know |
| and my sins | the sins that I have committed |

# Psalms 69:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May the ones waiting for you not have shame because of me, Lord Yahweh of Armies. May the ones seeking you not be humiliated because of me, God of Israel.* | *But Yahweh my Lord, commander of the heavenly armies, may the wrong things I have done not disappoint the people who trust you. You are the God whom we Israelite people should worship. Please do not let me embarrass those who do worship you.* |

ULT **May the ones waiting for you not have shame because of me**
UST may the wrong things I have done not disappoint the people who trust you
(אַל־יֵבֹ֤שׁוּ בִֽי ׀ קֹוֶ֗יךָ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please do not let the ones waiting for you feel shame because of me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **May … have shame**
UST may … disappoint
(יֵבֹ֤שׁוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **shame**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [May … feel ashamed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **May the ones seeking you not be humiliated**
UST Please do not let … embarrass those who do worship you
(אַל־יִכָּלְמ֥וּ & מְבַקְשֶׁ֗יךָ)

The expression **not be humiliated** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [May no one humiliate the ones seeking you]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **God of Israel**
UST You are the God whom we Israelite people should worship
(אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist is not using this possessive form **God of Israel** to indicate that the Israelites possess or control God. Rather the psalmist is using these words to indicate that God is the one whom Israel worships. Alternate translation: [oh, God whom Israel worships]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| May … have shame | may … disappoint |
| Lord Yahweh | But Yahweh my Lord |
| May the ones seeking you | those who do worship you |
| be humiliated | Please do … let … embarrass |
| God | You are the God whom … should worship |
| of Israel | we Israelite people |

# Psalms 69:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For because of you I have borne reproach; humiliation has covered my face.* | *People have insulted me because I am loyal to you. They have thoroughly humiliated me.* |

**ULT For because of you I have borne reproach**
**UST** People have insulted me because I am loyal to you
(כִּי־עָלֶיךָ נָשָׂאתִי חֶרְפָּה)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Because of you I have borne reproach]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT humiliation has covered my face**
**UST** They have thoroughly humiliated me
(כִּסְּתָה כְלִמָּה פָנָי)

David speaks of **humiliation** as if it were a person who could **cover** his face. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am completely humiliated]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT my face**
**UST** me
(פָּנָי)

Here, **my face** represents David himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [me completely]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT reproach**
**UST** People have insulted me
(חֶרְפָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **reproach**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [being insulted]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I have borne | People have insulted me |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| reproach | People have insulted me |

# Psalms 69:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have become a stranger to my brothers and a foreigner to the sons of my mother.* | *Even my own family members act as if they do not know me.* |

ULT **a stranger to my brothers and a foreigner to the sons of my mother**
UST Even my own family members act as if they do not know me
(מוּזָר לְאֶחָי וְנָכְרִי לִבְנֵי אִמִּי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [completely rejected by my own family]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and a foreigner | act as if they do not know me |

# Psalms 69:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For zeal for your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of the ones reproaching you have fallen on me.* | *I care so much about your temple that people are causing trouble for me. People are speaking disrespectfully of you, and it is as if they are also insulting me.* |

ULT **For zeal for your house has consumed me**
UST I care so much about your temple that people are causing trouble for me
(כִּי־קִנְאַת בֵּיתְךָ אֲכָלָתְנִי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Because zeal for your house has consumed me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **zeal for your house has consumed me**
UST I care so much about your temple that people are causing trouble for me
(קִנְאַת בֵּיתְךָ אֲכָלָתְנִי)

David speaks of **zeal** for God's house as if it were a person who could **consume** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I care so deeply about your house that it takes over all my thoughts]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **zeal for**
UST I care so much
(קִנְאַת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **zeal**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [caring deeply]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and the reproaches of the ones reproaching you have fallen on me**
UST People are speaking disrespectfully of you, and it is as if they are also insulting me
(וְחֶרְפּוֹת חוֹרְפֶיךָ נָפְלוּ עָלָי)

David speaks of **the reproaches** of the ones reproaching God as if they were persons who could fall on someone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when people insult you, they also insult me]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| zeal for | I care so much |
| your house | about your temple |
| has consumed me | that people are causing trouble for me |
| and the reproaches of | are speaking disrespectfully |
| the ones reproaching you | People … of you |

# Psalms 69:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Though I wept {in} my soul with fasting, yet it became reproaches to me;* | *I wept and fasted very sincerely, but they mocked me for doing that.* |

ULT **Though I wept {in} my soul with fasting, yet it became reproaches to me**
UST I wept and fasted very sincerely, but they mocked me for doing that
(וָאֶבְכֶּה בַצּוֹם נַפְשִׁי וַתְּהִי לַחֲרָפוֹת לִי)

David uses the words **Though** and **yet** here to indicate a contrast between his sincere mourning and the reproach he received for it. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I wept in my soul with fasting, but it became reproaches to me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **with fasting**
UST and fasted
(בַצּוֹם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **fasting**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with going without food]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {in} my soul | very sincerely |
| with fasting | and fasted |
| reproaches | they mocked |

# Psalms 69:11

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *though I made my clothing sackcloth, yet I became a proverb to them.* | *I wore rough clothing {to show that I was sad}, but they used me as an example of a foolish person.* |

**ULT though I made my clothing sackcloth, yet I became a proverb to them**
**UST** I wore rough clothing {to show that I was sad}, but they used me as an example of a foolish person
(וָאֶתְּנָה לְבוּשִׁי שָׂק וָאֱהִי לָהֶם לְמָשָׁל)

David uses the words **though** and **yet** here to indicate a contrast between his act of mourning and the ridicule he received. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [although I made my clothing sackcloth, still I became a proverb to them]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

**ULT though I made my clothing sackcloth**
**UST** I wore rough clothing {to show that I was sad}
(וָאֶתְּנָה לְבוּשִׁי שָׂק)

Wearing **sackcloth** was a symbolic action by which David showed his grief and repentance. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [though I wore rough clothing to show my sorrow]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my clothing | clothing |
| sackcloth | rough |
| a proverb | as an example of a foolish person |

# Psalms 69:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The sitters at the gate speak about me, and the songs of the drinkers of beer.* | *Even the elders of the city say bad things about me. The drunkards in the city sing insulting songs about me.* |

**ULT The sitters at the gate**
**UST** Even the elders of the city
(יֹשְׁבֵי שָׁעַר)

The phrase **The sitters at the gate** represents the leaders and judges of the city, since city leaders conducted public business at the gate of the city. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [The city leaders]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the gate | Even the elders of the city |

# Psalms 69:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But I, my prayer {is} to you, Yahweh. {At} a time of favor, God, in the greatness of your covenant faithfulness, answer me in the truth of your salvation.* | *But I will continue praying to you, Yahweh. You are always very kind to me, as you have promised. So at the time that you choose, please answer my prayer by rescuing me, since you love me faithfully.* |

ULT **But I, my prayer {is} to you**
UST But I will continue praying to you
(וַאֲנִי תְפִלָּתִי־לְךָ)

David uses the words **But I** here to indicate a contrast between the behavior of those who mock him and his own response of praying to God. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Yet I, my prayer is to you]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **my prayer {is} to you**
UST will continue praying to you
(תְפִלָּתִי־לְךָ)

David 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 prayer is offered to you]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **my prayer**
UST will continue praying
(תְפִלָּתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **prayer**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [praying to God]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **favor**
UST that … choose
(רָצוֹן)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **favor**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [being favorable]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **answer me**
UST please answer my prayer
(עֲנֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please answer me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **your covenant faithfulness … in the truth of your salvation**
UST You are always … kind to me, as you have promised … by rescuing me, since you love me faithfully
(חַסְדֶּךָ בֶּאֱמֶת יִשְׁעֶךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant faithfulness**, **truth**, and **salvation**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [faithfully keeping your covenant … true way that you are saving]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my prayer | will continue praying |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {At} a time of | So at the time |
| favor | that … choose |
| God | you |
| your covenant faithfulness | You are always … kind to me, as you have promised |
| your salvation | by rescuing me |

# Psalms 69:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Deliver me from the mire, and let me not sink. Let me be delivered from the ones hating me and from the depths of the waters.* | *Rescue me so that it will no longer be as if I were sinking in mud. Rescue me from my enemies so that it will no longer be as if I were drowning.* |

ULT **Deliver me from the mire, and let me not sink. Let me be delivered from the ones hating me and from the depths of the waters**
UST Rescue me so that it will no longer be as if I were sinking in mud. Rescue me from my enemies so that it will no longer be as if I were drowning
(הַצִּילֵנִי מִטִּיט וְאַל־אֶטְבָּעָה אִנָּצְלָה מִשֹּׂנְאַי וּמִמַּעֲמַקֵּי־מָיִם)

These are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than commands. If the imperatives do not communicate polite requests for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates polite requests. It may be helpful to add an expression such as "please" to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please deliver me from the mire, and please let me not sink. Please let me be delivered from the ones hating me and from the depths of the waters]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Deliver me from the mire**
UST Rescue me … in mud
(הַצִּילֵנִי מִטִּיט)

David is speaking of his distress as if it were **mire** that he is stuck in. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Rescue me from my troubles]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Let me be delivered from the ones hating me**
UST Rescue me from my enemies
(אִנָּצְלָה מִשֹּׂנְאַי)

The expression **Let me be delivered** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [Deliver me from the ones hating me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

> ULT **and from the depths of the waters**
> UST so that it will no longer be as if I were drowning
> (וּמִמַּעֲמַקֵּי־מָֽיִם)

David is speaking of his danger as if it were **the depths of the waters** that could drown him. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and from overwhelming danger]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Deliver me | Rescue me |
| Let me be delivered | Rescue me |

# Psalms 69:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let the flood of waters not overflow me, and let the deep not swallow me, and let the pit not close its mouth over me.* | *Make it so that it will no longer be as if a flood were swirling around me and I was about to go down to the bottom of deep water. Rescue me so that I do not go to the place where dead people are.* |

ULT **Let the flood of waters not overflow me, and let the deep not swallow me, and let the pit not close its mouth over me**
UST Make it so that it will no longer be as if a flood were swirling around me and I was about to go down to the bottom of deep water. Rescue me so that I do not go to the place where dead people are
(אַל־תִּשְׁטְפֵנִי ׀ שִׁבֹּלֶת מַיִם וְאַל־תִּבְלָעֵנִי מְצוּלָה וְאַל־תֶּאְטַר־עָלַי בְּאֵר פִּיהָ)

These are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than commands. If the imperatives do not communicate polite requests for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates polite requests. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please do not let the flood of waters overflow me, and please do not let the deep swallow me, and please do not let the pit close its mouth over me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Let the flood of waters not overflow me**
UST Make it so that it will no longer be as if a flood were swirling around me
(אַל־תִּשְׁטְפֵנִי ׀ שִׁבֹּלֶת מַיִם)

David is speaking of his troubles as if they were a **flood of waters** that could **overflow** or overwhelm him. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Do not let my troubles overwhelm me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and let the deep not swallow me**
UST and I was about to go down to the bottom of deep water
(וְאַל־תִּבְלָעֵנִי מְצוּלָה)

David speaks of **the deep** as if it were a person who could **swallow** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and do not let me perish in the deep waters]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **and let the pit not close its mouth over me**
UST Rescue me so that I do not go to the place where dead people are
(וְאַל־תֶּאְטַר־עָלַי בְּאֵר פִּיהָ)

David speaks of **the pit** as if it were a person who could **close its mouth** over him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and do not let the grave hold me]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **the deep … the pit**
UST to the bottom of deep water … to the place where dead people are
(מְצוֹלָה & בְּאֵר)

Here, **the deep** and **the pit** represent death and the grave. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use equivalent expressions or plain language. Alternate translation: [death … the grave]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the flood of | a flood were |
| the pit | to the place where dead people are |

# Psalms 69:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Answer me, Yahweh, for your covenant faithfulness {is} good; according to the greatness of your compassion, turn to me.* | *Yahweh, it is so good that you faithfully love me, so please do what I ask. Because you are very merciful, please help me.* |

ULT **your covenant faithfulness**
UST that you faithfully love me
(חַסְדֶּךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the idea of **covenant faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the way you are faithfully committed to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your compassion**
UST merciful
(רַחֲמֶיךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the idea of **compassion**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how compassionate you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **turn to me**
UST please help me
(פְּנֵה אֵלַי)

The psalmist is speaking as if God were not looking at him and he asked him to **turn to** him and pay attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [pay attention to me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| your covenant faithfulness | that you faithfully love me |
| {is} good | it is so good |
| your compassion | merciful |

# Psalms 69:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And may you not hide your face from your servant, for trouble {is} to me; hurry, answer me.* | *I am experiencing much trouble, so please consider my situation and act quickly to help me.* |

**ULT And may you not hide your face**
**UST** please consider
(וְאַל־תַּסְתֵּ֣ר פָּנֶ֣יךָ)

David is using **hide your face** as a common expression of the culture to mean "refuse to help" or "withdraw your presence." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And may you not turn away]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT your face**
**UST** please consider
(פָּנֶ֣יךָ)

Here, **your face** represents "your presence." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your attention]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT for trouble {is} to me**
**UST** I am experiencing much trouble, so
(כִּֽי־צַר־לִ֑י)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because trouble is to me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **And may you not hide your face from your servant … hurry, answer me**
UST please consider my situation and act quickly to help me
(וְאַל־תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מֵעַבְדֶּךָ & מַהֵר עֲנֵנִי)

These are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than commands. If the imperatives do not communicate polite requests for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates polite requests. It may be helpful to add an expression such as "please" to make this clear. Alternate translation: [And please do not hide your face from your servant … please hurry, please answer me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| from your servant | my situation |
| trouble | much trouble |

# Psalms 69:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Draw near to my soul, redeem it; because of my enemies, ransom me.* | *Come and save me; please rescue me from my enemies.* |

ULT **my soul**
UST me
(נַפְשִׁי)

David is using the term **my soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my life]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **redeem it; because of my enemies, ransom me**
UST and save … please rescue me from my enemies
(גְּאָלֵהּ לְמַעַן אֹיְבַי פְּדֵנִי)

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: [ransom me, because of my enemies]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **Draw near to my soul, redeem it … ransom me**
UST Come and save me; please rescue me
(קָרְבָה אֶל־נַפְשִׁי גְּאָלֵהּ & פְּדֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please draw near to my soul, redeem it … please ransom me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **redeem it … ransom me**
UST and save … please rescue me
(גְּאָלֵהּ & פְּדֵנִי)

The terms **redeem** and **ransom** mean similar things. David 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: [deliver it … deliver me]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my soul | me |
| redeem … me | please rescue me |
| it … ransom | and save |
| my enemies | my enemies |

# Psalms 69:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You, you know my reproach and my shame and my humiliation. All of my adversaries {are} before you.* | *You know personally how people are insulting, shaming, and dishonoring me. You know who all my enemies are.* |

**ULT my reproach and my shame and my humiliation**
**UST** how people are insulting, shaming, and dishonoring me
(חֶרְפָּתִי וּבָשְׁתִּי וּכְלִמָּתִי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **reproach**, **shame**, and **humiliation**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [being reproached … being shamed … being humiliated]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| you know | You know |
| my reproach | how people are insulting |
| and my shame | shaming |
| my adversaries | my enemies |

# Psalms 69:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Reproach has broken my heart, and I am sick. Though I waited for sympathy, yet there was none, and for comforters, yet I did not find.* | *Their insults have deeply offended me, and I feel very badly. I wanted someone to feel sorry for me and encourage me, but no one did.* |

ULT **Reproach has broken my heart**
UST Their insults have deeply offended me
(חֶרְפָּה ׀ שָׁבְרָה לִבִּי)

David speaks of **Reproach** as if it were a person who could break a person's heart. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am brokenhearted because of reproach]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **my heart**
UST deeply … me
(לִבִּי)

Here, **my heart** represents "my emotions." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my spirit]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Though I waited for sympathy, yet there was none**
UST I wanted someone to feel sorry for me … but no one did
(וָאֲקַוֶּה לָנוּד וָאַיִן)

David uses the word **Though** here to indicate a contrast between what he expected and what actually happened. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Even though I waited for sympathy, there was none]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **Though I waited for sympathy, yet there was none, and for comforters, yet I did not find**

UST I wanted someone to feel sorry for me and encourage me, but no one did
(וָאֲקַוֶּה לָנוּד וָאַיִן וְלַמְנַחֲמִים וְלֹא מָצָאתִי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [I waited for someone to show compassion, yet no one came]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Reproach | Their insults |

# Psalms 69:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But they put gall in my food, and they made me drink vinegar for my thirst.* | *Instead, they put poison in my food, and when I was thirsty, they gave me sour wine to drink.* |

ULT **But they put gall in my food, and … for my thirst**
UST Instead, they put poison in my food, and when I was thirsty
(וַיִּתְּנוּ בְּבָרוּתִי רֹאשׁ וְלִצְמָאִי)

David uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between the sympathy he hoped for and the cruelty he received. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Instead, they put gall in my food]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **But they put gall in my food, and … for my thirst**
UST Instead, they put poison in my food, and when I was thirsty
(וַיִּתְּנוּ בְּבָרוּתִי רֹאשׁ וְלִצְמָאִי)

Here, **they put gall in my food** represents the idea that David's enemies gave him what was harmful instead of what was nourishing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [they gave me something bitter to eat]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

# Psalms 69:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let their table become a snare to their faces and a trap for their welfare.* | *May their own food be like a trap that they walk into! May it harm their health.* |

ULT **Let their table become a snare to their faces and a trap for their welfare**
UST May their own food be like a trap that they walk into! May it harm their health
(יְהִי־שֻׁלְחָנָם לִפְנֵיהֶם לְפָח וְלִשְׁלוֹמִים לְמוֹקֵשׁ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [May their table become a snare to their faces and a trap for their welfare]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Let their table become a snare to their faces and a trap for their welfare**
UST May their own food be like a trap that they walk into! May it harm their health
(יְהִי־שֻׁלְחָנָם לִפְנֵיהֶם לְפָח וְלִשְׁלוֹמִים לְמוֹקֵשׁ)

David is speaking of his enemies' provision as if it were **a snare** and **a trap** that could catch and harm them. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Let what they enjoy become something that harms them and ruins their welfare]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **their table**
UST their own food
(שֻׁלְחָנָם)

Here, **their table** represents "their provision." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [their feasting]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to their faces**
UST that they walk into
(לִפְנֵיהֶם)

David is using **to their faces** as a common expression of the culture to mean "right in front of them." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [right before them]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **and a trap for their welfare**
UST May it harm their health
(וְלִשְׁלוֹמִים לְמוֹקֵשׁ)

David is using this possessive form to mean **a trap** that catches them when they are at ease. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [a trap that ruins their welfare]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **a snare … a trap**
UST like a trap … May it harm
(לְפָח & לְמוֹקֵשׁ)

The terms **a snare** and **a trap** mean similar things. David 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: [a deadly trap before them]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| a snare | like a trap |
| a trap | May it harm |

# Psalms 69:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let their eyes darken from seeing, and make their loins tremble continually.* | *May their eyes become dim so that they cannot see anything. May their bodies keep getting weaker.* |

**ULT Let their eyes darken from seeing, and make their loins tremble continually**
**UST** May their eyes become dim so that they cannot see anything. May their bodies keep getting weaker
(תָּחְשַׁכְנָה עֵינֵיהֶם מֵרְאוֹת וּמָתְנֵיהֶם תָּמִיד הַמְעַד)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [May their eyes darken from seeing, and may their loins tremble continually]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT their eyes**
**UST** their eyes
(עֵינֵיהֶם)

Here, **their eyes** represents "their sight." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [their vision]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT and … their loins**
**UST** their bodies
(וּמָתְנֵיהֶם)

Here, **their loins** represents "their strength." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [their legs]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and … their loins | their bodies |
| make … tremble | May … getting weaker |

# Psalms 69:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Pour your indignation on them, and let the burning of your nose overtake them.* | *Become angry with them and punish them! Angrily pursue them until you catch them.* |

ULT **Pour your indignation on them, and let the burning of your nose overtake them**
UST Become angry with them and punish them! Angrily pursue them until you catch them
(שְׁפָךְ־עֲלֵיהֶם זַעְמֶךָ וַחֲרוֹן אַפְּךָ יַשִּׂיגֵם)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please pour your indignation on them, and let the burning of your nose overtake them]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Pour your indignation on them, and let the burning of your nose overtake them**
UST Become angry with them and punish them! Angrily pursue them until you catch them
(שְׁפָךְ־עֲלֵיהֶם זַעְמֶךָ וַחֲרוֹן אַפְּךָ יַשִּׂיגֵם)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word other than **and** in order to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Pour your indignation on them; yes, let the burning of your nose overtake them]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Pour your indignation on them**
UST Become angry with them and punish them
(שְׁפָךְ־עֲלֵיהֶם זַעְמֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **indignation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Deal with them wrathfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and let the burning of your nose overtake them**
UST Angrily pursue them until you catch them
(וְחָרוֹן אַפְּךָ יַשִּׂיגֵם)

Here, **the burning of your nose** represents "your fierce anger." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and let your burning anger overtake them]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| let … overtake them | pursue them until you catch them |

# Psalms 69:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let their encampment be deserted; let there not be a dweller in their tents.* | *Make them abandon their towns so that no one lives in them anymore.* |

**ULT Let their encampment be deserted; let there not be a dweller in their tents**
**UST** Make them abandon their towns so that no one lives in them anymore
(תְּהִי־טִירָתָם נְשַׁמָּה בְּאָהֳלֵיהֶם אַל־יִהְיֶה יֹשֵׁב)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [May their encampment be deserted; may there not be a dweller in their tents]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Let their encampment be deserted; let there not be a dweller in their tents**
**UST** Make them abandon their towns so that no one lives in them anymore
(תְּהִי־טִירָתָם נְשַׁמָּה בְּאָהֳלֵיהֶם אַל־יִהְיֶה יֹשֵׁב)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Let their encampment be completely deserted, with no one living there]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT Let their encampment be deserted**
**UST** Make them abandon their towns
(תְּהִי־טִירָתָם נְשַׁמָּה)

The expression **Let their encampment be deserted** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [Let God make their encampment deserted]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| deserted | Make them abandon |
| in their tents | in them |

# Psalms 69:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you, whom you have struck, they have persecuted, and they talk about the pain of your wounded.* | *Do this because they did things to harm people whom you were already disciplining. They said that people whom you were correcting were suffering {because they had done bad things}.* |

ULT **For you, whom you have struck, they have persecuted**
UST Do this because they did things to harm people whom you were already disciplining
(כִּי־אַתָּה אֲשֶׁר־הִכִּיתָ רָדָפוּ)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [This is because the ones whom you have struck, they have persecuted]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **the pain of your wounded**
UST people whom you were correcting were suffering {because they had done bad things … }
(מַכְאֹוב חֲלָלֶיךָ)

David is using the possessive form to describe **pain** that is experienced by **your wounded**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [pain that your wounded ones feel]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the pain of**
UST were suffering {because they had done bad things}
(מַכְאֹוב)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **pain**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the painful experience of]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they have persecuted | they did things to harm |

# Psalms 69:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Add iniquity to their iniquity, and let them not come into your righteousness.* | *Punish them for every wrong thing they have done. Do not forgive them!* |

ULT **Add iniquity to their iniquity, and let them not come into your righteousness**
UST Punish them for every wrong thing they have done. Do not forgive them
(תְּנָה־עָוֹן עַל־עֲוֹנָם וְאַל־יָבֹאוּ בְּצִדְקָתֶךָ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please add iniquity to their iniquity, and do not let them come into your righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Add iniquity to their iniquity**
UST Punish them for every wrong thing they have done
(תְּנָה־עָוֹן עַל־עֲוֹנָם)

The psalmist is using **Add iniquity to their iniquity** as a common expression of the culture to mean "Charge them with crime after crime." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Keep a record of their sins] or [Give punishment for their sins]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **into your righteousness**
UST Do … forgive them
(בְּצִדְקָתֶךָ)

David is using the possessive form to describe **righteousness** that belongs to **you**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the righteousness that you grant]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **iniquity … into your righteousness**
UST for every wrong thing they have done. Do … forgive them
(עָוֹן & בְּצִדְקָתֶךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **iniquity** and **righteousness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [acting wrongfully … what you consider right]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| iniquity | for every wrong thing they have done |
| their iniquity | for every wrong thing they have done |
| into your righteousness | Do … forgive them |

# Psalms 69:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let them be wiped from the book of the living, and let them not be written with the righteous.* | *Remove their names from the book that records the names of people who have everlasting life; do not include them in your list of righteous people.* |

**ULT Let them be wiped from the book of the living, and let them not be written with the righteous**
UST Remove their names from the book that records the names of people who have everlasting life; do not include them in your list of righteous people
(יִמָּחוּ מִסֵּפֶר חַיִּים וְעִם צַדִּיקִים אַל־יִכָּתֵבוּ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please wipe them from the book of the living, and do not let them be written with the righteous]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Let them be wiped from the book of the living**
UST Remove their names from the book that records the names of people who have everlasting life
(יִמָּחוּ מִסֵּפֶר חַיִּים)

The expression **Let them be wiped from the book of the living** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [Let God wipe them from the book of the living]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT from the book of the living**
UST from the book that records the names of people who have everlasting life
(מִסֵּפֶר חַיִּים)

David is speaking of **the book of the living** as if it were a record that God keeps listing the names of all people who have eternal life. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the record of those who life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and let them not be written with the righteous**
UST do not include them in your list of righteous people
(וְעִם צַדִּיקִים אַל־יִכָּתֵבוּ)

The expression **let them not be written with the righteous** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [and do not write them with the righteous]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **the righteous**
UST righteous people
(צַדִּיקִים)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [those who are righteous]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let them be wiped | Remove their names |
| the righteous | righteous people |

# Psalms 69:29

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But I {am} poor and feeling pain; may your salvation, God, set me on high.* | *As for me, I am in bad circumstances, and I am suffering. O God, please protect me and save me.* |

**ULT But I {am} poor and feeling pain**
**UST** As for me, I am in bad circumstances, and I am suffering
(וַאֲנִי עָנִי וְכוֹאֵב)

David uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between his enemies and himself. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Yet I, I am poor and feeling pain]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

**ULT may your salvation, God, set me on high**
**UST** O God, please protect me and save me
(יְשׁוּעָתְךָ אֱלֹהִים תְּשַׂגְּבֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please let your salvation, God, set me on high]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT your salvation**
**UST** and save me
(יְשׁוּעָתְךָ)

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: [ability to save]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your salvation | and save me |
| God | O God |

# Psalms 69:30

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will praise the name of God with a song, and I will magnify him with thanksgiving.* | *When God does that, I will sing a song to praise God, and I will honor him by thanking him.* |

**ULT the name of God**
**UST** God
(שֵׁם־אֱלֹהִים)

Here, **the name of God** represents who God is and his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [God himself]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT with thanksgiving**
**UST** by thanking him
(בְּתוֹדָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **thanksgiving**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [thankful words]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will praise | to praise |
| God | God |

# Psalms 69:31

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And this will be better to Yahweh than an ox, a bull having horns and having hooves.* | *When I do that, it will please Yahweh more than if I had sacrificed oxen, yes, he will like that better than if I had offered him full-grown bulls.* |

**ULT than an ox, a bull**
**UST** more than if I had sacrificed oxen, yes, he will like that better than if I had offered him … bulls
(מִשּׁוֹר פָּר)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that the ox, a bull, is to be offered to God as a sacrifice. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [than receiving the sacrifice of an ox, a bull]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT a bull having horns and having hooves**
**UST** yes, he will like that better than if I had offered him full-grown bulls
(פָּר מַקְרִן מַפְרִיס)

This phrase distinguishes the full grown bulls from other younger ones. Alternate translation: [a bull that is full grown with horns and hooves]

**Support Reference:** Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And this will be better | When I do that, it will please |
| to Yahweh | Yahweh |
| than an ox | more than if I had sacrificed oxen |
| a bull | yes, he will like that better than if I had offered him … bulls |
| having horns | full-grown |

# Psalms 69:32

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The poor will see, they will rejoice; seekers of God, let your heart live.* | *Humble people will be happy when they see {that God has rescued me}. This will encourage people who worship God sincerely.* |

**ULT seekers of God**
**UST** people who worship God sincerely
(דֹּרְשֵׁי אֱלֹהִים)

David is using the possessive form to describe **seekers** whose goal is **God**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [You who seek God]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT let your heart live**
**UST** This will encourage
(וִיחִי לְבַבְכֶם)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [may your heart live]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT your heart**
**UST** This will encourage
(לְבַבְכֶם)

Here, **your heart** represents your inner being where your thoughts and feelings exist. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your spirit]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **The poor**
> UST Humble people
> (עֲנָיִים)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [Poor people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| they will rejoice | will be happy |
| seekers of | people who worship … sincerely |
| God | God |

# Psalms 69:33

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For Yahweh is hearing the needy, and he does not despise his prisoners.* | *When needy people pray to Yahweh, he does what they ask. He greatly respects people who suffer for him.* |

**ULT For Yahweh is hearing the needy**
**UST** When needy people pray to Yahweh, he does what they ask
(כִּי־שֹׁמֵעַ אֶל־אֶבְיוֹנִים יְהוָה)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is indeed hearing the needy]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT the needy**
**UST** When needy people
(אֶל־אֶבְיוֹנָיו)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [those who are in need]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT he does not despise**
**UST** He greatly respects
(לֹא בָזָה)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word **despise**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [he cares for]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

**ULT his prisoners**
**UST** people who suffer for him
(אֲסִירָיו)

David is not using this possessive form **his prisoners** to indicate that God took these people prisoner. Rather David is using these words to indicate that people who belong to God are being held captive. Alternate translation: [the prisoners who belong to him]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 69:34

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let the heavens and the earth praise him, the seas and everything moving in them.* | *May the entire creation praise God: the birds in the sky, the animals on the land, and the creatures in the sea.* |

ULT **Let the heavens and the earth praise him, the seas and everything moving in them**
UST May the entire creation praise God: the birds in the sky, the animals on the land, and the creatures in the sea
(יְהַלְלוּהוּ שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ יַמִּים וְכָל־רֹמֵשׂ בָּם)

David speaks of **the heavens and the earth** and **the seas and everything moving in them** as if they were persons who could praise God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Let everything in the heavens and the earth praise him, and everything in the seas and all that moves in them]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **Let the heavens and the earth praise him, the seas and everything moving in them**
UST May the entire creation praise God: the birds in the sky, the animals on the land, and the creatures in the sea
(יְהַלְלוּהוּ שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ יַמִּים וְכָל־רֹמֵשׂ בָּם)

The psalmist 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: [Let the heavens and the earth praise him; let the seas and everything moving in them praise him]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **Let the heavens and the earth praise him**
UST May the entire creation praise God: the birds in the sky, the animals on the land
(יְהַלְלוּהוּ שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [May the heavens and the earth praise him]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Let … praise him | praise God |
| the heavens | May the entire creation … the birds in the sky |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and the earth | the animals on the land |

# Psalms 69:35

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For God will save Zion, and he will build the cities of Judah, that they may dwell there and possess it.* | *May God protect the people who live in Jerusalem and in other places in Judah. May he strengthen their cities so that they keep living in them as their territory.* |

ULT **For**
UST May
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Tall should praise him because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **God will save Zion**
UST God protect the people who live in Jerusalem
(אֱלֹהִים ׀ יוֹשִׁיעַ צִיּוֹן)

Here “Zion” refers to the people in Zion. Alternate translation: [God will save the people of Zion]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and possess it**
UST as their territory
(וְיִרְשׁוּהָ)

The pronoun “it” refers to the land of Judah. Alternate translation: [and possess the land of Judah]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| will save | protect |
| Zion | the people who live in Jerusalem |
| Judah | Judah |
| and possess it | as their territory |

# Psalms 69:36

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And the seed of his servants will inherit it, and the ones loving his name will dwell in it.* | *May the descendants of the people who are loyal to him inherit that territory, and may those who love him live there safely.* |

ULT **And the seed of his servants**
UST May the descendants of the people who are loyal to him
(וְזֶרַע עֲבָדָיו)

David is speaking as if the people who will descend from God's servants were actually their **seed**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And the descendants of his servants]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **his name**
UST him
(שְׁמֹו)

Here, **his name** represents who God is and his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [who he is]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And the seed of | May the descendants of |
| his servants | the people who are loyal to him |
| will inherit it | inherit that territory |
| and the ones loving | and may those who love |

# Psalms 70

## Psalm 70 Introduction

Psalm 70 is a psalm of supplication or lament. Formallly, it includes only two the basic elements of that type of psalm, a cry for help and a petition. But a description of troubles and a statement of trust are implicit in the background. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Cry for help (1)
2. Petition (2–4)
3. Repeated cry for help (5)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Similarity to Psalm 40

This words of this psalm are very similar to Psalm 40:13–17. If you have already translated Psalm 40, see what you did there. It may help you translate Psalm 70.

# Psalms 70:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician. Of David. To cause to remember.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: David wrote this psalm to remind {God that he had promised to help him}.* |

**ULT For the chief musician**

UST This is a note for the worship leader

(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Of David | David wrote this psalm |

# Psalms 70:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hurry, God, to deliver me, Yahweh, to my help!* | *Yahweh my God, please act quickly to rescue me!* |

> ULT **Hurry, God, to deliver me, Yahweh, to my help**
> UST Yahweh my God, please act quickly to rescue me
> (אֱלֹהִים לְהַצִּילֵנִי יְהוָה לְעֶזְרָתִי חוּשָׁה)

These two phrases **Hurry, God, to deliver me** and **Yahweh, to my help** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Hurry, Yahweh God, to deliver me and help me]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

> ULT **Hurry, God, to deliver me**
> UST my God, please act quickly to rescue me
> (אֱלֹהִים לְהַצִּילֵנִי & חוּשָׁה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please hurry, God, to deliver me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

> ULT **Yahweh, to my help**
> UST Yahweh … to rescue me
> (יְהוָה לְעֶזְרָתִי)

David 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: [Yahweh, hurry to my help]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **to my help**
UST to rescue me
(לְעֶזְרָתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **help**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to help me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | my God |
| to deliver me | to rescue me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 70:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let the ones seeking my life have shame and have confusion; let the ones delighting in my harm be turned back and disgraced.* | *Some people are trying to kill me. Embarrass them by making them fail to do that. Some people would be happy to harm me. Humiliate them by making them abandon that plan.* |

ULT **Let the ones seeking my life have shame and have confusion; let the ones delighting in my harm be turned back and disgraced**
UST Some people are trying to kill me. Embarrass them by making them fail to do that. Some people would be happy to harm me. Humiliate them by making them abandon that plan
(יֵבֹ֤שׁוּ וְיַחְפְּרוּ֙ מְבַקְשֵׁ֣י נַפְשִׁ֔י יִסֹּ֖גוּ אָח֑וֹר וְיִכָּלְמ֖וּ חֲפֵצֵ֣י רָעָתִֽי׃)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Let all who want to harm me be completely defeated and put to shame]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Let the ones seeking my life have shame and have confusion**
UST Some people are trying to kill me. Embarrass them by making them fail to do that
(יֵבֹ֤שׁוּ וְיַחְפְּרוּ֙ מְבַקְשֵׁ֣י נַפְשִׁ֔י)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **shame** and **confusion**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Let the ones trying to kill me be ashamed and be confused]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Let the ones seeking my life have shame**
UST Some people are trying to kill me. Embarrass them by making them fail to do that
(יֵבֹ֤שׁוּ & מְבַקְשֵׁ֣י נַפְשִׁ֔י)

By using **Let** in each of the phrases in this verse, the psalmist is expressing what he desires or prays will happen. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants to happen. Alternate translation: [I desire that the ones seeking my life have shame]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **the ones seeking my life**
UST Some people are trying to kill me
(מְבַקְשֵׁי נַפְשִׁי)

David is using **seeking my life** as a common expression of the culture to mean "trying to kill me." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the ones trying to kill me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **let the ones delighting in my harm be turned back and disgraced**
UST Some people would be happy to harm me. Humiliate them by making them abandon that plan
(יִסֹּגוּ אָחוֹר וְיִכָּלְמוּ חֲפֵצֵי רָעָתִי)

The expression **be turned back and disgraced** has passive verbal forms. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [and God, please drive back and disgrace the ones delighting in my harm]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **let the ones delighting in my harm be turned back and disgraced**
UST Some people would be happy to harm me. Humiliate them by making them abandon that plan
(יִסֹּגוּ אָחוֹר וְיִכָּלְמוּ חֲפֵצֵי רָעָתִי)

Here David is speaking of thwarting the enemies' plans as if they were walking on a path and then could be blocked or **turned back**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [let the ones delighting in my harm by thwarted in their plan and disgraced]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in my harm**
UST to harm me
(רָעָתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **harm**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in harming me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Let … have shame | Embarrass them by making them fail to do that |
| the ones seeking | Some people are trying |
| the ones delighting | Some people would be happy |
| in my harm | to harm me |
| and disgraced | Humiliate them |

# Psalms 70:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let them turn back on account of their shame, the ones saying, “Aha! Aha!”* | *Some people are saying that I am suffering because I am a bad person. Make them ashamed of saying that so that they stop saying it.* |

ULT **Let them turn back**
UST they stop saying it
(יָשׁוּבוּ)

The pronoun **them** refers to the people described in the previous verse as “the ones seeking my life” and “the ones delighting in my harm.” It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Let those people turn back]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Let them turn back**
UST they stop saying it
(יָשׁוּבוּ)

Here David is speaking of stopping the enemies as if they were walking on a path and then were blocked or **turned back**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Let them stop]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **their shame**
UST Make them ashamed of saying that
(בָּשְׁתָּם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **shame**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [their being ashamed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Aha! Aha**
UST that I am suffering because I am a bad person
(הֶאָח ׀ הֶאָח)

David is using **Aha! Aha!** as a phrase that expresses a strong feeling: gloating and malicious delight at the misfortune of another person. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. If not, you could say what those people were feeling. Alternate translation: [We are glad he is suffering]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let them turn back | they stop saying it |
| their shame | Make them ashamed of saying that |

# Psalms 70:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let all of the seekers of you rejoice and be glad in you, and let the lovers of your salvation say continually, "God is great!"* | *{Rescue me so that} everyone who is loyal to you will greatly celebrate. Then the people who depend on you to rescue them will keep saying, "God certainly is great!"* |

ULT **Let all of the seekers of you rejoice and be glad in you, and let the lovers of your salvation say continually, "God is great**
UST { … Rescue me so that} everyone who is loyal to you will greatly celebrate. Then the people who depend on you to rescue them will keep saying, "God certainly is great
(יָשִׂישׂוּ וְיִשְׂמְחוּ ׀ בְּךָ כָּל־מְבַקְשֶׁיךָ וְיֹאמְרוּ תָמִיד יִגְדַּל אֱלֹהִים אֹהֲבֵי יְשׁוּעָתֶךָ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Let all who seek you celebrate and continually praise your greatness]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Let all of the seekers of you rejoice and be glad in you**
UST {Rescue me so that} everyone who is loyal to you will greatly celebrate
(יָשִׂישׂוּ וְיִשְׂמְחוּ ׀ בְּךָ כָּל־מְבַקְשֶׁיךָ)

The terms **rejoice** and **be glad** mean similar things. David 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: [Let all who seek you rejoice greatly]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **your salvation**
UST to rescue them
(יְשׁוּעָתֶךָ)

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: [the way you save them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the lovers of your salvation**
UST Then the people who depend on you to rescue them
(אֹהֲבֵי יְשׁוּעָתֶךָ)

David is using this possessive form to mean those who are grateful that God saved them. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [those who are grateful for your salvation]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **God is great**
UST God certainly is great
(יִגְדַּל אֱלֹהִים)

David is using **God is great!** as a phrase that expresses a strong feeling, praise and worship toward God. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [We praise God, for he is great]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let … rejoice | will greatly celebrate |
| the seekers of you … in you | Rescue me so that … who is loyal to you |
| and be glad | will greatly celebrate |
| the lovers of | Then the people who depend on you |
| your salvation | to rescue them |
| God | God |
| is great | certainly is great |

# Psalms 70:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But I {am} poor and needy; God, hurry to me! You {are} my help and my deliverer; Yahweh, do not delay!* | *But right now I am in very difficult circumstances, so please act quickly to help me, God! Yahweh, you are the one who helps me and saves me, so please help me right away!* |

**ULT But I {am} poor and needy**
**UST** But right now I am in very difficult circumstances
(וַאֲנִי ׀ עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן)

David uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between the praise of God's people described in the previous verse and his own current desperate situation. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Yet I am poor and needy]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

**ULT {am} poor and needy**
**UST** am in very difficult circumstances
(עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן)

The terms **poor** and **needy** mean similar things. David 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: [am very needy]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT God, hurry to me**
**UST** so please act quickly to help me, God
(אֱלֹהִים חוּשָׁה־לִּי)

David 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: [God, please hurry to help me]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **my help and my deliverer**
UST the one who helps me and saves me
(עֶזְרִי וּמְפַלְטִי)

The terms **help** and **deliverer** mean similar things. David 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: [my sure deliverer]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **my help**
UST the one who helps me
(עֶזְרִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **help**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [my helper]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Yahweh, do not delay**
UST Yahweh … so please help me right away
(יְהוָה אַל־תְּאַחַר)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Yahweh, please do not delay!]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| and my deliverer | and saves me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 71

## Psalm 71 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 71 is a psalm of supplication or lament. It presents all of the basic elements of that type of psalm. (Some elements are repeated.) See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Cry for help (1–4)
2. Statement of trust (5–7)
3. Petition (8–9)
4. Description of troubles (10–11)
5. Petition (12–13)
6. Statement of trust (14–17)
7. Petition (18–21)
8. Vow of praise (22–24)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Lifelong Dependence on God

The psalmist traces reliance on God from the womb (verse 6) through youth (verse 17) to old age (verses 9, 18), asking not to be abandoned as his strength fails.

#### God as Refuge and Rock

The psalmist calls God his rock, fortress, and refuge (verses 1–3, 7), using images of physical shelter to express trust in divine protection.

# Psalms 71:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In you, Yahweh, I take refuge; let me not ever have shame.* | *You, Yahweh, are the one who keeps me safe. May it always be clear that I was right to trust you.* |

**ULT I take refuge**
**UST** are the one who keeps me safe
(חָסֵיתִי)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a safe place where David could **take refuge**. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [I find safety]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT let me not ever have shame**
**UST** May it always be clear that I was right to trust you
(אַל־אֵבוֹשָׁה לְעוֹלָם)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please never let me have shame]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I take refuge | are the one who keeps me safe |
| let me … have shame | May it … be clear that I was right to trust you |

# Psalms 71:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In your righteousness, deliver me and rescue me; incline your ear to me and save me.* | *Because you always do what is right, take action to help me. Consider my situation and save me!* |

**ULT In your righteousness**
**UST** Because you always do what is right
(בְּצִדְקָתְךָ)

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: [Because you act righteously]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT deliver me and rescue me**
**UST** take action to help me
(תַּצִּילֵנִי וּתְפַלְּטֵנִי)

These are imperatives, but they communicate a polite request rather than a command. If the imperatives do not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please deliver me and rescue me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT deliver me and rescue me**
**UST** take action to help me
(תַּצִּילֵנִי וּתְפַלְּטֵנִי)

The terms **deliver** and **rescue** mean similar things. David 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 deliver me]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **incline your ear to me and save me**
UST Consider my situation and save me
(הַטֵּה־אֵלַי אָזְנְךָ וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנִי)

These are imperatives, but they communicate a polite request rather than a command. If the imperatives do not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please incline your ear to me and save me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **incline your ear to me**
UST Consider my situation
(הַטֵּה־אֵלַי אָזְנְךָ)

Here, **incline your ear to me** is a common expression that means "listen to me carefully." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [listen carefully to me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| In your righteousness | Because you always do what is right |
| deliver me | take action to help me |
| and rescue me | take action to help me |
| and save me | and save me |

# Psalms 71:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Be to me a rock of abode for coming continually; you command to save me, for you {are} my rock and my stronghold.* | *You declare that I will be safe, since you are the one who keeps me safe and protects me, so please be like a huge rock on top of which I can always go to be safe.* |

ULT **Be to me a rock of abode for coming continually**
UST so please be like a huge rock on top of which I can always go to be safe
(הֱיֵה לִּי ׀ לְצוּר מָעוֹן לָבוֹא תָּמִיד)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please be to me a rock of abode for coming continually]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Be to me a rock of abode**
UST so please be like a huge rock on top of which I … to be safe
(הֱיֵה לִּי ׀ לְצוּר מָעוֹן)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **rock** where David could live in safety. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [Be to me like a rock where I can live safely]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **a rock of abode**
UST like a huge rock on top of which … to be safe
(לְצוּר מָעוֹן)

David is using this possessive form to mean "a rock upon which he could live." It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [a safe place to dwell]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **for you {are} my rock and my stronghold**
UST since you are the one who keeps me safe and protects me
(כִּי־סַלְעִי וּמְצוּדָתִי אָתָּה)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because you are my rock and my stronghold]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **my rock and my stronghold**
UST are the one who keeps me safe and protects me
(סַלְעִי וּמְצוּדָתִי)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **rock** and **stronghold** that provided safety and protection. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [the one who protects me as would a rock and a stronghold]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| to save me | that I will be safe |
| and my stronghold | and protects me |

# Psalms 71:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My God, rescue me from the hand of the wicked, from the palm of the one doing wrong and the one being cruel;* | *My God, please rescue me from what wicked people want to do to me. Rescue me from the power of violent, evil men.* |

**ULT rescue me from the hand of the wicked**
**UST** please rescue me from what wicked people want to do to me. Rescue me
(פַּלְּטֵנִי מִיַּד רָשָׁע)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please rescue me from the hand of the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT from the hand of the wicked**
**UST** from what wicked people want to do to me
(מִיַּד רָשָׁע)

Here **hand** represents power or control. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the power of the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT from the hand of the wicked, from the palm of the one doing wrong and the one being cruel**
**UST** from what wicked people want to do to me … from the power of violent, evil men
(מִיַּד רָשָׁע מִכַּף מְעַוֵּל וְחוֹמֵץ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [from the hand of the wicked, yes, from the palm of the one doing wrong and the one being cruel]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רָשָׁע)

David is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean wicked people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [people who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **from the palm of the one doing wrong**
UST from the power of … evil
(מִכַּף מְעַוֵּל)

Here **palm** represents power or control. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the control of the one doing wrong]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| My God | My God |
| rescue me | please rescue me … Rescue me |
| the wicked | wicked people |
| the one doing wrong | evil |

# Psalms 71:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *for you {are} my hope, Lord Yahweh, my confidence from my youth.* | *Yahweh my Lord, you are the one whom I confidently expect to help me. I have trusted in you ever since I was young.* |

**ULT for you {are} my hope**
**UST** you are the one whom I confidently expect to help me
(כִּי־אַתָּה תִקְוָתִי)

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 you are my hope]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT {are} my hope**
**UST** are the one whom I confidently expect to help me
(תִקְוָתִי)

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: [are the one in whom I hope]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT my confidence from my youth**
**UST** I have trusted in you ever since I was young
(מִבְטַחִי מִנְּעוּרָי)

David 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 it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [you are my confidence from my youth]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT my confidence**
**UST** I have trusted in you
(מִבְטַחִי)

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: [the one in whom I have been confident]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {are} my hope | are the one whom I confidently expect to help me |
| Lord Yahweh | Yahweh my Lord |

# Psalms 71:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have supported myself on you from the womb; you were taking me from the belly of my mother. My praise {is} about you continually.* | *I have depended on you for my entire life; you even made sure that I was born safely, so I will always praise you.* |

ULT **from the womb**
UST for my entire life
(מִבֶּטֶן)

Here, **from the womb** is a common expression that means “from birth” or “since I was born.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from my birth]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **My praise {is} about you continually**
UST so I will always praise you
(בְּךָ תְהִלָּתִי תָמִיד)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [I praise you continually]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from the womb | for my entire life |
| My praise | so I will … praise |

# Psalms 71:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have become like a wonder to many, but you {are} my refuge of strength.* | *It shocks many people to see me now, but you are my mighty protector.* |

ULT **like a wonder**
UST It shocks … to see me now
(כַּמּוֹפֵת)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a wonder** causes amazement, so David causes amazement to many people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [like something that amazes people] or [like something that is shocking]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **to many**
UST many people
(לָרַבִּים)

David is using the adjective **many** as a noun to mean many people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [to a great number of people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **but you {are} my refuge of strength**
UST but you are my mighty protector
(וְאַתָּה מַחֲסִי־עֹז)

David is using the possessive form to describe a **refuge** that is characterized by **strength**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [but you are my strong refuge]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **{are} my refuge of strength**
UST are my mighty protector
(מַחֲסִי־עֹז)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [are my strong refuge]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {are} my refuge of | are my … protector |
| strength | mighty |

# Psalms 71:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let my mouth be filled {with} your praise, all of the day {with} your splendor.* | *I praise you lavishly throughout the day for how glorious you are.* |

ULT **Let my mouth be filled {with}**
UST I … lavishly
(יִמָּלֵא פִי)

The expression **Let my mouth be filled** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [May you fill my mouth with]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **Let my mouth be filled {with}**
UST I … lavishly
(יִמָּלֵא פִי)

Here, **mouth** represents speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Let what I say be filled with] or [Let my speech be filled with]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **your praise**
UST praise you
(תְּהִלָּתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [praising you] or [words that praise you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **all of the day {with} your splendor**
UST throughout the day for how glorious you are
(כָּל־הַיּוֹם תִּפְאַרְתֶּךָ)

David 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 earlier in the sentence if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [let all of the day be filled with your splendor]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **{with} your splendor**
UST for how glorious you are
(תִּפְאַרְתֶּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **splendor**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with how splendid you are] or [with your splendid deeds]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your praise | praise you |
| {with} your splendor | for how glorious you are |

# Psalms 71:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May you not cast me away in the time of old age; may you not forsake me when my strength fails.* | *Please keep helping me now that I have become an old man. Please help me even though I am not strong anymore.* |

ULT **May you not cast me away in the time of old age; may you not forsake me when my strength fails**

UST Please keep helping me now that I have become an old man. Please help me even though I am not strong anymore

(אַל־תַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי לְעֵת זִקְנָה כִּכְלוֹת כֹּחִי אַל־תַּעַזְבֵנִי)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [May you not cast me away and forsake me when I am old and my strength fails]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **May you not cast me away**

UST Please keep helping me … Please help me

(אַל־תַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי)

David is speaking of God rejecting him as if God would **cast** him **away** like throwing away an unwanted object. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May you not reject me] or [May you not abandon me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **may you not forsake me**

UST Please help me

(אַל־תַּעַזְבֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please do not forsake me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

> ULT **when my strength fails**
> UST even though I am not strong anymore
> (כְּכַלּוֹת כֹּחִי)

The word **when** introduces a clause that tells the time of the event in the previous clause. Use the form in your language for introducing a simultaneous time clause. Alternate translation: [at the time that my strength fails]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

> ULT **when my strength fails**
> UST even though I am not strong anymore
> (כְּכַלּוֹת כֹּחִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [when I am no longer strong] or [when I become weak]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| may you … forsake me | Please help me |
| in the time of | now that |
| old age | I have become an old man |

# Psalms 71:10

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *For my enemies have spoken against me, and the ones watching my life have consulted together,* | *My enemies are saying that they want to kill me, and they are planning together how to do that.* |

**ULT For my enemies have spoken against me**
**UST** My enemies are saying
(כִּֽי־אָמְרוּ אוֹיְבַ֥י לִ֑י)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Because my enemies have spoken against me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT and the ones watching my life**
**UST** that they want to kill me
(וְשֹׁמְרֵ֖י נַפְשִׁ֣י)

The phrase **the ones watching my life** refers to David's enemies. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and my enemies who are watching my life]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and the ones watching my life**
**UST** that they want to kill me
(וְשֹׁמְרֵ֖י נַפְשִׁ֣י)

Here, **the ones watching my life** is a common expression that means "those who want to kill me." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and those who want to kill me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my enemies | enemies |
| and the ones watching | that they want |
| have consulted | and they are planning … how to do that |

# Psalms 71:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *saying, “God has forsaken him; pursue and seize him, for there is none delivering.”* | *They are saying, “No one will rescue him, since God is not helping him anymore, so we can pursue him and capture him.”* |

ULT **saying, “God has forsaken him; pursue and seize him, for there is none delivering**
UST They are saying, “No one will rescue him, since God is not helping him anymore, so we can pursue him and capture him
(לֵאמֹר אֱלֹהִים עֲזָבֻהּ רִדְפוּ וְתִפְשׂוּהוּ כִּי־אֵין מַצִּיל)

You can indicate this as an indirect quote if that is more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [saying that God has forsaken him and that they should pursue and seize him because there is none delivering]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **has forsaken him**
UST is not helping him anymore
(עֲזָבֻהּ)

Here, **him** refers to David, the psalmist of this psalm. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [David]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **for there is none delivering**
UST No one will rescue him, since
(כִּי־אֵין מַצִּיל)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because there is none delivering]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| has forsaken him | is not helping him anymore |
| and seize him | and capture him |
| delivering | will rescue him |

# Psalms 71:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God, may you not be far from me; my God, hasten to my help.* | *My God, do not neglect me; hurry to help me!* |

ULT **may you not be far from me; my God, hasten to my help**
UST My God, do not neglect me; hurry to help me
(אַל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי אֱלֹהַי לְעֶזְרָתִי חוּשָׁה)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [may you not be far from me, but rather, my God, hasten to my help]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **may you not be far from me**
UST do not neglect me … to
(אַל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please do not be far from me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **may you not be far from me**
UST do not neglect me … to
(אַל־תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי)

David is speaking of God not helping him as if God were physically **far from** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [do not fail to help me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **hasten to my help**
UST hurry … help me
(לְעֶזְרָתִי חוּשָׁה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please hasten to my help]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **to my help**
UST help me
(לְעֶזְרָתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **help**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to meet my need]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | My God |
| my God | My God |

# Psalms 71:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let them shame and finish, the adversaries of my life; let them cover {with} reproach and disgrace, the ones seeking my harm.* | *Embarrass the people who want to kill me by making their plans fail. Yes, completely shame and disgrace those who want to harm me!* |

ULT **Let them shame and finish, the adversaries of my life; let them cover {with} reproach and disgrace, the ones seeking my harm**

UST Embarrass the people who want to kill me by making their plans fail. Yes, completely shame and disgrace those who want to harm me

(יֵבֹ֤שׁוּ יִכָּלוּ֙ שֹׂטְנֵ֣י נַפְשִׁ֔י יַעֲטֹ֥ו חֶרְפָּ֖ה וּכְלִמָּ֑ה מְבַקְשֵׁ֖י רָעָתִֽי׃)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Let them shame and finish the adversaries of my life; indeed, let them cover with reproach and disgrace the ones seeking my harm]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Let them shame and finish, the adversaries of my life; let them cover {with} reproach**

UST Embarrass the people who want to kill me by making their plans fail. Yes, completely shame

(יֵבֹ֤שׁוּ יִכָּלוּ֙ שֹׂטְנֵ֣י נַפְשִׁ֔י יַעֲטֹ֥ו חֶרְפָּֽה׃)

By using **let** in these phrases, the psalmist is expressing what he desires or prays will happen to his enemies. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [I ask that they be put to shame and finished, the adversaries of my life; I ask that they be covered with reproach]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **Let them shame and finish**

UST Embarrass … by making their plans fail

(יֵבֹ֤שׁוּ יִכָּלוּ֙׃)

The pronoun **them** refers to the adversaries themselves. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [May the adversaries themselves be put to shame and finish]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **let them cover {with} reproach and disgrace**
UST Yes, completely shame and disgrace
(יַעֲטוּ חֶרְפָּה וּכְלִמָּה)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **reproach** and **disgrace**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [let them be reproached and disgraced]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{with} reproach and disgrace**
UST shame and disgrace
(חֶרְפָּה וּכְלִמָּה)

The terms **reproach** and **disgrace** mean similar things. David 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: [with shameful disgrace]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **the ones seeking my harm**
UST those who want to harm me
(מְבַקְשֵׁי רָעָתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **harm**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the ones seeking to harm me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let them shame | Embarrass |
| the adversaries of | the people who want |
| {with} reproach | shame |
| and disgrace | and disgrace |
| the ones seeking | those who want |
| my harm | to harm me |

# Psalms 71:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But I, I will hope continually, and I will add to all of your praise.* | *But as for me, I will always trust you, and I will praise you even more {now than I have in the past}.* |

ULT **But I, I will hope**
UST But as for me, I will … trust you
(וַאֲנִי & אֲיַחֵל)

David is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **I will hope** already includes this meaning. He is doing that because he is contrasting his response with the fate of his enemies. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing that meaning here. Alternate translation: [But as for me, I will hope]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **your praise**
UST I will praise you
(תְּהִלָּתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the ways I praise you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will hope | I will … trust you |
| your praise | I will praise you |

# Psalms 71:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My mouth will recount your righteousness, all of the day, your salvation, for I do not know the numbers.* | *I will tell people how you have saved me because you are good. I will do that continually because there will always be more for me to say about this.* |

ULT **My mouth**
UST I
(פִּי)

Here, **My mouth** represents David speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **your righteousness**
UST because you are good
(צִדְקָתֶךָ)

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: [how righteous you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **all of the day**
UST I will do that continually
(כָּל־הַיּוֹם)

David is saying **all of the day** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [continually]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **your salvation**
UST how you have saved me
(תְּשׁוּעָתֶךָ)

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: [how you save]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your salvation**
UST how you have saved me
(תְּשׁוּעָתֶךָ)

David 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 will recount your salvation]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **for I do not know the numbers**
UST because there will always be more for me to say about this
(כִּי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי סְפֹרוֹת)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because I do not know the numbers]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| will recount | will tell people |
| your righteousness | because you are good |
| your salvation | how you have saved me |
| I do … know | there will always be more for me to say about this |

# Psalms 71:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will come in the forces of Lord Yahweh; I will remember your righteousness, yours alone.* | *Yahweh my Lord, you are the one who gives me great strength. I will recall {to others} how you do what is right in a way that no one else does.* |

ULT **I will come in the forces of Lord Yahweh**
UST Yahweh my Lord, you are the one who gives me great strength
(אָבֹוא בִּגְבֻרֹות אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה)

David is using **I will come in the forces of Lord Yahweh** as a common expression of the culture to mean "I will act in the strength of Lord Yahweh." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will act in the strength of Lord Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **your righteousness**
UST how you do what is right
(צִדְקָתְךָ)

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: [how righteous you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Lord Yahweh | Yahweh my Lord |
| your righteousness | how you do what is right |

# Psalms 71:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God, you have taught me from my youth, and to this I declare your wonderful doings.* | *God, you have taught me many things ever since I was young, and I still tell people today about the wonderful things you do.* |

**ULT you have taught me**

**UST** you have taught me many things

(לִמַּדְתַּנִי)

The implied information may be stated clearly. “taught me many things”

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| I declare | I … tell people |

# Psalms 71:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And also until old age and gray hair, God, do not forsake me, until I declare your arm to a generation, your might to everyone {who} will come.* | *God, please keep helping me now that I am old and my hair is gray. That way I will be able to tell my descendants how powerfully you have helped me.* |

ULT **old age and gray hair**
UST that I am old and my hair is gray
(זִקְנָה ו וְשֵׂיבָה)

The phrase **old age and gray hair** expresses a single idea. The word **gray hair** tells more about **old age**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [gray-haired old age]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

ULT **God, do not forsake me**
UST God, please keep helping me
(אֱלֹהִים אַל־תַּעַזְבֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please do not forsake me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **until I declare your arm to a generation**
UST That way I will be able to tell my descendants how powerfully you have helped me
(עַד־אַגִּיד זְרוֹעֲךָ לְדוֹר)

Here, **until I declare your arm to a generation** marks the purpose for David’s request. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that I may declare your arm to a generation]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **your arm to a generation, your might to everyone {who} will come**
UST my descendants how powerfully you have helped me
(זְרוֹעֲךָ לְדוֹר לְכָל־יָבוֹא גְּבוּרָתֶךָ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [your arm to a generation, that is, your might to everyone who will come]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **your arm**
UST how powerfully you have helped me
(זְרוֹעֲךָ)

Here, **arm** represents power or strength. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **your might to everyone {who} will come**
UST my descendants how powerfully you have helped me
(לְכָל־יָבוֹא גְּבוּרָתֶךָ)

David 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 declare your might to everyone who will come]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **your might**
UST how powerfully you have helped me
(גְּבוּרָתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **might**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how mighty you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| old age | that I am old |
| God | God |
| do … forsake me | please keep helping me |
| I declare | I will be able to tell |
| to a generation | my descendants |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your might | how powerfully you have helped me |

# Psalms 71:19

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *For your righteousness, God, {is} to height, {you} who do great {things}; God, who {is} like you?* | *God, you do so many great things because you are good, it is as if they have piled up to the sky. There is no one else like you, God!* |

**ULT For your righteousness, God, {is} to height**
**UST** God … because you are good, it is as if they have piled up to the sky
(וְצִדְקָתְךָ אֱלֹהִים עַד־מָרוֹם)

David is speaking of God's **righteousness** as if it were something that could reach up to a **height**. He means that God's righteousness is very great. Alternate translation: [Great is For your righteousness, God is very great]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT For your righteousness**
**UST** because you are good
(וְצִדְקָתְךָ)

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: [How righteous you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT who {is} like you**
**UST** There is no one else like you
(מִי כָמוֹךָ)

David is using the question form to emphasize that no one is like God. 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: [there is no one like you.] or [no one is like you!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| For your righteousness | because you are good |
| God | God |

# Psalms 71:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{You} who have made me see many and evil troubles, may you return, may you revive me, and may you return, may you bring me up from the depths of the earth.* | *You have allowed me to experience many very difficult things, and it has seemed as if I was about to go to the place where dead people are, but now please give me a good life again.* |

ULT **may you return, may you revive me, and may you return, may you bring me up from the depths of the earth**
UST and it has seemed as if I was about to go to the place where dead people are, but now please give me a good life again
(תָּשׁוּב תְּחַיֵּינִי וּמִתְּהֹמוֹת הָאָרֶץ תָּשׁוּב תַּעֲלֵנִי)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [please restore my life and bring me up from my troubles]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **may you return, may you revive me**
UST but now please give me a good life again
(תָּשׁוּב תְּחַיֵּינִי)

This is a request. Alternate translation: [please return and revive me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **may you return**
UST again
(תָּשׁוּב)

David is using **may you return** as a common expression to mean "resume acting on my behalf." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [may you act on my behalf again]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **may you return, may you bring me up**
UST but now please give me a good life again
(תָּשׁוּב תַּעֲלֵנִי)

This is a request. Alternate translation: [please return and bring me up] or [please return and restore me to life]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **and may you return, may you bring me up from the depths of the earth**
UST and it has seemed as if I was about to go to the place where dead people are, but now please give me a good life again
(וּמִתְהֹמֹ֖ות הָאָ֣רֶץ תָּשׁ֑וּב תַּעֲלֵֽנִי)

David is speaking of extreme trouble or despair as if it were the **depths of the earth**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and may you return, may you restore me from the place of great trouble] or [and may you return, may you restore me from great despair]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and evil | very difficult things |
| troubles | very difficult things |
| may you revive me | but now please give me a good life |

# Psalms 71:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May you increase my greatness, and may you turn around, may you comfort me.* | *Please make me even greater than I was before, and comfort me rather than allow me to have difficult experiences.* |

ULT **May you increase my greatness, and may you turn around, may you comfort me**
UST Please make me even greater than I was before, and comfort me rather than allow me to have difficult experiences
(תָּרֵב ׀ גְּדֻלָּתִי וְתִסֹּב תְּנַחֲמֵנִי)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Please increase my greatness and comfort me]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **May you increase my greatness**
UST Please make me even greater than I was before
(תָּרֵב ׀ גְּדֻלָּתִי)

This is a request. Alternate translation: [Please increase my greatness]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **my greatness**
UST greater
(גְּדֻלָּתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **greatness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how great I am]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and may you turn around, may you comfort me**
UST and comfort me rather than allow me to have difficult experiences
(וְתִסֹּב תְּנַחֲמֵנִי)

This is a request. Alternate translation: [please turn around and comfort me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my greatness | greater |

# Psalms 71:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Also I, I will praise you with the instrument of the lute {for} your faithfulness, my God; Let me make music to you with the harp, Holy {One} of Israel.* | *When you do that, then I will play my lute and praise you, my God, for faithfully helping me. I will play my harp as I sing to praise you. You are the holy God whom we Israelites worship.* |

ULT **Also I, I will praise you**
UST When you do that, then I … and praise you
(גַּם־אֲנִי ׀ אוֹדֶךָ)

The pronoun **I** appears twice for emphasis. David is emphasizing that he himself will praise God. Alternate translation: [I myself will praise you]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **{for} your faithfulness**
UST for faithfully helping me
(אֲמִתְּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how faithful you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{ … I will praise you with the instrument of the lute for} your faithfulness, my God; Let me make music to you with the harp**
UST will play my lute and praise you, my God, for faithfully helping me. I will play my harp as I sing to praise you
(אוֹדֶךָ בִּכְלִי־נֵבֶל אֲמִתְּךָ אֱלֹהָי אֲזַמְּרָה לְךָ בְכִנּוֹר)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [I will play music to praise you for your faithfulness, my God with stringed instruments]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Holy {One} of Israel**
UST You are the holy God whom we Israelites worship
(קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל)

David is using this possessive form to describe the holy God with whom the Israelites are in a covenant relationship. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Holy God with whom we Israelites are in a covenant relationship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will praise you | and praise you |
| the lute | will play my lute |
| {for} your faithfulness | for faithfully helping me |
| my God | my God |
| with the harp | my harp |
| Holy {One} | You are the holy God whom … worship |
| of Israel | we Israelites |

# Psalms 71:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My lips will shout joyfully when I make music to you, and my soul, which you have redeemed.* | *I will shout joyfully while I sing. Because you will have rescued me, I will sing to you wholeheartedly.* |

ULT **My lips**
UST I
(שְׂפָתַי)

Here, **lips** represents speech or singing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and my soul, which you have redeemed**
UST you will have rescued me … wholeheartedly
(וְנַפְשִׁי אֲשֶׁר פָּדִיתָ)

David 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 my soul will shout joyfully, which you have redeemed]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and my soul**
UST wholeheartedly
(וְנַפְשִׁי)

David is using **soul** to represent the whole person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and my soul | wholeheartedly |
| you have redeemed | you will have rescued me |

# Psalms 71:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Also my tongue will meditate {on} your righteousness all of the day, for they will shame, for they will confound the ones seeking my harm.* | *You will have defeated and disgraced the people who wanted to harm me, so throughout the day I will describe how you did what was right.* |

ULT **my tongue**
UST I
(לְשׁוֹנִי)

Here, **tongue** represents speech. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **{on} your righteousness**
UST how you did what was right
(צִדְקָתֶךָ)

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: [on how righteous you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **all of the day**
UST throughout the day
(כָּל־הַיּוֹם)

David is saying **all of the day** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [continually] or [very often]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **for they will shame, for they will confound the ones seeking my harm**
UST You will have defeated and disgraced the people who wanted to harm me, so
(כִּי־בֹשׁוּ כִי־חָפְרוּ מְבַקְשֵׁי רָעָתִי)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because those who seek my harm will be shamed and confounded]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **they will shame, for they will confound the ones seeking my harm**
UST You will have defeated and disgraced the people who wanted to harm me, so
(בֹּ֤שׁוּ כִי־חָפְרוּ֙ מְבַקְשֵׁ֣י רָעָתִ֔י)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [the ones seeking my harm will be thoroughly put to shame]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **they will shame, for they will confound**
UST You will have defeated and disgraced … so
(בֹּ֤שׁוּ כִי־חָפְרוּ֙)

The pronoun **they** refers to the people who seek to harm David (see verse 13). It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [shame and disgrace will come upon]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my tongue | I |
| will meditate | will describe |
| {on} your righteousness | how you did what was right |
| they will shame | and disgraced |
| the ones seeking | the people who wanted |
| my harm | to harm me |

# Psalms 72

## Psalm 72 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 72 is a royal psalm that celebrates the occasion of a new king beginning his rule. It is a prayer for God to help the new Israelite king uphold justice and help needy people as his representative on earth. It also asks God to defeat the king's foreign enemies so that he can continue to rule. This type of royal psalm is a specific kind of psalm of supplication. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Prayer that the new king will uphold justice (1–7)
2. Prayer that the new king will rule a great area (8–11)
3. Prayer that the new king will help needy people (12–14)
4. Prayer that the new king will bring blessings and be blessed (14–17)

Verses 18–20 are not part of the original psalm. They are a doxology (an expression of praise to God) that the editors of the book of Psalms added to mark the end of Book Two of the psalms. See how you translated the similar doxology in 41:13.

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### "Of Solomon"

The superscription of this psalm is "Of Solomon." This may mean that Solomon wrote this psalm. But it may also mean that someone else wrote this psalm in honor of Solomon. If so, one likely possibility is that David wrote it for the coronation of his son as the next king. We recommend that you translate the superscription in a way that allows for this possibility as well as for the possibility that Solomon was the author.

# Psalms 72:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Of Solomon. God, give your judgments to the king and your righteousness to the son of the king.* | *A psalm of Solomon. O God, please enable the man who is now succeeding his father as king to judge cases rightly, as you would do.* |

**ULT God, give your judgments to the king**
**UST** O God, please enable the man … as king to judge cases rightly
(אֱלֹהִים מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לַמֶּלֶךְ תֵּן)

The psalmist is using an imperative, but he is communicating a polite request to God rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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 give your judgments to the king]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT give your judgments to the king and your righteousness to the son of the king**
**UST** please enable the man who is now succeeding his father as king to judge cases rightly, as you would do
(מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לַמֶּלֶךְ תֵּן וְצִדְקָתְךָ לְבֶן־מֶלֶךְ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [give your just decisions to the king, yes, give your righteousness to the king’s son]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT your judgments**
**UST** to judge cases rightly
(מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **judgments**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [your ability to judge rightly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and your righteousness to the son of the king**
UST who is now succeeding his father … as you would do
(וְצִדְקָתְךָ לְבֶן־מֶלֶךְ)

The psalmist 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 give your righteousness to the son of the king]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and your righteousness**
UST as you would do
(וְצִדְקָתְךָ)

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: [your righteous character]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to the son of the king**
UST who is now succeeding his father
(לְבֶן־מֶלֶךְ)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to describe a social relationship. **The son of the king** refers to the king's offspring. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the king's son]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Of Solomon | A psalm of Solomon |
| God | O God |
| your judgments | to judge cases rightly |
| to the king | the man … as king |
| and your righteousness | as you would do |
| the king | who is now succeeding his father |

# Psalms 72:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May he judge your people with righteousness and your poor with justice.* | *Enable him to judge the cases of Israelite people fairly, especially for people who are vulnerable.* |

**ULT with righteousness**
**UST** fairly
(בְּצֶדֶק)

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: [righteously]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT May he judge your people with righteousness and your poor with justice**
**UST** Enable him to judge the cases of Israelite people fairly, especially for people who are vulnerable
(יָדִין עַמְּךָ בְצֶדֶק וַעֲנִיֶּיךָ בְּמִשְׁפָּט)

The psalmist is saying what he wants God to make happen. See the discussion in the introduction to Psalms about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [I want the king to judge your people with righteousness and your poor with justice]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

**ULT and your poor**
**UST** people who are vulnerable
(וַעֲנִיֶּיךָ)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [your poor people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT with justice**
**UST** especially for
(בְּמִשְׁפָּט)

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: [justly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May he judge | Enable him to judge |
| with righteousness | fairly |
| with justice | especially for |

# Psalms 72:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May the mountains bring peace to the people, and the hills, in righteousness.* | *May the people live rightly so that they will be prosperous as crops grow abundantly on the hillsides of the land.* |

ULT **May the mountains bring peace to the people, and the hills, in righteousness**
UST May the people live rightly so that they will be prosperous as crops grow abundantly on the hillsides of the land
(יִשְׂאוּ הָרִים שָׁלוֹם לָעָם וּגְבָעוֹת בִּצְדָקָה)

The psalmist is speaking of **the mountains** and **the hills** as if they were living things that could **bring peace** to the people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May the land produce prosperity for the people, from the mountains to the hills, through righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **peace**
UST so that they will be prosperous
(שָׁלוֹם)

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: [peaceful conditions]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and the hills, in righteousness**
UST May … live rightly … on the hillsides of the land
(וּגְבָעוֹת בִּצְדָקָה)

The psalmist 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 hills bring peace to the people, in righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **in righteousness**
UST May … live rightly
(בִּצְדָקָה)

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: [righteously]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| peace | so that they will be prosperous |
| in righteousness | May … live rightly |

# Psalms 72:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May he judge the poor of the people; may he save the sons of the needy, and may he crush the oppressor.* | *Help the king to defend poor people and rescue needy people and defeat those who are oppressing them.* |

**ULT the poor of the people**
**UST** poor people
(עֲנִיֵּי־עָם)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to describe the poor who are among the people. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [those among the people who are poor]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT the poor of**
**UST** poor
(עֲנִיֵּי)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the poor people of]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT the sons of the needy**
**UST** needy people
(לִבְנֵי אֶבְיוֹן)

The psalmist is using **sons of** as a common expression of the culture to indicate that a person has a certain characteristic. In this case, people have the characteristic of being needy. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [people who are in need]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

> ULT **the needy**
> UST needy people
> (אֶבְיוֹן)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [needy people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

> ULT **the oppressor**
> UST those who are oppressing them
> (עוֹשֵׁק)

The psalmist is using the adjective **oppressor** 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: [the one who oppresses them]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May he judge | Help the king to defend |
| may he save | and rescue |

# Psalms 72:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May they fear you with the sun and to the face of the moon, generation of generations.* | *May each successive generation of the people respect you. May they do that for as long as the sun and the moon are in the sky!* |

**ULT May they fear you**
**UST** respect you
(יִירָאוּךָ)

The pronoun **they** refers to the people. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [May the people fear you]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT with the sun and to the face of the moon**
**UST** May they do that for as long as the sun and the moon are in the sky
(עִם־שֶׁמֶשׁ וְלִפְנֵי יָרֵחַ)

The psalmist is using the two extremes of **the sun** and **the moon** together to mean all of time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [as long as the sun and moon endure]

**Support Reference:** Merism

**ULT and to the face of the moon**
**UST** and the moon are in the sky
(וְלִפְנֵי יָרֵחַ)

Here, **the face of the moon** represents the presence and duration of the moon. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [as long as the moon exists]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT generation of generations**
**UST** May each successive generation of the people
(דֹּר דֹּרִים)

The expression **generation of generations** is an idiom that means “for all successive generations,” that is, “forever.” If your readers would not understand this, you could use an equivalent idiom or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [throughout all future generations]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May they fear you | respect you |
| generation | May each successive generation of the people |
| of generations | May each successive generation of the people |

# Psalms 72:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May he come down like rain on mown grass, like showers, a drenching of the earth.* | *May this king make the nation prosperous, just as heavy rains soak the soil and enable more hay to grow after a first cutting.* |

**ULT like rain on mown grass**
**UST** just as heavy rains … and enable more hay to grow after a first cutting
(כִּמְטַר עַל־גֵּז)

The point of this comparison is that just as **rain** nourishes **mown grass** and causes it to grow again, so the king's rule will nourish and refresh his people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point of comparison explicit. Alternate translation: [like rain that falls on mown grass and refreshes it]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT like showers, a drenching of the earth**
**UST** just as heavy rains soak the soil
(כִּרְבִיבִים זַרְזִיף אָרֶץ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **showers** drench and soak the earth, so the king's influence will thoroughly bless his people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point of comparison explicit. Alternate translation: [like showers that drench the earth]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the earth | the soil |

# Psalms 72:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May the righteous flourish in his days, and abundance of peace until the moon {is} not.* | *May people who live rightly prosper during the time when he reigns, and may the nation be very prosperous for as long as the moon is in the sky.* |

ULT **May the righteous flourish in his days**
UST May people who live rightly prosper during the time when he reigns
(יִפְרַח־בְּיָמָיו צַדִּיק)

The psalmist is speaking of **the righteous** as if they were plants that **flourish** and grow. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May the righteous prosper in his days]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the righteous**
UST May people who live rightly
(צַדִּיק)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the righteous person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **in his days**
UST during the time when he reigns
(בְּיָמָיו)

The pronoun **his** refers to the king. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [in the king's days]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **in his days**
UST during the time when he reigns
(בְּיָמָיו)

Here, **his days** represents the time period of the king's reign. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [during his reign]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and abundance of peace**
UST and may the nation be very prosperous
(וְרֹ֣ב שָׁלֽוֹם)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **abundance** and **peace**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [and experience very peaceful life]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the righteous | May people who live rightly |
| in his days | during the time when he reigns |
| of peace | and may the nation be … prosperous |

# Psalms 72:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May he rule from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.* | *May he rule over all of the surrounding territory, right up to the shores of the seas. May his realm extend from the Euphrates River to the limits of the lands that people know.* |

ULT **from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth**
UST over all of the surrounding territory, right up to the shores of the seas. May his realm extend from the Euphrates River to the limits of the lands that people know
(מִיָּם עַד־יָם וּמִנָּהָר עַד־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ)

The psalmist is using two extremes of geography, **from sea to sea** and **from the River to the ends of the earth**, together to mean everywhere. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [over the whole earth, from sea to sea and from the River to the farthest lands]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **May he rule from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth**
UST May he rule over all of the surrounding territory, right up to the shores of the seas. May his realm extend from the Euphrates River to the limits of the lands that people know
(וְיֵרְדְּ מִיָּם עַד־יָם וּמִנָּהָר עַד־אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ)

The psalmist is saying how he wants the king to **rule**. See the discussion in the introduction to Psalms about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [I want him to rule from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **the ends of the earth**
UST the limits of the lands that people know
(אַפְסֵי־אָרֶץ)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to describe the farthest places on **the earth**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the farthest places on earth]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May he rule | May he rule |
| and from the River | May his realm extend from the Euphrates River |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the earth | the lands that people know |

# Psalms 72:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May desert-dwellers kneel to his face, and may his enemies lick the dust.* | *May the leaders of the desert tribes bow down in front of him {to acknowledge him as their ruler}, and may his enemies lie facedown on the ground {in submission to him}.* |

**ULT May … kneel to his face**
**UST** May … bow down in front of him {to acknowledge him as their ruler}
(לְפָנָיו יִכְרְעוּ)

Here, **his face** represents his presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [kneel before him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT lick the dust**
**UST** may … lie facedown on the ground {in submission to him}
(עָפָר יְלַחֵכוּ)

The expression **lick the dust** is an idiom that means to be completely defeated and humiliated. If your readers would not understand this, you could use an equivalent idiom or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [be completely defeated]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT May desert-dwellers kneel to his face, and may his enemies lick the dust**
**UST** May the leaders of the desert tribes bow down in front of him {to acknowledge him as their ruler}, and may his enemies lie facedown on the ground {in submission to him … }
(לְפָנָיו יִכְרְעוּ צִיִּים וְאֹיְבָיו עָפָר יְלַחֵכוּ)

In both instances, the pronoun **his** refers to the king. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [May desert-dwellers kneel to the king's face, and may the king's enemies lick the dust]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May … kneel | May … bow down … to acknowledge him as their ruler |
| and may his enemies | and … his enemies |
| desert-dwellers | the leaders of the desert tribes |

# Psalms 72:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May the kings of Tarshish and the coastlands return tribute; may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring near a gift.* | *May the kings who rule the land of Tarshish and other coastal areas pay tribute to him. May the king of Sheba and the king of Seba give him gifts.* |

ULT **May the kings of Tarshish and the coastlands return tribute; may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring near a gift**

UST May the kings who rule the land of Tarshish and other coastal areas pay tribute to him. May the king of Sheba and the king of Seba give him gifts

(מַלְכֵ֣י תַרְשִׁ֣ישׁ וְאִיִּ֗ים מִנְחָ֥ה יָשִׁ֑יבוּ מַלְכֵ֖י שְׁבָ֣א וּסְבָ֣א אֶשְׁכָּ֖ר יַקְרִֽיבוּ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [May kings from distant lands, from Tarshish to Sheba and Seba, bring tribute and gifts to him]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the kings of Tarshish**

UST May the kings who rule the land of Tarshish

(מַלְכֵ֣י תַרְשִׁ֣ישׁ)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to describe the kings who rule in **Tarshish**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the kings who rule in Tarshish]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the kings of Sheba and Seba**

UST the king of Sheba and the king of Seba

(מַלְכֵ֖י שְׁבָ֣א וּסְבָ֣א)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to describe the kings who rule in **Sheba** and **Seba**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the kings who rule in Sheba and Seba]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **and Seba**

UST and the king of Seba

(וּסְבָ֣א)

The word **Seba** is the name of a region.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the kings of | May the kings who rule |
| Tarshish | the land of Tarshish |
| tribute | tribute |
| Sheba | Sheba |

# Psalms 72:11

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And may all kings bow down to him; may all nations serve him.* | *In fact, may all the kings in the world acknowledge him as their ruler, and may every nation obey him.* |

**ULT And may all kings bow down to him; may all nations serve him**
**UST** In fact, may all the kings in the world acknowledge him as their ruler, and may every nation obey him
(וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ־לוֹ כָל־מְלָכִים כָּל־גּוֹיִם יַעַבְדוּהוּ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [And may all kings and nations submit to him and serve him]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT And may all kings bow down to him**
**UST** In fact, may all the kings in the world acknowledge him as their ruler
(וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ־לוֹ כָל־מְלָכִים)

The word **And** escalates the stated desire from the specific kings mentioned in the previous verse to **all kings** and **all nations**. Use a connector in your language that communicates this escalation. Alternate translation: [Indeed, may all kings bow down to him]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

**ULT all kings … all nations**
**UST** all the kings in the world … and may every nation
(כָּל־מְלָכִים כָּל־גּוֹיִם)

The psalmist says **all kings** and **all nations** as a generalization to emphasize how widespread the king's dominion will be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [kings everywhere … nations everywhere]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And may … bow down | In fact, may … acknowledge … as their ruler |
| kings | the kings |
| may … serve him | obey him |
| nations | nation |

# Psalms 72:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For may he deliver the needy crying out and the poor when no helper {is} to him.* | *May all these things happen because he rescues needy people when they cry out for help and he helps poor people who have no one else to help them.* |

**ULT For may he deliver**
**UST** May all these things happen because he rescues … he helps
(כִּֽי־יְצַ֥יל)

The word **For** introduces the reason why the kings and nations of the preceding verses should honor the king. Use a connector in your language that communicates that what follows is a reason. Alternate translation: [May they do this because he delivers]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT the needy**
**UST** needy people
(אֶבְיוֹן)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the needy person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT and the poor**
**UST** and … poor people
(וְעָנִֽי)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the poor person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT when no helper {is} to him**
**UST** who have no one else to help them
(וְאֵין־עֹזֵ֥ר לֽוֹ)

The pronoun **him** refers to the poor person. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [when no helper is available to that poor person]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| may he deliver | he rescues … he helps |
| crying out | when they cry out for help |

# Psalms 72:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May he have pity on the weak and the needy, and may he save the lives of the needy.* | *May he feel compassion for people who are weak and needy and save their lives.* |

ULT **May he have pity on the weak and the needy, and may he save the lives of the needy**

UST May he feel compassion for people who are weak and needy and save their lives

(יָחֹס עַל־דַּל וְאֶבְיוֹן וְנַפְשׁוֹת אֶבְיוֹנִים יוֹשִׁיעַ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [May he show compassion to weak and needy people by saving their lives]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the weak and the needy**

UST people who are weak and needy

(דַּל וְאֶבְיוֹן)

The psalmist is using the adjectives **weak** 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 adjectives with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [weak people and needy people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| may he save | and save |

# Psalms 72:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May he redeem their life from oppression and from violence, and may their blood be precious in his eyes.* | *May their lives be important to him so that he rescues them from people who are oppressing and harming them.* |

ULT **May he redeem their life from oppression and from violence, and may their blood be precious in his eyes**

UST May their lives be important to him so that he rescues them from people who are oppressing and harming them

(מִתְּוֹךְ וּמֵחָמָס יִגְאַל נַפְשָׁם וְיִיקַר דָּמָם בְּעֵינָיו)

In this verse, the pronoun **he** refers to the kings, **their** refers twice to the needy, and the pronoun **his** refers to the king. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [May the king redeem the lives of the needy from oppression and from violence, and may the blood of the needy be precious in the king's eyes]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **their life**

UST them

(נַפְשָׁם)

The psalmist is using the singular **life** to refer collectively to the lives of multiple people. If your language would not use a singular noun in this way, you could use the plural form. Alternate translation: [their lives]

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

ULT **from oppression and from violence**

UST from people who are oppressing and harming them

(מִתְּוֹךְ וּמֵחָמָס)

The words **oppression** and **violence** mean similar things. The psalmist is using the two words together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [from every kind of mistreatment]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **from oppression and from violence**
UST from people who are oppressing and harming them
(מִתָּוֹךְ וּמֵחָמָס)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **oppression** and **violence**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [from those who oppress them and from those who harm them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **their blood**
UST their lives
(דָּמָם)

Here, **their blood** represents their lives, especially the shedding of blood through violence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [their lives]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and may their blood be precious in his eyes**
UST May their lives be important to him
(וְיִיקַר דָּמָם בְּעֵינָיו)

The expression **precious in his eyes** is an idiom that means he considers it to be very valuable. If your readers would not understand this, you could use an equivalent idiom or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and may their lives be valuable to him]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May he redeem | so that he rescues |

# Psalms 72:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May he live! And may one give to him from the gold of Sheba, and may one pray for him continually; may they bless him all of the day.* | *May this king live for a long time! May he receive much fine gold. May people always pray for him and ask God to bless him.* |

ULT **from the gold of Sheba**
UST much fine gold
(מִזְּהַב שְׁבָא)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to describe gold that comes from **Sheba**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from the gold that comes from Sheba]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **And may one give to him … and may one pray for him**
UST May he receive … May people … pray for him
(וְיִתֶּן־לוֹ & וְיִתְפַּלֵּל בַּעֲדוֹ)

The word **one** refers to people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [may people give to him … may people pray for him]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **may they bless him**
UST and ask God to bless him
(יְבָרְכֻנְהוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [may people bless him]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and may one pray for him continually; may they bless him all of the day**
UST May people always pray for him and ask God to bless him
(וְיִתְפַּלֵּל בַּעֲדוֹ תָּמִיד כָּל־הַיּוֹם יְבָרְכֻנְהוּ)

The psalmist says **continually** and **all of the day** as generalizations to emphasize how frequently people should pray for and bless the king. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [and may one pray for him continuously; may they bless him constantly]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from the gold of | much … gold |
| Sheba | fine |
| and may one pray | May people … pray |
| may they bless him | and ask God to bless him |

# Psalms 72:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May there be an abundance of grain in the land; on the head of the mountains may its fruit sway like Lebanon, and may they flourish from the city like the grass of the earth.* | *May the fields produce such abundant crops that grain grows all the way up to the tops of the hills and sways in the wind like the branches of the trees in Lebanon. May the cities in Israel be as full of people as the fields are full of grass.* |

ULT **an abundance of grain**
UST such abundant crops
(פְּסַת־בַּר)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **abundance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [abundant grain]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **on the head of the mountains**
UST all the way up to the tops of the hills
(בְּרֹאשׁ הָרִים)

Here, **the head** of the mountains represents the tops or summits of the mountains. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [on the tops of the mountains]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **may its fruit sway like Lebanon**
UST that grain grows … and sways in the wind like the branches of the trees in Lebanon
(יִרַעַשׁ כַּלְּבָנוֹן פִּרְיוֹ)

The point of this comparison is that the fruit of the grain will sway abundantly, just as the trees of **Lebanon** sway in the wind. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point of comparison explicit. Alternate translation: [may its fruit sway like the trees of Lebanon sway]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **its fruit**
UST that grain grows
(פִּרְיוֹ)

The pronoun **its** refers to the grain in the land. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [the grain's fruit]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and may they flourish from the city like the grass of the earth**
UST May the cities in Israel be as full of people as the fields are full of grass
(וְיָצִיצוּ מֵעִיר כְּעֵשֶׂב הָאָרֶץ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **grass** grows abundantly on **the earth**, so the people will flourish and multiply in the cities. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point of comparison explicit. Alternate translation: [may the people of the city flourish as abundantly as does the grass of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **and may they flourish from the city**
UST May the cities in Israel be as full of people
(וְיָצִיצוּ מֵעִיר)

The pronoun **they** refers to the people. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [may the people flourish from the city]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| grain | crops |
| in the land | May the fields produce |
| its fruit | that grain grows |
| like Lebanon | like the branches of the trees in Lebanon |

# Psalms 72:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May his name be forever; may his name continue to the face of the sun. And may they be blessed by him; may all of the nations acclaim him.* | *May people always remember what a good king this was, for as long as the sun is in the sky! May he do good things for many people, and may the people of other nations say that he has a good life.* |

ULT **to the face of the sun**
UST for as long as the sun is in the sky
(לִפְנֵי־שָׁמֶשׁ)

Here, **the face of the sun** represents the presence and duration of the sun. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [as long as the sun shines]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **And may they be blessed by him**
UST May he do good things for many people
(וְיִתְבָּרְכוּ בוֹ)

The pronoun **they** refers to the nations, and the pronoun **him** refers to the king. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [may the nations be blessed by the king]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **And may they be blessed by him**
UST May he do good things for many people
(וְיִתְבָּרְכוּ בוֹ)

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 he bless them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **And may they be blessed by him**
UST May he do good things for many people
(וְיִתְבָּרְכוּ בוֹ)

Here, **blessed** means to have good things done for someone. The psalmist is expressing a desire for the king to bring good things to all people. Alternate translation: [may he do good things for them]

**Support Reference:** Blessings

ULT **all of the nations**
UST and may the people of other nations
(כָּל־גּוֹיִם)

The psalmist says **all of the nations** as a generalization to emphasize how widespread the king's fame will be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [nations everywhere]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **May his name be forever; may his name continue to the face of the sun**
UST May people always remember what a good king this was, for as long as the sun is in the sky
(יְהִי שְׁמוֹ לְעוֹלָם לִפְנֵי־שֶׁמֶשׁ יִנּוֹן שְׁמוֹ)

Here, **his name** represents the king's reputation and fame. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May his reputation last forever; may his fame continue to the face of the sun]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| forever | always |
| And may they be blessed | May … do good things for many people |
| the nations | and may the people of … nations |

# Psalms 72:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Blessed {be} Yahweh God, the God of Israel, the one doing wonders, he alone.* | *Praise Yahweh, the God whom we Israelites worship; he does amazing things that no one else can do.* |

**ULT Blessed {be} Yahweh God**
**UST** Praise Yahweh, the God whom … worship
(בָּרוּךְ ׀ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים)

The expression **Blessed be** is a passive verbal form. The psalmist is expressing his desire to praise Yahweh. If it would be unnatural to use that form for this purpose, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I bless Yahweh] or [Let us all praise Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT the God of Israel**
**UST** the God whom we Israelites worship
(אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist is not using this possessive form to indicate that the Israelites possess or control God. Rather, he is using it to indicate that Yahweh is the God whom Israel worships. Alternate translation: [who is the God whom Israel worships]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT he alone**
**UST** that no one else can do
(לְבַדּוֹ)

The psalmist 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 alone can do]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Blessed | Praise |
| {be} Yahweh God | Yahweh, the God whom … worship |
| God | the God whom … worship |
| the God of | the God whom … worship |
| Israel | we Israelites |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| wonders | amazing things |

# Psalms 72:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And blessed {be} the name of his glory forever, and let all of the earth be filled {with} his glory. Amen and amen.* | *Praise him forever for how glorious he is! May his glory fill the whole world! Amen! Yes, amen!* |

**ULT And blessed {be} the name of his glory forever**
**UST** Praise him forever for how glorious he is
(וּבָרוּךְ ׀ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ לְעוֹלָם)

Here, **blessed be** expresses praise to God. This is a doxology in which the psalmist declares that God's glorious name is worthy of praise forever. If your readers would not understand this blessing formula, you could express this in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [may people praise his glorious name forever]

**Support Reference:** Blessings

**ULT the name of his glory**
**UST** him … for how glorious he is
(שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ)

Here, **the name** represents God's reputation and character. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his glorious reputation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT the name of his glory**
**UST** him … for how glorious he is
(שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [his glorious name]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and let all of the earth be filled {with} his glory**
**UST** May his glory fill the whole world
(וְיִמָּלֵא כְבוֹדוֹ אֶת־כָּל הָאָרֶץ)

The expression **be filled** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and let his glory fill all of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **Amen and amen**
UST Amen! Yes, amen
(אָמֵן וְאָמֵן)

The psalmist is repeating the word **Amen** for emphasis as a way of concluding Book 2 of Psalms (42–72). If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [May it certainly be so]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And blessed {be} | Praise |
| his glory | glorious |
| forever | forever |
| Amen | Amen |
| and amen | Yes, amen |

# Psalms 72:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The prayers of David son of Jesse are finished.* | *This is the end of the prayers that David, the son of Jesse, wrote.* |

ULT **son of Jesse**
UST the son of Jesse
(בֶּן־יִשָׁי)

This possessive form describes a social relationship, for **son of Jesse** identifies David as the offspring of Jesse. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [, Jesse's son,]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **are finished**
UST This is the end of
(כָּלּוּ)

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: [end here]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The prayers of | the prayers that … wrote |
| David | David |
| of Jesse | Jesse |

# Psalms 73

## Psalm 73 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 73 is a wisdom psalm. It explains the problem of wicked people who seem to prosper. (See: wise, wisdom and evil, wicked, wickedness, unpleasant)

### Structure and Formatting

1. Affirmation that God is good to the righteous (1)
2. The psalmist recounts his experience of envy and confusion as he observes the prosperity of the wicked (2–16)
3. The psalmist goes to the sanctuary of God and understands what will happen to wicked people in the future (17–24)
4. The psalmist renews his commitment to God and to righteous living (25–26)
5. The psalmist's final thoughts (27–28)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Evil people

Sometimes it seems that wicked people have no problems and that they live an easy and problem free life. Despite this, wicked people will eventually perish (18–19 and 27). In contrast, righteous people have the benefit of always having God's presence with them during their life on earth (23), God guiding them during their life on earth (24a), and being with God in "glory" after they die. (See: righteous, righteousness, unrighteous, unrighteousness, upright, uprightness)

#### Psalms by Asaph

There are twelve psalms attributed to Asaph; the first one is Psalm 50, which is in Book Two, and the other eleven (Psalms 73–83) are at the beginning of Book Three.

# Psalms 73:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A psalm of Asaph Surely God is good to Israel, to those with a pure heart.* | *Asaph wrote this psalm. God truly is good to us Israelite people, to those who want to do what pleases God.* |

**ULT Surely**
**UST** truly
(אַךְ)

The psalmist uses the word **Surely** to emphasize the truth of what follows. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation or use a natural form in your language for expressing this emphasis. Alternate translation: [Certainly]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

**ULT to Israel**
**UST** to us Israelite people
(לְיִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **Israel** represents the Israelite people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [to the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT to those with a pure heart**
**UST** to those who want to do what pleases God
(לְבָרֵי לֵבָב)

Here the psalmist speaks of the **heart** of righteous people as **pure** and not blemished by wrong and sinful thoughts in contrast to having a **heart** that is impure because of sinful thoughts and motives and therefore morally dirty. What the psalmist means by **pure** here is that the person's **heart** is "morally pure." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly or use an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [to the ones who think about and want what is pleasing to God] or [to those with a morally pure heart]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to those with a pure heart**
UST to those who want to do what pleases God
(לְבָרֵי לֵבָב)

In Jewish culture people considered the **heart** to be the center of a persons thoughts and feelings and here, the **heart** represents the intentions, thoughts and desires of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to those who think about and want what is pure] or [to those with a pure mind] or [to those with pure thoughts]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| A psalm | wrote this psalm |
| of Asaph | Asaph |
| God is | God |
| good | is good |
| to Israel | to us Israelite people |
| to those with a pure | to those who want to do what pleases God |

# Psalms 73:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But as for me, my feet almost slipped; my steps almost were caused to slide out {from under me}* | *As for me, I almost stopped trusting in God; I was almost guilty of committing a great sin against him* |

ULT **my feet almost slipped; my steps almost were caused to slide out {from under me … }**
UST I almost stopped trusting in God; I was almost guilty of committing a great sin against him
(בְּמְעַט נָטָיוּ רַגְלָי כִּאְיִן שֻׁפְכוּ אֲשֻׁרָי)

Here, **my feet** and **my steps** represent the Psalmist himself and the phrases **slipped** and **slide out** refer to abandoning doing what pleases God and instead choosing to sin. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning with an equivalent expression or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I was tempted to stop obeying God. It was as if my feet almost slipped and as if my steps were almost caused to slide out from under me] or [I almost stopped trusting in God; I was almost guilty of sinning against him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **my feet almost slipped; my steps almost were caused to slide out {from under me … }**
UST I almost stopped trusting in God; I was almost guilty of committing a great sin against him
(בְּמְעַט נָטָיוּ רַגְלָי כִּאְיִן שֻׁפְכוּ אֲשֻׁרָי)

The phrases **my feet almost slipped** and **my steps almost were caused to slide out from under me** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine the phrases and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [my feet almost slipped] or [my feet almost slid out from under me]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **my steps almost were caused to slide out {from under me}**
UST I was almost guilty of committing a great sin against him
(כְּאַ֥יִן שֻׁפְכוּ אֲשֻׁרָ֑י)

The expression **my steps almost were caused to slide out** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who did the action, the following verse implies that the Psalmist caused his own steps to almost slide out from under him when he looked at the "prosperity of the wicked" and did not also immediately go into "God's sanctuary" so that he could "understand" the final "fate" of the wicked (see Psalm 73:17). Alternate translation: [I almost caused my steps to slide out from under me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

# Psalms 73:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *because I was envious of the arrogant {when} I saw the prosperity of the wicked.* | *because I envied those who proudly acted as if they did not need God, when I realized that they prospered even though they were wicked.* |

ULT **because**
UST because
(כִּי)

Here the word **because** indicates that what follows it in this verse is the reason for what precedes it in 73:2. Use a natural form for indicating this relationship. Alternate translation: [for]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **{ … I was envious of the arrogant when} I saw the prosperity of the wicked**
UST I envied those who proudly acted as if they did not need God, when I realized that they prospered even though they were wicked
(קִנֵּאתִי בַּהוֹלְלִים שְׁלוֹם רִשָּׁעִים אֶרְאֶה)

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: [when I saw the prosperity of the wicked, I was envious of the arrogant]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **{ … of the arrogant when} I saw the prosperity of the wicked**
UST those who proudly acted as if they did not need God, when I realized that they prospered even though they were wicked
(בַּהוֹלְלִים שְׁלוֹם רִשָּׁעִים אֶרְאֶה)

The Psalmist is using the adjectives **arrogant** and **wicked** as nouns in order to describe certain people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [of arrogant people when I saw the prosperity of wicked people] or [of the people who are arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the people who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **{when} I saw the prosperity of the wicked**
UST when I realized that they prospered even though they were wicked
(שְׁלֹום רְשָׁעִים אָרְאָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **prosperity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [when I saw how prosperous the wicked were]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| of the arrogant | those who proudly acted as if they did not need God |
| the prosperity | they prospered |
| of the wicked | even though they were wicked |

# Psalms 73:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For {they have} no ropes until their death, and their belly is fat.* | *Those people do not suffer; they always have plenty of food to eat.* |

ULT **ropes**
UST suffer
(חַרְצֻבּוֹת)

The word the ULT translates as **ropes** refers to ropes or bonds that constrain a person. Here the psalmist is speaking of struggles or pains as if they were **ropes** or "bonds." If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning with an equivalent expression, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [struggles] or [emotional pains] or [pains]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **until their death**
UST suffer
(לְמוֹתָם)

The word the ULT translates as **until their death** could refer to: (1) the time before the death of wicked people in which case you can use the ULT as a model, or (2) the time at which wicked people die. Alternate translation: [in their death] or [at their death]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

# Psalms 73:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They {are} free from the trouble of man, and with {the rest of} man they are not afflicted.* | *They do not experience the difficult things that other people do; they do not experience catastrophes and sicknesses like other people.* |

**ULT They {are} free from the trouble of man**
**UST** They do not experience the difficult things that other people do
(בַּעֲמַל אֱנוֹשׁ אֵינֵמוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **trouble**, you could express the same idea with a verb or in some other way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [They do not have to experience difficult things like the rest of man] or [They do not suffer the way other men do]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT man, and with {the rest of} man they are not afflicted**
**UST** that other people do; they do not experience catastrophes and sicknesses like other people
(אֱנוֹשׁ & וְעִם־אָדָם לֹא יְנֻגָּעוּ)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [people, and with people they are not afflicted] or [other people, and they are not afflicted like everyone else]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**ULT and with {the rest of} man they are not afflicted**
**UST** they do not experience catastrophes and sicknesses like other people
(וְעִם־אָדָם לֹא יְנֻגָּעוּ)

The expression **they are not afflicted** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who did the action, the context implies that God did it. Alternate translation: [and God does not afflict them like he does the rest of man] or [and God does not afflict them like he does everyone else]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| They {are} free from | They do not experience |
| they are … afflicted | they do … experience catastrophes and sicknesses |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the trouble of | the difficult things |

# Psalms 73:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Therefore pride is a necklace for them; a garment of violence covers them.* | *So they are proud and violent. Their being prideful is like a necklace that they show off to others, and they openly display their violent actions like people openly display the clothes they wear.* |

**ULT Therefore**
**UST** So
(לָכֵן)

Here, the word **Therefore** introduces the result of 73:4–5. You can use a natural word or phrase in your language to express this relationship. Alternate translation: [As a result]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT pride is a necklace for them**
**UST** they are proud … Their being prideful is like a necklace that they show off to others
(עֲנָקָתְמוֹ גַּאֲוָה)

The psalmist is speaking of **pride** as if it were a **necklace** that wicked people wear around their neck. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparison, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they wear pride like a necklace] or [pride is like a necklace which they flaunt]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT pride is a necklace for them**
**UST** they are proud … Their being prideful is like a necklace that they show off to others
(עֲנָקָתְמוֹ גַּאֲוָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **pride**, you could express the same idea in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [they act pridefully for all to see, like someone who wears a necklace that they want everyone to see] or [they unashamedly act proud in front of everyone, like a person wearing a necklace that they want everyone to see]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **a necklace for them**
UST they are … is like a necklace that they show off to others
(עֲנָקָתְמוֹ)

A **necklace** is a type of jewelry worn around the neck in order to adorn the body and make a person look more attractive. If your readers would not be familiar with necklaces, you could use the name of something similar that your readers would recognize, or you could use a more general term. Alternately, if you are using footnotes, you could make a footnote explaining what a **necklace** is. Alternate translation: [a neck ornament for them]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **a garment of violence covers them**
UST and violent … and they openly display their violent actions like people openly display the clothes they wear
(יַעֲטָף־שִׁית חָמָס לָמוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of **violence** as it were a **garment** that people wear. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning with a comparable expression, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [violence covers them like a garment] or [violence covers them like clothing]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **a garment of violence covers them**
UST and violent … and they openly display their violent actions like people openly display the clothes they wear
(יַעֲטָף־שִׁית חָמָס לָמוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **violence**, you could express the same idea in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [they are proud of their violent actions and display them openly, as a person who wears a garment for all to see]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| pride is | proud … Their being prideful |

# Psalms 73:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Their eyes bulge out from fatness; the imaginations of {their} heart overflow.* | *Their eyes protrude because their faces are fat, and they are always thinking about more evil things to do.* |

ULT **the imaginations of {their} heart overflow**
UST are … and they are always thinking about more evil things to do
(עָבְרוּ מַשְׂכִּיּוֹת לֵבָב)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **imaginations**, you could express the same idea in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [they are constantly imagining evil things in their hearts] or [they are constantly thinking about evil things in their hearts]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the imaginations of {their} heart overflow**
UST are … and they are always thinking about more evil things to do
(עָבְרוּ מַשְׂכִּיּוֹת לֵבָב)

Here the psalmist speaks of the **heart** of a wicked person as if it were a container that could overflow with evil **imaginations** (thoughts). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express the meaning using an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [their heart is constantly thinking of evil things to do] or [their heart is constantly imagining evil thoughts]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the imaginations of {their} heart overflow**
UST are … and they are always thinking about more evil things to do
(עָבְרוּ מַשְׂכִּיּוֹת לֵבָב)

The psalmist is describing the mind of wicked people by association with their **heart**, which is where a person's thoughts and intentions were viewed as coming from in Jewish culture. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [they constantly think of evil things to do] or [the imaginations of their inner being overflow]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

# Psalms 73:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They mock and speak with evil of oppression; they speak from an elevated place.* | *They scoff at other people, and wickedly talk about doing unjust things to them; they speak pridefully.* |

ULT **and speak with evil of oppression**
UST and wickedly talk about doing unjust things to them
(וִידַבֵּרוּ בְרָע עָשָׁק)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the ideas of **evil** and **oppression**, you could express the same ideas in some other way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and wickedly speak about oppressing people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **they speak from an elevated place**
UST they speak pridefully
(מִמָּרוֹם יְדַבֵּרוּ)

The phrase **they speak from an elevated place** means “they speak arrogantly.” If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: [they speak arrogantly]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| They mock<br>with evil of | They scoff at other people<br>and wickedly |

# Psalms 73:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They set their mouth in the heavens, and their tongue goes through the earth.* | *They exalt themselves and talk as if they are God in heaven, and they go about the earth talking boastfully.* |

ULT **They set their mouth in the heavens, and their tongue goes through the earth**
UST They exalt themselves and talk as if they are God in heaven, and they go about the earth talking boastfully
(שַׁתּוּ בַשָּׁמַיִם פִּיהֶם וּלְשׁוֹנָם תִּהֲלַךְ בָּאָרֶץ)

Here, **mouth** and **tongue** represents "speech." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [They talk as if they are God who is in the heavens, and their speech goes through the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **They set their mouth in the heavens**
UST They exalt themselves and talk as if they are God in heaven
(שַׁתּוּ בַשָּׁמַיִם פִּיהֶם)

The word translated as **in the heavens** could be translated as: (1) **in the heavens** as modeled by the ULT in which case the psalmist is describing the role or authority of God by association with the **heavens**, Alternate translation: [They talk with their mouth as if they are God who is in heaven] or [They talk as if they are in the position of God] or (2) "against the heavens" in which case the psalmist is describing God by association with the **heavens**. Alternate translation: [They set their mouth against the heavens] or [They set their mouth against God]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and their tongue goes through the earth**
UST and they go about the earth talking boastfully
(וּלְשׁוֹנָם תִּהֲלַךְ בָּאָרֶץ)

The psalmist is speaking of the **tongue** (words or speech) of wicked people as if it could go **through the earth**. What he means is that these wicked people go about talking wickedly (and bragging) as they live their daily lives on earth and proudly act as if they are not accountable to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and they constantly talk wickedly as if they rule the earth] or [and they walk about talking wickedly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the heavens | God in heaven |
| and their tongue | and … talking boastfully |
| through the earth | the earth |

# Psalms 73:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Therefore his people turn here, and waters of a full {cup} are drained by them.* | *The result is that people pay attention to them and listen to everything they say.* |

ULT **Therefore**
UST The result is that
(לָכֵן)

The term translated as **Therefore** indicates that what follows is a result of what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [This is why]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **his people turn here**
UST people pay attention to them and listen to
(יָשׁוּב עַמּוֹ הֵלֹם)

This could mean: (1) “God’s people love the wicked people” or (2) “the wicked people return to this place”

ULT **and waters of a full {cup} are drained by them**
UST and listen to everything they say
(וּמֵי מָלֵא יִמָּצוּ לָמוֹ)

The expression **are drained** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who did the action, the context implies that people did it. Alternate translation: [and they drain the waters of a full cup]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and waters of a full {cup} are drained by them**
UST and listen to everything they say
(וּמֵי מָלֵא יִמָּצוּ לָמוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of listening to words as if they were drinking **water** out of a cup. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning with a simile or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and believe all that they say]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and waters of a full {cup} are drained by them**
UST and listen to everything they say
(וּמֵי מָלֵא יִמָּצוּ לָמוֹ)

This could mean: (1) “God’s people listen gladly to the words of the wicked people” or (2) “the wicked people have plenty of food to eat and wine to drink”

# Psalms 73:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they say, “How does God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High?”* | *Wicked people say to themselves, “God certainly does not care what we do; the Most High certainly will not judge us for what we do!”* |

ULT **How does God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High**
UST God certainly does not care what we do; the Most High certainly will not judge us for what we do
(אֵיכָה יָדַע־אֵל וְיֵשׁ דֵּעָה בָּעֶלְיוֹן)

The phrases **How does God know** and **is there knowledge in the Most High** mean basically the same thing. The second phrase emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine the phrases into one. Alternate translation: [How could God know?] or [Does God have knowledge?]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **And they say**
UST Wicked people say to themselves
(וְאָמְרוּ)

Here the word **they** could refer to: (1) wicked people. Alternate translation: [And those who are wicked say] or [And the wicked say] or (2) people who are righteous and obey God. Alternate translation: [And righteous people say] or [And godly people say]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **How does God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High**
> UST God certainly does not care what we do; the Most High certainly will not judge us for what we do
> (אֵיכָה יָדַע־אֵל וְיֵשׁ דֵּעָה בָּעֶלְיוֹן)

Here wicked people are not asking for information but are using the question form to express that they do not think God knows or cares about the evil things they do. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or exclamations and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [Surely God does not know what we are doing! Surely the Most High has no knowledge of it!] or [Surely God does not care about we are doing! Surely what we are doing does not matter to the Most High!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

> ULT **How does God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High**
> UST God certainly does not care what we do; the Most High certainly will not judge us for what we do
> (אֵיכָה יָדַע־אֵל וְיֵשׁ דֵּעָה בָּעֶלְיוֹן)

This portion of this verse is a quotation of what the wicked people said or thought to themselves. In your translation, use a natural way of introducing direct quotations in your language.

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| does … know | does … care what we do |
| God | God |
| knowledge | judge us for what we do |
| in the Most High | the Most High |

# Psalms 73:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Behold, these wicked; they are always at ease, they increase in wealth.* | *Look at how these wicked people live; their lives are so easy that they never have to worry about anything, and they are always becoming richer.* |

ULT **Behold**
UST Look at how
(הִנֵּה)

The psalmist is using the term **Behold** to focus his listeners' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [See]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **wicked**
UST wicked people live
(רְשָׁעִים)

The Psalmist is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun in order to describe a group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. See how you translated the phrase **the wicked** in 73:3. Alternate translation: [wicked ones]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **they are always at ease**
UST their lives are so easy that they never have to worry about anything
(וְשַׁלְוֵי עוֹלָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **ease**, you could express the same idea in some other way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [they are always comfortable] or [they are always carefree]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **they increase in wealth**
UST and they are always becoming richer
(הִשְׁגִּ֖ו־חָֽיִל)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wealth**, you could express the same idea in some other way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [they become increasingly wealthy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| wicked | wicked people live |
| in wealth | richer |

# Psalms 73:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Surely in vain I have kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence.* | *{When I saw this I thought that} certainly it is useless that I have thought about things that are pleasing to you and have not sinned.* |

ULT **Surely**
UST certainly
(אַךְ)

Here the psalmist uses the word **Surely** to emphasize his strong thoughts and feelings about the certainty of what he states in this verse. Use a natural form in your language for expressing this emphasis. Alternate translation: [Certainly]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **I have kept my heart clean**
UST I have thought about things that are pleasing to you
(זִכִּיתִי לִבָּבִי)

The psalmist is describing his thoughts and intentions by association with his **heart**, which Jews viewed as the center of a person's thoughts and intentions. The expression **I have kept my heart clean** means he has intentionally kept his thoughts and intentions morally pure (free from sin). You may have an equivalent expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I have kept my thoughts pure]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and washed my hands in innocence**
UST and have not sinned
(וָאֶרְחַץ בְּנִקָּיוֹן כַּפָּי)

The psalmist is describing his actions by association with his **hands**, which he would use to do the actions. The psalmist is using the symbolic action of hand washing to declare his **innocence**. In that culture hand washing was a common practice that people did to publicly assert that they were innocent. (See Deuteronomy 21:6 and Matthew 27:24.) Here the psalmist is saying that he has **washed** his **hands in innocence** as a way to declare that he is guiltless. See how you translated the similar phrase in Psalm 26:6. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and kept my actions pure to show that I am innocent] or [and kept my actions free from sin]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in vain | it is useless that |
| I have kept … clean | I have thought about things that are pleasing to you |

# Psalms 73:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For I have been stricken all of the day and punished every morning.* | *Every day I suffer, and every morning you punish me.* |

ULT **For I have been stricken all of the day and punished every morning**
UST Every day I suffer, and every morning you punish me
(וָאֱהִי֣ נֻגּ֣וַע כָּל־הַיּ֑וֹם וְתוֹכַחְתִּ֖י לַבְּקָרִֽים)

The expression **I have been stricken … and punished** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [For you have stricken me all of the day and punished me every morning] or [For you have afflicted me all of the day and punished me every morning]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **all of the day**
UST Every day
(כָּל־הַיּ֑וֹם)

The phrase **all of the day** is a common expression meaning “every day” or “constantly.” If this phrase does not have this meaning in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [constantly]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and punished | and … you punish me |

# Psalms 73:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *If I had said, "I will recount such things," behold, I would have betrayed the generation of your children.* | *If I had said these things out loud in front of others, surely I would have been sinning against your people.* |

ULT **If I had said, "I will recount such things," behold, I would have betrayed the generation of your children**

UST If I had said these things out loud in front of others, surely I would have been sinning against your people

(אִם־אָמַרְתִּי אֲסַפְּרָה כְמוֹ הִנֵּה דּוֹר בָּנֶיךָ בָגָדְתִּי)

The psalmist is describing a hypothetical situation in order to tell his readers what would have happened if he had said the things he was thinking out loud. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a situation that could happen. Alternate translation: [If I had said, 'I will recount such things,' then I would have betrayed the generation of your children.]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

ULT **behold**

UST surely

(הִנֵּה)

The psalmist is using the term **behold** to emphasize what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [certainly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **your children**

UST your people

(בָּנֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of God's people, his spiritual children, as if they were his biological **children**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your followers] or [the people who obey you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will recount | I had said … out loud in front of others |
| I would have betrayed | I would have been sinning against |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the generation of | your people |

# Psalms 73:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And {when} I thought {how} to understand this, it {was} troublesome in my eyes* | *When I tried to think about all this, it was very difficult for me to understand it.* |

ULT **in my eyes**
UST for me to understand it
(בְּעֵינָי)

Here the author's **eyes** represent his evaluation or estimation as he tried to understand why wicked people seemed to prosper and he suffered. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to me] or [to think about]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to understand | When I tried to think about |
| troublesome | very difficult |

# Psalms 73:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *until I went into the sanctuaries of God, {then} I discerned their end.* | *But when I went to the temple where people worship God, then I understood what will happen to wicked people in the future.* |

**ULT the sanctuaries of God**
**UST** the temple where people worship God
(מִקְדְּשֵׁי־אֵל)

Here the plural word **sanctuaries** could: (1) refer to the Jerusalem temple, in which case the plural is intensifying the meaning. Alternate translation: [the great sanctuary of God] or [the great temple of God] (2) refer to the precincts of the Jerusalem temple. Alternate translation: [the precincts of the temple of God] or [the precincts of God's temple]

**Support Reference:** Unusual Uses of the Plural

**ULT {then} I discerned their end**
**UST** then I understood what will happen to wicked people in the future
(אָבִינָה לְאַחֲרִיתָם)

Alternate translation: [then I understood their fate] or [then I understood what will happen to those who are wicked]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the sanctuaries of | the temple where people worship |
| God | God |
| {then} I discerned | then I understood |

# Psalms 73:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Surely you set them in slippery places; you make them fall to destruction.* | *I know that you make their future insecure; you will cause them to be ruined.* |

ULT **Surely**
UST I know that
(אַךְ)

See how you translated the word **Surely** in 73:1 where it is used with the same meaning.

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **you set them in slippery places**
UST you make their future insecure
(בַּחֲלָקוֹת תָּשִׁית לָמוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of the fact that God does not allow wicked people to have a secure future as if God had **set them in slippery places**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you do not give them a good future]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Surely you set them in slippery places**
UST I know that you make their future insecure
(אַךְ בַּחֲלָקוֹת תָּשִׁית לָמוֹ)

Here the word **you** refers to God and the word **them** refers to wicked people. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: [Surely you, God, set wicked people in slippery places]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **you make them fall to destruction**
UST you will cause them to be ruined
(הַפִּלְתָּם לְמַשּׁוּאוֹת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **destruction**, you could express the same idea in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [you cause them to be destroyed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to destruction | you will cause them to be ruined |

# Psalms 73:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *How they are {brought} to desolation as in a moment! They come to an end, they perish by terrors.* | *God will suddenly destroy these wicked people; they will die in terrible ways.* |

**ULT How**
(אֵיךְ)

The psalmist is using the term **How** to focus attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation.

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

**ULT they are {brought}**
**UST** God will … these wicked people
(הָיוּ)

The expression **they are brought** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who did the action, the context implies that "God" does it. Alternate translation: [God brings them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT they are {brought} to desolation as in a moment**
**UST** God will suddenly destroy these wicked people
(הָיוּ לְשַׁמָּה כֶּרֶגַע)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **desolation**, you could express the same idea in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [God will destroy them as in a moment] or [they will be suddenly destroyed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT as in a moment**
**UST** suddenly
(כֶּרֶגַע)

The phrase **as in a moment** means "suddenly" or "all at once." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: [all at once]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **They come to an end, they perish**
UST they will die
(סָפּוּ֤ תַּמּוּ֙)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The psalmist is using the phrases **They come to an end** and **they perish** together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [They come to an end] or [They perish]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **They come to an end, they perish by terrors**
UST they will die in terrible ways
(סָפּוּ֤ תַּמּוּ֙ מִן־בַּלָּהֽוֹת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **terrors**, you could express the same idea in another way that is natural in your language.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| to desolation | destroy |
| as in a moment | suddenly |
| They come to an end | they will die |
| they perish | they will die |
| terrors | in terrible ways |

# Psalms 73:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Like a dream after {one} awakes, Lord, when you rouse {yourself}, you will despise their image.* | *Lord, when you act, you will cause the wicked to quickly vanish; they will vanish like a dream which disappears as soon as a person awakes from their sleep.* |

ULT **Like a dream after {one} awakes, Lord, when you rouse {yourself}, you will despise their image**

UST Lord, when you act, you will cause the wicked to quickly vanish; they will vanish like a dream which disappears as soon as a person awakes from their sleep

(כַּחֲלוֹם מֵהָקִיץ אֲדֹנָי בָּעִיר ׀ צַלְמָם תִּבְזֶה)

The psalmist is comparing the short and temporary duration of a **dream**, which is over after a person **awakes**, to the fact that God will **despise** wicked people when he rouses himself to action and judges them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the basis of this comparison or express this meaning in plain language. Alternate translation: [They will disappear as quickly as a dream disappears when a person awakes in the morning; Lord, when you act, you will cause them to disappear]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **their image**

UST the wicked

(צַלְמָם)

Alternate translation: [their form]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Like a dream | they will vanish like a dream which disappears |
| Lord | Lord |

# Psalms 73:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *When my heart was embittered, and I was pierced in my kidneys,* | *When I was grieved in my inner being and felt emotionally hurt,* |

ULT **When my heart was embittered, and I was pierced in my kidneys**
UST When I was grieved in my inner being and felt emotionally hurt
(כִּי יִתְחַמֵּץ לְבָבִי וְכִלְיוֹתַי אֶשְׁתּוֹנָנוּ)

The phrases **When my heart was embittered** and **I was pierced in my kidneys** mean basically the same thing. The second phrase emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and it would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word other than **and** in order to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [When my heart was embittered, yes, when I was pierced in my kidneys]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **my heart was embittered**
UST I was grieved in my inner being
(יִתְחַמֵּץ לְבָבִי)

The psalmist is describing his inner being and thoughts by association with his **heart**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I was embittered] or [I was embittered within]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and I was pierced in my kidneys**
UST and felt emotionally hurt
(וְכִלְיוֹתַי אֶשְׁתּוֹנָנוּ)

The psalmist is describing his feelings by association with his **kidneys**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language as modeled by the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

# Psalms 73:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I {was} stupid and I was not knowing; I was an animal with you.* | *I was stupid and ignorant; I behaved like an animal toward you.* |

**ULT and I was not knowing**
**UST** and ignorant
(וְלֹ֣א אֵדָ֑ע)

The phrase **I was not knowing** means "I was without knowledge" or "I was ignorant." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: [and I was without knowledge] or [and I was ignorant]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT I was an animal with you**
**UST** I behaved like an animal toward you
(בְּהֵמ֥וֹת הָיִ֗יתִי עִמָּֽךְ)

The psalmist is speaking of his prior **stupid** and ignorant thinking and action toward God as if he had been behaving like an **animal**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning with a comparison, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I acted like an animal toward you] or [I acted and thought like an animal before you] or [I acted like a fool toward you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT with you**
**UST** toward you
(עִמָּֽךְ)

Here the word **you** refers to God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: [with you, God]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I was … knowing | and ignorant |
| an animal | like an animal |

# Psalms 73:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yet I {am} continuously with you; you hold {me} by my right hand.* | *Nevertheless I am always with you; you constantly stay close to me.* |

**ULT you hold {me} by my right hand**
**UST** you constantly stay close to me
(אָחַזְתָּ בְּיַד־יְמִינִי)

The psalmist is speaking of God's continual presence with him as if God were continually holding his **right hand**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning with a comparison, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you are constantly with me] or [you are constantly with me. It is as if you are holding me by my right hand]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 73:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me {to} glory.* | *You lead me by instructing me, and when I die, you will take me into your glorious presence.* |

**ULT You guide me with your counsel**
UST You lead me by instructing me
(בַּעֲצָתְךָ תַנְחֵנִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **counsel**, you could express the same idea in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [You guide me by teaching me instructive things] or [You guide me by teaching me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and afterward you will take me {to} glory**
UST and when I die, you will take me into your glorious presence
(וְאַחַר כָּבוֹד תִּקָּחֵנִי)

Here the term **glory** could refer to: (1) God's presence in this life or after death. Alternate translation: [and afterward you will take me into your glorious presence] or [and after I die you will take me into your presence] (2) the glory or honor that God would give the psalmist in this life or after death because he had remained faithful and lived a righteous life. Alternate translation: [and afterward you will receive me with honor] or [and when I die you will receive me with honor] or [and at the end of my life you will receive me and honor me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT and afterward you will take me {to} glory**
UST and when I die, you will take me into your glorious presence
(וְאַחַר כָּבוֹד תִּקָּחֵנִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and afterward you will take me into your glorious presence] or [and afterward you will honor me when you receive me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| with your counsel | by instructing me |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {to} glory | into your glorious presence |

# Psalms 73:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Whom have I in heaven {but you}? And besides you {there is} nothing on the earth I desire.* | *You are the only one I have in heaven! There is nothing on this earth that I desire more than you.* |

ULT **Whom have I in heaven {but you}**
UST You are the only one I have in heaven
(מִי־לִי בַשָּׁמָיִם)

Here psalmist is implying the words “but you?” If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly as modeled by the ULT. Alternate translation: [Whom have I in heaven but you?]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Whom have I in heaven {but you}**
UST You are the only one I have in heaven
(מִי־לִי בַשָּׁמָיִם)

The psalmist is not asking for information but is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate these words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [There is no one I have in heaven but you!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **And besides you {there is} nothing on the earth I desire**
UST There is nothing on this earth that I desire more than you
(וְעִמְּךָ לֹא־חָפַצְתִּי בָאָרֶץ)

Alternate translation: [And with you I desire nothing on the earth]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in heaven | in heaven |
| on the earth | on this earth |

# Psalms 73:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My flesh and my heart fail, {but} God {is} the rock of my heart and my portion forever.* | *My body and my spirit may become very weak, but God enables me to feel encouraged; he has granted to me that I would belong to him forever.* |

**ULT My flesh and my heart fail**
**UST** My body and my spirit may become very weak
(כָּלָה שְׁאֵרִי וּלְבָבִי)

The psalmist is referring to his entire body as if it were his **flesh**, and he is referring to his mind and/or spirit as if they were his **heart**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly or use an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [I may become physically and emotionally weak] or [My body and my mind may fail] or [My body and my spirit may fail]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT { … My flesh and my heart fail, but} God {is} the rock of my heart and my portion forever**
**UST** My body and my spirit may become very weak, but God enables me to feel encouraged; he has granted to me that I would belong to him forever
(כָּלָה שְׁאֵרִי וּלְבָבִי צוּר־לְבָבִי וְחֶלְקִי אֱלֹהִים לְעוֹלָם)

Alternate translation: [My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart forever]

**ULT {but} God {is} the rock of my heart and my portion forever**
**UST** but God enables me to feel encouraged; he has granted to me that I would belong to him forever
(צוּר־לְבָבִי וְחֶלְקִי אֱלֹהִים לְעוֹלָם)

The psalmist is speaking of **God** as if he were a **rock**. The term **rock** is associated with strength so by calling God **the rock of my heart**, he means that God is the strength of his heart. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning with a comparison, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but God, you are like a rock for my heart, and you are my portion forever] or [but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| but} God {is} | but God |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 73:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For behold, those who are far from you will perish; you destroy every one being unfaithful to you.* | *People who abandon you will perish; you will ruin every person who is not loyal to you.* |

**ULT behold**
(הִנֵּה)

The psalmist is using the term **behold** to bring attention to and emphasize the certainty of what he is about to say. Use a word or phrase that would communicate that meaning in your language. Alternate translation: [indeed]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT you destroy every one being unfaithful to you**
**UST** you will ruin every person who is not loyal to you
(הִצְמַתָּה כָּל־זוֹנֶה מִמֶּךָּ)

Alternate translation: [you will destroy everyone who is unfaithful to you]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| will perish | will perish |
| you destroy | you will ruin |
| one being unfaithful | person who is not loyal |

# Psalms 73:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But {for} me, the closeness of God for me {is} good. I have made the Lord, Yahweh, my refuge in order to recount all your works.* | *But for me, the only thing I need is to be close to God. I trust in the Lord Yahweh to keep me safe so that I may tell others everything you have done for me.* |

ULT **But {for} me, the closeness of God for me {is} good**
UST But for me, the only thing I need is to be close to God
(וַאֲנִי ׀ קִרְבַת אֱלֹהִים לִי־טוֹב)

Alternate translation: [But for me, God's companionship is my greatest good] or [But for me, God's presence is my good]

ULT **the closeness of God for me {is} good**
UST the only thing I need is to be close to God
(קִרְבַת אֱלֹהִים לִי־טוֹב)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **closeness**, you could express the same idea in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [being close to God is good for me] or [being near to God is good for me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **I have made the Lord, Yahweh, my refuge**
UST I trust in the Lord Yahweh to keep me safe
(שַׂתִּי ׀ בַּאדֹנָי יְהוִה מַחְסִי)

The psalmist speaks of **Yahweh** as if he were a physical place that a person could go to for **refuge**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning with a comparison, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Like a person runs to a shelter to keep them safe when they are in danger, so I have chosen to trust you to keep me safe]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **I have made the Lord, Yahweh, my refuge**
UST I trust in the Lord Yahweh to keep me safe
(שַׂתִּי ׀ בַּאדֹנָי יְהוִה מַחְסִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **refuge**, you could express the same idea in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I trust the Lord, Yahweh, to protect me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in order to recount all your works**
UST so that I may tell others everything you have done for me
(לְסַפֵּר כָּל־מַלְאֲכוֹתֶיךָ)

The phrase **in order to** marks **recount all your works** as the goal or purpose for which the psalmist **made the Lord, Yahweh** his **refuge**. Use a natural way in your language for indicating that this is the goal or purpose.

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **in order to recount all your works**
UST so that I may tell others everything you have done for me
(לְסַפֵּר כָּל־מַלְאֲכוֹתֶיךָ)

Alternate translation: [that I might make known to people all your works] or [that I may declare all your deeds]

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| {is} good | the only thing … need is |
| the Lord | the Lord |
| Yahweh | Yahweh to |
| my refuge | keep me safe |
| in order to recount | so that I may tell others |

# Psalms 74

## Psalm 74 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 74 is a psalm of supplication or lament. It includes all the basic elements of that type of psalm except a vow of praise. (There is only the hint of a vow of praise in verse 21b.) See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Cry for help (1–3)
2. Description of troubles (4–9)
3. Cry for help (10–11)
4. Statement of trust (12–17)
5. Petition (18–23)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a "maskil." See the discussion of that term in the introduction to Psalms.

### Translation Issues in this Psalm

#### Imperatives

Throughout this psalm, the psalmist is requesting things from Yahweh by using an imperative form which may sound like a command in your language. If this would be impolite in your language, then use a form that would be more appropriate for addressing Yahweh with a request.

#### Parallelisms

Parallelisms arise when two phrases occur together which mean the same thing. The second phrase emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea using different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine the phrases and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one and not saying something

additional. See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing.

# Psalms 74:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A maskil. Of Asaph. Why, God, have you rejected {us} forever? {Why} does your nose smoke against the flock of your pasture?* | *A Levite from the clan of Asaph wrote this song. God, it feels as if you have permanently abandoned us! You care for us Israelites the way a shepherd cares for his flock. So please do not continue to be angry with us.* |

ULT **A maskil**
UST this song
(מַשְׂכִּיל)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **maskil**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Why, God, have you rejected {us} forever? Why} does your nose smoke against the flock of your pasture**
UST God, it feels as if you have permanently abandoned us! You care for us Israelites the way a shepherd cares for his flock. So please do not continue to be angry with us
(לָמָּה אֱלֹהִים זָנַחְתָּ לָנֶצַח יֶעְשַׁן אַפְּךָ בְּצֹאן מַרְעִיתֶךָ)

Asaph is using the question form to express his anguish at God's anger toward his people. 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: [God, you have rejected us forever! Your nose should not smoke against the flock of your pasture.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **{Why} does your nose smoke**
UST So please do not continue to be angry with us
(יֶעְשַׁן אַפְּךָ)

Asaph is using **does your nose smoke** as a common expression of the culture to mean that God is angry. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Why are you angry]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

> ULT **against the flock of your pasture**
> UST You care for us Israelites the way a shepherd cares for his flock
> (בְּצֹאן מַרְעִיתֶךָ)

Here Asaph is speaking of God's people as if they were **the flock** of a shepherd, and of God as if he were a shepherd who cares for them in **your pasture**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [against the people you care for]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **against the flock of your pasture**
> UST You care for us Israelites the way a shepherd cares for his flock
> (בְּצֹאן מַרְעִיתֶךָ)

Asaph is using the possessive form to describe a **flock** that is associated with a **pasture**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express the idea in another way. Alternate translation: [against the flock that you pasture]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Of Asaph | A Levite from the clan of Asaph wrote |
| God | God |
| have you rejected {us} | you have … abandoned us |
| forever | permanently |
| against the flock of | You care for us Israelites the way a shepherd cares for his flock |

# Psalms 74:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Remember your congregation {that} you acquired {in} antiquity, {which} you redeemed, the tribe of your inheritance, this Mount Zion on which you have dwelt.* | *Think about your people whom you chose long ago. You rescued us from slavery so that we would belong to you. Think about Mount Zion, where you have been present {in your temple}.* |

ULT **Remember your congregation**
UST Think about your people
(זְכֹר עֲדָתְךָ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. See the Introduction to this Psalm for more information on how to translate the imperative here and throughout this Psalm. Alternate translation: [Please remember your congregation]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **the tribe of your inheritance**
UST so that we would belong to you
(שֵׁבֶט נַחֲלָתֶךָ)

Asaph is using this possessive form to mean that the tribe itself is what God inherited. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the tribe that is your inheritance]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the tribe of your inheritance**
UST so that we would belong to you
(שֵׁבֶט נַחֲלָתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **inheritance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the tribe that you inherited] or [the people whom you have made your own]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT this Mount Zion on which you have dwelt**
**UST** Think about Mount Zion, where you have been present {in your temple}
(הַר־צִיּוֹן זֶה ׀ שָׁכַנְתָּ בּוֹ)

The psalmist is leaving out some of the words that a sentence in many languages would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if this would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [remember this Mount Zion on which you have dwelt]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your congregation | your people |
| {which} you redeemed | You rescued us from slavery |
| the tribe of | so that we |
| your inheritance | would belong to you |
| Mount Zion | Think about Mount Zion |

# Psalms 74:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Lift up your feet to the destructions of perpetuity, {to} all the enemy has damaged in the holy place.* | *Come and walk through the ruins of your temple. It seems that no one will ever rebuild it. Look at all the damage that the enemy soldiers did to your temple.* |

ULT **Lift up your feet**
UST Come and walk through
(הָרִימָה פָעָמֶיךָ)

The psalmist speaks of God as if he were a person with **feet** which he could **Lift up** and come and see the ruined temple in Jerusalem. The phrase **Lift up your feet** is probably also indicating that the psalmist wants God to not only take notice but also to take notice quickly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Come and see the perpetual ruins] or [Please do not delay any longer. Please pay attention to these perpetual ruins]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **in the holy place**
UST to your temple
(בַּקֹּדֶשׁ)

Here and other places in this psalm, **the holy place** refers to the Temple in Jerusalem that had been destroyed. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly as modeled by the UST.

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to the destructions of | the ruins of your temple |
| perpetuity | It seems that no one will ever rebuild it |
| the enemy | the enemy soldiers |
| has damaged | the damage that … did |
| in the holy place | to your temple |

# Psalms 74:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your adversaries roared in the midst of your meeting place; they set up their signs {as} signs.* | *Your enemies shouted in triumph right there in the place where you met with us Israelites. They set up their battle flags to show that they had conquered it.* |

ULT **Your adversaries roared**
UST Your enemies shouted in triumph
(שָׁאֲגוּ צָרֶיךָ)

Here Asaph is speaking of the **adversaries** as if they were wild animals that **roared**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Your adversaries shouted loudly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **they set up their signs {as} signs**
UST They set up their battle flags to show that they had conquered it
(שָׂמוּ אוֹתֹתָם אֹתוֹת)

Setting up **signs** was a symbolic action by which the conquerors signified their victory over those conquered. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. The phrase **they have set up their signs as signs** could mean: (1) that God's adversaries had set up their military banners as signs in the Temple. Alternate translation: [they have set up their banners as signs] or [they have set up their banners as a sign of their conquest] or (2) that God's adversaries had set up items of worship and symbols related to their false religion. Alternate translation: [they have set up symbols and items for their pagan worship] or [they have set up idolatrous symbols and items of false worship]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Your adversaries | Your enemies |
| roared | shouted in triumph |
| your meeting place | the place where you met with us Israelites |
| {as} signs | to show that they had conquered it |

# Psalms 74:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *It was known like one bringing upward axes in a thicket of trees.* | *They acted like woodsmen who were swinging axes to cut down trees in a forest.* |

ULT **It was known**
UST They acted
(יְיֻדַּע)

The expression **It was known** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [They appeared]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **like one bringing upward axes in a thicket of trees**
UST like woodsmen who were swinging axes to cut down trees in a forest
(כְּמֵבִיא לְמָעְלָה בְּסָבָךְ־עֵץ קַרְדֻּמּוֹת)

The point of this comparison is that just as a woodsman swings **axes** to cut down trees **in a thicket**, so the enemies swung their weapons to destroy the carvings of the temple. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [like a woodsman chopping down trees in a forest]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| It was known | They acted |
| axes | axes |

# Psalms 74:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And now with hatchet and hammers they have broken down its carvings altogether.* | *They smashed all the carved wooden panels with their axes and hammers.* |

ULT **And now**
UST They smashed
(וְעַתָּה)

Here the words **And now** mark a shift from describing what the enemies did in the past to what they are doing in the present. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [Now]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **its carvings**
UST the carved wooden panels
(פִּתּוּחֶיהָ)

The pronoun **its** refers to the holy place. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the carvings of the holy place]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

# Psalms 74:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They sent your holy place into fire; they profaned the dwelling of your name to the ground.* | *Then they burned down your temple completely. They treated the temple where you were present as if it were not a sacred place.* |

ULT **They sent your holy place into fire; they profaned the dwelling of your name to the ground**
UST Then they burned down your temple completely. They treated the temple where you were present as if it were not a sacred place
(שִׁלְּחוּ בָאֵשׁ מִקְדָּשֶׁךָ לָאָרֶץ חִלְּלוּ מִשְׁכַּן־שְׁמֶךָ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. For more information on translating parallelisms, see the Introduction to this Psalm. Alternate translation: [They completely burned down and desecrated the place where you dwell]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **They sent**
UST Then they burned down
(שִׁלְּחוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to the enemies. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The enemies sent]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the dwelling of your name**
UST the temple where you were present
(מִשְׁכַּן־שְׁמֶךָ)

Asaph is using the term **name** to represent God's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the place called by your name by bringing it] or [the dwelling where you are present by bringing it]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **the dwelling of your name**
> UST the temple where you were present
> (מִשְׁכַּן־שִׁמְךָ)

Asaph is using the possessive form to describe a **dwelling** that is characterized by God's **name**, that is, by his presence. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express the idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the dwelling place dedicated to you by burning it]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your holy place | your temple |
| they profaned | They treated … as if it were not a sacred place |
| the dwelling of | the temple where … were present |

# Psalms 74:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They said in their heart, "Let us oppress them altogether." They burned all of the meeting places of God in the land.* | *They said to themselves, "We will completely subdue the Israelites." They burned down every place in the land where people gathered to worship God.* |

ULT **They said in their heart**
UST They said to themselves
(אָמְרוּ בְלִבָּם)

The phrase **They said in their heart** introduces a direct quotation. In your translation, use a natural way of introducing direct quotations in your language. Alternate translation: [They thought to themselves]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **They said in their heart**
UST They said to themselves
(אָמְרוּ בְלִבָּם)

Both occurrences of the pronoun **They** refer to the enemies. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The enemies said in their heart]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **in their heart**
UST to themselves
(בְלִבָּם)

Asaph is using **in their heart** as a common expression of the culture to mean that the enemies thought this to themselves. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [within themselves]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **the meeting places of God**
UST place … where people gathered to worship God
(מוֹעֲדֵי־אֵל)

Asaph is using this possessive form to mean the places that are dedicated to **God** for worship. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the places where people gather to worship God]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the meeting places of | place … where people gathered to worship |
| God | God |
| in the land | in the land |

# Psalms 74:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *We do not see our signs; there is no longer a prophet and not one with us knowing until when.* | *You no longer give us any signs, and there are no prophets anymore. None of us knows how long this will last.* |

**ULT We do not see our signs**
**UST** You no longer give us any signs
(אֹותֹתֵינוּ לֹא רָאִינוּ)

Here the phrase **our signs** could refer to: (1) signs that God's prophets gave. Alternate translation: [We do not see any prophetic signs for us] or [We do not see any signs given to us from a prophet] or (2) the military banners and symbols used by the Israelite army which represented their army. Alternate translation: [We no longer see any of our military banners] or (3) the Jewish festivals and religious observances which were the outward signs of their religion. Alternate translation: [We no longer see any signs of our religion] or [All our sacred observances are gone] or [All our sacred symbols are gone]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| our signs | any signs |
| a prophet | and there are … prophets |
| one … knowing | knows |

# Psalms 74:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Until when, God, will the adversary reproach? Will the enemy despise your name forever?* | *God, do not allow your opponents to continue to insult you! Do not allow your enemies to keep treating you with disrespect anymore!* |

ULT **Until when, God, will the adversary reproach? Will the enemy despise your name forever**

UST God, do not allow your opponents to continue to insult you! Do not allow your enemies to keep treating you with disrespect anymore

(עַד־מָתַי אֱלֹהִים יְחָרֵף צָר יְנַאֵץ אוֹיֵב שִׁמְךָ לָנֶצַח)

Asaph is using the question form to express his impatient plea for God to intervene. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate these questions as statements or exclamations. Alternate translation: [God, the adversary has reproached you long enough! The enemy should not despise your name forever.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **your name**

UST you

(שִׁמְךָ)

Asaph is using the term **name** to represent God's reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your reputation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| will … reproach | to insult you |
| the adversary | your opponents |
| the enemy | your enemies |
| forever | Do not allow … anymore |

# Psalms 74:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Why do you hold back your hand, even your right hand? From the midst of your bosom finish {them}!* | *You should not fail to use your great power. Use your power to destroy your enemies!* |

ULT **Why do you hold back your hand, even your right hand**
UST You should not fail to use your great power
(לָמָּה תָשִׁיב יָדְךָ וִימִינֶךָ)

Asaph is using the question form to protest God's inaction. 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: [You should not hold back your hand, even your right hand!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **do you hold back your hand**
UST fail to use your … power
(תָשִׁיב יָדְךָ)

Asaph is using **hold back your hand** as a common expression of the culture to mean that God is withholding his action and not intervening. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [do you refrain from acting with your great power]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **your hand, even your right hand**
UST your great power
(יָדְךָ וִימִינֶךָ)

Here, **your hand, even your right hand** represents God's power to act. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your power, even your great strength]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **your bosom**
> UST Use your power
> (חֵיקְךָ)

Here, **your bosom** represents concealment and inaction, as though God were keeping his hand tucked inside his robe instead of stretching it out to act. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your hiding place]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| finish {them} | to destroy your enemies |

# Psalms 74:12

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *But God {is} my king from antiquity, working salvations in the midst of the earth.* | *God, I acknowledge that you have ruled from ancient times. You have been saving people throughout the earth.* |

**ULT But God {is} my king**
**UST** God, I acknowledge that you have ruled
(וֵאלֹהִים מַלְכִּי)

Asaph uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between the despair he has expressed about the destruction of the temple and his confidence in God as king. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Yet God is my king]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

**ULT {is} my king**
**UST** I acknowledge that you have ruled
(מַלְכִּי)

Asaph uses the pronoun **my** instead of "our" to express a personal declaration of trust. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [is my king whom I trust]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT salvations**
**UST** You have been saving people
(יְשׁוּעוֹת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **salvations**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [mighty things to save his people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| But God | God |
| {is} my king | I acknowledge that you have ruled |
| salvations | You have been saving people |

# Psalms 74:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You, you divided the sea by your strength; you broke the heads of the sea monsters in the waters.* | *By your great power, you pushed back the sea so that the dry land would appear. You created order out of the watery chaos.* |

ULT **You, you divided**
UST you pushed back … so that the dry land would appear
(אַתָּה פוֹרַרְתָּ)

Asaph is stating the pronoun **You** separately, even though the verb translated as **you divided** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that it was God himself who performed this mighty act. If it would be natural in your language to use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation, or you could express this emphasis in a different way. See how you as a team decide to translate this phrase and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [It was you who divided]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **by your strength**
UST By your great power
(בְּעָזֶּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [because you are strong]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the heads of the sea monsters**
UST You created order out of the … chaos
(רָאשֵׁי תַנִּינִים)

Here Asaph is speaking of the forces of chaos as if they were **sea monsters** whose **heads** God crushed. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the powers of the chaotic waters]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 74:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You, you crushed the heads of Leviathan; you gave him {as} food to a people, to the desert-dwellers.* | *It was as if you smashed the heads of a chaos monster that lived in the sea and left his body in the desert for scavengers to eat.* |

**ULT the heads of Leviathan**
UST the heads of a chaos monster that lived in the sea
(רָאשֵׁי לִוְיָתָן)

Here Asaph is speaking of the forces of chaos as if they were a great sea creature called **Leviathan**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the great chaos creature]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT you gave him {as} food to a people**
UST and left his body in the desert for scavengers to eat
(תִּתְּנֶנּוּ מַאֲכָל לָעָם)

Here Asaph is speaking of God's defeat of Leviathan as if God had given **him as food** to people, meaning that God completely destroyed this power. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you left his remains for the people]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Leviathan | a chaos monster that lived in the sea |
| to the desert-dwellers | in the desert … scavengers |

# Psalms 74:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You, you split open spring and wadi; you, you dry up perpetual rivers.* | *You are able to make springs and streams flow in dry areas, but you are also able to dry up rivers that usually flow all the time.* |

**ULT you split open spring and wadi**
UST are able to make springs and streams flow in dry areas
(בָּקַעְתָּ מַעְיָן וְנָחַל)

Here, **split open spring and wadi** refers to Yahweh breaking open the ground and causing springs and streams to flow. Alternate translation: [you caused springs and streams to flow out of the ground]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| spring | springs |
| and wadi | and streams |
| you dry up | are also able to dry up |

# Psalms 74:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The day {is} to you; the night {is} also to you. You, you established the light and the sun.* | *You determine when it becomes day and when it becomes night. You make it light during the day when the sun shines.* |

**ULT The day {is} to you; the night … also**
**UST** You determine when it becomes day and … it becomes night
(לְךָ יוֹם אַף & לַיְלָה)

Asaph is referring to all of time by naming two extremes, **the day** and **the night**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [All hours of the day and night are also]

**Support Reference:** Merism

**ULT also**
**UST** and
(אַף)

Here the word **also** connects two parallel statements, emphasizing that both the day and the night belong to God. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [even]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

**ULT the light and the sun**
**UST** light during the day when the sun shines
(מָאוֹר וָשָׁמֶשׁ)

Asaph is referring to all celestial light by naming two components, **the light and the sun**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [every source of light in the sky]

**Support Reference:** Merism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| you established | make it |

# Psalms 74:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You, you set all of the boundaries of the earth; summer and winter, you, you formed them.* | *You are the one who set all the boundaries of the earth. You are the one who created the seasons of summer and winter.* |

**ULT the boundaries of the earth**
**UST** the boundaries of the earth
(גְּבוּלוֹת אֶרֶץ)

Asaph is using this possessive form to mean the boundaries that mark the extent of **the earth**. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the boundaries that define the earth]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT summer and winter**
**UST** the seasons of summer and winter
(קַיִץ וְחֹרֶף)

Asaph is referring to all the seasons of the year by naming two extremes, **summer and winter**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all the seasons of the year]

**Support Reference:** Merism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the earth | the earth |

# Psalms 74:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Remember this: the enemy has reproached Yahweh, and a foolish people has despised your name.* | *Yahweh, remember that your enemies have insulted you and that foolish people have mocked your reputation.* |

**ULT Remember this**
**UST** remember that
(זְכָר־זֹאת)

Here the words **Remember this** mark a shift from praising God's mighty acts back to petitioning him for help. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [Consider this]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

**ULT the enemy has reproached Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh … your enemies have insulted you
(אוֹיֵב חֵרֵף ׀ יְהוָה)

Even though Asaph is addressing God directly, he is speaking of him in the third person as **Yahweh** to show respect. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: [the enemy has reproached you, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

**ULT has despised your name**
**UST** have mocked your reputation
(נִאֲצוּ שִׁמְךָ)

Asaph is using the term **name** to represent God's reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [has despised your reputation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the enemy | your enemies |
| has reproached | have insulted you |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| foolish | foolish |

# Psalms 74:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May you not give the life of your dove to a beast; may you not forget the life of your poor forever.* | *Do not allow cruel enemies to destroy the people whom you cherish. Save the lives of your vulnerable people before it is too late.* |

ULT **the life of your dove**
UST to destroy the people whom you cherish
(נֶפֶשׁ תּוֹרֶךָ)

Asaph is using the possessive form to describe the **life** that belongs to the people he calls a **dove**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express the idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the lives of your people whom you cherish]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **your dove**
UST the people whom you cherish
(תּוֹרֶךָ)

Here Asaph is speaking of God's people as if they were a vulnerable **dove**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your defenseless people]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to a beast**
UST cruel enemies
(לְחַיַּת)

Here Asaph is speaking of the enemy nation as if it were a wild **beast** that would devour its prey. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to the cruel enemy]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **your poor**
UST your vulnerable people
(עֲנִיֶּיךָ)

Asaph 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [your poor people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your dove | the people whom you cherish |
| to a beast | cruel enemies |
| forever | before it is too late |

# Psalms 74:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Regard the covenant, for pastures of violence fill the dark places of the land.* | *People are committing violent acts in places where they think others will not see them. So we need you to help us. Please do that because of the covenant that you made with us.* |

ULT **for pastures of violence fill the dark places of the land**
UST People are committing violent acts in places where they think others will not see them. So
(כִּי מָלְאוּ מַחְשַׁכֵּי־אֶרֶץ נְאוֹת חָמָס)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because violent places fill the dark places of the land]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **pastures of violence**
UST People are committing violent acts
(נְאוֹת חָמָס)

Asaph is using the possessive form to describe **pastures** that are characterized by **violence**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this purpose, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [violent places]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **violence**
UST People are committing violent acts
(חָמָס)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **violence**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [violent deeds]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the dark places of the land**
UST in places where they think others will not see them
(מְחֻשַּׁכֵּי־אָֽרֶץ)

Here Asaph is speaking of places of oppression and danger as if they were **dark places**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the dangerous places of the land]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the dark places of the land**
UST in places where they think others will not see them
(מְחֻשַּׁכֵּי־אָֽרֶץ)

Asaph is using this possessive form to mean the places in **the land** that are dark, that is, dangerous. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the dark places that are in the land]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the covenant | the covenant that you made with us |
| the land | in places where they think others will not see them |

# Psalms 74:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May the weak not return ashamed; may the poor and the needy praise your name.* | *We are asking you to help us; please do not disappoint us. Then we poor and needy people will praise you for what you have done.* |

ULT **the weak**
UST We are asking you to help us
(דָּ֭וּךְ)

Asaph is using the adjective **weak** 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: [the weak person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **ashamed**
UST please do … disappoint us
(נִכְלָ֑ם)

The expression **ashamed** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [feeling shame]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **the poor and the needy**
UST Then we poor and needy people
(עָנִ֖י וְאֶבְי֣וֹן)

Asaph 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 adjectives with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [those who are poor and needy]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| may … praise | will praise … for what you have done |
| ashamed | please do … disappoint us |

# Psalms 74:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Arise, God! Plead your case! Remember your reproach from the fool all of the day.* | *Take action to defend yourself, God! Do not allow foolish people to keep insulting you!* |

ULT **Arise, God**
UST Take action … God
(קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים)

Here the words **Arise, God** mark a shift to a final urgent appeal for God to act. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [Take action, God]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **Plead your case**
UST to defend yourself
(רִיבָה רִיבֶךָ)

Here Asaph is speaking of God as if he were a litigant who would **plead** a legal **case** in court. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Contend for yourself]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **your case**
UST yourself
(רִיבֶךָ)

Asaph is using this possessive form to mean the case that is brought against God, that is, the insults directed at him. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the case against you]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **your reproach**
UST insulting you
(חֶרְפָּתְךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **reproach**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how the fool reproaches you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

> ULT **your reproach from the fool**
> UST foolish people … insulting you
> (חֶרְפָּתְךָ מִנִּי־נָבָל)

Asaph is using this possessive form to mean the reproach that comes from **the fool**. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the way the fool reproaches you]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| Plead | to defend |
| your reproach | insulting you |
| the fool | foolish people |

# Psalms 74:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not forget the voice of your adversaries, the uproar of the ones rising against you, going up continually.* | *Do not ignore what your enemies are saying. Your opponents keep shouting things against you.* |

ULT **the voice of your adversaries**
UST what your enemies are saying
(קוֹל צֹרְרֶיךָ)

Here, **the voice of your adversaries** represents what the adversaries are saying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the words of your adversaries]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the voice of your adversaries**
UST what your enemies are saying
(קוֹל צֹרְרֶיךָ)

Asaph is using this possessive form to mean the voice that comes from **your adversaries**. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [what your adversaries are saying]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the uproar of the ones rising against you**
UST Your opponents … shouting things
(שְׁאוֹן קָמֶיךָ)

Asaph is using this possessive form to mean the uproar that comes from **the ones rising against** God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the noise that your opponents make]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your adversaries | your enemies |
| the uproar of | shouting things |
| the ones rising against you | Your opponents |

# Psalms 75

## Psalm 75 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

1. Superscription
2. Community thanksgiving (1)
3. God’s promise of righteous judgment (2–5)
4. Declaration that God alone is judge (6–8)
5. Psalmist’s vow to praise (9)
6. God’s promise to judge (10)

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 75 is a psalm of Asaph that celebrates God as the righteous judge of all the earth.

1. Purpose: to declare that God will judge the earth with equity
2. Content: The psalm moves between different speakers—the community, God himself, and the psalmist—all affirming that God is the judge who humbles the wicked and exalts the righteous.
3. Message: God alone has the authority to judge, and he will do so at the appointed time.

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

1. The psalm contains multiple speakers. Verse 1 is the community speaking. Verses 2–5 (and possibly continuing through verse 8) are God speaking. Verse 9 is the psalmist (Asaph) speaking. Verse 10 contains God’s words in quotation marks.
2. The image of the “horn” appears in verses 4, 5, and 10, representing power, pride, or strength.

3. The image of God's judgment as a cup of wine appears in verse 8, a common biblical image.

See: Poetry

# Psalms 75:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; “May You Not Destroy.” A psalm of Asaph; a song.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: Asaph wrote this song. The tune is “Do Not Destroy.”* |

**ULT For the chief musician**

UST This is a note for the worship leader

(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May You … Destroy | Do … Destroy |
| A psalm | this song |
| of Asaph | Asaph wrote |

# Psalms 75:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *We give thanks to you, God; we give thanks, and your name is near; they recount your wonders.* | *We thank you, God! We thank you because you are close {to us}. We tell people about the wonderful things that you have done.* |

**ULT We give thanks to you, God; we give thanks**
**UST** We thank you, God! We thank you
(הוֹדִֽינוּ לְךָ֣ ׀ אֱלֹהִ֣ים הוֹדִ֑ינוּ)

The psalmist is repeating the phrase **We give thanks** in order to intensify the idea that it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [We thank you so very much]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

**ULT and your name is near**
**UST** because you are close {to us}
(וְקָרוֹב שְׁמֶ֗ךָ)

By **your name is near**, the psalmist means that God is present and accessible to his people. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [you are present with us] or [you are close to us]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT your name**
**UST** you
(שְׁמֶ֗ךָ)

The psalmist is using the term **name** to represent God himself and his presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT they recount**
**UST** We tell people
(סִפְּרוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to the people of Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state this explicitly. Alternate translation: [we your people recount]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| they recount | We tell people |
| your wonders | about the wonderful things that you have done |

# Psalms 75:2

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *When I take the appointed time; I, I will judge {with} equity.* | *{You say,} "I have set a time {to judge people}. At that time, I will judge everyone fairly.* |

**ULT When I take the appointed time; I, I will judge {with} equity**
**UST** { … You say,} "I have set a time {to judge people}. At that time, I will judge everyone fairly
(כִּי אֶקַּח מוֹעֵד אֲנִי מֵישָׁרִים אֶשְׁפֹּט)

This is the beginning of what God said. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could mark that this is a direct quote of God. Alternate translation: [God said, "When I take the appointed time, I will judge with equity]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

**ULT I, I will judge**
**UST** At that time, I will judge everyone
(אֲנִי & אֶשְׁפֹּט)

God is stating the pronoun **I** twice, even though the verb already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that he himself is the one speaking and acting. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the emphasis here. Alternate translation: [I myself will judge]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT {with} equity**
**UST** fairly
(מֵישָׁרִים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **equity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what is right] or [uprightly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the appointed time | a time {to judge people} |
| the appointed time | a time {to judge people} |
| I will judge | will judge everyone |

# Psalms 75:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The earth and all its inhabitants are melting; I, I established its pillars. Selah* | *The earth may shake, and everyone who lives on it may tremble. But I am the one who holds it steady.” Selah* |

**ULT The earth and all its inhabitants are melting**
**UST** The earth may shake, and everyone who lives on it may tremble
(נָמֹגִים אֶ֥רֶץ וְכָל־יֹשְׁבֶ֑יהָ)

The psalmist is speaking of the earth and its inhabitants as if they were **melting**. He means that they are overcome with fear and instability in the presence of God’s judgment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The earth and all its inhabitants are trembling with fear]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT I, I established**
**UST** But I am the one who holds it steady
(אָנֹכִ֥י תִכַּ֗נְתִּי)

God is stating the pronoun **I** explicitly, even though the verb already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that he himself is the one who establishes the earth’s foundations. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the emphasis here. Alternate translation: [I myself established]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT I established its pillars**
**UST** holds it steady
(תִכַּ֗נְתִּי עַמּוּדֶ֥יהָ)

The psalmist is speaking of the earth as if it were a building with **pillars** to support it. This image represents the stability that God provides and maintains for the earth. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [made it stable] or [keep it stable]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The earth | The earth |
| I established | holds it steady |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| its pillars | holds it steady |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 75:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I said to the boasters, "Do not boast," and to the wicked, "Do not lift up a horn.* | *I warn those who boast, "Stop boasting!" I tell wicked people, "Do not be proud!* |

**ULT to the boasters**
**UST** those who boast
(לַהוֹלְלִים)

David is using the adjective **boasters** 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: [people who boast]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT and to the wicked**
**UST** I tell wicked people
(וְלָרְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist 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]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT lift up a horn**
**UST** Do … be proud
(תָּרִימוּ קָרֶן)

The psalmist is speaking of arrogant or defiant people as if they were to physically **lift up a horn** like an animal displaying strength. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [behave arrogantly] or [act defiantly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| boast | boasting |
| and to the wicked | I tell wicked people |
| a horn | Do … be proud |

# Psalms 75:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not lift up your horn to the height, or speak with an arrogant neck.”* | *Do not brag about your power! Do not speak arrogantly!”* |

**ULT** **lift up your horn to the height**
**UST** Do … brag about your power
(תָּרִימוּ לַמָּרוֹם קַרְנְכֶם)

The psalmist is speaking of **to the height** as if it were a physical elevation to which one could **lift up** a **horn**. This intensifies the image of arrogance that the horn metaphor conveys. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [act with extreme arrogance]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT** **speak with an arrogant neck**
**UST** Do not speak arrogantly
(תְּדַבְּרוּ בְצַוָּאר עָתָק)

Here, **neck** represents speaking with an arrogant attitude. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [speak arrogantly]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your horn | your power |
| arrogant | arrogantly |

# Psalms 75:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For not from the east or from the west, and not from the wilderness {comes} lifting up.* | *{The one who judges and} honors people does not come from the east, west, or south.* |

ULT **from the east or from the west, and not from the wilderness {comes} lifting up**
UST {The one who judges and} honors people … from the east, west, or south
(מֵמוֹצָא וּמִמַּעֲרָב וְלֹא מִמִּדְבַּר הָרִים)

The psalmist is referring to all directions on earth by naming two (or three) cardinal points, **the east**, **the west**, and **the wilderness** (the south). The word translated **comes lifting up** could possibly mean “mountains” which would refer to the north. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from any direction comes lifting up]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **{comes} lifting up**
UST {The one who judges and} honors people
(הָרִים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **lifting up**, you could express the same idea with a verb such as “lift” or “exalt.” Alternate translation: [to lift someone up]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from the wilderness | south |

# Psalms 75:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For God {is} the judge; this one he brings low, and this one he lifts up.* | *God is the one who judges people; he shames and punishes some people, and he honors other people.* |

**ULT this one he brings low, and this one he lifts up**
**UST** he shames and punishes some people, and he honors other people
(זֶה יַשְׁפִּיל וְזֶה יָרִים)

The implication is that God brings low the proud and wicked, and lifts up the humble and righteous. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [he humbles this proud person, and he exalts this humble person] or [he brings down the arrogant, and he raises up the lowly]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God is the one |
| {is} the judge | who judges people |

# Psalms 75:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For a cup {is} in the hand of Yahweh, and the wine foams, a full mixture, and he pours out from this; surely its dregs they will drain; all the wicked of the earth will drink.* | *It is as if Yahweh holds a cup {full of punishment} in his hand. It is full of {punishment that is like} foaming wine mixed with spices. He pours it out {to punish the wicked}, and all the wicked people on earth must drink it. {He punishes them fully like} they were drinking the cup to the last drop.* |

ULT **a cup {is} in the hand of Yahweh**
UST Yahweh holds a cup {full of punishment} in his hand
(כּוֹס בְּיַד־יְהוָה)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's judgment as if it were **a cup** that Yahweh held **in** his **hand** and forced people to drink. This is a common biblical image. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [Yahweh's judgment is like a cup in his hand]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the wine foams, a full mixture**
UST It is full of {punishment that is like} foaming wine mixed with spices
(וְיַיִן חָמַר ׀ מָלֵא מָסֶךְ)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **wine** that **foams** and is **a full mixture** refers to wine mixed with spices, making it very strong and intoxicating, representing the full strength of God's judgment. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the wine foams, full of spices]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **its dregs they will drain**
UST {He punishes them fully like} they were drinking the cup to the last drop
(שְׁמָרֶיהָ יִמְצוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of punishment as if it were a cup of wine and God's enemies **will drain** even **its dregs**, the sediment at the bottom. He means that they will experience God's judgment completely, even to its most severe and bitter aspects. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they will experience the punishment fully, even its worst parts]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **the wicked**
> UST the wicked people
> (רְשָׁעֵי)

See how you translated the similar expression in verse 4.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and the wine | wine |
| the wicked | the wicked people |
| of the earth | on earth |

# Psalms 75:9

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *But I, I will declare to eternity; I will sing praise to the God of Jacob.* | *But as for me, I will never stop saying what the God whom Jacob worshiped has done; I will never stop singing to praise him.* |

**ULT But I, I will declare to eternity; I will sing praise to the God of Jacob**
**UST** But as for me, I will never stop saying what the God whom Jacob worshiped has done; I will never stop singing to praise him
(וַאֲנִי אַגִּיד לְעֹלָם אֲזַמְּרָה לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב)

This is the beginning of what the psalmist said. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could mark that this is a direct quote of the psalmist. Alternate translation: [But as for me, I will declare to eternity; I will sing praise to the God of Jacob]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

**ULT But I, I will declare**
**UST** But as for me … saying what
(וַאֲנִי אַגִּיד)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **I** twice for emphasis. He is doing that to emphasize his personal commitment and determination, in contrast to the wicked. If a speaker of your language would repeat a pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing that meaning here. Alternate translation: [But as for me, I will declare]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT to the God of Jacob**
**UST** the God whom Jacob worshiped has done
(לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב)

Here, **Jacob** represents the people of Israel, the descendants of Jacob. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to the God of the people of Israel] or [to the God of the Israelites]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| I will declare | saying what |
| to eternity | I will never stop |
| I will sing praise | I will never stop singing to praise him |
| to the God | the God whom |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of Jacob | Jacob worshiped has done |

# Psalms 75:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“And all the horns of the wicked I will cut off; the horns of the righteous will be lifted up.”* | *God promises this: “I will destroy the power of wicked people, but I will increase the power of righteous people.”* |

ULT **And all the horns of the wicked I will cut off; the horns of the righteous will be lifted up**
UST God promises this: “I will destroy the power of wicked people, but I will increase the power of righteous people
(וְכָל־קַרְנֵי רְשָׁעִים אֲגַדֵּעַ תְּרוֹמַמְנָה קַרְנוֹת צַדִּיק)

This is the beginning of what God said. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could mark that this is a direct quote of God. Alternate translation: [God says, “And all the horns of the wicked I will cut off; the horns of the righteous will be lifted up.”]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **the horns of the wicked … the horns of the righteous**
UST God promises this … the power of wicked people … righteous people
(קַרְנֵי רְשָׁעִים & קַרְנוֹת צַדִּיק)

The psalmist is speaking of power and strength as if they were **horns**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the power of the wicked … the power of the righteous]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **of the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

See how you translated the similar expression in verse 4.

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the righteous**
UST righteous people
(צַדִּיק)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **will be lifted up**
UST but I will increase the power of
(תְּרוֹמַמְנָה)

The expression **will be lifted up** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [I will lift up] or [God will lift up]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the horns | God promises this … the power of |
| of the wicked | wicked people |
| the horns of | קַרְנוֹת (ORIG QUOTE) |
| the righteous | righteous people |

# Psalms 76

## Psalm 76 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

1. Superscription
2. God is known in Zion (1–3)
3. God's judgment destroys the enemies (4–6)
4. God's judgment causes fear (7–9)
5. Call to worship and vow to God (10–12)

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 76 is a psalm of Asaph that celebrates God's victory over the enemies of his people and his dwelling in Zion.

1. Purpose: to praise God for his victory and to warn others to fear him
2. Content: The psalm describes God's power in breaking the weapons of war and striking down the enemies who attacked Jerusalem. It affirms God's sovereignty over all kings and leaders.
3. Message: God is the supreme judge and warrior who defends his people and dwells among them.

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Images of War

The psalm uses several images related to war and judgment, such as "flames of the bow" (arrows), "mountains of prey" (victory), and "gird on wrath" (using wrath as a weapon).

## God's Names and Titles

The psalm uses "God of Jacob" (v6), "Fear" (or "Awesome One", v11), and refers to his dwelling in "Salem" and "Zion" (v2).

## Idioms

There are idioms like "stout of heart" (brave) and "found not their hands" (helpless).

See: Poetry

# Psalms 76:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on stringed instruments. A psalm of Asaph, a song.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: to be accompanied by stringed instruments. Asaph wrote this psalm.* |

**ULT For the chief musician**

UST This is a note for the worship leader

(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm of | this psalm |
| Asaph | Asaph wrote |

# Psalms 76:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In Judah God is known; in Israel his name is great.* | *People in Judah know God. He is famous in Israel.* |

**ULT In Judah God is known; in Israel his name is great**
**UST** People in Judah know God. He is famous in Israel
(נוֹדָע בִּיהוּדָה אֱלֹהִים בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל גָּדוֹל שְׁמוֹ)

These lines mean basically the same thing. Translate according to your team's decision on parallelism. See the Introduction to Psalms for more information.

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT God is known**
**UST** know God
(נוֹדָע & אֱלֹהִים)

The expression **is known** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [people know God] or [God has revealed himself]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT his name**
**UST** He is famous
(שְׁמוֹ)

The psalmist is using the term **name** to represent who God is or to refer to God's reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his reputation] or [he himself]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| In Judah | People in Judah |
| God | God |
| is known | know |
| in Israel | in Israel |

# Psalms 76:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And his abode is in Salem, and his dwelling place is in Zion.* | *His home is in Jerusalem. He lives on Mount Zion.* |

**ULT And his abode is in Salem, and his dwelling place is in Zion**
UST His home is in Jerusalem. He lives on Mount Zion
(וַיְהִי בְשָׁלֵם סֻכּוֹ וּמְעוֹנָתוֹ בְּצִיּוֹן)

These lines mean basically the same thing. Translate according to your team's decision on parallelism. See the Introduction to Psalms for more information.

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT in Salem**
UST in Jerusalem
(בְשָׁלֵם)

The word **Salem** is the name of a city. This is an ancient name for Jerusalem.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

**ULT And his abode is in Salem, and his dwelling place**
UST His home is in Jerusalem. He lives
(וַיְהִי בְשָׁלֵם סֻכּוֹ וּמְעוֹנָתוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a person who had an **abode** and a **dwelling place** in Salem and Zion. This represents Yahweh's special presence among his people in those locations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And his home is in Salem, and where he lives] or [And he is present in Salem, and his presence]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT is in Zion**
UST on Mount Zion
(בְצִיּוֹן)

The word **Zion** is the name of a mountain in Jerusalem.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| is in Zion | on Mount Zion |

# Psalms 76:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *There he broke the flames of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Selah* | *There he shattered the flaming arrows. He destroyed the shields, the swords, and the weapons of war. Selah* |

ULT **There he broke the flames of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle**
UST There he shattered the flaming arrows. He destroyed the shields, the swords, and the weapons of war
(שָׁמָּה שָׁבַר רִשְׁפֵי־קֶשֶׁת מָגֵן וְחֶרֶב וּמִלְחָמָה)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh providing peace for his people as if he were physically breaking weapons. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He provides peace by stopping all the enemies' attacks]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the flames of the bow**
UST the flaming arrows
(רִשְׁפֵי־קֶשֶׁת)

The psalmist is speaking of arrows as if they were **flames of the bow**. This could be because arrows move swiftly like lightning or because they were tipped with fire. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the arrows of the bow]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the shield, and the sword, and the battle**
UST He destroyed the shields, the swords, and the weapons of war
(מָגֵן וְחֶרֶב וּמִלְחָמָה)

The psalmist uses some weapons (**the shield and the sword**) to represent all weapons of war and then further uses **the battle** as a summary representing the weapons used in battle. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [shields and swords and all other weapons of war]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of the bow | arrows |
| the shield | He destroyed the shields |
| and the sword | the swords |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 76:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You are shining, majestic, from the mountains of prey.* | *You are glorious and excellent. You are more majestic than the mountains where you destroyed your enemies.* |

ULT **are shining, majestic**
UST are glorious and excellent
(נָאוֹר & אַדִּיר)

The terms **shining** and **majestic** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [are brilliantly glorious] or [are radiant with glory]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **are shining**
UST are glorious
(נָאוֹר)

The psalmist is speaking of God as if he were **shining** with radiant light. If it would be helpful for your readers, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [are glorious] or [are radiant]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **from the mountains of prey**
UST You are more majestic than the mountains where you destroyed your enemies
(מֵהַרְרֵי־טָֽרֶף)

The psalmist is speaking of the mountains as if they were places where God had hunted down his enemies like **prey**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the mountains where you defeated your enemies] or [like the mountains of your victory]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| majestic | and excellent |
| prey | where you destroyed your enemies |

# Psalms 76:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The stout of heart were plundered; they slept their sleep, and all of the men of strength found not their hands.* | *Enemy soldiers plundered the brave soldiers. They have fallen into their final sleep. None of the warriors were able to lift their hands {to defend themselves}.* |

ULT **The stout of heart**
UST the brave soldiers
(אַבִּירֵי לֵב)

The psalmist is using **stout of heart** as a common expression of his culture to mean "brave" or "courageous." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The courageous] or [The brave warriors]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **were plundered**
UST Enemy soldiers plundered
(אֻשְׁתּוֹלָלוּ)

The expression **were plundered** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [lost all their possessions] or [had their possessions taken away]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **they slept their sleep**
UST They have fallen into their final sleep
(נָמוֹ שְׁנָתָם)

The psalmist is referring to death in a polite way by using the phrase **slept their sleep**. Depending on what is helpful for your readers, you could use a polite way of referring to this in your language, or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [they died] or [they passed away]

**Support Reference:** Euphemism

**ULT and … found not their hands**
**UST** None of the warriors were able to lift their hands {to defend themselves}
(וְלֹא־מָצְאוּ & יְדֵיהֶם)

The psalmist is using **found not their hands** as a common expression of his culture to mean “were unable to use their strength or weapons.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and … could not lift their hands to fight] or [and … were helpless]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| were plundered | Enemy soldiers plundered |
| strength | were able to lift their hands {to defend themselves} |

# Psalms 76:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *At your rebuke, O God of Jacob, both rider and horse fell deeply asleep.* | *When you, the God whom Jacob worshiped, shouted at them, their war horses and their riders fell down dead.* |

ULT **At your rebuke**
UST shouted at them
(מִגַּעֲרָתְךָ)

The expression **At your rebuke** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [When you rebuked them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **O God of Jacob**
UST When you, the God whom Jacob worshiped
(אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב)

The psalmist is not using this possessive form **God of Jacob** to indicate that Jacob possessed or controlled God. Rather, the psalmist is using these words to indicate that God is the God whom Jacob worshiped. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [God whom Jacob worshiped]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **both rider and horse**
UST their war horses and their riders
(רֶכֶב וָסוּס)

The psalmist is using **rider and horse** to represent all the military forces of the enemy. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [chariots and horses] or [riders and their horses]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **fell deeply asleep**
UST fell down dead
(נִרְדָּמוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of **fell deeply asleep** as if dying were falling into a deep sleep. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [fell down dead] or [died]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| At your rebuke | shouted at them |
| O God of | When you, the God whom |
| Jacob | Jacob worshiped |
| and horse | their war horses |

# Psalms 76:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You, you are to be feared, and who can stand before your face from the time of your nose?* | *You are the one whom everyone must fear. No one can survive in your presence when you are angry.* |

**ULT You, you are**
**UST** You are the one whom
(אַתָּה & אַתָּה)

The psalmist is repeating the pronoun **You** in order to intensify the emphasis on God himself. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [You yourself are] or [Truly you are]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT you are to be feared**
**UST** You are the one whom everyone must fear
(נָורָא אַתָּה)

The expression **you are to be feared** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [you are fearsome] or [people must fear you]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT and who can stand before your face from the time of your nose**
**UST** No one can survive in your presence when you are angry
(וּמִי־יַעֲמֹד לְפָנֶיךָ מֵאָז אַפֶּךָ)

The psalmist 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: [and no one can stand before your face from the time of your nose!] or [and no one is able to stand before your face when your nose begins to burn!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **can stand before your face**
UST can survive in your presence
(יַעֲמֹד לְפָנֶיךָ)

The psalmist is using **stand before your face** as a common expression of the culture to mean “withstand your judgment” or “endure your presence.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [can survive in your presence] or [can endure your anger]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **from the time of your nose**
UST when you are angry
(מֵאָז אַפֶּךָ)

The psalmist is using the phrase **from the time of your nose** as a common expression of the culture to mean “when you are angry.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when you are angry] or [when your anger flares up]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| to be feared | everyone must fear |
| from the time of | when |

# Psalms 76:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *From heaven you caused judgment to be heard; the earth feared and was quiet* | *You gave your decision from heaven. The whole world was scared and silent.* |

ULT **From heaven**
UST from heaven
(מִשָּׁמַיִם)

Here, **heaven** represents the place where God dwells. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [From the sky] or [From your dwelling place]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **you caused judgment to be heard**
UST You gave your decision
(הִשְׁמַעְתָּ דִּין)

The expression **caused judgment to be heard** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [you proclaimed judgment] or [you announced your judgment]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **the earth feared and was quiet**
UST The whole world was scared and silent
(אֶרֶץ יָרְאָה וְשָׁקָטָה)

Here, **earth** represents the people who live on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the people of the earth were afraid and were quiet] or [everyone on earth feared and were quiet]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| From heaven | from heaven |
| judgment | your decision |
| the earth | The whole world |
| feared | was scared |

# Psalms 76:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *when God arose to judgment, to save all the humble of the earth. Selah* | *This happened when you stood up to judge, O God, to rescue all the oppressed people of the world. Selah* |

**ULT when … arose to judgment**

**UST** This happened when you stood up to judge

(בְּקוּם־לַמִּשְׁפָּט)

The psalmist is using **arose to judgment** as a common expression of his culture to mean "began to judge" or "decided to act in judgment." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when … began to judge] or [when …took action to judge]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | O God |
| to judgment | to judge |
| to save | to rescue |
| the humble | the oppressed people |
| of the earth | of the world |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 76:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the wrath of man will thank you; the remainder of wrath you will gird on.* | *Even human anger will bring you praise. You will use the rest of their anger as a weapon.* |

ULT **the wrath of man will thank you**
UST human anger will bring you praise
(חֲמַת אָדָם תּוֹדֶךָּ)

The psalmist is speaking of **wrath** as if it were a living thing that could **praise** God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [people's anger will result in praise to you] or [you will be praised because of how you respond to human anger]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **you will gird on**
UST as a weapon
(תַּחְגֹּר)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he will **gird on** the remainder of wrath like a belt or weapon. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you will wear like a belt] or [you will use like a weapon]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the wrath of | anger |
| the remainder of | You will use the rest of |
| you will gird on | as a weapon |

# Psalms 76:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Vow and pay to Yahweh your God; let all who are around him bring a gift to the Fear.* | *Make promises to Yahweh your God and keep them. Let everyone around him bring gifts to the Awesome One.* |

**ULT Vow and pay to Yahweh your God**
**UST** Make promises to Yahweh your God and keep them
(נֶדְרוּ וְשַׁלְּמוּ֙ לַיהוָ֣ה אֱלֹהֵיכֶ֔ם)

The implication is that the people should fulfill the vows they make to God by doing what they promised. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Make vows to Yahweh your God and fulfill them]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT all who are around him**
**UST** everyone around him
(כָּל־סְבִיבָ֖יו)

The implication is that **all who are around him** refers to the people of the nations surrounding Israel. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [all the people of the surrounding nations]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT to the Fear**
**UST** to the Awesome One
(לַמּוֹרָ֑א)

Here, **the Fear** represents God, the one who is to be feared. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [to the One who is to be feared] or [to the Awesome One]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Vow | Make promises |
| to Yahweh | to Yahweh |
| your God | your God |
| to the Fear | to the Awesome One |

# Psalms 76:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He cuts off the spirit of princes; he is to be feared by the kings of the earth.* | *He humbles the leaders, and terrifies all the kings.* |

ULT **He cuts off**
UST He humbles
(יְבַצֹּר)

Here the psalmist is speaking of God as if he were using a tool and **cuts off the spirit of princes**. He means that God humbles or destroys them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He humbles] or [He destroys]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the spirit of**
UST He humbles
(רוּחַ)

Here, **spirit** represents the courage or pride of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the courage of] or [the pride of]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **he is to be feared by the kings of the earth**
UST and terrifies all the kings
(נוֹרָא לְמַלְכֵי־אָרֶץ)

The expression **is to be feared by the kings of the earth** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [the kings of the earth fear him] or [he causes the kings of the earth to fear him]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the spirit of | He humbles |
| princes | the leaders |
| he is to be feared | and terrifies |
| by the kings | the kings |
| of the earth | all |

# Psalms 77

## Psalm 77 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

1. Superscription
2. Lament and sleepless searching (1–6)
3. Questions about God’s favor (7–10)
4. Remembering Yah’s deeds (11–15)
5. God’s power over the waters and leading his people (16–20)

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 77 is a psalm of Asaph in which the psalmist moves from intense distress and questioning to renewed confidence by remembering God’s past saving actions.

1. Purpose: to express a lament and then to renew trust in God by recalling his mighty deeds.
2. Content: The psalm begins with the psalmist crying out in trouble and asking a series of questions about whether God has rejected him. It then turns to remembrance of God’s works and ends with vivid storm-and-sea imagery that recalls God leading his people.
3. Message: When God seems absent, the psalmist responds by remembering who God is and what he has done for his people.

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

1. Rhetorical questions: Verses 7–9 contain a series of questions that function primarily to express grief and uncertainty, not to request information.
2. Figurative language for inner life: The psalm uses terms like “soul,” “heart,” and “spirit” to describe a person’s internal experience.

3. Body-part imagery for God's power: Expressions like "right hand" and "arm" refer to God's power and ability to act.

4. Nature imagery: The psalm personifies waters, clouds, skies, and the earth, and uses war/storm imagery such as "arrows" for lightning.

5. Key names and titles: The psalm includes the divine name "Yah," the title "the Most High," and references to Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron.

6. Selah: The term "Selah" appears in verses 3, 9, and 15 as a likely musical direction.

See: Poetry

# Psalms 77:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on Jeduthun; a psalm of Asaph.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: Perform in the style of Jeduthun. Asaph wrote this song.* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

**For the chief musician** is an instruction about who should lead people in singing or playing music with this psalm. This could refer to the person in charge of music for temple worship. If your readers would not be familiar with this role, you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the worship leader]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **on Jeduthun**
UST Perform in the style of Jeduthun
(עַל־יְדוּתוּן)

See how you translated the expression “on Jeduthun” in the superscription to Psalm 39.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a psalm | this song |
| of Asaph | Asaph wrote |

# Psalms 77:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My voice {is} to God, and I cry out; my voice {is} to God, and he listens to me.* | *I cried out to God; I cried aloud to him, and he listened to me.* |

**ULT My voice {is} to God, and I cry out; my voice {is} to God**
UST I cried out to God; I cried aloud to him
(קוֹלִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים וְאֶצְעָקָה קוֹלִי אֶל־אֱלֹהִים)

Asaph is repeating the expression **my voice is to God** in order to intensify his expression of crying out to God. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [I earnestly cry out to God] or [I cry out with my voice again and again to God]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

**ULT My voice**
UST I cried out
(קוֹלִי)

Here, **My voice** represents Asaph's act of calling out to God in prayer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [My prayer]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| and I cry out | I cried out |

# Psalms 77:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord; my hand was stretched out at night, and it did not slacken. My soul refused to be comforted.* | *When I was in trouble, I prayed to the Lord; all during the night I lifted up my hands {while I prayed}, and I did not stop {praying}. But nothing could comfort me.* |

ULT **In the day of my trouble**
UST When I was in trouble
(בְּיוֹם צָרָתִי)

Asaph is using the term **day** to refer to a specific time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [At the time of my trouble] or [When I was in trouble]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **my hand was stretched out at night**
UST all during the night I lifted up my hands {while I prayed}
(יָדִי ׀ לַיְלָה נִגְּרָה)

Here, **my hand was stretched out** was a symbolic action by which Asaph showed his persistent prayer and pleading to God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [I lifted my hands to God in continual prayer]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **My soul refused to be comforted**
UST But nothing could comfort me
(מֵאֲנָה הִנָּחֵם נַפְשִׁי)

Asaph is using one part of himself, his **soul**, to represent all of him in his refusal of comfort. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I refused to be comforted]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of my trouble | I was in trouble |
| I sought | I prayed |
| the Lord | to the Lord |
| My soul | me |
| to be comforted | comfort |

# Psalms 77:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I remembered God and I groaned; I meditated, and my spirit grew faint. Selah* | *When I thought about God, I despaired; as I thoughtfully considered {him}, I became weak and discouraged. Selah* |

ULT **I remembered God and I groaned; I meditated, and my spirit grew faint**
UST When I thought about God, I despaired; as I thoughtfully considered {him}, I became weak and discouraged
(אֶזְכְּרָה אֱלֹהִים וְאֶהֱמָיָה אָשִׂיחָה ו וְתִתְעַטֵּף רוּחִי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [I remembered God and groaned; yes, my spirit grew faint as I meditated]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **and my spirit grew faint**
UST I became weak and discouraged
(וְתִתְעַטֵּף רוּחִי)

Here, **spirit** represents Asaph's inner strength or vitality. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I felt weak] or [and I became exhausted]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| I meditated | as I thoughtfully considered {him} |
| my spirit | I |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 77:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You held the lids of my eyes; I was troubled and I did not speak.* | *All during the night he prevented me from sleeping; I was so worried that I did not know what to say.* |

**ULT You held the lids of my eyes**
**UST** All during the night he prevented me from sleeping; I was so
(אָחַזְתָּ שְׁמֻרוֹת עֵינָי)

Asaph is speaking of God preventing him from sleeping as if God **held the lids of my eyes** open. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You prevented me from sleeping] or [You kept me awake]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I was troubled | worried that |

# Psalms 77:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I thought about days from antiquity, years of long ago.* | *I thought about days that had passed; I remembered what had happened in previous years.* |

**ULT days from antiquity, years of long ago**
**UST** about days that had passed; I remembered what had happened in previous years
(יָמִים מִקֶּדֶם שְׁנוֹת עוֹלָמִים)

These two phrases **days from antiquity** and **years of long ago** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [times long, long ago]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT days from antiquity**
**UST** about days that had passed
(יָמִים מִקֶּדֶם)

Here, **days** represents a particular period of time in the past. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the time long ago] or [the era of antiquity]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| years | years |

# Psalms 77:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will remember my song in the night; with my heart I will meditate, and my spirit searches.* | *During the night, I remembered the songs that I used to sing; I thoughtfully considered, and I pondered these things:* |

ULT **with my heart I will meditate**
UST I thoughtfully considered
(עִם־לְבָבִי אָשִׂיחָה)

Asaph is speaking of **my heart** as if it were the place where thinking and reflection occur. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I meditate within myself] or [I reflect deeply]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and my spirit searches**
UST and I pondered these things
(וְיַחְפֵּשׂ רוּחִי)

Asaph is using one part of a person, his **spirit**, to mean all of him in the act of searching for understanding. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I search diligently]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will meditate | I thoughtfully considered |
| and my spirit | pondered these things |
| searches | and I |

# Psalms 77:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Will the Lord reject {me} forever? And will he not again add to show favor?* | *{I feared that} the Lord would reject {me} forever and that he would never be kind {to me} again.* |

ULT **Will the Lord reject {me} forever? And will he not again add to show favor**
UST { … I feared that} the Lord would reject {me} forever and that he would never be kind {to me} again
(הַלְעוֹלָמִים יִזְנַח ׀ אֲדֹנָי וְלֹא־יֹסִיף לִרְצוֹת עֽוֹד)

Asaph is using the question form to express his distress and uncertainty. 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: [The Lord will surely not reject me forever! He will show me favor again!] or [I am afraid that the Lord will reject me forever and will never again show me favor.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **And will he not again add to show favor**
UST and that he would never be kind {to me} again
(וְלֹא־יֹסִיף לִרְצוֹת עֽוֹד)

Asaph is using **again add** as a common expression to mean “continue.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And will he not continue to show favor] or [And will he not ever show favor]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **will he … add to show favor**
UST that he would … be kind {to me}
(יֹסִיף לִרְצוֹת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **favor**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [will he … treat me favorably] or [will he … be favorable toward me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Will … reject {me} | would reject {me} |
| the Lord | {I feared that} the Lord |
| forever | forever |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| favor | that he would … be kind {to me} |

# Psalms 77:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Has his covenant faithfulness ceased forever? Has a promise ended for generation and generation?* | *{I wondered whether} {the Lord} had completely stopped being faithful and had broken his promise to all future generations.* |

**ULT his covenant faithfulness**
**UST** the … being faithful
(חַסְדּוֹ)

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: [his faithfulness to his covenant] or [his faithful commitment to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT for generation and generation**
**UST** to all future generations
(לְדֹר וָדֹר)

Asaph is using **for generation and generation** as a common expression of his culture to mean “throughout all generations” or “forever.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [throughout all generations]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT Has his covenant faithfulness ceased forever? Has a promise ended for generation and generation**
**UST** { … I wondered whether} {the Lord} had completely stopped being faithful and had broken his promise to all future generations
(הֶאָפֵס לָנֶצַח חַסְדּוֹ גָּמַר אֹמֶר לְדֹר וָדֹר)

Asaph is using the question form to express his deep sorrow and fear that God has abandoned him. 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: [Your covenant faithfulness must be gone forever! Your promise must have failed forever!] or [Surely your covenant faithfulness is gone forever. Surely your promise has failed forever.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his covenant faithfulness | the … being faithful |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| forever | completely |
| a promise | his promise |
| for generation | to all future generations |
| and generation | to all future generations |

# Psalms 77:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Has God forgotten to be gracious? Or has he shut up his compassions in {his} nose? Selah* | *{I asked myself whether} God had forgotten to be gracious {and whether} his anger had caused him to stop being compassionate. Selah* |

**ULT Has God forgotten to be gracious? Or has he shut up his compassions in {his} nose**
**UST** { … I asked myself whether} God had forgotten to be gracious and whether} his anger had caused him to stop being compassionate
(הֲשָׁכַח חַנּוֹת אֵל אִם־קָפַץ בְּאַף רַחֲמָיו)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Has God forgotten to be gracious and shut up his compassions in his nose]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT has he shut up his compassions in {his} nose**
**UST** his anger had caused him to stop being compassionate
(קָפַץ בְּאַף רַחֲמָיו)

Asaph speaks of anger as if it were a person shutting a door to keep another person, compassion, from coming out. Alternate translation: [has God stopped showing us compassion because he is angry with us]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT Has God forgotten to be gracious? Or has he shut up his compassions in {his} nose? Selah**
**UST** { … I asked myself whether} God had forgotten to be gracious and whether} his anger had caused him to stop being compassionate. Selah
(הֲשָׁכַח חַנּוֹת אֵל אִם־קָפַץ בְּאַף רַחֲמָיו סֶלָה)

Asaph is using the question form to express his anguish and doubt, not to seek information. 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: [God has forgotten to be gracious. He has shut off his compassion in anger.] or [Surely God has not forgotten to be gracious! Surely his anger has not shut off his compassion!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **has he shut up his compassions in {his} nose**
UST his anger had caused him to stop being compassionate
(קָפַץ בְּאַף רַחֲמָיו)

Asaph is speaking of God's **compassions** as if they were something physical that his anger could **shut up**, like closing a door or stopping a flow. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [has his anger caused him to withhold his compassion] or [has he withheld his compassion because of his anger]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in {his} nose**
UST his anger
(בְּאַף)

Here, **nose** represents anger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in his anger]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| to be gracious | to be gracious |
| his compassions | compassionate |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 77:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I said, "This is my wounding: the changing of the right hand of the Most High."* | *I said, "What causes me to be sad the most is that it seems that God, who is greater than any other spirit being, is no longer using his power for us."* |

**ULT And I said**
**UST** I said
(וָאֹמַר)

This could mean: (1) Asaph was speaking to himself or (2) Asaph was speaking to Yahweh. Alternate translation: [And I said to myself] or [And I said to Yahweh]

**ULT This is my wounding**
**UST** What causes me to be sad the most is that it seems that
(חַלּוֹתִי הִיא)

Asaph is speaking of his great distress as if it were a physical **wounding**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [This is my great distress] or [This is what afflicts me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the right hand**
**UST** using his power for us
(יְמִין)

Here, **the right 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: [the power] or [the strength]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of the Most High | God, who is greater than any other spirit being |

# Psalms 77:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will remember the deeds of Yah; for I will remember your wonder from antiquity.* | *But then, Yahweh, I recall your great deeds; I remember the wonderful things that you did in the past.* |

> ULT **your wonder from antiquity**
> UST the wonderful things … did in the past
> (מִקֶּדֶם פִּלְאֶךָ)

Here, **from antiquity** represents the distant past when God did his remarkable deeds. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the wonders you did long ago] or [your wonderful deeds in ancient times]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **your wonder from antiquity**
> UST the wonderful things … did in the past
> (מִקֶּדֶם פִּלְאֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wonder**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the wonderful things that you did long ago]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of Yah | But then, Yahweh |
| your wonder | the wonderful things |

# Psalms 77:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I will ponder on all your deeds, and on your works I will meditate.* | *I contemplated all that you have done, and I thought carefully about your mighty acts.* |

**ULT And I will ponder on all your deeds, and on your works I will meditate**
**UST** I contemplated all that you have done, and I thought carefully about your mighty acts
(וְהָגִיתִי בְכָל־פָּעֳלֶךָ וּבַעֲלִילוֹתֶיךָ אָשִׂיחָה)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [And I will ponder and meditate on all your deeds]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And I will ponder | I contemplated |
| I will meditate | I thought carefully |

# Psalms 77:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your way, God, is in holiness; what god is great like God?* | *God, everything that you do is amazing; there is certainly no god who is great like you are!* |

**ULT Your way, God, is in holiness**
**UST** God, everything that you do is amazing
(אֱלֹהִים בַּקֹּדֶשׁ דַּרְכֶּךָ)

Asaph is speaking of God's manner of acting as if it were a **way** or path that he travels. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [God, the manner in which you act is holy] or [God, everything you do is holy]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT is in holiness**
**UST** that you do is amazing
(בַּקֹּדֶשׁ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **holiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [is a holy way] or [is a way that is holy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT what god is great like God**
**UST** there is certainly no god who is great like you are
(מִי־אֵ֣ל גָּד֣וֹל כֵּאלֹהִ֑ים)

Asaph is using the question form to emphasize that no god compares to the true God. 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 god is great like God] or [there is no god as great as God!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| god | like you are |
| is in holiness | that you do is amazing |
| like God | no god who is |

# Psalms 77:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You are the God who does wonders; you have revealed your strength among the peoples.* | *You are God, the one who performs miracles; you showed to the people of many people groups that you are powerful.* |

**ULT your strength**
**UST** you are powerful
(עֻזָּ֑ךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how strong you are] or [how powerfully you act]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the God who does | who performs |
| wonders | miracles; you showed |
| your strength | you are powerful |

# Psalms 77:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have redeemed your people with {your} arm, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah* | *By your power you rescued your people {from Egypt}; you saved those who were descendants of Jacob and his son Joseph. Selah* |

ULT **with {your} arm**
UST By your power
(בִּזְרֹועַ)

Here, **arm** represents God's power and ability to rescue. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [by your power] or [with your mighty strength]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the sons of Jacob and Joseph**
UST you saved those who were descendants of Jacob and his son Joseph
(בְּנֵי־יַעֲקֹב וְיוֹסֵף)

Asaph is speaking of the later Israelites as if they were actually the **sons of Jacob and Joseph**. He means that they are the descendants of these ancestors. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the descendants of Jacob and Joseph] or [the people descended from Jacob and Joseph]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You have redeemed | you rescued your people |
| of Jacob | Jacob |
| and Joseph | and his son Joseph |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 77:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The waters saw you, God; the waters saw you, and they trembled; indeed the depths shook.* | *It was as though the waters saw you and became very afraid, and even the deepest part of the water shook.* |

ULT **The waters saw you, God; the waters saw you**
UST It was as though the waters saw you
(רָ֭אוּךָ מַ֣יִם ׀ אֱלֹהִ֑ים רָ֝אוּךָ מַ֗יִם)

Asaph is repeating the phrase **the waters saw you** in order to intensify his expression of the idea it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [The waters surely saw you, God]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

ULT **The waters saw you, God; the waters saw you, and they trembled; indeed the depths shook**
UST It was as though the waters saw you and became very afraid, and even the deepest part of the water shook
(רָ֭אוּךָ מַ֣יִם ׀ אֱלֹהִ֑ים רָ֝אוּךָ מַ֗יִם יָחִ֥ילוּ אַף יִרְגְּזוּ֥ תְהֹמֽוֹת)

Starting in this verse and extending through verse 19, Asaph is speaking of God's powerful actions during the exodus as if they were a storm, with **thunder** representing God's voice, **arrows** and **lightning** representing God's power striking out, and **the waters** and **the earth** reacting in fear by trembling. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these images with a comparison or state the meaning plainly.

**Support Reference:** Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

ULT **The waters saw you, God; the waters saw you**
UST It was as though the waters saw you
(רָ֭אוּךָ מַ֣יִם ׀ אֱלֹהִ֑ים רָ֝אוּךָ מַ֗יִם)

Asaph is speaking of **the waters** as if they were living things that could see and respond with fear. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [When you, God, came to the waters, they moved back in fear] or [The waters moved away from you, God, as if they saw you]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **and they trembled; indeed the depths shook**
UST and became very afraid, and even the deepest part of the water shook
(וַתֶּחֱיַלּוּ אַף יִרְגְּזוּ תְהֹמוֹת)

These two phrases, **they trembled** and **the depths shook**, mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [and they trembled, even the depths shook]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | you |
| and they trembled | and became very afraid |
| shook | shook |

# Psalms 77:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The clouds poured down water; the skies gave a sound; your arrows also flew about.* | *Rain poured down from the clouds; it thundered very loudly, and lightning flashed in all directions.* |

ULT **the skies gave a sound**
UST from the clouds; it thundered very loudly
(עָבֹ֤ות קֹול֙ נָתְנ֔וּ)

By **gave a sound**, Asaph means that the skies thundered. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the skies thundered]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **your arrows also flew about**
UST and lightning flashed in all directions
(אַף־חִצֶּ֖יךָ יִתְהַלָּֽכוּ)

Asaph is speaking of lightning bolts as if they were **arrows** that God shot. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your lightning bolts also flashed in all directions] or [you also shot lightning across the sky]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the skies | from the clouds |

# Psalms 77:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The sound of your thunder {was} in the whirlwind; the lightning lit up the world; the earth trembled and shook.* | *Thunder crashed in the whirlwind—your voice! Lightning lit up, and the earth shook violently.* |

**ULT The sound of your thunder {was} in the whirlwind**
**UST** Thunder crashed in the whirlwind—your voice
(קוֹל רַעַמְךָ ׀ בַּגַּלְגַּל)

Asaph is speaking of the sound of God's thunder as if it were **in the whirlwind** and as if God's voice or presence were speaking from within the storm. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Your voice thundered from the whirlwind] or [You spoke with thundering power in the storm]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT trembled and shook**
**UST** shook violently
(רָגְזָה וַתִּרְעַשׁ)

The terms **trembled** and **shook** mean similar things. Asaph 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: [shook violently] or [quaked greatly]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the world | and the earth |
| trembled and | shook |
| shook | violently |

# Psalms 77:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your way went through the sea and your path through many waters, but your footprints were not discerned.* | *Then you walked through the sea in a path that you made through the deep water, but your footprints could not be seen.* |

**ULT Your way went through the sea and your path**
**UST** Then you walked through the sea in a path that
(בַּיָּם דַּרְכֶּךָ וְשָׁבִילְךָ)

Asaph is speaking of God's actions and guidance as if they were a **way** and **path** that he traveled. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Your deeds were done in the sea and your works] or [You acted in the sea, and you worked]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Your way went through the sea and your path through many waters**
**UST** Then you walked through the sea in a path that you made through the deep water
(בַּיָּם דַּרְכֶּךָ וְשָׁבִילְךָ בְּמַיִם רַבִּים)

These two phrases, **Your way went through the sea** and **your path through many waters**, mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Your way went through the sea, yes, your path went through many waters]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT but your footprints were not discerned**
**UST** but your footprints could not be seen
(וְעִקְּבוֹתֶיךָ לֹא נֹדָעוּ)

Asaph is speaking of God as if he were a person who could leave **footprints** when walking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but no trace of your presence could be seen] or [but there was no sign of where you had been]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **but your footprints were not discerned**
UST but your footprints could not be seen
(וְעִקְּבוֹתֶיךָ לֹא נֹדָעוּ)

The expression **your footprints were not discerned** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [but no one could discern your footprints] or [but your footprints could not be seen]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| were … discerned | but your |

# Psalms 77:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.* | *You led your people as a shepherd leads his flock of sheep while Moses and Aaron were the leaders of your people.* |

**ULT like a flock**
**UST** sheep
(כַּצֹּאן)

The point of this comparison is that just as a shepherd leads and cares for **a flock**, so God led and cared for his people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [as a shepherd leads a flock] or [with the care and guidance of a shepherd]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT by the hand of Moses and Aaron**
**UST** while Moses and Aaron were the leaders
(בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן)

Here, **hand** represents agency and leadership. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [through the leadership of Moses and Aaron] or [by means of Moses and Aaron]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| like a flock | sheep |
| of Moses | while Moses |
| and Aaron | and Aaron were |

# Psalms 78

## Psalm 78 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 78 is a historical wisdom psalm—a maskil—of Asaph. It recounts Israel's history from the exodus to the reign of David, teaching each generation to trust God and to not repeat the failures of the past. (See: wise, wisdom)

1. Call to hear and teach the next generation (1–8)
2. Ephraim's failure and Israel's forgetfulness (9–11)
3. God's wonders in Egypt and the wilderness (12–16)
4. Rebellion in the wilderness and God's provision (17–31)
5. Continued sin and God's compassion (32–39)
6. Recounting the plagues and the exodus (40–55)
7. Rebellion in the land and God's judgment (56–64)
8. God's renewal: choosing Judah, Zion, and David (65–72)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a "maskil." See the discussion of that term in the introduction to Psalms.

### About the Psalm

Psalm 78 is the second longest psalm in the Psalter (after Psalm 119). It belongs to the Asaph collection (Psalms 73–83) and follows a pattern of historical recitation similar to Psalm 15, Psalm 16, and Nehemiah 9. The psalm opens with a didactic framework (verses 1–8) in which Asaph calls his audience to hear a "parable" and "riddles from antiquity." He establishes the purpose of the recitation: each generation must pass on the knowledge of God's deeds to the next, so that future generations will trust God and keep his commandments TW ARTICLE FOR other :: commandments NOT FOUND! rather than repeating the pattern of rebellion.

The historical narrative unfolds in two main cycles. The first cycle (verses 9–39) moves from Ephraim's failure through the exodus, God's provision of water, manna and quail, the people's rebellious demands, God's judgment, and then his compassion. The second cycle (verses 40–64) returns to the plagues in Egypt, recounts the exodus and conquest, and then describes Israel's idolatry in the land, culminating in God's abandonment of Shiloh and the capture of the ark. The psalm concludes (verses 65–72) with God choosing Judah, Zion, and David as shepherd-king over his people.

The historical events alluded to include the exodus and sea crossing (Exodus 14), the wilderness provision of water, manna, and quail (Exodus 16–17, Numbers 11), the plagues of Egypt (Exodus 7–12), the conquest of Canaan (Joshua 13–21), the capture of the ark at Shiloh (1 Samuel 4), and God's choice of David (2 Samuel 5–7).

## Translation Issues in This Psalm

### God's "nose" as an idiom for anger

The Hebrew word for "nose" is used throughout the psalm to represent God's anger (verses 21, 31, 38, 49, 50). This is a common Hebrew idiom based on the physical signs of anger (flared nostrils, heavy breathing). Translators should be aware of this recurring pattern and handle it consistently. See the notes on individual verses for guidance.

### Anthropomorphism in verse 65

Verse 65 describes Yahweh awakening "as one sleeping" and "as a mighty man shouting from wine." This portrays God as having been inactive during the period of judgment, then suddenly rousing himself to action. These comparisons convey sudden, vigorous action after a period of apparent inactivity, not that God was literally asleep or intoxicated.

# Psalms 78:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A maskil of Asaph. Hear my teaching, my people; incline your ears to the words of my mouth.* | *A song of Asaph. My friends, listen to what I am going to teach you; pay careful attention to what I will say.* |

**Note:** (78:1-2)

See how you translated a similar introduction in Psalms 49:1–4.

ULT **A maskil**
UST A song
(מַשְׂכִּיל)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **maskil**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **Hear my teaching, my people; incline your ears to the words of my mouth**
UST My friends, listen to what I am going to teach you; pay careful attention to what I will say
(הַאֲזִינָה עַמִּי תּוֹרָתִי הַטּוּ אָזְנְכֶם לְאִמְרֵי־פִי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine the phrases and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how your team has decided to translate parallel phrases in the Psalms and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Hear my teaching, my people; yes, listen to the words of my mouth]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Hear my teaching**
UST listen to what I am going to teach you
(הַאֲזִינָה & תּוֹרָתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **teaching**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Listen to what I teach you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **my people**
UST My friends
(עַמִּי)

Asaph is using this possessive form **my people** to indicate that he is addressing the Israelites as a leader or teacher among them, not to indicate that they belong to him personally. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [fellow Israelites] or [people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **incline your ears**
UST pay careful attention
(הַטּוּ אָזְנְכֶם)

Asaph is speaking of paying careful attention to his teaching as if his audience could physically **incline** their **ears** toward him in order to listen better. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [pay close attention] or [listen carefully]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to the words of my mouth**
UST to what I will say
(לְאִמְרֵי־פִי)

Here, **the words of my mouth** represents what a person says. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to what I say]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| of Asaph | of Asaph |
| my teaching | what I am going to teach you |

# Psalms 78:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will open my mouth in a parable; I will pour out riddles from antiquity.* | *I am going to give you some sayings that wise people have said. They will be sayings about things that happened long ago, things that were difficult to understand.* |

ULT **I will open my mouth in a parable; I will pour out riddles from antiquity**
UST I am going to give you some sayings that wise people have said. They will be sayings about things that happened long ago, things that were difficult to understand
(אֶפְתְּחָה בְמָשָׁל פִּי אַבִּיעָה חִידוֹת מִנִּי־קֶדֶם)

See the note on 78:1 or in the Introduction to the Psalms for more information on translating parallelisms. Alternate translation: [I will open my mouth in parables, yes, I will sing about hidden things from the past]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **I will open my mouth**
UST I am going to give you … said
(אֶפְתְּחָה & פִּי)

Asaph is using **I will open my mouth** as a common expression of the culture to mean "I will speak" or "I will begin to teach." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will speak] or [I will begin to teach]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **in a parable**
UST some sayings that wise people have
(בְמָשָׁל)

A **parable** is a type of teaching that uses comparisons, stories, or wise sayings to communicate deeper truths. If your readers would not be familiar with this concept, you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [in wise sayings] or [in instructive stories]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **my mouth in a parable; I will pour out riddles from antiquity**
UST some sayings that wise people have said. They will be sayings about things that happened long ago, things that were difficult to understand
(בְּמָשָׁל פִּי אַבִּיעָה חִידוֹת מִנִּי־קֶדֶם)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **parables** and **riddles**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [my mouth in symbolic sayings; I will pour out what is difficult to understand from antiquity] or [my mouth by speaking metaphorically; I will pour out enigmatic sayings from antiquity]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **I will pour out riddles**
UST They will be sayings … things that were difficult to understand
(אַבִּיעָה חִידוֹת)

Asaph is speaking of sharing wisdom as if he were **pouring out riddles** like liquid from a container. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will utter riddles] or [I will proclaim mysteries]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in a parable | some sayings that wise people have |

# Psalms 78:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *These are things that we have heard and learned, things that our fathers have told us.* | *These are things that we have heard and known previously, things that our parents and grandparents told us.* |

ULT **These are things that we have heard and learned, things**
UST These are things that we have heard and known previously
(אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ וַנֵּדָעֵם)

The terms **heard** and **learned** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [These are things that we know well, things]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **that our fathers**
UST parents and grandparents
(וַאֲבוֹתֵינוּ)

Asaph is speaking of earlier generations of Israelites as if they were **fathers**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that our forefathers] or [that those who came before us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 78:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *We will not keep them from their descendants. We will tell the next generation about the praises of Yahweh, his strength, and his wonders that he has done.* | *We will tell these things to our children, but we will also tell our grandchildren to praise Yahweh for his power and the glorious things that he has done.* |

ULT **We will not keep them from their descendants**
UST We will tell these things to our children
(לֹא נְכַחֵד ׀ מִבְּנֵיהֶם)

Asaph is emphasizing a positive meaning by using a negative word, **not**, together with a mild expression that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If it would be helpful in your language, you could emphasize the positive meaning in a strong way. Alternate translation: [We will certainly tell these things to their descendants]

**Support Reference:** Litotes

ULT **about the praises of Yahweh**
UST to praise Yahweh
(תְּהִלּוֹת יְהוָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praises**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [about the praiseworthy deeds of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **his strength, and his wonders**
UST for his power and the glorious things
(וְעֻזּוֹ וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו)

The phrase **his strength, and his wonders** expresses a single idea. The word **strength** tells more about **wonders**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [his powerful wonders] or [the mighty miracles]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| keep … from their descendants | We will tell these things to |
| We will tell | we will also tell |
| generation | but … our grandchildren |
| about the praises | to praise |
| of Yahweh | Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his strength<br>and his wonders | for his power<br>and the glorious things |

# Psalms 78:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach them to their children,* | *He gave requirements and instructions to the Israelites, those who are descended from Jacob, and he told our ancestors to teach them to their children.* |

**ULT a testimony … and … a law**
**UST** requirements and instructions
(עֵדוּת & וְתוֹרָה)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **testimony** and **law**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [what he decreed and commanded] or [his requirements and commands]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT in Jacob and … a law in Israel**
**UST** and instructions to the Israelites, those who are descended from Jacob
(בְּיַעֲקֹב וְתוֹרָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **Jacob** and **Israel** represent all the descendants of the patriarch Jacob, the Israelite nation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [among the people of Jacob and … a law among the people of Israel] or [among the descendants of Jacob and … a law among the descendants of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And he established | He gave |
| and … a law | and instructions |
| a testimony | requirements |
| in Jacob | those who are descended from Jacob |
| appointed | He gave |
| in Israel | to the Israelites |

# Psalms 78:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *So that the later generation might know, the children yet to be born, and they will rise up and tell to their children.* | *He commanded this so that their children would also know them and so that they would teach them to their own children.* |

ULT **So that the later generation**
UST He commanded this so that their children would also … and so
(לְמַעַן דּוֹר אַחֲרוֹן)

**So that** marks the rest of verses 6–8 as the goal or purpose of verse five. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [He commanded this in order that the generation to come]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **So that the later generation might know, the children yet to be born**
UST He commanded this so that their children would also know them and so that they … to their own
(לְמַעַן יֵדְעוּ ׀ דּוֹר אַחֲרוֹן בָּנִים יִוָּלֵדוּ)

The psalmist 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 that the generation to come might know his decrees, and so that the children not yet born might also know them]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and they will rise up and tell**
UST would teach them
(יָקֻמוּ וְיִסַּפְּרוּ)

The psalmist is using **rise up** as a common expression of the culture to mean “take action” or “come along.” He does not mean that the children will literally stand up. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and they in their turn will tell] or [and they will then tell]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the … generation | He commanded this |
| might know | know them |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and tell | teach them |

# Psalms 78:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they would place their confidence in God and not forget the deeds of God but keep his commandments.* | *In that way, they also would trust in God and would not forget the things that he has done; instead, they would obey his commandments.* |

**ULT And they would place their confidence in God**
**UST** In that way, they also would trust in God … the things that he has done
(וְיָשִׂימוּ בֵאלֹהִים כִּסְלָם)

The psalmist is speaking of **confidence** as if it were something that could be physically **placed** in a secure location. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And they would trust in God] or [And they would rely on God]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT And they would place their confidence in God**
**UST** In that way, they also would trust in God … the things that he has done
(וְיָשִׂימוּ בֵאלֹהִים כִּסְלָם)

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 they would hope in God] or [And they would confidently trust in God]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their confidence | the things that he has done |
| in God | God |
| of God | his |
| but … his commandments | commandments |

# Psalms 78:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they would not be like their fathers, a stubborn generation and a rebellious generation, {which} did not cause its heart to be steadfast, and its spirit was not faithful with God.* | *They would not be like their ancestors, who were very stubborn and kept rebelling against God; they did not continue firmly trusting in God, and they did not worship him alone.* |

ULT **a stubborn generation and a rebellious generation**
UST be like … and kept rebelling against God
(דּוֹר֣ סוֹרֵ֣ר וּמֹרֶ֑ה דּ֝וֹר)

The terms **stubborn** and **rebellious** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [a very obstinate generation] or [an extremely defiant generation]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **{which} did not cause its heart to be steadfast**
UST stubborn … they did not continue firmly trusting in God
(לֹא־הֵכִ֣ין לִבּ֑וֹ)

Here, **heart** represents the inner disposition and loyalty of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [who were not inwardly loyal] or [whose inner disposition was not right]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and its spirit was not faithful with God**
UST and they did not worship him alone
(וְלֹא־נֶאֶמְנָ֖ה אֶת־אֵ֣ל רוּחֽוֹ)

Here, **spirit** represents the inner person or will. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and they were not committed and faithful to God]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and … rebellious | and kept |
| a … generation … a … generation | be like … against God |
| its spirit | alone |
| was … faithful | they did |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | him |

# Psalms 78:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The sons of Ephraim being armed {with} shooters of bows, they turned back on the day of battle.* | *The soldiers of the tribe of Ephraim had bows and arrows, but they ran away from their enemies on the day that they fought with their enemies.* |

**ULT they turned back on the day of battle**
**UST** but they ran away … on the day that they fought with their enemies
(הָפְכוּ בְּיוֹם קָרָב)

The psalmist is using **turned back on the day of battle** as a common expression of the culture to mean "retreated in battle" or "fled when they should have fought." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [fled when they should have fought] or [retreated instead of fighting]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT on the day of battle**
**UST** on the day that they fought with their enemies
(בְּיוֹם קָרָב)

The psalmist 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: [when it was time to fight] or [at the time of battle]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of Ephraim | tribe of Ephraim |
| of bows | had bows and arrows |

# Psalms 78:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They did not keep the covenant of God, and they refused to walk in his law.* | *They did not do what they had agreed with God that they would do; they refused to obey his laws.* |

ULT **They did not keep the covenant of God, and they refused to walk in his law**
UST They did not do what they had agreed with God that they would do; they refused to obey his laws
(לֹא שָׁמְרוּ בְּרִית אֱלֹהִים וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ מֵאֲנוּ לָלֶכֶת)

See the note on 78:1 or the Introduction to the Psalms for more information on how to translate parallelisms. Alternate translation: [They did not keep the covenant with God; indeed, they refused to obey his law]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the covenant of God**
UST what they had agreed with God
(בְּרִית אֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist is using this possessive form, **the covenant of God**, to mean the covenant that God had made with the Israelites. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the covenant that God had made with them] or [God's covenant]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **and they refused to walk in his law**
UST that they would do; they refused to obey his laws
(וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ מֵאֲנוּ לָלֶכֶת)

The psalmist is speaking of obeying God's law as if it were a path one could **walk** on. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and they refused to obey his law]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| keep | They did |
| the covenant | what they had agreed with |
| of God | God |
| and … in his law | his laws |

# Psalms 78:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they forgot his deeds, and his wonders that he had shown them.* | *They forgot what he had done; they forgot about the miracles that they had seen him perform.* |

**ULT and his wonders that he had shown them**
**UST** they forgot about the miracles that they had seen him perform
(וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר הֶרְאָם)

The psalmist is not distinguishing the **wonders that he had shown them** from other wonderful things that God had not shown them. The psalmist is reminding the people about the character of God's deeds that they forgot. Be sure that this is clear in your translation. Alternate translation: [which were wonderful things that he had shown them]

**Support Reference:** Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and his wonders | they forgot about the miracles |

# Psalms 78:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He did wonders before their fathers in the land of Egypt, in the territory of Zoan.* | *While our ancestors were watching, God performed miracles in the area around the city of Zoan in Egypt.* |

**ULT in the territory of Zoan**
**UST** in the area around the city of Zoan
(שְׂדֵה־צֹֽעַן)

The word **Zoan** is the name of a city.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

**ULT before their fathers**
**UST** While our ancestors were watching
(נֶגֶד אֲבוֹתָם)

Here, **their fathers** represents their ancestors who were present to see the marvelous things. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when their ancestors were present] or [while their ancestors were watching]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| wonders | miracles |
| in the land | in Egypt |
| of Egypt | in Egypt |

# Psalms 78:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He divided the sea and led them across it, and he made the waters to stand like a heap.* | *Then he caused the Sea of Reeds to divide, causing the water on each side to pile up like a wall, with the result that our ancestors walked through it on dry ground.* |

ULT **and he made the waters to stand like a heap**
UST causing the water on each side to pile up like a wall … our ancestors walked through it on dry ground
(וַיַּצֵּב־מַ֝יִם כְּמוֹ־נֵֽד)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a heap** is a vertical structure, so **the waters** stood upright. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and he made the waters stand upright like a solid wall]

**Support Reference:** Simile

# Psalms 78:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And by day he led them with the cloud and all the night with the light of fire.* | *He led them by a bright cloud during the day and by a fiery light during the night.* |

ULT **and all the night with the light of fire**
UST and by a fiery light during the night
(וְכָל־הַלָּיְלָה בְּאוֹר אֵשׁ)

The psalmist 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 all the night he led them with the light of fire]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **with the cloud … with the light of fire**
UST bright cloud … by a fiery light
(בֶּעָנָן & בְּאוֹר אֵשׁ)

By **the cloud** and **the light of fire**, the psalmist means the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire that guided Israel in the wilderness (Exodus 13:21–22). You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [with the pillar of cloud … with the pillar of fire]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

# Psalms 78:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He split open the rocks in the wilderness, and he gave drink abundantly as the deep.* | *He split rocks open in the wilderness and gave to our ancestors plenty of water from deep inside the earth.* |

**ULT He split open**
**UST** He split
(יְבַקַּע)

The pronoun **He** refers to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [God split open]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and he gave drink abundantly as the deep**
**UST** and gave to our ancestors plenty of water from deep inside the earth
(וַיַּשְׁקְ כִּתְהֹמוֹת רַבָּה)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the deep** has limitless water, so God provided limitless water for his people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and he gave them water as limitless as the deep]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT and he gave drink abundantly as the deep**
**UST** and gave to our ancestors plenty of water from deep inside the earth
(וַיַּשְׁקְ כִּתְהֹמוֹת רַבָּה)

The psalmist says **and he gave drink abundantly as the deep** as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [and he gave them an enormous amount of water to drink]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the wilderness | in the wilderness |

# Psalms 78:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He made streams flow out of the rock and made the water flow like rivers.* | *He caused a stream of water to flow from the rock; the water flowed like a river.* |

**ULT like rivers**
**UST** a river
(כַּנְּהָרוֹת)

The point of this comparison is that just as **rivers** are abundant and continuous in their flow, so was the water that God brought from the rock. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [in great abundance] or [in a continuous stream]

**Support Reference:** Simile

# Psalms 78:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they added still to sin against him, to rebel against the Most High in the dry land.* | *But our ancestors continued to sin against God; in the desert they rebelled against the one who is greater than any other spirit being.* |

**ULT And they added**
**UST** But our ancestors continued
(וַיּוֹסִ֗יפוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to the Israelites, the ancestors of those whom the psalmist is addressing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [And the Israelite people added] or [And those ancestors added]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT And they added still to sin against him**
**UST** But our ancestors continued to sin against God
(וַיּוֹסִ֣יפוּ עֲוֹד לַחֲטֹא־לֽוֹ)

The psalmist uses the word **And** here to indicate a contrast between God's gracious provision and the people's sinful response. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [But they added still to sin against him] or [Yet they added still to sin against him]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to sin | to sin |
| to rebel against | they rebelled against |
| the Most High | the one who is greater than any other spirit being |
| in the dry land | in the desert |
| in the dry land | in the desert |

# Psalms 78:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they tested God in their hearts by asking {for} food for their appetite.* | *By demanding that God give them the food that they desired, they tried to find out if he would always do what they requested him to do.* |

ULT **And they tested God in their hearts by asking {for} food for their appetite**
UST By demanding that God give them the food that they desired, they tried to find out if he would always do what they requested him to do
(וַיְנַסּוּ־אֵל בִּלְבָבָם לִשְׁאָל־אֹכֶל לְנַפְשָׁם)

The psalmist is using the phrase **by asking for food for their appetite** to state the reason for the result that **they tested God in their hearts**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [And they tested God in their hearts when they asked for food for their appetite]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **in their hearts**
UST that they desired
(בִּלְבָבָם)

Here, **hearts** represents the inner thoughts and attitudes. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in their minds] or [inwardly]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **{for} food for their appetite**
UST By demanding that God give them the food
(אֹכֶל לְנַפְשָׁם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **appetite**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [for what they craved] or [for what they desired to eat]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And they tested | they tried |
| God | to find out |

# Psalms 78:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they spoke against God. They said, "Can God arrange a table in the wilderness?* | *They insulted God by saying, "God surely cannot supply food for us here in this desert.* |

**ULT Can God arrange a table in the wilderness**
**UST** God surely cannot supply food for us here in this desert
(הֲיָכִ֣ין אֵ֣ל לַעֲרֹ֣ךְ שֻׁלְחָ֑ן בַּמִּדְבָּֽר)

The Israelites are using the question form to express doubt about God's ability to provide for them. 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: [God cannot arrange a table in the wilderness!] or [Surely God is not able to arrange a table in the wilderness!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT arrange a table**
**UST** supply food for us
(לַעֲרֹ֣ךְ שֻׁלְחָ֑ן)

The Israelites are speaking of God providing food as if he were **arranging a table** for a meal. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [provide food for us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| against God | God |
| God | God |
| in the wilderness | here in this desert |

# Psalms 78:20

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Behold, he struck the rock and waters gushed out and streams overflowed. Is he able to give bread also? Or can he provide meat for his people?"* | *It is surely true that Moses struck the rock, and God made a huge amount of water gush out, but we, his people, {doubt} that he can also provide bread and meat for us."* |

ULT **Is he able to give bread also? Or can he provide meat for his people**
UST but we, his people, {doubt} that he can also provide bread and meat for us
(הֲגַם־לֶ֭חֶם יוּכַ֣ל תֵּ֑ת אִם־יָכִ֥ין שְׁאֵ֖ר לְעַמּֽוֹ)

The Israelites are using the question form to express their doubt that God can provide different kinds of food. 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: [But surely he cannot give bread also! Surely he cannot provide meat for his people!] or [But he is not able to give bread also. He cannot provide meat for his people.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **for his people**
UST we, his people … for us
(לְעַמּֽוֹ)

The people are speaking of themselves in the third person as **his people** to acknowledge their relationship with God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: [for us, his people]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| bread | bread |

# Psalms 78:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Therefore, Yahweh heard and was furious, and a fire was kindled against Jacob, and also {his} nose went up against Israel,* | *So when Yahweh heard that, he became very angry, and he sent a fire to burn up some of his Israelite people.* |

ULT **and a fire was kindled against Jacob**
UST he became very angry … he sent a fire
(וְאֵשׁ נִשָּׂקָה בְיַעֲקֹב)

The expression **a fire was kindled** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [and Yahweh kindled a fire against Jacob] or [and Yahweh's anger burned against Jacob]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and a fire was kindled against Jacob**
UST he became very angry … he sent a fire
(וְאֵשׁ נִשָּׂקָה בְיַעֲקֹב)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's anger as if it were **a fire** that could be **kindled**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and Yahweh became furiously angry against Jacob] or [and Yahweh's anger burned against Jacob]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and also {his} nose went up against Israel**
UST and … to burn up some of his Israelite people
(וְגַם־אַף עָלָה בְיִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **nose** represents anger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and also his anger burned against Israel] or [and also he became angry with Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **against Jacob … against Israel**
UST he sent … Israelite people
(בְּיַעֲקֹב & בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **Jacob** and **Israel** represent the entire nation descended from this patriarch. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [against the people of Jacob … against the people of Israel] or [against the nation of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| against Jacob | he sent |
| against Israel | Israelite people |

# Psalms 78:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *because they did not believe in God and did not trust in his salvation.* | *He did that because they did not trust in him, and they did not believe that he would rescue them.* |

ULT **because they did not believe in God and did not trust in his salvation**
UST He did that because they did not trust in him, and they did not believe that he would rescue them
(כִּי לֹא הֶאֱמִינוּ בֵּאלֹהִים וְלֹא בָטְחוּ בִּישׁוּעָתוֹ)

The word translated as **because** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [since they did not believe in God and did not trust in his salvation]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **and did … trust in his salvation**
UST they did … believe that he would rescue them
(בָטְחוּ בִּישׁוּעָתוֹ)

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: [and that he would save them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they did … believe | they did … trust |
| in God | in him |
| and did … trust in | they did … believe |
| his salvation | that he would rescue them |

# Psalms 78:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yet he commanded the clouds from above and opened the doors of the sky.* | *But God spoke to the sky above them and commanded it to open like a door,* |

ULT **Yet he commanded**
UST and commanded it
(וַיְצַו)

The psalmist uses the word **Yet** here to indicate a contrast between the Israelites' unbelief and God's gracious provision. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [But he commanded] or [Even so, he commanded]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **Yet he commanded the clouds from above and opened the doors of the sky**
UST But God spoke to the sky above them and commanded it to open like a door
(וַיְצַו שְׁחָקִים מִמָּעַל וְדַלְתֵי שָׁמַיִם פָּתָח)

The psalmist is speaking of the sky as if it were a building with **doors** that God opened. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yet he gave orders to the sky above and caused the heavens to open]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Yet he commanded the clouds**
UST But God spoke to … and commanded it
(וַיְצַו שְׁחָקִים)

The psalmist is speaking of **the clouds** as if they were living things that could hear and obey God's commands. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He controlled the clouds]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of the sky | the sky |

# Psalms 78:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he rained down manna to eat on them, and gave to them the grain of heaven.* | *and then food fell down like rain, food that they named "manna." God gave them grain from heaven.* |

**ULT And he rained down manna to eat on them**
**UST** and then food fell down like rain … manna
(וַיַּמְטֵר עֲלֵיהֶם מָן לֶאֱכֹל)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a weather phenomenon, and **he rained down manna** from the sky. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He caused manna to fall down from the sky]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and … the grain of heaven**
**UST** grain from heaven
(וּדְגַן־שָׁמַיִם)

The phrase **the grain of heaven** could mean: (1) the grain that angels eat or (2) the grain that came from heaven. The next verse supports the first meaning.

**ULT and … the grain of heaven**
**UST** grain from heaven
(וּדְגַן־שָׁמַיִם)

The psalmist is using **grain** to represent all of the manna that God provided. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and … the food from heaven] or [and … the provision from heaven]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and … the grain of | grain |
| manna | manna |
| heaven | from heaven |

# Psalms 78:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Man ate the bread of the mighty. He sent to them provision to {their} satisfaction.* | *So the people ate the food that angels eat. God gave to them all the manna that they wanted.* |

**ULT Man ate**
**UST** So the people ate
(אָכַל אִישׁ)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **Man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [People ate]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**ULT the bread**
**UST** the food
(לֶחֶם)

The psalmist 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: [the food] or [the grain]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT of the mighty**
**UST** that angels eat
(אַבִּירִים)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **the mighty** refers to angels. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [of angels]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT provision to {their} satisfaction**
**UST** all the manna that they wanted
(צֵידָה & לָשָׂבַע)

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: [enough food to satisfy them] or [abundant food]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the bread | the food |
| of the mighty | that angels eat |

# Psalms 78:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He caused the east wind to blow in the sky, and by his power he guided the south wind.* | *Later, he caused the wind to blow from the east, and by his power he also sent wind from the south.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

# Psalms 78:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he rained down meat on them like dust, and birds of wing as the sands of the sea.* | *The wind brought birds to eat which fell like rain. They were as uncountable as the grains of sand on the seashore.* |

ULT **And he rained down meat on them like dust**
UST The wind brought birds to eat which fell like rain … were as uncountable
(וַיַּמְטֵר עֲלֵיהֶם כֶּעָפָר שְׁאֵר)

The psalmist is speaking of the meat as if it were rain that God **rained down** on the people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He caused meat to fall on them in great abundance] or [He gave them a huge amount of meat]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and birds of wing as the sands of the sea**
UST They … as the grains of sand on the seashore
(וְכָחוֹל יַמִּים עוֹף כָּנָף)

The psalmist 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 rained down birds of wing as numerous as the sands of the sea]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **birds of wing**
UST They
(עוֹף כָּנָף)

It might seem that the expression **birds of wing** contains extra information that would not be natural to express in your language. If so, you could shorten it. Alternate translation: [birds]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

ULT **birds of wing**
UST They
(עֹוף כָּנָף)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **birds** that are characterized by having **wings**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [winged birds] or [flying birds]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **like dust, and … as the sands of the sea**
UST were as uncountable as the grains of sand on the seashore
(כֶּעָפָר & וּכְחֹול יַמִּים)

The psalmist says **like dust** and **as the sands of the sea** as extreme statements for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [in great quantities and … beyond counting]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

# Psalms 78:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he caused them to fall in the middle of his camp, around his dwellings.* | *God caused those birds to fall in the middle of their camp. There were birds all around their tents.* |

ULT **And he caused them to fall in the middle of his camp, around his dwellings**
UST God caused those birds to fall in the middle of their camp. There were birds all around their tents
(וַיַּפֵּל בְּקֶרֶב מַחֲנֵהוּ סָבִיב לְמִשְׁכְּנֹתָיו)

The pronoun **his** refers to the people of Israel, not to God. The psalmist is describing the birds falling into the Israelites' camp and near their tents. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [They fell in the middle of the Israelites' camp, all around the Israelites' tents]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **of his camp, around his dwellings**
UST in the middle of their camp … all around their tents
(מַחֲנֵהוּ סָבִיב לְמִשְׁכְּנֹתָיו)

Here, **his** refers to the Israelites. See the book introduction for more information.

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his dwellings | their tents |

# Psalms 78:29

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they ate and were very satisfied. And he brought their craving to them.* | *So the people {cooked the birds and} ate the meat; their stomachs were full because God had given them what they wanted.* |

**ULT And he brought their craving to them**

**UST** because God had given them what they wanted

(וַתַּאֲוָתָם יָבֵא לָהֶם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **craving**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [He gave them what they craved]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

# Psalms 78:30

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They were not separated from their craving, their food was still in their mouth,* | *But they had not yet eaten all that they wanted,* |

**ULT from their craving**

**UST** they wanted

(מִתַּאֲוָתָם)

See how you translated the similar expression in 78:29.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

# Psalms 78:31

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *and the nose of God went up in them and he killed some of their stoutest people, and he caused the young men of Israel to bow down.* | *when God angrily killed some of their strongest men. He even sent young Israelite men to their graves.* |

ULT **and the nose of God went up in them**
UST when God angrily
(וְאַף אֱלֹהִים ׀ עָלָה בָהֶם)

See how you translated the similar expression in 78:21.

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and he caused the young men of Israel to bow down**
UST He even sent young Israelite men to their graves
(וּבַחוּרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הִכְרִיעַ)

The psalmist is speaking of the young men dying as if God were physically forcing them to **bow down** to the ground. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he struck down the young men of Israel] or [and he made the young men of Israel fall dead]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and the nose | when … angrily |
| of God | God |
| and he killed | killed some |
| and he caused … to bow down | He even sent … to their graves |
| of Israel | Israelite men |

# Psalms 78:32

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In all this they sinned again, and did not believe in his wonders.* | *In spite of all this, the people continued to sin; in spite of all the miracles that God had performed, they still did not trust that he would take care of them.* |

**ULT in his wonders**

**UST** in spite of all the miracles that God had performed
(בְּנִפְלְאוֹתָיו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wonders**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in the wonderful things he did] or [that he could do wonderful things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they sinned | to sin |
| did … believe | trust that he would take care of them |
| in his wonders | in spite of all the miracles that God had performed |

# Psalms 78:33

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *So he consumed their days in a vapor, and their years in terror.* | *So he shortened their lives so they seemed to only be a few days or like they were gone as quickly as a breath of air, and he terrified them during even those few years.* |

ULT **So he consumed their days in a vapor, and their years in terror**
UST So he shortened their lives so they seemed to only be a few days or like they were gone as quickly as a breath of air, and he terrified them during even those few years
(וַיְכַל־בַּהֶבֶל יְמֵיהֶם וּשְׁנוֹתָם בַּבֶּהָלָה)

This is poetic language. The psalmist moves from shorter units of time (**days**) to longer units (**years**) to emphasize the completeness of God's judgment. If your language has a way to indicate poetry, you could use it here. Alternate translation: [So he ended their lives quickly, like a breath, and their years were full of fear]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **So he consumed their days**
UST So he shortened their lives … a few days
(וַיְכַל & יְמֵיהֶם)

The psalmist is referring to God ending the lives of the Israelites in a polite way by using the phrase **he consumed their days**. Depending on what is helpful for your readers, you could use a polite way of referring to this in your language, or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [So he ended their days] or [So he caused their days to vanish]

**Support Reference:** Euphemism

ULT **So he consumed their days in a vapor**
UST So he shortened their lives so they seemed to only be a few days or like they were gone as quickly as a breath of air
(וַיְכַל־בַּהֶבֶל יְמֵיהֶם)

The psalmist is speaking of **their days** as if they were something that could be **consumed** (used up) **in a vapor** (as quickly as a puff of breath disappears). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [So he caused their days to quickly vanish like vapor] or [So he caused their days to pass swiftly like a breath]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and their years in terror**
UST and he terrified them during even those few years
(וּשְׁנוֹתָם בַּבֶּהָלָה)

The psalmist 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 consumed their years in terror]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **their days … and their years**
UST their lives … a few days … even those few years
(יְמֵיהֶם וּשְׁנוֹתָם)

Here, **their days** and **their years** represent their lives. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [their lives … and their lives]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| So he consumed | So he shortened |
| and their years | even those few years |
| in terror | and he terrified them during |

# Psalms 78:34

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *When he killed them, then they would seek him, and they would return and look earnestly for God.* | *Whenever God caused some of the Israelites to die, the others would repent; they would be sorry and seriously ask God to save them.* |

**ULT When he killed them, then they would seek him**
**UST** Whenever God caused some of the Israelites to die … they would be sorry and seriously ask God
(אִם־הָרָגָם וּדְרָשֻׁהוּ)

The psalmist is describing repeated events, not a single occurrence. The word **When** indicates that this pattern happened multiple times. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a word or phrase that shows this repetition. Alternate translation: [Each time God afflicted them, they would seek him]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he killed them | to die |
| then they would seek him | they would be sorry and seriously ask God |
| God | to save them |

# Psalms 78:35

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they would remember that God was their rock and {that} God Most High was their redeemer.* | *They would remember that God was like a huge rock on which they would be safe, and that he, who was greater than any other spirit being, was the one who would buy them back.* |

**ULT And they would remember that God was their rock and {that} God Most High was their redeemer**

UST They would remember that God was like a huge rock on which they would be safe, and that he, who was greater than any other spirit being, was the one who would buy them back
(וַיִּזְכְּרוּ כִּי־אֱלֹהִים צוּרָם וְאֵל עֶלְיוֹן גֹּאֲלָם)

See the note on 78:1 or the Introduction to the Psalms for more information on how to translate parallelisms. Alternate translation: [They would remember that God Most High was their rock and redeemer]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT God was their rock**

UST God was like a huge rock on which they would be safe
(אֱלֹהִים צוּרָם)

The psalmist is speaking of God as if he were a **rock** that provided protection and stability. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture, or you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [God was their refuge] or [God was their protector]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and {that} God Most High was their redeemer**

UST and that he, who was greater than any other spirit being, was the one who would buy them back
(וְאֵל עֶלְיוֹן גֹּאֲלָם)

The psalmist 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 they would remember that God Most High was their rescuer]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| and {that} God | and that he |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Most High | who was greater than any other spirit being |
| was their redeemer | was the one who would buy them back |

# Psalms 78:36

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they would deceive him with their mouth and lie to him with their tongues.* | *But they tried to trick God by lying to him.* |

**ULT with their mouth and … with their tongues**
UST But they tried to trick God by lying
(בְּפִיהֶם יְכַזְּבוּהוּ)

Here, **with their mouth** and **with their tongues** represent what the people said by using their mouth and words. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [by what they said to him and … in what they told him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And they would deceive him | But they tried to trick God |
| and … with their tongues | by lying |
| lie | by lying |

# Psalms 78:37

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And their hearts were not steadfast with him, and they were not faithful in his covenant.* | *They were not loyal to him; they did not keep the promises between God and them.* |

ULT **And their hearts were not steadfast with him**
UST They were not loyal to him
(וְלִבָּם לֹא־נָכוֹן עִמּוֹ)

Here, **hearts** represents the people's inner desires and commitment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And they were not truly committed to him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **And their hearts were not steadfast with him**
UST They were not loyal to him
(וְלִבָּם לֹא־נָכוֹן עִמּוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **steadfast**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [And they were not loyal to him in their hearts] or [And they did not remain faithful toward him in their hearts]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and they were … faithful | they did … keep |
| in his covenant | the promises between God and them |

# Psalms 78:38

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yet he, {being} merciful, atoned for their iniquity and did not destroy them. And many times he held back his nose and did not stir up all his wrath.* | *But God acted mercifully toward his people. He forgave them for having sinned and did not get rid of them. Many times he decided not to become angry with them and did not furiously punish them.* |

ULT **And many times he held back his nose and did not stir up all his wrath**
UST Many times he decided not to become angry with them and did not furiously punish them
(וְהִרְבָּה לְהָשִׁיב אַפּוֹ וְלֹא־יָעִיר כָּל־חֲמָתוֹ)

The psalmist is emphasizing a positive meaning by using a negative word, **not**, together with an expression that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If it would be helpful in your language, you could emphasize the positive meaning in a strong way. Alternate translation: [Many times he chose to be patient with his people]

**Support Reference:** Litotes

ULT **he held back his nose**
UST decided not to become angry with them
(לְהָשִׁיב אַפּוֹ)

Here, **nose** represents anger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he held back his anger] or [he restrained his anger]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **he held back his nose**
UST decided not to become angry with them
(לְהָשִׁיב אַפּוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of God's anger as if it were something physical that God **held back** to keep it from going out toward the people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he restrained his anger] or [he controlled his anger]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and did not stir up all his wrath**
UST he … and did not furiously punish them
(וְלֹא־עֵ֝יר כָּל־חֲמָתֽוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of God's wrath as if it were something dormant that he could **stir up** or arouse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and did not cause his full wrath to awaken] or [and did not unleash the full extent of his anger]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {being} merciful | acted mercifully toward his people |
| atoned for | He forgave them |
| their iniquity | for having sinned |
| did … destroy them | did … get rid of them |
| And many times | Many times |
| did … stir up | he … did … furiously punish them |
| his wrath | he … did … furiously punish them |

# Psalms 78:39

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he remembered that they were flesh, a wind going and it does not return.* | *He remembered that they were only humans who die, humans who disappear as quickly as a wind that blows by and then is gone.* |

**ULT they were flesh**
**UST** they were only humans who die, humans who
(בָּשָׂר הֵמָּה)

Here, **flesh** represents the weakness and frailty of human nature. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they were weak and frail] or [they were mortal]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT a wind going and it does not return**
**UST** disappear as quickly as a wind that blows by and then is gone
(רוּחַ הוֹלֵךְ וְלֹא יָשׁוּב)

The psalmist is speaking of human beings as if they were **a wind going and it does not return**. He means that human life is brief and fragile, like a wind that blows by once and then is gone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [mortal beings whose lives quickly end]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 78:40

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness! They grieved him in the desert!* | *Many times our ancestors rebelled against God in the wilderness and made him very sad.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they rebelled against him | rebelled against God |
| in the wilderness | in the wilderness |
| in the desert | in the wilderness |

# Psalms 78:41

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they returned and they tested God and grieved the Holy {One} of Israel.* | *Many times they did evil things to find out if they could do those things without God punishing them. They frequently caused the holy God whom the Israelites worship to become sad.* |

**ULT And they returned and they tested God**
**UST** Many times they did evil things to find out if they could do those things without God punishing them
(וַיָּשֻׁובוּ וַיְנַסּוּ אֵל)

The psalmist is using the expression **they returned and they tested** as a common expression of the culture to mean "they repeatedly tested." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They tested God again and again] or [They continually tested God]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT and grieved the Holy {One} of Israel**
**UST** They frequently caused the holy God whom the Israelites worship to become sad
(וּקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל הִתְווּ)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to describe the holy God with whom the Israelites are in a covenant relationship. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and grieved the holy God with whom the Israelites are in a covenant relationship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT and … the Holy {One} of Israel**
**UST** They frequently caused the holy God whom the Israelites worship
(וּקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The expression **the Holy One of Israel** is a title for God.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and they tested | they did evil things |
| and … the Holy {One} | They frequently caused the holy God |
| God | to find out if they could do those things without God punishing them |
| grieved | to become sad |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of Israel | whom the Israelites worship |

# Psalms 78:42

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They did not remember his hand, the day when he redeemed them from the adversary,* | *They did not remember how powerfully he had acted, and they {forgot} about the time when he rescued them from their enemies.* |

**ULT They did not remember his hand**
**UST** They did not remember how powerfully he had acted
(לֹא־זָכְרוּ אֶת־יָדָוֹ)

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: [his power] or [his strength]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT the day**
**UST** and they {forgot} about the time
(יֹּום)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **day**. He means the time in general when God redeemed the Israelites from Egypt. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [the time]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**ULT he redeemed them from the adversary**
**UST** he rescued them from their enemies
(פָּדָם מִנִּי־צָר)

Here, **the adversary** represents Egypt and Pharaoh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [he redeemed them from Egypt] or [he redeemed them from Pharaoh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he redeemed them | he rescued them |
| the adversary | their enemies |

# Psalms 78:43

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *when he set his signs in Egypt and his wonders in the field of Zoan.* | *They forgot about all the wonderfully powerful things he did near Zoan in Egypt.* |

**ULT of Zoan**
**UST** Zoan
(צֹ֣עַן)

See how you translated this in 78:12. **Zoan** was a city in Egypt.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his signs | all the wonderfully powerful things he did |
| in Egypt | in Egypt |
| and his wonders | all the wonderfully powerful things he did |

# Psalms 78:44

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he turned their rivers to blood and their streams they could not drink.* | *He turned the rivers of {Egypt} to blood, so that the people could not drink their streams.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

# Psalms 78:45

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He sent a swarm among them, and it devoured them, and the frog and it destroyed them.* | *He sent swarms of flies among the people of Egypt that bit them, and he sent frogs that destroyed everything.* |

> ULT **and the frog**
> UST and he sent frogs
> (וַיִּצְפַּרְדֵּ֑עַ)

Here, **the frog** represents frogs in general, not one particular frog. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and the frogs]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

> ULT **and the frog**
> UST and he sent frogs
> (וַיִּצְפַּרְדֵּ֑עַ)

The psalmist 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 sent the frog]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and it devoured them | that bit them |
| and it destroyed them | that destroyed everything |

# Psalms 78:46

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he gave their produce to the locust and their labor to the swarming locust.* | *He gave their crops to the locusts. He let swarming locusts eat everything they had worked for.* |

**ULT to the locust and their labor**
**UST** to the locusts. He let … eat everything they had worked for
(לֶֽחָסִיל & וְיִגִיעָֽם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **labor**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and what they had labored to produce]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and their labor**
**UST** He let … eat everything they had worked for
(וְיִגִיעָֽם)

Here, **labor** represents the produce or results of their labor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and what their labor produced] or [and the fruit of their labor]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their produce | their crops |
| their produce | their crops |
| to the locust | to the locusts |
| and their labor | He let … eat everything they had worked for |
| to the swarming locust | swarming locusts |

# Psalms 78:47

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He slew their vines with hail and their sycamore trees with frost.* | *He killed their grape vines with hail, and killed their sycamore trees with frost.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their vines | their grape vines |
| with hail | with hail |

# Psalms 78:48

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he gave over their cattle to the hail and their livestock to the bolts of lightning.* | *He sent a terrible thunderstorm with hail to kill all their domestic animals.* |

**ULT And he gave over their cattle to the hail and their livestock**
**UST** He sent … with hail to kill all their domestic animals
(וַיַּסְגֵּר לַבָּרָד בְּעִירָם וּמִקְנֵיהֶם)

The psalmist is speaking of God as if he were a commander who **gave over** the Egyptians' **cattle to the hail** as if the hail were an enemy army that would attack them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And he caused the hail to kill their cattle and gave their livestock] or [And he allowed the hail to strike down their cattle and gave their livestock]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their cattle | all their domestic animals |
| to the hail | with hail |
| and their livestock | all their domestic animals |

# Psalms 78:49

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He sent among them the burning of his nose, fury and indignation and distress, a group of messengers of calamity.* | *Because God was fiercely angry with the people of Egypt, he caused them to be very distressed. The disasters that struck them were like a group of angels that destroyed everything.* |

ULT **among them the burning of his nose, fury and indignation**
UST Because God was fiercely angry with the people of Egypt, he caused them to be very distressed
(בָּם ׀ חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ עֶבְרָה וָזַעַם)

The psalmist is using the phrase **the burning of his nose** as a common expression of the culture to mean that God is angry. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [among them his fierce anger] or [among them his burning anger]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **fury and indignation and distress**
UST he caused them to be very distressed
(עֶבְרָה וָזַעַם וְצָרָה)

The terms **fury**, **indignation**, and **distress** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [great wrath]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **He sent among them the burning of his nose, fury and indignation and distress, a group of messengers of calamity**
UST Because God was fiercely angry with the people of Egypt, he caused them to be very distressed. The disasters that struck them were like a group of angels that destroyed everything
(יְשַׁלַּח־בָּם ׀ חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ עֶבְרָה וָזַעַם וְצָרָה מִשְׁלַחַת מַלְאֲכֵי רָעִים)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **fury**, **indignation**, **distress**, and **calamity**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [He furiously and indignantly distressed them with disastrous messengers]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **He sent among them the burning of his nose, fury and indignation and distress, a group of messengers of calamity**
UST Because God was fiercely angry with the people of Egypt, he caused them to be very distressed. The disasters that struck them were like a group of angels that destroyed everything
(יְשַׁלַּח־בָּם ׀ חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ עֶבְרָה וָזַעַם וְצָרָה מִשְׁלַחַת מַלְאֲכֵי רָעִים)

The psalmist is speaking of **fury and indignation and distress** as if they were living things that could be sent as **messengers** to carry out God's judgment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He vented on them his great anger and fury, causing them trouble and disaster]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **He sent among them the burning of his nose, fury and indignation**
UST Because God was fiercely angry with the people of Egypt, he caused them to be very distressed
(יְשַׁלַּח־בָּם ׀ חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ עֶבְרָה וָזַעַם)

The psalmist is speaking of God's anger as if it were a weapon or force that **He sent** out to strike the Egyptians. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [His fierce anger struck them with fury and indignation] or [He attacked them with his fierce anger]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| fury | he caused them to be very distressed |
| and distress | he caused them to be very distressed |
| messengers of | The disasters that struck them were like a group of angels that destroyed everything |
| calamity | The disasters that struck them were like a group of angels that destroyed everything |

# Psalms 78:50

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He made level a path for his anger; he did not spare their soul from death, and their life he gave over to the plague.* | *He let himself be angry with them, and he did not prevent them from dying; he sent a serious illness that killed many of them.* |

**ULT He made level a path for his anger**
**UST** He let himself be angry with them
(יְפַלֵּס נָתִיב לְאַפּוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of **his anger** as if it were something that could travel along a **path**. He means that God fully released his anger against the people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He gave full vent to his anger] or [He released his anger without restraint]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and their life he gave over to the plague**
**UST** he sent a serious illness that killed many of them
(וְחַיָּתָם לַדֶּבֶר הִסְגִּיר)

The psalmist is speaking of the lives of the Egyptians as if they were something God could physically give **over to the plague**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but allowed them to die from the plague] or [but caused the plague to kill them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he did … spare | he did … prevent |
| their soul | them |
| to the plague | a serious illness |

# Psalms 78:51

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he struck every firstborn in Egypt, the beginning of strength in the tents of Ham.* | *In that plague he caused all the firstborn sons of the people of Egypt to die.* |

**ULT the beginning of strength**
**UST** the firstborn sons
(רֵאשִׁית אוֹנִים)

The psalmist is using **the beginning of strength** as a common expression of the culture to mean the **firstborn** sons. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the firstborn sons] or [the oldest sons]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT in the tents of Ham**
**UST** of the people of Egypt
(בְּאָהֳלֵי חָם)

Here, **tents** represents the families who lived in them, and **Ham** represents the people of Egypt, who were descended from him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in the households of Egypt] or [among the people of Egypt]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| firstborn | the firstborn sons |
| in Egypt | of the people of Egypt |
| the beginning of | the firstborn sons |
| in the tents of | of the people of Egypt |
| Ham | of the people of Egypt |

# Psalms 78:52

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he made his people journey like sheep, and he led them like a flock in the wilderness.* | *Then he led his people out of Egypt like a shepherd leads his sheep, and he guided them like a flock in the desert.* |

ULT **And he made his people journey like sheep, and he led them like a flock in the wilderness**

UST Then he led his people out of Egypt like a shepherd leads his sheep, and he guided them like a flock in the desert

(וַיַּסַּע כַּצֹּאן עַמּוֹ וַיְנַהֲגֵם כַּעֵדֶר בַּמִּדְבָּר)

The point of this comparison is that just as **sheep** need a shepherd to guide and care for them, so did God's people need God to guide and care for them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [And he made his people journey, guiding and caring for them like a shepherd does for sheep, and he led them, protecting them like a shepherd protects a flock in the wilderness]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| like sheep | out of Egypt like a shepherd leads his sheep |
| like a flock | like a flock |
| in the wilderness | in the desert |

# Psalms 78:53

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he guided them in security, and they did not fear, and the sea covered their enemies.* | *He led them safely, and they were not afraid, but their enemies drowned in the sea.* |

**ULT in security**
UST safely
(לָבֶטַח)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **security**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [securely] or [safely]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they did … fear | they were … afraid |
| their enemies | their enemies |

# Psalms 78:54

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he brought them to the border of his holiness, this mountain that his right hand acquired.* | *Later God used his power to bring the Israelite people to the land he had set apart, to this hill country that he had taken for himself.* |

ULT **And he brought them**
UST Later God used his power to bring the Israelite people
(וַיְבִיאֵם)

The pronoun **he** refers to God, while the pronoun **them** refers to the Israelites. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [And God brought the Israelites]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the border of his holiness**
UST to the land he had set apart
(גְּבוּל קָדְשׁוֹ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **the border** that is characterized by **his holiness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the border of the land he had set apart] or [the border of his holy land]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **of his holiness**
UST to the land he had set apart
(קָדְשׁוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **holiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [of what is holy to him] or [of what he had set apart]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

> ULT **that his right hand acquired**
> UST that he had taken for himself
> (קָנְתָה יְמִינוֹ)

Here, **his right hand** represents the power of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that he acquired by his power] or [that his power acquired]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of his holiness | to the land he had set apart |

# Psalms 78:55

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he drove out nations from before them and caused them to fall in a portion of inheritance, and he caused the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.* | *He drove out the people groups as the Israelites advanced; he distributed the land for each tribe to possess as their own, and he settled the tribes of Israel in the homes of those peoples.* |

ULT **And he drove out nations from before them**
UST He drove out the people groups as the Israelites advanced
(וַיְגָרֶשׁ מִפְּנֵיהֶם ו גּוֹיִם)

The pronoun **he** refers to God, while the pronoun **them** refers to the Israelites. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [God drove out nations from before the Israelites]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and caused them to fall in a portion of inheritance**
UST he distributed the land for each tribe to possess as their own
(וַיַּפִּילֵם בְּחֶבֶל נַחֲלָה)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the Canaanites whom God **caused them to fall in a portion of inheritance**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and caused them to be defeated in each portion that Israel inherited] or [and defeated them in each portion that Israel inherited as they came to it]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in a portion of inheritance**
UST the land for each tribe to possess as their own
(בְּחֶבֶל נַחֲלָה)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean a portion for inheriting. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [in each portion inherited by Israel] or [in each portion that Israel inherited]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **in a portion of inheritance**
UST the land for each tribe to possess as their own
(בְּחֶבֶל נַחֲלָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **inheritance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and gave each tribe a portion to inherit] or [and gave each tribe of Israel a portion as their own]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| nations | the people groups |
| of inheritance | the land for each tribe to possess as their own |
| the tribes | the tribes of Israel |
| of Israel | the tribes of Israel |
| in their tents | in the homes of those peoples |

# Psalms 78:56

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But they tested and rebelled against God Most High, and they did not keep his testimonies.* | *But the Israelites defied the God who is greater than all other spirit beings and disobeyed him to see what he would do. They did not obey what he had required them to do.* |

ULT **But they tested and rebelled**
UST But the Israelites defied … and disobeyed him to see what he would do
(וַיְנַסּוּ וַיְמָרוּ)

The psalmist uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between God's provision and the people's rebellion. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Despite all this, they tested and rebelled] or [Even so, they tested and rebelled]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **But they tested and rebelled**
UST But the Israelites defied … and disobeyed him to see what he would do
(וַיְנַסּוּ וַיְמָרוּ)

The terms **tested** and **rebelled** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [But they continually pushed back] or [But they stubbornly rebelled]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| But they tested | But the Israelites defied |
| and rebelled | and disobeyed him to see what he would do |
| against God | the God who is greater than all other spirit beings |
| Most High | the God who is greater than all other spirit beings |
| and they … his testimonies | what he had required them to do |
| keep | They did not obey |

# Psalms 78:57

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they turned back and acted treacherously like their fathers; they turned themselves like a bow of deceit.* | *They turned away and were unfaithful, just as their ancestors had been; they were as unreliable as a bow that does not shoot straight.* |

ULT **And they turned back and acted treacherously like their fathers; they turned themselves like a bow of deceit**
UST They turned away and were unfaithful, just as their ancestors had been; they were as unreliable as a bow that does not shoot straight
(וַיִּסֹּגוּ וַיִּבְגְּדוּ כַּאֲבוֹתָם נֶהְפְּכוּ כְּקֶשֶׁת רְמִיָּה)

For more information on translating parallelism, see the note at 78:1. Alternate translation: [They turned back and acted treacherously like their fathers, being as unreliable as a bow of deceit]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **like their fathers**
UST just as their ancestors had been
(כַּאֲבוֹתָם)

The point of this comparison is that just as **their fathers** were unfaithful to God, so were the Israelites. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [in the same unfaithful way as their fathers]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **like a bow of deceit**
UST a bow that does not shoot straight
(כְּקֶשֶׁת רְמִיָּה)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a bow of deceit** is unreliable and does not shoot straight, so were the Israelites unreliable. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [as unreliable as a faulty bow]

**Support Reference:** Simile

> ULT **like a bow of deceit**
> UST a bow that does not shoot straight
> (כֶּ֖קֶשֶׁת רְמִיָּֽה)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **a bow** that is characterized by **deceit**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [into a deceitful bow] or [as a faulty bow]

**Support Reference:** Possession

> ULT **like a bow of deceit**
> UST a bow that does not shoot straight
> (כֶּ֖קֶשֶׁת רְמִיָּֽה)

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: [into a deceitful bow] or [as a faulty bow]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| like a bow | a bow that does not shoot |
| of deceit | straight |

# Psalms 78:58

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they provoked him to anger with their high places, and with their carved images they moved him to jealousy.* | *They made God angry by worshiping at shrines on the hilltops, and they made him jealous by worshiping carved idols.* |

**ULT they moved him to jealousy**
**UST** and they made him jealous
(יַקְנִיאֻהוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **jealousy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [they caused him to be jealous]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And they provoked him to anger | They made God angry |
| and with their carved images | by worshiping carved idols |
| they moved him to jealousy | and they made him jealous |

# Psalms 78:59

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God heard and was furious, and he rejected Israel greatly.* | *When God saw what they were doing, he became very angry and completely rejected the Israelite people.* |

**ULT God heard and was furious**
**UST** When God saw what they were doing, he became very angry
(שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים וַיִּתְעַבָּר)

The term translated as **and** indicates that what follows is a result of what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [God heard, and as a result, he was furious] or [When God heard, he was furious]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | When God saw what they were doing |
| and he rejected | and completely rejected |
| Israel | the Israelite people |

# Psalms 78:60

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he abandoned the dwelling of Shiloh, the tent {in which} he had dwelt among mankind.* | *He stopped living at Shiloh, the place where he had set up his tent and lived among people.* |

**ULT And he abandoned the dwelling of Shiloh**
**UST** He stopped living at Shiloh, the place where he had set up
(וַיִּטֹּשׁ מִשְׁכַּן שִׁלֹה)

The term translated as **And** indicates that what follows is a result of what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [Therefore, he abandoned the dwelling of Shiloh] or [So he abandoned the dwelling of Shiloh]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the dwelling | the place where he had set up |
| of Shiloh | Shiloh |
| the tent | his tent |

# Psalms 78:61

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he gave his strength to captivity and his splendor into the hand of the enemy.* | *He let enemies capture the sacred chest which showed how strong and glorious he was.* |

ULT **And he gave his strength to captivity**
UST He let enemies capture the sacred chest which showed how strong
(וַיִּתֵּן לִשְׁבִי עֻזּוֹ)

Here, **his strength** represents the box of the covenant, which showed God's power. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [And he allowed the box to be captured] or [And he let the box that showed his power be captured]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **his strength**
UST the sacred chest which showed how strong
(עֻזּוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what showed he was strong] or [the box that showed his power]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to captivity**
UST enemies capture
(לִשְׁבִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **captivity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to be captured] or [to those who would capture it]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and his splendor**
UST and glorious he was
(וְתִפְאַרְתּוֹ)

The psalmist 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 gave his splendor]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

> ULT **and his splendor into the hand of the enemy**
> UST enemies capture … and glorious he was
> (וְתִפְאַרְתּוֹ בְּיַד־צָר)

Here, **his splendor** represents the box of the covenant, and **the hand of the enemy** represents their power or control. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use equivalent expressions or plain language. Alternate translation: [and his glorious box into the power of the enemy] or [and the box that showed his splendor to be controlled by the enemy]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **and his splendor**
> UST and glorious he was
> (וְתִפְאַרְתּוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **splendor**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and what was splendid to him] or [and the ark that showed he was glorious]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| his strength | the sacred chest which showed how strong |
| to captivity | enemies capture |
| and his splendor | and glorious he was |
| of the enemy | enemies capture |

# Psalms 78:62

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And he delivered his people over to the sword, and he was furious with his inheritance.* | *He let enemies kill his people in battle, because he was very angry with the people who belonged to him.* |

ULT **And he delivered his people over to the sword**
UST He let enemies kill his people in battle
(וַיַּסְגֵּר לַחֶרֶב עַמּוֹ)

Here, **the sword** represents warfare or violent death in battle. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And he allowed his people to be killed in battle] or [And he delivered his people over to violent death]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and … with his inheritance**
UST the people who belonged to him
(וּבְנַחֲלָתוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **inheritance**, you could express the same idea in another way. See how you translated this in 78:55. Alternate translation: [and … with the people he had chosen]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And he delivered … over | He let enemies kill |
| and … with his inheritance | the people who belonged to him |
| to the sword | in battle |

# Psalms 78:63

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Fire consumed his young men, and his virgins were not praised {in} wedding songs.* | *Fire destroyed the young men, and no one sang wedding songs for the young women.* |

ULT **Fire consumed his young men, and his virgins were not praised {in} wedding songs**
UST Fire destroyed the young men, and no one sang wedding songs for the young women
(בַּחוּרָיו אָכְלָה־אֵשׁ וּבְתוּלֹתָיו לֹא הוּלָּלוּ)

The phrases **Fire consumed his young men** and **his virgins were not praised** mean opposite things but work together to show the devastating completeness of the judgment. For emphasis, the psalmist is describing both the death of young men and the corresponding lack of marriage celebrations. If a speaker of your language would not use this kind of contrast, in your translation you can convey the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [Fire consumed his young men so that his virgins had no weddings]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **Fire consumed his young men**
UST Fire destroyed the young men
(בַּחוּרָיו אָכְלָה־אֵשׁ)

The psalmist speaks of **Fire** as if it were a person that could actively consume people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [His young men died in fires] or [His young men were burned to death]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **and his virgins were not praised {in} wedding songs**
UST and no one sang wedding songs for the young women
(וּבְתוּלֹתָיו לֹא הוּלָּלוּ)

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 praised his virgins in wedding songs] or [and no one sang wedding songs for his virgins]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| consumed | Fire destroyed |
| and his virgins | the young women |
| praised {in} wedding songs | and no one sang wedding songs for |
| praised {in} wedding songs | and no one sang wedding songs for |

# Psalms 78:64

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *His priests fell by the sword, and his widows did not weep.* | *Enemies killed the priests in battle, and the wives they left behind were not able to mourn for them.* |

**ULT fell by the sword**
**UST** Enemies killed … in battle
(בַּחֶרֶב נָפָלוּ)

Here, **the sword** represents violent death in battle. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [died in battle] or [were killed in war]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| His priests | the priests |
| by the sword | Enemies killed … in battle |
| weep | were not able to mourn for them |

# Psalms 78:65

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then the Lord awoke as one sleeping, as a mighty man shouting from wine.* | *Then the Lord acted as though he had been sleeping and had woken up, like a warrior who becomes alert after drinking wine.* |

ULT **Then the Lord awoke**
UST Then the Lord … and had woken up
(וַיִּקַץ & אֲדֹנָי)

The psalmist uses the word **Then** to indicate a contrast between God's judgment and his intervention. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [But then the Lord awoke] or [After this, the Lord awoke]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **Then the Lord awoke as one sleeping**
UST Then the Lord acted as though he had been sleeping and had woken up
(וַיִּקַץ כְּיָשֵׁן ׀ אֲדֹנָי)

The psalmist speaks of **the Lord** as if he were a person who could sleep and wake up. He means that God had seemed inactive during the time of judgment but then became active again to help his people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Then the Lord acted as if he had awakened from sleep] or [Then the Lord began to act again after seeming to be inactive]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **as one sleeping**
UST acted as though he had been sleeping
(כְּיָשֵׁן)

The point of this comparison is that just as **one sleeping** must wake up before acting, so the Lord resumed acting after a period of seeming inactivity. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [like someone who had been asleep]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **as a mighty man shouting from wine**
UST like a warrior who becomes alert after drinking wine
(כְּגִבּוֹר מְתָרוֹנֵן מִיָּיִן)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a mighty man** who has been drinking wine might shout loudly and powerfully, so the Lord acted with great power. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [like a powerful warrior shouting with great strength]

**Support Reference:** Simile

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the Lord | Then the Lord |
| as a mighty man | like a warrior |
| from wine | after drinking wine |

# Psalms 78:66

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he struck his adversaries backward; he gave to them a reproach of perpetuity.* | *He drove his enemies back and disgraced them forever.* |

ULT **a reproach of perpetuity**
UST and disgraced them forever
(חֶרְפַּ֣ת עוֹלָ֑ם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **perpetuity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a shame that lasts forever] or [permanent disgrace]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his adversaries | his enemies |
| a reproach | and disgraced them |

# Psalms 78:67

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he rejected the tent of Joseph, and he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim.* | *He did not choose the descendants of Joseph to be the leading tribe, and he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And he rejected | He did not choose … to be the leading tribe |
| and … the tribe | the tribe of Ephraim |
| the tent | the descendants of Joseph |
| of Joseph | the descendants of Joseph |
| he did … choose | and he did not choose |
| of Ephraim | the tribe of Ephraim |

# Psalms 78:68

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But he chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Zion, which he loved.* | *Instead he chose the tribe of Judah whose capital is on Mount Zion, which he loves.* |

**ULT But he chose the tribe of Judah**
**UST** Instead he chose the tribe of Judah
(וַיִּבְחַר אֶת־שֵׁבֶט יְהוּדָה)

The psalmist uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between rejecting Joseph and Ephraim and choosing Judah. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Instead, he chose the tribe of Judah]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

**ULT Mount Zion, which**
**UST** whose capital is on Mount Zion, which
(אֶת־הַר צִיּוֹן אֲשֶׁר)

Here, **Mount Zion** represents the tribe of Judah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Judah's descendants, who]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the tribe | the tribe of Judah |
| of Judah | the tribe of Judah |
| Mount Zion | whose capital is on Mount Zion |
| he loved | he loves |

# Psalms 78:69

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he built his sanctuary like the heights, like the earth he founded it forever.* | *He had them build his temple there, high up like the heavens, and he established it to last as long as the earth.* |

ULT **And he built his sanctuary like the heights, like the earth he founded it forever**
UST He had them build his temple there, high up like the heavens, and he established it to last as long as the earth
(וַיִּבֶן כְּמוֹ־רָמִים מִקְדָּשׁוֹ כָּאָרֶץ יְסָדָהּ לְעוֹלָם)

The phrase **he built his sanctuary like the heights** is parallel to the statement **like the earth he founded it forever** and clarifies the relationship between the sanctuary's grandeur and its permanence. Alternate translation: [And he built his sanctuary to be as exalted as the heavens and as permanent as the earth]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **like the heights**
UST high up like the heavens
(כְּמוֹ־רָמִים)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the heights** are exalted and majestic, so is God's sanctuary. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [as exalted as the heavens]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **like the earth he founded it forever**
UST and he established it to last as long as the earth
(כָּאָרֶץ יְסָדָהּ לְעוֹלָם)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the earth** is permanent and enduring, so God **founded** his sanctuary to last **forever**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [as enduring as the earth, he founded it to last forever]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his sanctuary | his temple |
| like the earth | the earth |
| he founded it | and he established it |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| forever | to last as long as |

# Psalms 78:70

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he chose David his servant and took him from the folds of the flock.* | *He chose David, who served him, and took him away from tending the sheep.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| David | David |
| his servant | who served him |
| of the flock | the sheep |

# Psalms 78:71

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *From behind the nursing ewes he brought him, to shepherd Jacob his people and Israel his inheritance.* | *He took David from caring for the mother sheep and their lambs and appointed him to lead the people of Israel, the people who belonged to God.* |

ULT **to shepherd Jacob his people**
UST and appointed him to lead the people of Israel
(לִרְעוֹת בְּיַעֲקֹב עַמּוֹ)

The term translated as **to** indicates that what follows is a purpose or goal of what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [in order to shepherd Jacob his people] or [so that he would shepherd Jacob his people]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **to shepherd Jacob his people**
UST and appointed him to lead the people of Israel
(לִרְעוֹת בְּיַעֲקֹב עַמּוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of **Jacob his people** as if they were sheep that needed someone **to shepherd** them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to lead and care for Jacob his people] or [to rule over Jacob his people]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **his inheritance**
UST the people who belonged to God
(נַחֲלָתוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **inheritance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the people who belonged to him] or [the people he had chosen as his own]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the nursing ewes | from caring for the mother sheep and their lambs |
| to shepherd | and appointed him to lead |
| Jacob | the people of Israel |
| and Israel | the people who belonged to God |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his inheritance | the people who belonged to God |

# Psalms 78:72

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and with the skillfulness of his hands he guided them.* | *David led them with a sincere and devoted heart, and he guided them with great skill.* |

ULT **according to the integrity of his heart**
UST with a sincere and devoted heart
(כְּתֹם לְבָבוֹ)

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: [with an honest heart] or [with a pure heart]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **according to the integrity of his heart**
UST with a sincere and devoted heart
(כְּתֹם לְבָבוֹ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **his heart** that is characterized by **integrity**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [according to his honest heart]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **and with the skillfulness of his hands he guided them**
UST and he guided them with great skill
(וּבִתְבוּנוֹת כַּפָּיו יַנְחֵם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **skillfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and with his skillful hands he guided them] or [and he guided them skillfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and with the skillfulness of his hands he guided them**
UST and he guided them with great skill
(וּבִתְבוּנוֹת כַּפָּיו יַנְחֵם)

Here, **his hands** represents the actions and capabilities of David. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and with his skill he guided them] or [and he guided them with his abilities]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And he shepherded them | David led them |
| according to the integrity | with a sincere and devoted heart |

# Psalms 79

## Psalm 79 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 79 is a psalm of supplication or lament. It includes all the basic elements of that type of psalm except a statement of trust. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Description of troubles (1–4)
2. Cry for help (5–7)
3. Petition: request for forgiveness (8–9)
4. Petition: request for retribution (10–12)
5. Vow of praise (13)

### Translation Issues in this Psalm

#### Imperatives

Throughout this psalm, the psalmist is requesting things from Yahweh by using an imperative form which may sound like a command in your language. If this would be impolite in your language, then use a form that would be more appropriate for addressing Yahweh with a request.

#### Parallelisms

Parallelisms arise when two phrases occur together which mean the same thing. The second phrase emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea using different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine the phrases and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one and not saying something additional. See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing.

# Psalms 79:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A psalm. Of Asaph. God, nations have come into your inheritance; they have defiled the temple of your holiness; they have made Jerusalem into heaps.* | *A Levite from the clan of Asaph wrote this song. God, foreign nations have invaded the land that belongs to you. They have made your holy temple unfit for worship, and they have made Jerusalem a pile of ruins.* |

ULT **God, nations have come into your inheritance**
UST God, foreign nations have invaded the land that belongs to you
(אֱלֹהִים בָּאוּ גוֹיִם ׀ בְּנַחֲלָתֶךָ)

Asaph is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of anguish over the invasion of Israel. If your language has a comparable way to express this feeling, you could use it in your translation. Alternate translation: [O God, nations have invaded your inheritance]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **nations**
UST foreign nations
(גוֹיִם)

Here Asaph is introducing the **nations** as new participants in the psalm. He does not specify which nations, but refers to foreign peoples in general. Your language may have its own way of introducing new participants that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [foreign nations]

**Support Reference:** Introduction of New and Old Participants

ULT **into your inheritance**
UST the land that belongs to you
(בְּנַחֲלָתֶךָ)

Here Asaph is speaking of the land of Israel being different than other parts of the earth by calling it God's **inheritance**. This means the land that God specially reserved for him and his people. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [into your special possession]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **into your inheritance**
UST the land that belongs to you
(בְּנַחֲלָתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **inheritance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [into what you have inherited]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your holiness**
UST holy
(קָדְשֶׁךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **holiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [you who are holy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **nations have come into your inheritance; they have defiled the temple of your holiness; they have made Jerusalem into heaps**
UST foreign nations have invaded the land that belongs to you. They have made your holy temple unfit for worship, and they have made Jerusalem a pile of ruins
(בָּאוּ גוֹיִם ׀ בְּנַחֲלָתֶךָ טִמְּאוּ אֶת־הֵיכַל קָדְשֶׁךָ שָׂמוּ אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם לְעִיִּים)

These three phrases all describe the enemy's attack on what belongs to God. Each phrase intensifies the devastation, moving from invasion to defilement to destruction. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. For more information on how to translate parallel phrases see the Psalm 79 Introduction. Alternate translation: [nations have invaded your land, made your holy temple unclean, and turned Jerusalem into piles of rubble]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| A psalm | this song |
| Of Asaph | A Levite from the clan of Asaph wrote |
| God | God |
| nations | foreign nations |
| into your inheritance | the land that belongs to you |
| they have defiled | They have made … unfit for worship |
| the temple of | your … temple |
| your holiness | holy |
| Jerusalem | Jerusalem |

# Psalms 79:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They have given the corpse of your servants {as} food to the bird of the heavens, the flesh of your faithful to the beast of the earth.* | *They left the dead bodies of the people who were faithful to you for birds and wild animals to eat.* |

**ULT to the bird of the heavens**
**UST** birds
(לְעֹוף הַשָּׁמָיִם)

Asaph is using the possessive form to describe a **bird** that lives in **the heavens**, that is, the sky. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to the birds that fly in the sky]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT the flesh of your faithful to the beast of the earth**
**UST** the dead bodies of the people who were faithful to you … and wild animals
(בְּשַׂר חֲסִידֶיךָ לְחַיְתוֹ־אָרֶץ)

Asaph 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 they have given the flesh of your faithful as food to the beast of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT your faithful**
**UST** the people who were faithful to you
(חֲסִידֶיךָ)

Asaph is using the adjective **faithful** as a noun to mean people who are faithful to God. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [your faithful ones]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT to the beast of the earth**
**UST** and wild animals
(לְחַיְתוֹ־אָרֶץ)

Asaph is using the possessive form to describe a **beast** that lives on **the earth**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to the animals that live on the land]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **to the bird of the heavens … to the beast of the earth**
UST birds and wild animals
(לְעֹוף הַשָּׁמַיִם & לְחַיְתוֹ־אָרֶץ)

The terms **the bird** and **the beast** are singular collective nouns that refer to all birds and all beasts as a group. If your language does not use singular nouns in that way, you can use plural forms in your translation. Alternate tranlstaion

**Support Reference:** Collective Nouns

ULT **to the bird of the heavens … to the beast of the earth**
UST birds and wild animals
(לְעֹוף הַשָּׁמַיִם & לְחַיְתוֹ־אָרֶץ)

Asaph is referring to all wild creatures by naming two major components, **bird of the heavens** and **beast of the earth**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [to every kind of bird … to every kind of wild creature]

**Support Reference:** Merism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your servants | the people who were faithful to you |
| the heavens | birds |
| your faithful | the people who were faithful to you |
| to the beast of | and … animals |
| the earth | wild |

# Psalms 79:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They have poured out their blood like water around Jerusalem, and there is no burying.* | *They killed so many of your people that blood flowed like water all around Jerusalem. There were not enough people still alive to bury them.* |

**ULT their blood**
**UST** blood
(דָּמָם)

Here, **their blood** represents their violent death. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the blood of those they killed]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT like water**
**UST** like water
(כַּמַּיִם)

The point of this comparison is that just as **water** flows freely and abundantly, so the blood of the slain was shed in great quantity. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [as freely as water is poured out]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT and there is no burying**
**UST** There were not enough people still alive to bury them
(וְאֵין קוֹבֵר)

Asaph is providing background information to help readers understand the situation. In your translation, introduce this information in a way that would be natural in your own language and culture.

**Support Reference:** Background Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Jerusalem | Jerusalem |
| no burying | to bury them |

# Psalms 79:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *We have become a reproach to our neighbors, scorn and derision to the ones around us.* | *The people of the nations around us insult us and laugh at us.* |

ULT **We have become**
UST insult us
(הָיִינוּ)

Here Asaph is using the word **We** to introduce the community of Israel as speakers for the first time in the psalm. Your language may have its own way of introducing new participants that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [We, your people, have become]

**Support Reference:** Introduction of New and Old Participants

ULT **a reproach to our neighbors, scorn and derision to the ones around us**
UST The people of the nations around us insult us and laugh at us
(חֶרְפָּה לִשְׁכֵנֵינוּ לַעַג וָקֶלֶס לִסְבִיבוֹתֵינוּ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. The poetry of the original language was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [those whom our neighbors insult and mock]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **a reproach**
UST insult us
(חֶרְפָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **reproach**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [people whom others reproach]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **scorn and derision to the ones around us**
UST The people of the nations around us … and laugh at us
(לַעַג וָקֶלֶס לִסְבִיבוֹתֵינוּ)

Asaph 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 we have become scorn and derision to the ones around us]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **scorn and derision**
UST and laugh at us
(לַעַג וָקֶלֶס)

The terms **scorn** and **derision** mean similar things. Asaph 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: [utter mockery]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **scorn and derision to the ones around us**
UST The people of the nations around us … and laugh at us
(לַעַג וָקֶלֶס לִסְבִיבוֹתֵינוּ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **scorn** and **derision**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [people whom others scorn and deride]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| a reproach | insult us |
| to our neighbors | The people of the nations around us |

# Psalms 79:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Until when, Yahweh? Will you be angry forever? Will your jealousy burn like fire?* | *Yahweh, please do not stay so very angry with us, even though we sinned against you by worshiping other gods.* |

ULT **Until when, Yahweh? Will you be angry forever? Will your jealousy burn like fire**
UST Yahweh, please do not stay so very angry with us, even though we sinned against you by worshiping other gods
(עַד־מָה֥ יְהוָ֗ה תֶּאֱנַף֮ לָנֶ֪צַח תִּבְעַ֫ר כְּמוֹ־אֵ֥שׁ קִנְאָתֶֽךָ׃)

These two phrases **Will you be angry forever** and **Will your jealousy burn like fire** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. The poetry of the original language was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [How long, Yahweh, will you remain fiercely angry with us]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Until when, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh, please do not stay
(עַד־מָה֥ יְהוָ֗ה)

Asaph is using the question form to express lament and anguish rather than to seek information. 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: [Yahweh, it has been so long!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Will you be angry forever**
UST please do not stay … angry with us
(תֶּאֱנַף֮ לָנֶ֪צַח)

Asaph is using the question form to express anguish at the duration of God's anger rather than to ask for information. 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: [Please do not stay angry forever!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **forever**
UST please do not stay
(לָנֶ֣צַח)

Asaph says **forever** as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [without end]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **Will your jealousy burn like fire**
UST so very … even though we sinned against you by worshiping other gods
(תִּבְעַ֣ר כְּמוֹ־אֵ֣שׁ קִנְאָתֶֽךָ)

Asaph is using the question form to express distress rather than to ask for information. 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: [Do not let your jealousy keep burning like fire!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **your jealousy**
UST even though we sinned against you by worshiping other gods
(קִנְאָתֶֽךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **jealousy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how jealous you are cause us to]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **like fire**
UST so very
(כְּמוֹ־אֵ֣שׁ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **fire** is intense and consuming, so is God's jealousy. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [as intensely as a fire burns]

**Support Reference:** Simile

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| forever | please do not stay |
| your jealousy | even though we sinned against you by worshiping other gods |

# Psalms 79:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Pour out your wrath on the nations that have not known you and on the kingdoms that have not called on your name.* | *The people of other nations do not honor you as God. You should be angry with them and punish them,* |

**ULT Pour out your wrath on the nations that have not known you and on the kingdoms that have not called on your name**

**UST** The people of other nations do not honor you as God. You should be angry with them and punish them

(שְׁפֹךְ חֲמָתְךָ אֶל־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יְדָעוּךָ וְעַל מַמְלָכוֹת אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁמְךָ לֹא קָרָאוּ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request to God rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates a polite request. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please.” For more information on imperatives, see the Psalm 79 Introduction. See how you as a team have decided to translate imperatives and follow that approach here and throughout this Psalm. Alternate translation: [Please pour out your wrath on the nations that have not known you and on the kingdoms that have not called on your name]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Pour out your wrath**

**UST** You should be angry … and punish them

(שְׁפֹךְ חֲמָתְךָ)

Here Asaph is speaking as if God’s wrath were a liquid that he could **pour out**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Unleash your wrath]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Pour out your wrath on the nations that have not known you and on the kingdoms**

**UST** The people of other nations do not honor you as God. You should be angry with them and punish them

(שְׁפֹךְ חֲמָתְךָ אֶל־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יְדָעוּךָ וְעַל מַמְלָכוֹת)

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: [Show the peoples that do not worship you how angry you are and also the kingdoms]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and on the kingdoms that have not called on your name**
UST The people of other nations do not honor you as God … with them
(וְעַל מַמְלָכוֹת אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁמְךָ לֹא קָרָאוּ)

Asaph 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 pour out your wrath on the kingdoms that have not called on your name]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **on your name**
UST do … honor you as God
(בְּשִׁמְךָ)

Here, **name** represents who God is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your wrath | You should be angry … and punish them |
| the nations | The people of other nations |
| have … known you | do … honor you as God |
| the kingdoms | The people of other nations |
| have … called | do … honor you as God |

# Psalms 79:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For one has devoured Jacob, and they have desolated his habitation.* | *because they are the ones who have killed so many Israelites and destroyed the land in which they lived.* |

ULT **For**
UST because
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **one has devoured Jacob**
UST they are the ones who have killed so many Israelites
(אָכַל אֶת־יַעֲקֹב)

Here Asaph is speaking as if the enemy were a wild animal that **devoured** its prey. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [one has destroyed the people of Jacob]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **one has devoured**
UST they are the ones who have killed
(אָכַל)

The pronoun **one** is indefinite and refers to the enemy nations mentioned in verse 6. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the enemy has devoured]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Jacob**
UST so many Israelites
(אֶת־יַעֲקֹב)

Asaph is using the name **Jacob** to represent the nation of Israel, which descended from the patriarch Jacob. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **they have desolated**
UST the land in which they lived
(הֵשַׁמּוּ)

The pronoun **they** shifts from the singular "one" and refers to the enemy nations. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the nations have desolated]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **his habitation**
UST destroyed
(נָוֵהוּ)

The pronoun **his** refers to Jacob, that is, the people of Israel. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Jacob's habitation]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| one has devoured | they are the ones who have killed |
| Jacob | so many Israelites |
| they have desolated | the land in which they lived |

# Psalms 79:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not remember former iniquities against us; hasten, let your compassions meet us, for we have become very weak.* | *Please forgive the wicked things we did in the past. Quickly be merciful to us, because we are desperate.* |

ULT **former iniquities against us**
UST the wicked things we did in the past
(לָ֭נוּ עֲוֹנֹ֣ת רִאשֹׁנִ֑ים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **iniquities**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the wicked things we did in the past]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **let your compassions meet us**
UST be merciful to us
(יְקַדְּמ֖וּנוּ רַחֲמֶ֣יךָ)

Asaph is speaking of **your compassions** as if they were a living thing that could **meet** the people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [show us compassion]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **let your compassions meet us**
UST be merciful to us
(יְקַדְּמ֖וּנוּ רַחֲמֶ֣יךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **compassions**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [come to us with your tender care]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **for we have become very weak**
UST because we are desperate
(כִּ֥י דַלּ֗וֹנוּ מְאֹֽד)

Asaph is giving the reason for his urgent request. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this gives the reason for the preceding request. Alternate translation: [because we have become very weak]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| iniquities | the wicked things … did |
| your compassions | merciful |

# Psalms 79:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Help us, God of our salvation, on account of the glory of your name, and deliver us and cover over our sins for the sake of your name.* | *God, you are the one who saves us, so please help us! Do that for the sake of your glorious reputation. Forgive us for our sins so that people will honor you.* |

**ULT God of our salvation**
**UST** God, you are the one who saves us
(אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ)

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: [God, the one who saves us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT on account of the glory of your name**
**UST** Do that for the sake of your glorious reputation
(עַל־דְּבַר כְּבוֹד־שְׁמֶךָ)

Here, **on account of the glory of your name** marks the purpose for the preceding request. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that your name will be glorified]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

**ULT the glory of your name**
**UST** your glorious reputation
(כְּבוֹד־שְׁמֶךָ)

Here, **name** represents God's reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your glorious reputation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT the glory of your name**
**UST** your glorious reputation
(כְּבוֹד־שְׁמֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [your glorious name]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **our sins**
UST us for our sins
(חַטֹּאתֵינוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **sins**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the wrong things we have done]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **for the sake of your name**
UST so that people will honor you
(לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ)

Here, **for the sake of your name** marks the purpose for covering over their sins. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that people will honor your name]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **for the sake of your name**
UST so that people will honor you
(לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ)

Here, **name** represents God's reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [for the sake of your reputation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God of | God |
| our salvation | you are the one who saves us |
| the glory of | glorious |
| and deliver us | so please help us |
| our sins | us for our sins |

# Psalms 79:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Why should the nations say, "Where {is} their God?" Let the vengeance of the poured-out blood of your servants be known among the nations to our eyes.* | *Do not let the other nations say, "Their God was not able to help them!" We want to see you punish those nations for killing the people who serve you.* |

**ULT Why should the nations say, "Where {is} their God**
**UST** Do not let the other nations say, "Their God was not able to help them
(לָמָּה ׀ יֹאמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם֮ אַיֵּה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם)

Asaph is using the question form to argue that God should act so that the nations will not mock him. 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: [Do not let the nations say that their God cannot help them!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT Where {is} their God**
**UST** Their God was not able to help them
(אַיֵּה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם)

The nations would be using the question form to mock Israel rather than to ask for information. 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: [Their God cannot help them!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT Why should the nations say, "Where {is} their God**
**UST** Do not let the other nations say, "Their God was not able to help them
(לָמָּה ׀ יֹאמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם֮ אַיֵּה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: [Why should the nations ask where their God is]

**Support Reference:** Direct and Indirect Quotations

**ULT {is} their God**
**UST** Their God
(אֱלֹהֵיהֶם)

The pronoun **their** refers to the people of Israel, spoken from the perspective of the nations. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [is the God of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Let the vengeance of the poured-out blood of your servants be known among the nations to our eyes**
UST We want to see you punish those nations for killing the people who serve you
(יִוָּדַע בַּגּוֹיִם לְעֵינֵינוּ נִקְמַת דַּם־עֲבָדֶיךָ הַשָּׁפוּךְ)

The expression **be known among the nations** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Let the nations see you carry out vengeance for killing your servants]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **the vengeance of**
UST punish
(נִקְמַת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **vengeance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how you avenge]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the poured-out blood of your servants**
UST for killing the people who serve you
(דַּם־עֲבָדֶיךָ הַשָּׁפוּךְ)

The psalmist is speaking as if someone had actually **poured out** the **blood** of Yahweh's **servants** from a vessel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the shedding of the blood of your servants]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the poured-out blood of your servants**
UST for killing the people who serve you
(דַּם־עֲבָדֶיךָ הַשָּׁפוּךְ)

Here, **the poured-out blood** represents the violent killing of God's servants. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the killing of your servants]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the poured-out blood of your servants**
UST for killing the people who serve you
(דַּם־עֲבָדֶיךָ הַשָּׁפוּךְ)

The expression **the poured-out blood** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [the blood that the nations have shed]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **to our eyes**
UST We want to see you
(לְעֵינֵינוּ)

Here, **eyes** represents sight and perception. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [so that we can see it]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the nations | the other nations |
| {is} their God | Their God |
| Let … be known | We want to see you |
| the vengeance of | punish |
| your servants | the people who serve you |
| among the nations | those nations |

# Psalms 79:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let the groaning of the prisoner come to your face; according to the greatness of your arm, preserve the sons of death.* | *Listen to the moans of your people who are now captives, and use your great power to save those who are about to die.* |

ULT **the groaning of the prisoner**
UST the moans of your people who are now captives
(אֲנָקַת אָסִיר)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **groaning**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how the prisoners groan]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to your face**
UST Listen to
(לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here, **face** represents God's presence and attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [into your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **according to the greatness of your arm**
UST and use your great power
(כְּגֹדֶל זְרוֹעֲךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **greatness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [your great arm]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your arm**
UST and use your … power
(זְרוֹעֲךָ)

Here, **arm** represents God's power and strength. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **the sons of death**
> UST those who are about to die
> (בְּנֵי תְמוּתָה)

Asaph is using **sons of death** as a common expression to mean “those who are destined to die.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those who are condemned to die]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

# Psalms 79:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And return to our neighbors sevenfold, into their bosom, their reproach {with} which they have reproached you, Lord.* | *Lord, pay back our neighbors directly, seven times over, for the insults they have spoken against you!* |

ULT **sevenfold**
UST seven times over
(שִׁבְעָתַיִם)

Asaph says **sevenfold** as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [many times over]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **into their bosom**
UST directly
(אֶל־חֵיקָם)

Asaph is using **into their bosom** as a common expression to mean "directly and personally to them." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [directly upon them]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **their reproach {with} which they have reproached you**
UST for the insults they have spoken against you
(חֶרְפָּתָם אֲשֶׁר חֵרְפוּךָ)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could put the object **their reproach with which they have reproached you** before the other information in the sentence, so that the reader understands right away what is to be returned. Alternate translation: [And return their reproach with which they have reproached you, Lord, to our neighbors sevenfold, into their bosom]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **their reproach**
UST for the insults
(חֶרְפָּתָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **reproach**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the insults they have spoken]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| to our neighbors | our neighbors |
| their reproach | for the insults |
| their reproach … they have reproached you | for the insults they have spoken against you |
| they have reproached you | they have spoken against you |
| Lord | Lord |

# Psalms 79:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And we, your people and the flock of your pasture, will give thanks to you forever; to generation and generation we will recount your praise.* | *Then we will always thank you. You care for us, your people, the way a shepherd cares for his sheep. Each generation of Israelites will tell their children how wonderful you are.* |

ULT **And we**
UST us
(וַאֲנַחְנוּ)

Asaph places **And we** at the beginning of this verse to mark a shift from petition to a vow of praise. If it would be more natural in your language, you could indicate this transition in another way. Alternate translation: [Then we]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **and the flock of your pasture**
UST the way a shepherd cares for his sheep
(וְצֹאן מַרְעִיתֶךָ)

Here Asaph is speaking of God's people as if they were a **flock** of sheep that God tends in his **pasture**. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the ones you tend and care for]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the flock of your pasture**
UST the way a shepherd cares for his sheep
(וְצֹאן מַרְעִיתֶךָ)

Asaph is using the possessive form to describe a **flock** that is located in God's **pasture**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the flock that feeds in your pasture]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **will give thanks to you forever**
UST Then we will always thank you
(נוֹדֶה לְּךָ֣ לְעוֹלָ֑ם)

This concluding vow of praise signals the end of the psalm. Use the natural form in your language for signaling that a song or poem is ending. Alternate translation: [will always give thanks to you]

**Support Reference:** End of Story

ULT **forever**
UST always
(לְעוֹלָ֑ם)

Asaph says **forever** as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [always]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **to generation and generation**
UST Each generation of Israelites … their children
(לְדֹ֣ר וָדֹ֑ר)

Asaph says **to generation and generation** as an extreme statement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [in every generation that follows]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **to generation and generation**
UST Each generation of Israelites … their children
(לְדֹ֣ר וָדֹ֑ר)

Asaph is using a poetic device found in the original language by repeating the word **generation** to express the idea of an unending succession. This is poetic language. If your language has a way to indicate this kind of poetic repetition, you could use it here. Alternate translation: [from one generation to the next]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **your praise**
UST how wonderful you are
(תְּהִלָּתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how praiseworthy you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and the flock | his sheep |
| forever | always |
| to generation | Each generation of Israelites |
| and generation | their children |
| we will recount | will tell |
| your praise | how wonderful you are |

# Psalms 80

## Psalm 80 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 80 is a psalm of supplication or lament. It includes all the basic elements of that type of psalm except a statement of trust. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the Introduction to the Psalms.

1. Cry for help (1–2)
2. Refrain (3)
3. Description of troubles (4–6)
4. Refrain (7)
5. Description of troubles (8–13)
6. Petition (14–18)
7. Refrain (19)

### Translation Issues in this Psalm

#### Imperatives

Throughout this psalm, the psalmist is requesting things from Yahweh by using an imperative form which may sound like a command in your language. If this would be impolite in your language, then use a form that would be more appropriate for addressing Yahweh with a request.

# Psalms 80:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on “Lilies.” A testimony. Of Asaph; a psalm.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: The tune is “Lilies.” A Levite from the clan of Asaph wrote this song as an appeal to Yahweh for help.* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. See how this is translated in Psalm 4:1. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **A testimony**
UST as an appeal to Yahweh for help
(עֵדוּת)

See how you translated the term **testimony** in the superscription to Psalm 8.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A testimony | as an appeal to Yahweh for help |
| Of Asaph | A Levite from the clan of Asaph wrote |
| a psalm | this song |

# Psalms 80:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Shepherd of Israel, give ear, the one leading Joseph like a flock. Sitter {on} the cherubim, shine forth.* | *God, you are like a shepherd to the people of Israel, so please listen to me. You lead the descendants of Joseph the way a shepherd leads his flock. You were present with us in your temple above the statues of the cherubim; reveal your glory to us again!* |

ULT **Shepherd of Israel**
UST God, you are like a shepherd to the people of Israel
(רֹ֭עֵה יִשְׂרָאֵ֑ל)

Asaph is speaking as if God were a **Shepherd of Israel**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Caretaker of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **give ear**
UST so please listen to me
(הַאֲזִינָה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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. See how you as a team have decided to translate imperatives in the Psalms and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. For more information on how to translate imperatives see the Psalm 80 Introduction. Alternate translation: [please pay attention]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **give ear**
UST so please listen to me
(הַאֲזִינָה)

Asaph is using the phrase **give ear** to mean “listen to me.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the one leading Joseph like a flock**
UST You lead the descendants of Joseph the way a shepherd leads his flock
(נֹהֵג כַּצֹּאן יוֹסֵף)

The point of this comparison is that just as a shepherd leads and cares for a flock, so God leads and cares for the descendants of Joseph. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [the one caring for the descendants of Joseph as a shepherd cares for a flock]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **Joseph**
UST the descendants of Joseph
(יוֹסֵף)

Here, **Joseph** represents all the people of Israel, particularly the northern tribes descended from Joseph. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the descendants of Joseph]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Sitter {on} the cherubim**
UST You were present with us in your temple above the statues of the cherubim
(יֹשֵׁב הַכְּרוּבִים)

Asaph is speaking as if God were one who sits on the cherubim. This refers to God being enthroned above the ark of the covenant. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You who are enthroned above the cherubim]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Shepherd of | God, you are like a shepherd |
| Israel | to the people of Israel |
| Joseph | the descendants of Joseph |
| like a flock | the way a shepherd leads his flock |
| the cherubim | the statues of the cherubim |

# Psalms 80:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the face of Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, awaken your might and come to us for salvation.* | *Just as you moved powerfully through the wilderness right ahead of the tribes of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, come powerfully once again and save us.* |

ULT **To the face of Ephraim**
UST Just as you moved powerfully through the wilderness right ahead of the tribes of Ephraim
(לִפְנֵי אֶפְרַיִם)

Here, **To the face of** represents being in front of or in the presence of these tribes. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [In the presence of Ephraim]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **awaken**
UST once again
(עוֹרְרָה)

Here Asaph is speaking of God displaying his **might** as if it were something that was sleeping and needed to be told to **awaken.** Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [display] or [take action by using]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **your might**
UST powerfully
(אֶת־גְּבוּרָתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **might**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and display your power]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **for salvation**
UST and save
(לִישֵׁעָתָה)

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: [to save us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Ephraim | Ephraim |
| and Benjamin | Benjamin |
| and Manasseh | and Manasseh |
| your might | powerfully |
| for salvation | and save |

# Psalms 80:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God, restore us, and make your face shine and let us be saved.* | *God, make us strong again. Regard us favorably and save us.* |

**ULT and make your face shine and let us be saved**
**UST** Regard us favorably and save us
(וְהָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ וְנִוָּשֵׁעָה)

This phrase indicates that what follows, **let us be saved**, is the purpose or goal of what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [and make your face shine so that we will be saved]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

**ULT and make your face shine**
**UST** Regard us favorably
(וְהָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ)

Asaph is speaking as if God's face were a light that could shine. This represents God showing favor and blessing to his people. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and show us your favor]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and let us be saved**
**UST** and save us
(וְנִוָּשֵׁעָה)

The expression **let us be saved** is a passive verbal form. If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and rescue us]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| restore us | make us strong again |
| and let us be saved | and save us |

# Psalms 80:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, God of armies, until when will you smolder against the prayer of your people?* | *Yahweh, you are the God who commands the heavenly armies. You have been angry with us, and so you have not been doing what we ask when we pray to you. But please now answer our prayers.* |

ULT **God of armies**
UST you are the God who commands the heavenly armies
(אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת)

Here Asaph is using the possessive form **God of armies** to mean "God, the one who commands the armies of heaven." It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [God who commands armies]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **until when will you smolder against the prayer of your people**
UST You have been angry with us, and so you have not been doing what we ask when we pray to you. But please now answer our prayers
(עַד־מָתַי עָשַׁנְתָּ בִּתְפִלַּת עַמֶּךָ)

Asaph is using the question form to express strong emotion. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [You have smoldered against the prayer of your people for far too long!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **will you smolder against the prayer of**
UST You have been angry … and so you have not been doing what we ask when we pray to you … answer our prayers
(עָשַׁנְתָּ בִּתְפִלַּת)

Asaph is speaking as if God's anger were fire that continues to **smolder**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [will you remain angry at]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **against the prayer of your people**
UST with us, and so you have not been doing what we ask when we pray to you … answer our prayers
(בִּתְפִלַּ֣ת עַמֶּ֑ךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **prayer**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [when your people pray to you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| God of armies | you are the God who commands the heavenly armies |
| God of | you are the God |
| against the prayer of | and so you have not been doing what we ask when we pray to you … answer our prayers |

# Psalms 80:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have made them eat bread of tears, and you have made them drink tears {in} triple measure.* | *You have caused us to experience constant sorrow. It feels as if you are punishing us three times as much as we deserve.* |

ULT **You have made them eat bread of tears, and you have made them drink tears {in} triple measure**

UST You have caused us to experience constant sorrow. It feels as if you are punishing us three times as much as we deserve

(הֶאֱכַלְתָּם לֶחֶם דִּמְעָה וַתַּשְׁקֵמוֹ בִּדְמָעוֹת שָׁלִישׁ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [You have made them eat and drink tears abundantly]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **You have made them eat**

UST You have caused us to experience

(הֶאֱכַלְתָּם)

The pronoun **them** refers to the people of Israel. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [You have made the people of Israel eat]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **bread of tears**

UST constant sorrow

(לֶחֶם דִּמְעָה)

Asaph is speaking as if tears were **bread** that people could eat. This means that sorrow has become their constant experience. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [food of sorrow]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and you have made them drink tears {in} triple measure**
UST You have caused us to experience constant sorrow. It feels as if you are punishing us three times as much as we deserve
(וַתַּשְׁקֵמוֹ בִּדְמָעוֹת שָׁלִישׁ)

Asaph is speaking as if **tears** were a liquid that people could drink in great quantity. This means that God has caused the people to experience overwhelming sorrow. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and you have caused them to weep an overwhelming amount]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{in} triple measure**
UST It feels as if you are punishing us three times as much as we deserve
(שָׁלִישׁ)

Asaph uses the phrase **in triple measure** as an exaggeration for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use another way to express this emphasis. Alternate translation: [much more than we deserve]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| bread of | constant sorrow |

# Psalms 80:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have made us strife to our neighbors, and our enemies mock among themselves.* | *The nations around us have become hostile to us, and our enemies make fun of us.* |

**ULT You have made us strife to our neighbors**
**UST** The nations around us have become hostile to us
(תְּשִׂימֵ֣נוּ מָד֣וֹן לִשְׁכֵנֵ֑ינוּ)

The first-person pronoun **us** here indicates a shift from the third person **them** in the previous verse. Asaph is now including himself among the suffering people. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use the same person as in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [You have made them strife to their neighbors]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT strife to our neighbors**
**UST** The nations around us … hostile
(מָד֣וֹן לִשְׁכֵנֵ֑ינוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strife**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a cause of quarreling with our neighbors]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and our enemies mock among themselves**
**UST** and our enemies make fun of us
(וְאֹיְבֵ֥ינוּ יִלְעֲג֗וּ לָמֽוֹ)

Asaph 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 our enemies mock us among themselves]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| strife | hostile |
| to our neighbors | The nations around us |
| and our enemies | and our enemies |
| mock | make fun |

# Psalms 80:7

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *God of armies, restore us, and make your face shine and let us be saved.* | *God, you who command the heavenly armies, make us strong again! Regard us favorably and save us.* |

ULT **God of armies**
UST God, you who command the heavenly armies
(אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת)

Here Asaph is using the possessive form **God of armies** to mean "God, the one who commands the armies of heaven." It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. See how you translated this in verse 4. Alternate translation: [God who commands armies]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **and make your face shine and let us be saved**
UST Regard us favorably and save us
(וְהָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ וְנִוָּשֵׁעָה)

The word **and** indicates that what follows, **let us be saved**, is the purpose or goal of what came before. See how you translated this in 80:3. Alternate translation: [and make your face shine so that we will be saved]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **and make your face shine**
UST Regard us favorably
(וְהָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ)

Asaph is speaking as if God's face were a light that could shine. See how you translated this in 80:3. Alternate translation: [and show us your favor]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and let us be saved**
UST and save us
(וְנִוָּשֵׁעָה)

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and rescue us]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God of armies | God, you who command the heavenly armies |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| restore us<br>and let us be saved | make us strong again<br>and save us |

# Psalms 80:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You pulled up a vine from Egypt; you drove out nations and planted it.* | *You brought your people out of Egypt as if you were transplanting a vine from there. You forced other nations to leave this land and you allowed your people to settle in it, as if you were planting that vine here.* |

ULT **You pulled up a vine from Egypt; you drove out nations and planted it**
UST You brought your people out of Egypt as if you were transplanting a vine from there. You forced other nations to leave this land and you allowed your people to settle in it, as if you were planting that vine here
(גֶּפֶן מִמִּצְרַיִם תַּסִּיעַ תְּגָרֵשׁ גּוֹיִם וַתִּטָּעֶהָ)

The structure here indicates events in sequence. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could show this relationship by using a fuller phrase. Alternate translation: [You pulled up a vine from Egypt, and then you drove out nations and planted it]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT **You pulled up a vine from Egypt**
UST You brought your people out of Egypt as if you were transplanting a vine from there
(גֶּפֶן מִמִּצְרַיִם תַּסִּיעַ)

Asaph is speaking of Israel as if it were a **vine**. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [You pulled up a nation like a vine from Egypt]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a vine | a vine |
| from Egypt | out of Egypt |
| nations | other nations |
| and planted it | and you allowed your people to settle in it, as if you were planting that vine here |

# Psalms 80:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You cleared to the face of it, and it rooted its roots and filled the land.* | *You removed the foreign nations, just as a farmer clears the ground for a new plant. This enabled your people to become a strong nation that occupied the entire country.* |

ULT **You cleared to the face of it, and it rooted its roots and filled the land**
UST You removed the foreign nations, just as a farmer clears the ground for a new plant. This enabled your people to become a strong nation that occupied the entire country
(פִּנִּיתָ לְפָנֶיהָ וַתַּשְׁרֵשׁ שָׁרָשֶׁיהָ וַתְּמַלֵּא־אָרֶץ)

The structure here indicates events in sequence. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could show this relationship by using a fuller phrase. Alternate translation: [Then you cleared the ground for it, and it took root and filled the land]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT **to the face of it**
UST for a new plant
(לְפָנֶיהָ)

The pronoun **it** refers to the vine (representing Israel). It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [to the face of the vine]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and it rooted its roots and filled the land**
UST This enabled your people to become a strong nation that occupied the entire country
(וַתַּשְׁרֵשׁ שָׁרָשֶׁיהָ וַתְּמַלֵּא־אָרֶץ)

Asaph is speaking of Israel as if it were a vine that became established and spread. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [and the people became established and filled the land]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and it rooted its roots**
UST This enabled your people to become a strong nation
(וַתַּשְׁרֵשׁ שָׁרָשֶׁיהָ)

The phrase **rooted its roots** is an idiom using a verb and noun from the same root. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and it became deeply rooted]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the land | country |

# Psalms 80:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The mountains were covered {with} its shadow, and its branches {were} cedars of God.* | *It was as if that vine became so large that its shadow darkened the mountains and its branches were like great cedar trees.* |

**ULT The mountains were covered {with} its shadow**
**UST** It was as if that vine became so large that its shadow darkened the mountains
(כָּסּוּ הָרִים צִלָּהּ)

Asaph is speaking of Israel as if it were a vine whose shadow covered the mountains. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [The people spread even over the mountains]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT The mountains were covered {with} its shadow**
**UST** It was as if that vine became so large that its shadow darkened the mountains
(כָּסּוּ הָרִים צִלָּהּ)

The expression **were covered** is a passive verbal form. If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Its shadow covered the mountains]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT and its branches {were} cedars of God**
**UST** and its branches were like great cedar trees
(וַעֲנָפֶיהָ אַרְזֵי־אֵל)

Asaph is speaking of Israel as if it were a vine whose branches were like the mighty cedars. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [and the people became as strong as the mighty cedars]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{were} cedars of God**
UST were like great cedar trees
(אַרְזֵי־אֵֽל)

Asaph is using the possessive form to describe the **cedars** as being characterized by extraordinary greatness, as if they belong to God. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [were very great cedars]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {were} cedars | were like … cedar trees |
| of God | great |

# Psalms 80:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *It sent out its branches to the sea, and its shoots to the River.* | *They controlled the territory from the Great Sea in the west to the Euphrates River in the east.* |

**ULT It sent out its branches to the sea**
**UST** They controlled the territory from the Great Sea in the west
(תְּשַׁלַּח קְצִירָהּ עַד־יָם)

Asaph is speaking of Israel as if it were a vine that **sent out its branches**. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this in another way. Alternate translation: [The people extended their territory]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the sea, and its shoots to the River**
**UST** They controlled the territory … the Great Sea in the west to the Euphrates River in the east
(יָם וְאֶל־נָהָר יְנִקוֹתֶיהָ)

Asaph is referring to the entire promised land by naming its two extreme boundaries, **the sea** (the Mediterranean Sea in the west) and **the River** (the Euphrates River in the east). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the Mediterranean Sea, and its shoots to the Euphrates River]

**Support Reference:** Merism

**ULT and its shoots to the River**
**UST** They controlled the territory … to the Euphrates River in the east
(וְאֶל־נָהָר יְנִקוֹתֶיהָ)

Asaph 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 it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [and it sent out its shoots to the River]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the sea | the Great Sea in the west |
| the River | the Euphrates River in the east |

# Psalms 80:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Why have you broken down its walls, so that all the ones passing {on} the way pluck it?* | *But now you have allowed enemies to invade and conquer us, as if you had torn down a fence that protected that vine, so that everyone who walked past it could take whatever fruit they wanted from it.* |

ULT **Why have you broken down its walls, so that all the ones passing {on} the way pluck it**
UST But now you have allowed enemies to invade and conquer us, as if you had torn down a fence that protected that vine, so that everyone who walked past it could take whatever fruit they wanted from it
(לָמָה פָּרַצְתָּ גְדֵרֶיהָ וְאָרוּהָ כָּל־עֹבְרֵי דָרֶךְ)

In this context, the second phrase states the result of what the first phrase describes. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a result of what came before. Alternate translation: [You have broken down its walls with the result that all the ones passing on the way pluck it]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **Why have you broken down its walls**
UST But now you have allowed enemies to invade and conquer us, as if you had torn down a fence that protected that vine
(לָמָה פָּרַצְתָּ גְדֵרֶיהָ)

Asaph is using the question form to express strong emotion. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [You should not have broken down its walls]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **have you broken down its walls**
UST you have allowed enemies to invade and conquer us, as if you had torn down a fence that protected that vine
(פָּרַצְתָּ גְדֵרֶיהָ)

Asaph is speaking as if Israel were a vineyard with **walls** that God has broken down. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [have you removed its protection]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **its walls**
UST a fence that protected that vine
(גְּדֵרֶיהָ)

The pronoun **its** refers to the vine (representing Israel). It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the walls of the vine] or [our walls]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **so that all the ones passing {on} the way pluck it**
UST so that everyone who walked past it could take whatever fruit they wanted from it
(וְאָרוּהָ כָּל־עֹבְרֵי דָּרֶךְ)

The phrase **all the ones passing on the way** is a generalization to emphasize how vulnerable the vine has become. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [so that many people passing by pluck it]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

# Psalms 80:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The boar from the forest ravages it, and the creature of the field grazes on it.* | *Those enemies have destroyed the country, as if a wild boar had chewed up that vine and wild animals ate what remained.* |

ULT **The boar from the forest ravages it, and the creature of the field grazes on it**
UST Those enemies have destroyed the country, as if a wild boar had chewed up that vine and wild animals ate what remained
(יְכַרְסְמֶנָּה חֲזִיר מִיָּעַר וְזִיז שָׂדַי יִרְעֶנָּה)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Wild animals from the forest and the field ravage and consume it]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **The boar from the forest ravages it, and the creature of the field grazes on it**
UST Those enemies have destroyed the country, as if a wild boar had chewed up that vine and wild animals ate what remained
(יְכַרְסְמֶנָּה חֲזִיר מִיָּעַר וְזִיז שָׂדַי יִרְעֶנָּה)

Asaph continues to draw an extended comparison between the nation of Israel, and a vineyard planted by a gardener. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the comparison. [Their enemies have destroyed your people like wild animals that root and destroy a vineyard]

**Support Reference:** Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

ULT **ravages it … grazes on it**
UST Those enemies have destroyed the country, as if … had chewed up that vine … ate what remained
(יְכַרְסְמֶנָּה & יִרְעֶנָּה)

The pronoun **it** refers to the vine, which represents Israel. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [ravages the vine … grazes on it]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and the creature of | and … animals |

# Psalms 80:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God of armies, return, please. Look down from heaven and see, and visit this vine,* | *God, commander of the heavenly armies, please help us again! Look down from heaven and see what is happening to us! Come and care for your people, who are like a vine that you planted* |

**ULT God of armies**
**UST** God, commander of the heavenly armies
(אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת)

Here, **God of armies** describes God as the one who commands the armies of heaven. See how you translated this in 80:4. Alternate translation: [God who commands armies]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT and visit this vine**
**UST** Come and care for your people, who are like a vine that you planted
(וּפִקְדִּ֗ גֶּ֥פֶן זֹֽאת)

Asaph is speaking of Israel as if it were a **vine**. Your language may have a comparable expression you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and care for this people]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God of armies | God, commander of the heavenly armies |
| return | help us again |
| please | please |
| from heaven | from heaven |
| vine | your people, who are like a vine |

# Psalms 80:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *even the stock that your right hand planted, and on the son you strengthened for yourself.* | *and worked hard to make sure that it would grow well. Your people are also like your own son whom you helped grow up to be strong.* |

ULT **even the stock that your right hand planted**
UST and worked hard to make sure that it would grow well
(וְכַנָּה אֲשֶׁר־נָטְעָה יְמִינֶךָ)

In the phrase **even the stock that your right hand has planted**, Asaph continues to extend the comparison between Israel and a vine. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the comparison. Alternate translation: [even the nation that you have established]

**Support Reference:** Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

ULT **your right hand planted**
UST and worked hard to make sure that … would grow well
(נָטְעָה יְמִינֶךָ)

Here, **your right hand** represents God's power. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you powerfully planted]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the son**
UST your own son
(בֵּן)

Here, **the son** could refer to: (1) the vine, representing the people of Israel. Alternate translation: [the people] or [the nation] or (2) a particular leader of the people of Israel. Alternate translation: [the leader]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| planted | to make sure that … would grow well |

# Psalms 80:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *It is burned with fire, it is cut down; from the rebuke of your face they perish.* | *But now, because you do not regard them favorably, their enemies are destroying them as if someone had cut down that vine and burned it.* |

ULT **It is burned with fire, it is cut down**
UST as if someone had cut down that vine and burned it
(שְׂרֻפָ֣ה בָאֵ֣שׁ כְּסוּחָ֑ה)

Asaph is speaking of Israel's destruction as if the vine had been **burned with fire** and **cut down**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [It is destroyed, it is cut off]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **It is burned with fire, it is cut down**
UST as if someone had cut down that vine and burned it
(שְׂרֻפָ֣ה בָאֵ֣שׁ כְּסוּחָ֑ה)

The expressions **It is burned with fire** and **it is cut down** are passive verbal expressions. If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Enemies have burned it with fire and cut it down]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **from the rebuke of your face**
UST But now, because you do not regard them favorably
(מִגַּעֲרַ֖ת פָּנֶ֣יךָ)

Here, **your face** represents God's presence and judgment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [because you rebuke them]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **from the rebuke of**
UST But now, because you do not regard them favorably
(מִגַּעֲרַת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **rebuke**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [because you are angry with them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **they perish**
UST their enemies are destroying them
(יֹאבֵדוּ)

The pronoun shifts from the singular **it** (the vine) to the plural **they** (the people of Israel). It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the people of Israel perish]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from the rebuke of | But now, because you do not regard them favorably |
| they perish | their enemies are destroying them |

# Psalms 80:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let your hand be on the man of your right hand, on the son of man you strengthened for yourself.* | *Even though we are human, we are like your own son whom you helped grow up to be strong, so please help us with your power. Restore us to a position of honor.* |

ULT **Let your hand be on**
UST so please help us with your power
(תְּהִי־יָדְךָ עַל)

Here, **hand** represents power and protection. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Let your protection be on]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the man of your right hand … the son of man you strengthened for yourself**
UST Even though we are human, we are like your own son whom you helped grow up to be strong … with … Restore us to a position of honor
(אִישׁ יְמִינֶךָ & בֶּן־אָדָם אִמַּצְתָּ לָךְ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [the one whom you have chosen and strengthened]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the man of your right hand, on the son of man you strengthened for yourself**
UST Even though we are human, we are like your own son whom you helped grow up to be strong … with … Restore us to a position of honor
(אִישׁ יְמִינֶךָ עַל־בֶּן־אָדָם אִמַּצְתָּ לָךְ)

The expressions **on the man of your right hand** and **on the son of man you strengthened for yourself** both describe the same figure. This could refer to: (1) the nation of Israel as a whole, Alternate translation: [on the people at your right hand, on the ones you strengthened for yourself] or (2) to a particular leader or king. Alternate translation: [on the man of your right hand, on the one you strengthened for yourself]

ULT **the man of your right hand**
UST with … Restore us to a position of honor
(אִישׁ יְמִינֶךָ)

Here, **right hand** represents a position of strength and honor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [on the man you have placed in a position of honor]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the son of man**
UST Even though we are human, we are like your own son
(בֶּן־אָדָם)

Here Asaph is using the phrase **son of man** as a common expression of the culture to indicate a person that has the characteristic of being human. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the human being]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the son of man | Even though we are human, we are like your own son |

# Psalms 80:18

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And we will not turn back from you; revive us, and we will call on your name.* | *Then we will not worship other gods again. Give us new life, and we will worship only you.* |

ULT **And we will not turn back from you**
UST Then we will not worship other gods again
(וְלֹא־נָסֹוג מִמֶּךָּ)

Here, **And** introduces a vow or promise that Asaph makes as a consequence of God's intervention. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [Then we will not turn back from you]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **And we will not turn back**
UST Then we will not worship … gods again
(וְלֹא־נָסֹוג)

Asaph is emphasizing a positive meaning by using a negative word, **not**, together with the phrase **turn back from you**. He means that if God acts on their behalf, they will continue to live the way God wants his people to live. If it would be helpful in your language, you could emphasize the positive meaning in a strong way. Alternate translation: [And we will continue to live the way you want your people to live]

**Support Reference:** Litotes

ULT **and we will call on your name**
UST and we will worship only you
(וּבְשִׁמְךָ נִקְרָא)

Here, **your name** represents God himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and we will worship you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| we will call | and we will worship only you |

# Psalms 80:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, God of armies, restore us. Make your face shine, and let us be saved.* | *Yahweh, the God who commands the heavenly armies, make us strong again! Regard us favorably and save us.* |

ULT **God of armies**
UST the God who commands the heavenly armies
(אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת)

Here, **God of armies** describes God as the one who commands the armies of heaven. See how you translated this in 80:4. Alternate translation: [God who commands armies]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **Make your face shine, and let us be saved**
UST Regard us favorably and save us
(הָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ וְנִוָּשֵׁעָה)

Here, **and** marks **let us be saved** as the goal or purpose of **Make your face shine**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. See how you translated this in 80:3. Alternate translation: [Make your face shine so that we will be saved]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **Make your face shine**
UST Regard us favorably
(הָאֵר פָּנֶיךָ)

Asaph is speaking as if God's face were a light that could shine. See how you translated this in 80:3. Alternate translation: [Show us your favor]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and let us be saved**
UST and save us
(וְנִוָּשֵׁעָה)

The phrase **let us be saved** is a passive verbal form. If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and rescue us]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| God of armies | the God who commands the heavenly armies |
| restore us | make us strong again |
| and let us be saved | and save us |

# Psalms 81

## Psalm 81 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 81 begins like a psalm of praise. However, it then presents a direct address from Yahweh. He recalls that he delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, but they nevertheless disobeyed him. He then describes how he would bless the Israelites if they did obey him. Many interpreters believe that this psalm was written for the occasion of one of the annual festivals, when many Israelites would be at the temple in Jerusalem and hear its message of warning and promise. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the Introduction to Psalms.

1. Call to worship (1–3)
2. Reason to worship (4–5)
3. Yahweh testifies against the Israelites (6–12)
4. Yahweh says how he would bless the Israelites (13–16)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Parallelisms

Parallelisms arise when two phrases occur together which mean about the same thing. The second phrase emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea using different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine the phrases and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one and not saying something additional. See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. For more information, see the Introduction to the Psalms.

## Imperatives

The ULT uses the imperative to show that a speaker is expressing a desire that something happen or that someone do something. When Asaph says in verse 1, “Shout joyfully to God”, he means that it is his desire that the people should do this. Translate this form in the most natural way in your language to indicate that the speaker is expressing what he wants someone to do or what he wishes someone would do.

# Psalms 81:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on Gittith; of Asaph.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: Accompany the song with a stringed instrument. A Levite from the clan of Asaph wrote this song.* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **Gittith**
UST a stringed instrument
(הַגִּתִּית)

See how you translated the term **Gittith** in the superscription to Psalm 8.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of Asaph | the song … A Levite from … clan of Asaph wrote this |

# Psalms 81:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Shout joyfully to God, our strength; shout out to the God of Jacob.* | *Sing joyfully to God, who makes us strong! Shout with joy to the God whom we Israelites worship!* |

ULT **Shout joyfully to God, our strength; shout out to the God of Jacob**
UST Sing joyfully to God, who makes us strong! Shout with joy to the God whom we Israelites worship
(הַרְנִינוּ לֵאלֹהִים עוּזֵּנוּ הָרִיעוּ לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב)

These two phrases **Shout joyfully to God, our strength** and **shout out to the God of Jacob** mean basically the same thing. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. For more information on translating parallel phrases, see the Introduction to this psalm. Alternate translation: [Shout with great joy to God who is the strength of Jacob's descendants]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Shout joyfully to God, our strength; shout out**
UST Sing joyfully to God, who makes us strong! Shout with joy
(הַרְנִינוּ לֵאלֹהִים עוּזֵּנוּ הָרִיעוּ)

Asaph is saying what he wants the people of Israel to do. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about this form of speech and follow the decision of your team, here and throughout this psalm, of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [I desire that all shout joyfully to God, our strength; you should all shout out]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **our strength**
UST who makes us strong
(עוּזֵּנוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the one who strengthens us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to God | to God |
| to the God | to the God whom … worship |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of Jacob | we Israelites |

# Psalms 81:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Raise a song and put forth the tambourine, the pleasant harp with the lyre.* | *Start playing music! Beat tambourines and play lyres and pleasant-sounding harps.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the … harp | harps |
| pleasant | pleasant-sounding |
| the lyre | lyres |

# Psalms 81:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Blow a shofar at the new moon, at the full moon for the day of our festival.* | *Blow a ram's horn for the new-moon festival {each month} and on the day of the full moon when the Festival of Shelters begins.* |

**ULT at the full moon**
UST the full moon when … begins
(בַּכֶּסֶה)

Asaph 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: [also blow a shofar at the full moon]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a shofar | a ram's horn |
| at the new moon | for the new-moon festival {each month} |
| our festival | the Festival of Shelters |

# Psalms 81:4

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *For {it is} a statute for Israel, a judgment of the God of Jacob.* | *Do this because the God whom we Israelite people worship has commanded us to do it.* |

**ULT For {it is} a statute for Israel**
**UST** Do this because … we Israelite people … has commanded us to do it
(כִּי חָק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because it is a statute for Israel]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT { … it is} a statute for Israel, a judgment of the God of Jacob**
**UST** the God whom we Israelite people worship has commanded us to do it
(חָק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא מִשְׁפָּט לֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the ideas of **statute** and **judgment**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [it is something that God decreed, what the God of Jacob decided]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| a statute | has commanded us to do |
| for Israel | we Israelite people |
| a judgment of | has commanded us to do |
| the God of | the God whom … worship |
| Jacob | we Israelite people |

# Psalms 81:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He set it as a testimony in Joseph when he went out over the land of Egypt, {where} I heard a lip I did not know.* | *God told our ancestors to observe these festivals when he delivered them from slavery to the Egyptians, a people whose language they did not understand.* |

**ULT He set it as a testimony in Joseph when he went out**
**UST** God told our ancestors to observe these festivals when he delivered them from slavery
(עֵדוּת ׀ בְּיהוֹסֵף שָׂמוֹ בְּצֵאתוֹ)

The pronoun **He** refers to God, and the pronoun **he** in **when he went out** refers to Joseph (representing Israel). It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [God set it as a testimony in Joseph when Israel went out]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT as a testimony**
**UST** to observe these festivals
(עֵדוּת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **testimony**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [as something to be observed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT in Joseph**
**UST** our ancestors
(בְּיהוֹסֵף)

The name **Joseph** represents the people of Israel, particularly the tribes descended from Joseph. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [among the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT a lip**
**UST** a people whose language
(שְׂפַת)

Here, **lip** represents language or speech. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [a tongue]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| as a testimony | to observe these festivals |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in Joseph | our ancestors |
| the land of | the Egyptians |
| Egypt | the Egyptians |
| I did … know | they did … understand |

# Psalms 81:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“I removed his shoulder from the burden; his palms passed from the basket.* | *{Yahweh says,} “They had to hold on to heavy baskets full of bricks as they carried them on their shoulders, but I freed them from doing that.* |

ULT **I removed his shoulder from the burden**
UST Yahweh says … as they carried them on their shoulders, but I freed them from doing that
(הֲסִירֹתִי מִסֶּבֶל שִׁכְמֹו)

This is the beginning of what Yahweh said. His speech continues through verse 16. You may wish to mark the words of this speech with a first-level quotation mark at the beginning and end of them or with some other punctuation or convention that your language uses to indicate a first-level quotation.

**Support Reference:** Quote Markings

ULT **I removed his shoulder from the burden**
UST Yahweh says … as they carried them on their shoulders, but I freed them from doing that
(הֲסִירֹתִי מִסֶּבֶל שִׁכְמֹו)

The phrase **I removed his shoulder from the burden** represents Yahweh completely liberating Israel from slavery in Egypt. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I freed him from his slavery]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **his shoulder from the burden; his palms passed from the basket**
UST { … Yahweh says,} “They had to hold on to heavy baskets full of bricks as they carried them on their shoulders, but I freed them from doing that
(מִסֶּבֶל שִׁכְמֹו כַּפָּיו מִדּוּד תַּעֲבֹרְנָה)

The pronouns **his** refer to the people of Israel collectively. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the shoulder of my people from the burden; their palms passed from the basket]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

# Psalms 81:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In distress you called, and I delivered you; I answered you from the secret place of thunder. I tested you at the waters of Meribah. Selah* | *When they were suffering, they cried to me for help, and I rescued them. {At Mount Sinai,} I spoke to them from dark clouds {and gave them laws}. Then I saw whether they trusted me when they complained at Meribah that they had no water. Selah* |

ULT **In distress**
UST When they were suffering
(בַּצָּרָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distress**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [When you were suffering]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **from the secret place of thunder**
UST At Mount Sinai … from dark clouds
(בְּסֵתֶר רַעַם)

Yahweh is speaking as if he were concealed within **the secret place of thunder**. This represents God's awesome and hidden presence in the storm. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the thunderstorm where I was hidden]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **from the secret place of thunder**
UST At Mount Sinai … from dark clouds
(בְּסֵתֶר רַעַם)

Yahweh is using this possessive form to describe a hidden place that is associated with thunder. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [from the place hidden by thunder]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **Meribah**
UST Meribah
(מְרִיבָה)

The word **Meribah** is the name of a desert place.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| In distress | When they were suffering |
| you called | they cried to me for help |
| and I delivered you | and I rescued them |
| I tested you | Then I saw whether they trusted me |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 81:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hear, my people, and let me testify against you. Israel, if you would listen to me!* | *Listen to me, my people, while I warn you! I wish that you Israelites would pay attention to me!* |

ULT **Israel, if you would listen to me**
UST I wish that you Israelites would pay attention to me
(יִשְׂרָאֵל אִם־תִּשְׁמַע־לִי)

Here, **if you would listen to me** introduces the first part of a possible condition. Yahweh will only do the things described in verses 13–16 if this condition happens. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that could happen.

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

ULT **Israel, if you would listen to me**
UST I wish that you Israelites would pay attention to me
(יִשְׂרָאֵל אִם־תִּשְׁמַע־לִי)

Yahweh is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling, a deep longing for Israel to obey. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. If not, you could say what Yahweh was feeling. Alternate translation: [Israel, I so deeply wish you would listen to me]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and let me testify | while I warn |
| Israel | you Israelites |

# Psalms 81:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *There shall not be a strange god among you, and you shall not bow down to a god of foreignness.* | *You must not make any idols that represent any of the gods that other nations worship. You must never bow down to worship any of those gods.* |

ULT **to a god of foreignness**
UST to worship any of those gods
(לְאֵ֣ל נֵכָֽר)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **foreignness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to a foreign god]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a … god | any of the gods that … worship |
| you … shall … bow down | You must … bow down |
| to a god of | to worship … gods |
| foreignness | any of those |

# Psalms 81:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I {am} Yahweh your God, the one having brought you up from the land of Egypt. Open wide your mouth, and I will fill it.* | *I am Yahweh your God. I am the one who rescued you from slavery in Egypt. If you depend on me, I will provide everything that you need.* |

> ULT **Open wide your mouth, and I will fill it**
> UST If you depend on me, I will provide everything that you need
> (הַרְחֶב־פִּיךָ וַאֲמַלְאֵהוּ)

Yahweh is speaking as if Israel's dependence on him were opening a mouth wide to be fed. This represents trusting God to provide abundantly. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Depend on me completely, and I will provide for you abundantly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **Open wide your mouth, and I will fill it**
> UST If you depend on me, I will provide everything that you need
> (הַרְחֶב־פִּיךָ וַאֲמַלְאֵהוּ)

The word translated as **Open wide** is an imperative, but it communicates a condition rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a condition for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates a condition. Alternate translation: [If you open wide your mouth, then I will fill it]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I {am} Yahweh | I am Yahweh |
| your God | your God |
| from the land of | from slavery in |
| Egypt | Egypt |

# Psalms 81:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But my people did not listen to my voice, and Israel did not submit to me.* | *However, my people would not listen to what I said; the Israelites refused to obey me.* |

ULT **But my people did not listen**
UST However, my people would not listen
(וְלֹא־שָׁמַע עַמִּי)

Yahweh uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between the commands he gave in verses 8–10 and the response of the people. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [However, my people did not listen]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **to my voice**
UST to what I said
(לְקוֹלִי)

Here, **voice** represents Yahweh's commands and instructions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [to my commands]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and Israel | the Israelites |
| did … submit | to obey |

# Psalms 81:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *So I sent them away in the stubbornness of their heart; they walked in their counsels.* | *So I let them do whatever they stubbornly wanted to do; they did whatever they had decided to do.* |

ULT **So I sent them away**
UST So I let them do
(וָאֲשַׁלְּחֵהוּ)

The term translated as **So** indicates that what follows is a result of what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [Therefore I sent them away]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **in the stubbornness of their heart**
UST whatever they stubbornly wanted to do
(בִּשְׁרִירוּת לִבָּם)

Here, **heart** represents the will and inner attitude of the people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in the stubbornness of their wills]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in the stubbornness of their heart**
UST whatever they stubbornly wanted to do
(בִּשְׁרִירוּת לִבָּם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **stubbornness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with their stubborn hearts]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **they walked in their counsels**
UST they did whatever they had decided to do
(יֵלְכוּ בְּמוֹעֲצוֹתֵיהֶם)

Yahweh is speaking of how the people lived as if that were a path that they were walking along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they lived according to their own plans]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in their counsels**
UST whatever they had decided to do
(בְּמוֹעֲצוֹתֵיהֶם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **counsels**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the way they themselves chose]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in their counsels | whatever they had decided to do |

# Psalms 81:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *If only my people were listening to me, {if} Israel would walk in my ways!* | *I wish that my people would obey me! Yes, I wish that the Israelites would live the way I want them to!* |

ULT **{ … If only my people were listening to me, if} Israel would walk in my ways**
UST I wish that my people would obey me! Yes, I wish that the Israelites would live the way I want them to
(לוּ עַמִּי שֹׁמֵעַ לִי יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּדְרָכַי יְהַלֵּכוּ)

Yahweh is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling, a deep longing for Israel to obey. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. If not, you could say what Yahweh was feeling. Alternate translation: [How I long for my people to listen to me and for Israel to follow my ways]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **{if} Israel would walk in my ways**
UST Yes, I wish that the Israelites would live the way I want them to
(יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּדְרָכַי יְהַלֵּכוּ)

Yahweh 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 helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Israel would live according to my commands]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {if} Israel | Yes, I wish that the Israelites |

# Psalms 81:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *As a little {thing} I would subdue their enemies, and I would turn my hand against their adversaries.* | *Then I would use my power against those who are opposing them, and I would easily defeat their enemies.* |

**ULT I would turn my hand**
UST I would use my power
(אַשִּׁיב יָדִי)

Here, **hand** represents Yahweh's power and ability to act. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I would use my power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their enemies | their enemies |
| their adversaries | those who are opposing them |

# Psalms 81:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The haters of Yahweh would cringe before him, and their time would be forever.* | *Then those who had rebelled against Yahweh would bow down fearfully in front of him {to submit to his authority}. But the Israelites would always prosper.* |

**ULT would cringe before him**
**UST** would bow down fearfully in front of him {to submit to his authority}
(יְכַחֲשׁוּ־לוֹ)

The pronoun **him** refers to Yahweh. Even though Yahweh is speaking in the first person, he refers to himself in the third person here. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [would cringe before Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and their time would be forever**
**UST** But the Israelites would always prosper
(וְיִהְיֵ עִתָּם לְעוֹלָם)

Here, **time** represents the duration of their fate or condition. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and their punishment would last forever]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| their time | the Israelites would … prosper |
| forever | always |

# Psalms 81:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he would feed him with the fat of the wheat, and I would satisfy you with honey from the rock."* | *I would make their fields produce abundant crops, and they would even find all the honey they wanted in wild bee hives in rocky places."* |

ULT **And he would feed him**
UST I would make their fields produce
(וַיַּאֲכִילֵהוּ)

The pronouns **he** and **him** refer to Yahweh and Israel respectively. Even though Yahweh is speaking in the first person, he uses the third person here. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [I would feed Israel]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **with the fat of the wheat**
UST abundant crops
(מֵחֶלֶב חִטָּה)

Here, **fat** represents the best and richest portion of something. Yahweh is speaking as if the finest wheat had a rich fat. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with the finest wheat]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **with the fat of the wheat**
UST abundant crops
(מֵחֶלֶב חִטָּה)

Yahweh is using this possessive form to describe the richest part of the wheat. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the richest part of the wheat]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **and I would satisfy you with honey from the rock**
UST and they would even find all the honey they wanted in wild bee hives in rocky places
(וּמִצּוּר דְּבַשׁ אַשְׂבִּיעֶךָּ)

The pronoun **you** marks an abrupt shift from the third person **him** earlier in the verse to the second person. Both refer to the people of Israel. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [I would satisfy them with honey from the rock]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the wheat | crops |
| with honey | honey |

# Psalms 82

## Psalm 82 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 82, like Psalm 81, seems to have been written for the occasion of one of the annual festivals, when many Israelites would have been at the temple in Jerusalem and heard its message of challenge and warning. It depicts God convening an assembly of rulers and passing judgment against them for failing to ensure justice.

1. God takes his place of authority in this assembly (1)
2. God demands that these rulers judge justly (2–4)
3. God passes judgment against these rulers (5–7)
4. The psalmist asks God to judge the earth (8)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Translation of the term “gods”

The psalmist describes these rulers as “gods” in verse 1, and God says to them “You are gods” in verse 6. That has led many interpreters to conclude that this is a depiction of a divine assembly in heaven. However, that same Hebrew term can also mean “judges,” as in Exodus 21:6 and 22:8, so other interpreters understand this as a depiction of God summoning human judges and indicting them for not upholding justice. If possible, translate this psalm in a way that allows for either interpretation. The UST models one way to do that.

#### Parallelisms

Parallelisms arise when two clauses occur together which mean the same thing. The second clause emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea using different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine the phrases and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the clauses with a word that shows that the second clause is repeating the first one and not saying something

additional. See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of clauses in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing.

# Psalms 82:1

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *A psalm. Of Asaph. God is standing in the congregation of God; in the midst of gods he judges:* | *A Levite from the clan of Asaph wrote this song. God has taken his place in the assembly that he governs; he pronounces judgment on the rulers there.* |

ULT **is standing**
UST has taken his place
(נִצָּב)

The expression **is standing** was a common expression meaning to take one's position of authority in order to act. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [takes his position of authority]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **in the midst of gods**
UST on the rulers there
(בְּקֶרֶב אֱלֹהִים)

The term "god," when applied to a being other than Yahweh, can refer to an idol, but, as here, it can also refer to any lesser spirit being. Alternate translation: [in the midst of the spirit beings]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| A psalm | this song |
| Of Asaph | A Levite from the clan of Asaph wrote |
| God | God |
| in the congregation of | in the assembly |
| God | that he governs |
| of gods | rulers |
| he judges | he pronounces judgment |

# Psalms 82:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“Until when will you judge {with} injustice and lift up the faces of the wicked? Selah* | *He says, “You must stop making unjust decisions and favoring wicked people! Selah* |

ULT **Until when will you judge {with} injustice and lift up the faces of the wicked**
UST He says, “You must stop making unjust decisions and favoring wicked people
(עַד־מָתַי תִּשְׁפְּטוּ־עָוֶל וּפְנֵי רְשָׁעִים תִּשְׂאוּ)

Asaph is using the question form to rebuke these judges for their corrupt rulings. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for this purpose, you could translate these questions as statements or exclamations. Alternate translation: [You must stop judging with injustice and stop making rulings that favor the wicked!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **{with} injustice**
UST unjust
(עָוֶל)

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: [unjustly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and lift up the faces of the wicked**
UST and favoring wicked people
(וּפְנֵי רְשָׁעִים תִּשְׂאוּ)

The expression **lift up the faces of the wicked** was a common expression meaning “to show partiality or favoritism.” If it would be helpful for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and show partiality to wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **wicked**
UST wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

Asaph 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: [people who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| will you judge | making … decisions |
| {with} injustice | unjust |
| wicked | wicked people |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 82:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Judge the poor and the orphan; vindicate the poor and the destitute.* | *Defend poor people and orphans, and decide cases fairly for people who have no one else to help them.* |

ULT **the poor and the orphan; vindicate the poor and the destitute**
UST poor people and orphans, and decide cases fairly for people who have no one else to help them
(דַּל וְיָתוֹם עָנִי וָרָשׁ הַצְדִּיקוּ)

Asaph is using the adjectives **poor**, **orphan**, and **destitute** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these adjectives with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [the poor people and the fatherless children; vindicate the poor people and the destitute people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Judge | Defend |

# Psalms 82:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Rescue the poor and the needy; deliver {them} from the hand of the wicked.* | *Save defenseless people from what wicked people want to do to them!* |

**ULT the poor and the needy; deliver {them} from the hand of the wicked**
UST Save defenseless people from what wicked people want to do to them
(דַּל וְאֶבְיוֹן מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים הַצִּילוּ)

Asaph is using the adjectives **poor**, **needy**, 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 adjectives with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [the poor people and the needy people; deliver them from the hand of the wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT from the hand of the wicked**
UST from what wicked people want to do to them
(מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים)

Here, **hand** represents the power or control 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 control of the wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Rescue | Save |
| deliver {them} | Save |
| the wicked | wicked people |

# Psalms 82:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They do not know and they do not understand; they walk about in darkness. All of the foundations of the earth are shaken.* | *You are foolish and ignorant! You do not recognize the right things to do. People are no longer living by the basic principles that make a society fair.* |

**ULT They do not know and they do not understand**
**UST** You are foolish and ignorant
(לֹ֤א יָדְע֨וּ ׀ וְלֹ֪א יָבִ֡ינוּ)

The terms **do not know** and **do not understand** mean similar things. Asaph 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: [They are completely ignorant]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT they walk about in darkness**
**UST** You do not recognize the right things to do
(בַּ֭חֲשֵׁכָה יִתְהַלָּ֑כוּ)

Asaph is speaking of these judges as if they were walking around in a dark place. He means that they are morally ignorant and do not act according to what is right. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation, or you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they go about in moral ignorance]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT All of the foundations of the earth are shaken**
**UST** People are no longer living by the basic principles that make a society fair
(יִמּ֥וֹטוּ כָל־מוֹסְדֵ֗י אָֽרֶץ)

Asaph is speaking of the moral and social order of the world as if it had **foundations** like those under a building. He means that because of these unjust judges, the stability of the world is being destroyed. You may have a comparable expression in your language that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [All the stability and order of the world is being undermined]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **are shaken**
UST People are no longer living by
(יִמּוֹטוּ)

The phrase **are shaken** is a passive verbal form. If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [shake] or [are trembling]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| They do … know | You are foolish |
| they do … understand | and ignorant |
| the foundations of | the basic principles that make … fair |
| the earth | a society |
| are shaken | People are no longer living by |

# Psalms 82:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I, I said, 'You {are} gods and sons of the Most High, all of you.* | *I said, 'You are spiritual beings; you are all rulers over creation like the Most High.* |

**ULT I, I said, 'You {are} gods**
**UST** I said, 'You are spiritual beings
(אֲנִי־אָמַרְתִּי אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם)

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. In that case, you could express what God said as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: [I said that you are gods]

**Support Reference:** Quotes within Quotes

**ULT I, I said**
**UST** I said
(אֲנִי־אָמַרְתִּי)

Asaph is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **I said** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that Yahweh is the one speaking. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [I myself said]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT gods**
**UST** spiritual beings
(אֱלֹהִים)

See the discussion of the term "gods" in the introduction to this psalm.

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT and sons of the Most High**
**UST** you are all rulers over creation
(וּבְנֵי עֶלְיוֹן)

Asaph is speaking of these judges as if they were **sons of the Most High**, that is, as if they belonged to God's family. He means that God had given them a share in his authority. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and those who share the authority of the Most High]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the Most High | you are all rulers over creation |

# Psalms 82:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But you will die like man, and like one of the princes, you will fall.’”* | *But you will die as humans do; you will lose your power just as rulers do.’”* |

ULT **But**
UST But
(אָכֵן)

Asaph uses the word **But** here to introduce a contrast between the divine status declared in the previous verse and the mortality declared here. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [However,]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **you will die like man**
UST you will die as humans do
(כְּאָדָם תְּמוּתוּן)

The point of this comparison is that despite being called gods, these judges will die just as any ordinary human person does. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point clear. Alternate translation: [like any mortal person, you will die]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **and like one of the princes, you will fall**
UST you will lose your power just as rulers do
(וּכְאַחַד הַשָּׂרִים תִּפֹּלוּ)

The point of this comparison is that these judges will lose their position and power just as earthly rulers do when they are defeated. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [like any other ruler, you will fall from power]

**Support Reference:** Simile

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the princes | just as rulers do |

# Psalms 82:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Arise, God, judge the earth, for you, you will inherit among all of the nations.* | *God, you rule all the nations, so take action and judge the people who live on the earth!* |

**ULT Arise, God, judge the earth**
**UST** God … take action and judge the people who live on the earth
(קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים שָׁפְטָה הָאָרֶץ)

Asaph is using the imperative forms **Arise** and **judge** to make a request of God. If your language does not use the imperative to make requests, you could express this as a request or wish. Alternate translation: [Please arise, God, and judge the earth]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT you, you will inherit**
**UST** you rule
(אַתָּה תִּנְחַל)

The word translated as **you** before **you will inherit** represents an independent pronoun used for emphasis in the original language, in addition to the pronoun expressed within the verb. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [you yourself will inherit]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT you, you will inherit among all of the nations**
**UST** you rule all the nations
(אַתָּה תִּנְחַל בְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם)

Asaph is speaking of God's sovereign ownership and authority over the nations as if God would **inherit** them as property. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you possess authority over all the nations]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **for you, you will inherit among all of the nations**
UST you rule all the nations, so
(כִּי־אַתָּה תִנְחַל בְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם)

Asaph is giving a reason for what he said in the previous phrase. He asked God to judge the earth and he now gives the reason: God possesses authority over all the nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this connection more explicit. Alternate translation: [because you have authority over all the nations]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| judge | and judge |
| you will inherit | rule |
| the nations | the nations |

# Psalms 83

## Psalm 83 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 83 is a psalm of supplication or lament. It is such a desperate, urgent plea for help that it presents only three of the basic elements of that type of psalm. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Cry for help (1)
2. Description of troubles (2–8)
3. Petition (9–18)

Many interpreters believe that this psalm was written during the reign of Jehoshaphat when a large army composed of Moabites, Ammonites, and Meunites, supported by other nations, invaded and attacked Judah, as described in 2 Chronicles 20:1–30. Yahweh inspired a Levite from the clan of Asaph to reassure the king and nation that he would defeat these invaders. The outcome was exactly what this psalm envisions and pleads for: “the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of the lands when they heard how Yahweh had fought with the enemies of Israel.” It may be helpful to read this passage before translating this psalm.

# Psalms 83:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God, {may} silence not {be} to you; do not be still, and do not be quiet, God!* | *God, please take action to help us! Please do that right away!* |

ULT **{may} silence not {be} to you**
UST please take action to help us
(אַל־דֳּמִי־לָךְ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **silence**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [may you not be silent]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **do not be still, and do not be quiet**
UST Please do that right away
(אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ וְאַל־תִּשְׁקֹט)

The expressions **do not be still** and **do not be quiet** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [do not remain inactive]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **do not be still, and do not be quiet**
UST Please do that right away
(אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ וְאַל־תִּשְׁקֹט)

The psalmist is using the imperative forms **do not be still** and **do not be quiet** to make a request to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a natural form for making a request. Alternate translation: [please do not be still, and please do not be quiet]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **{ … may} silence not {be} to you; do not be still, and do not be quiet**
UST please take action to help us! Please do that right away
(אַל־דֳּמִי־לָךְ אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ וְאַל־תִּשָּׁקֹט)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [do not remain silent and inactive]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| God | God |

# Psalms 83:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For behold, your enemies roar, and the ones hating you lift up {the} head.* | *I ask this because the enemies who hate you are defiantly approaching us with a large army.* |

ULT **For behold**
UST I ask this because
(כִּי־הִנֵּה)

The psalmist uses **For behold** to introduce the reason for his plea in verse 1. He is saying that God should take action because the enemies are rising up. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make the connection clearer.

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **behold**
UST I ask this because
(הִנֵּה)

The word **behold** is used here to draw attention to what follows. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this with a word or phrase that serves this purpose, or you could leave it untranslated. Alternate translation: [look]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the ones hating you**
UST who hate you
(וּמְשַׂנְאֶיךָ)

The phrase **the ones hating you** refers to the same people as **your enemies** earlier in the verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this explicit. Alternate translation: [those same enemies of yours]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **your enemies roar, and the ones hating you lift up {the} head**
UST the enemies who hate you are defiantly approaching us with a large army
(אוֹיְבֶיךָ יֶהֱמָיוּן וּמְשַׂנְאֶיךָ נָשְׂאוּ רֹאשׁ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [your enemies are boldly rising up against you]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **lift up {the} head**
UST defiantly
(נָשְׂאוּ רֹאשׁ)

The expression **lift up the head** is an idiom that means to act boldly or defiantly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [act defiantly]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your enemies | the enemies |

# Psalms 83:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They are cunning {with} counsel against your people, and they conspire against your treasured ones.* | *They have plotted deviously together to fight against us Israelites whom you cherish.* |

**ULT They are cunning {with} counsel against your people, and they conspire against your treasured ones**
UST They have plotted deviously together to fight against us Israelites whom you cherish
(עַל־עַמְּךָ יַעֲרִימוּ סֹוד וְיִתְיָעֲצוּ עַל־צְפוּנֶיךָ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [they are craftily plotting against your cherished people]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT They are cunning**
UST deviously
(יַעֲרִימוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to the enemies mentioned in verse 2. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this explicit. Alternate translation: [Your enemies are cunning]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT {with} counsel**
UST They have plotted
(סֹוד)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **counsel**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in counseling together]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT your treasured ones**
UST us Israelites whom you cherish
(צְפוּנֶיךָ)

The phrase **your treasured ones** refers to the people of Israel, whom God values. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this explicit. Alternate translation: [the Israelites, your treasured people]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| They are cunning | deviously |
| {with} counsel | They have plotted |
| and they conspire | together |

# Psalms 83:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They have said, "Come, and let us destroy them from {being} a nation, that the name of Israel may not be remembered anymore."* | *They have said to each other, "Come on, let us destroy them so completely that no one will ever remember that Israel existed!"* |

ULT **They have said**
UST They have said to each other
(אָמְרוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to the enemies mentioned in verses 2–3. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this explicit. Alternate translation: [These enemies have said]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the name of Israel**
UST that Israel existed
(שֵׁם־יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **the name of Israel** represents the nation of Israel itself and its existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the nation of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **that the name of Israel may not be remembered**
UST that no one will … remember that Israel existed
(וְלֹא־יִזָּכֵר שֵׁם־יִשְׂרָאֵל)

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [that no one may remember the name of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and let us destroy them | let us destroy them |
| from {being} a nation | so completely |
| Israel | Israel |

# Psalms 83:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For they have conspired against you, heart together; they have cut a covenant:* | *They have all agreed to do this, and they have made an alliance against you.* |

ULT **For**
UST They have … agreed to do this
(כִּי)

The word **For** introduces the reason why the psalmist said what he said in verses 3–4. The enemies are conspiring because they want to destroy Israel. Use a connector in your language that introduces a reason. Alternate translation: [This is because]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **they have conspired**
UST They have … agreed to do this
(נוֹעָצוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to the nations listed in verses 6–8. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this explicit. Alternate translation: [these nations have conspired]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **heart together**
UST all
(לֵב יַחְדָּו)

Here, **heart** represents the will or intention. The psalmist is saying that these enemies have **conspired** with unified purpose. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with one purpose]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **they have cut a covenant**
UST and they have made an alliance
(בְּרִית יְכָרֹתוּ)

The expression **they have cut a covenant** is an idiom that means they have made a formal agreement or alliance. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they have allied themselves]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they have conspired | They have … agreed to do this |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a covenant | and they have made |

# Psalms 83:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites, Moab and the Hagrites,* | *This army includes soldiers who are Edomites, Ishmaelites, Moabites, Hagrites,* |

**ULT the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites**
UST This army includes soldiers who are Edomites, Ishmaelites
(אָהֳלֵי אֱדוֹם וְיִשְׁמְעֵאלִים)

The psalmist is leaving out the verb that would be expected in this phrase. The verb can be supplied from the context in verse 5. If it would be helpful in your language, you could supply this verb. Alternate translation: [the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites have cut a covenant against you]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT the tents of Edom**
UST This army includes soldiers who are Edomites
(אָהֳלֵי אֱדוֹם)

Here, **the tents of Edom** represents the people of Edom who live in those tents. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the people of Edom]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the tents of | This army includes soldiers who are |
| Edom | Edomites |
| and the Ishmaelites | Ishmaelites |
| Moab | Moabites |

# Psalms 83:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Gebal and Ammon and Amalek, Philistia with the dwellers of Tyre.* | *Gebalites, Ammonites, Amalekites, Philistines, and Tyrians.* |

**ULT Gebal and Ammon and Amalek**
UST Gebalites, Ammonites, Amalekites
(גְּבָל וְעַמּוֹן וַעֲמָלֵק)

The psalmist is leaving out the verb that would be expected in this phrase. The verb can be supplied from the context in verse 5. If it would be helpful in your language, you could supply this verb. Alternate translation: [Gebal and Ammon and Amalek have cut a covenant against you]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and Ammon | Ammonites |
| and Amalek | Amalekites |
| Philistia | Philistines |
| Tyre | Tyrians |

# Psalms 83:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Also Assyria has joined with them; they {are} an arm to the sons of Lot. Selah* | *The Assyrians are helping them. They have given military support to the Moabites and Ammonites {who are leading this army}. Selah* |

ULT **they**
UST They have given military support
(הָיְוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to Assyria, mentioned earlier in the verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this explicit. Alternate translation: [the Assyrians]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Also Assyria has joined with them; they {are} an arm to the sons of Lot**
UST The Assyrians are helping them. They have given military support to the Moabites and Ammonites who are leading this army
(גַּם־אַשּׁוּר נִלְוָה עִמָּם הָיְוּ זְרוֹעַ לִבְנֵי־לוֹט)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Also Assyria has joined with them; indeed, they {are} an arm to the sons of Lot]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **they {are} an arm to the sons of Lot**
UST They have given military support to the Moabites and Ammonites who are leading this army
(הָיְוּ זְרוֹעַ לִבְנֵי־לוֹט)

Here, **an arm** represents military strength or support. The psalmist is saying that Assyria has provided military power to help the descendants of Lot. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they have given military support to the sons of Lot]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to the sons of Lot**
UST to the Moabites and Ammonites who are leading this army
(לִבְנֵי־לֹוט)

The psalmist is speaking of **the sons of Lot** to mean the descendants of Lot, that is, the Moabites and Ammonites. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [the descendants of Lot]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Assyria | The Assyrians |
| Lot | to the Moabites and Ammonites who are leading this army |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 83:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do to them as {to} Midian, as {to} Sisera, as {to} Jabin at the river of Kishon.* | *Defeat them just as you helped Gideon defeat the Midianites, and just as you helped Barak defeat Sisera{, the commander of the Canaanite king} Jabin at the Kishon River!* |

**ULT Do to them as {to} Midian**

**UST** Defeat them just as you helped Gideon defeat the Midianites

(עֲשֵׂה־לָהֶם כְּמִדְיָן)

The psalmist is using the imperative form **Do to them as to Midian** to make a request to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a natural form for making a request. Alternate translation: [Please do to them as to Midian]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| as {to} Midian | just as you helped Gideon defeat the Midianites |

# Psalms 83:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They were destroyed at En Dor; they became dung for the ground.* | *You destroyed those Canaanites at En Dor, and their dead bodies rotted on the ground.* |

ULT **They were destroyed**
UST You destroyed those Canaanites
(נִשְׁמְדוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to Midian, Sisera, and Jabin mentioned in verse 9. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this explicit. Alternate translation: [Those enemies were destroyed]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **They were destroyed**
UST You destroyed those Canaanites
(נִשְׁמְדוּ)

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [God destroyed them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **they became dung for the ground**
UST and their dead bodies rotted on the ground
(הָיוּ דֹּמֶן לָאֲדָמָה)

The psalmist is speaking of the dead enemies as if **they became dung for the ground**. He means that their corpses were left unburied and decayed on the ground like refuse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [their dead bodies lay rotting on the ground]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| They were destroyed | You destroyed those Canaanites |
| dung | rotted |

# Psalms 83:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Make them, their nobles, like Oreb and like Zeeb and like Zebah and like Zalmunna, all of their princes,* | *Kill the leaders of this invading army just as Gideon killed Oreb and Zeeb, the Midianite commanders. Defeat all their rulers just as Gideon defeated Zebah and Zalmunna{, the Midianite rulers}.* |

**ULT Make them, their nobles, like Oreb and like Zeeb**
UST Kill the leaders of this invading army just as Gideon killed Oreb and Zeeb, the Midianite commanders
(שִׁיתֵ֣מוֹ נְדִיבֵ֣מוֹ כְעֹרֵ֣ב וְכִזְאֵ֑ב)

The psalmist uses the word **like** to compare the fate he requests for the current enemies to the fate of **Oreb** and **Zeeb**, who were Midianite commanders killed by Gideon. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [Defeat them and their nobles as Gideon defeated Oreb and Zeeb]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT Make them, their nobles**
UST Kill the leaders of this invading army
(שִׁיתֵ֣מוֹ נְדִיבֵ֣מוֹ)

The psalmist is using the imperative form **Make them, their nobles** to make a request to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a natural form for making a request. Alternate translation: [Please make them, their nobles]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT their nobles**
UST the leaders of this invading army
(נְדִיבֵ֣מוֹ)

The psalmist is using the adjective **nobles** as a noun to refer to people who are noble. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate it with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [their noble leaders]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT and like Zebah and like Zalmunna, all of their princes**
**UST** Defeat all their rulers just as Gideon defeated Zebah and Zalmunna{, the Midianite rulers}
(וְכִזְאֵב וְכִצַלְמֻנָּע כָּל־נְסִיכֵמוֹ)

The psalmist uses the word **like** to compare the fate he requests for the princes of the current enemies to the fate of **Zebah** and **Zalmunna**, who were Midianite kings defeated by Gideon. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [and defeat all of their princes as Gideon defeated Zebah and Zalmunna]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT their princes**
**UST** Defeat … their rulers
(נְסִיכֵמוֹ)

The psalmist is using the adjective **princes** as a noun to refer to people who are princely rulers. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate it with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [their ruling princes]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| their nobles | the leaders of this invading army |
| their princes | Defeat … their rulers |

# Psalms 83:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *who said, "Let us possess for ourselves the pastures of God."* | *They too had said, "Let us take for ourselves the land where God's people dwell."* |

**ULT who**
**UST** They too
(אֲשֶׁר)

The pronoun **who** refers to the nobles and princes mentioned in verse 11. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this explicit. Alternate translation: [Those nobles and princes]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT the pastures of God**
**UST** the land where God's people dwell
(אֶת נְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist is speaking of the land of Israel as **the pastures of God**. He means the land that God has given to his people as their dwelling place. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the land that God gave to his people]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the pastures of God**
**UST** the land where God's people dwell
(אֶת נְאוֹת אֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist is using the possessive form **the pastures of God** to describe pastures that belong to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this relationship in another way. Alternate translation: [the pastures that belong to God]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Let us possess | Let us take |
| God | God's |

# Psalms 83:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My God, make them like tumbleweed, like chaff to the face of the wind.* | *My God, please defeat them so that they run away just as tumbleweed rolls away and just as chaff flies away in the wind!* |

ULT **make them like tumbleweed**
UST please defeat them so that they run away just as tumbleweed rolls away
(שִׁיתֵמוֹ כַגַּלְגַּל)

The psalmist uses the word **like** to compare the enemies to **tumbleweed**, which is blown away by the wind. He means that God should scatter them completely. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [scatter them as the wind scatters tumbleweed]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **make them like tumbleweed**
UST please defeat them so that they run away just as tumbleweed rolls away
(שִׁיתֵמוֹ כַגַּלְגַּל)

The psalmist is using the imperative form **make them like tumbleweed** to make a request to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a natural form for making a request. Alternate translation: [please make them like tumbleweed]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **like chaff to the face of the wind**
UST and just as chaff flies away in the wind
(כְּקַשׁ לִפְנֵי־רוּחַ)

The psalmist uses the word **like** to compare the enemies to **chaff** that is blown away by the wind. He means that God should scatter them as easily as the wind scatters chaff. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [like chaff blown away by the wind]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **to the face of the wind**
UST in the wind
(לִפְנֵי־רוּחַ)

Here, **the face of the wind** represents the front of the wind, that is, the direction the wind blows. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [before the wind]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My God | My God |
| like chaff | and just as chaff flies away |

# Psalms 83:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *As fire burns a forest, and as flame kindles mountains,* | *Just as a forest fire burns down trees and flames burn up the dry vegetation on hillsides,* |

**ULT As fire burns a forest, and as flame kindles mountains**
**UST** Just as a forest fire burns down trees and flames burn up the dry vegetation on hillsides
(כְּאֵשׁ תִּבְעַר־יָעַר וְכִלְהָבָה תְּלַהֵט הָרִים)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [As fire burns a forest; indeed, as a flame kindles mountains]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT As fire burns a forest, and as flame kindles mountains**
**UST** Just as a forest fire burns down trees and flames burn up the dry vegetation on hillsides
(כְּאֵשׁ תִּבְעַר־יָעַר וְכִלְהָבָה תְּלַהֵט הָרִים)

The psalmist uses the word **as** to compare his request for God's action against the enemies to how **fire burns a forest** and how **flame kindles mountains**. He means that God should consume the enemies completely. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [As fire consumes a forest and as flames consume the mountainside]

**Support Reference:** Simile

# Psalms 83:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *thus pursue them with your tempest, and terrify them with your whirlwind.* | *make them run away afraid as if a great storm were driving them off.* |

ULT **thus**
UST make them run away
(כֵּן)

The word **thus** connects the similes in verses 13–14 to the request in verse 15. The psalmist is saying that just as fire consumes a forest and flame kindles mountains, so God should pursue the enemies. Use a connector in your language that draws a comparison. Alternate translation: [in that way,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **pursue them with your tempest**
UST make them run away … as if a great storm were driving them off
(תִּרְדְּפֵם בְּסַעֲרָךְ)

The psalmist is using the imperative form **pursue them with your tempest** to make a request to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a natural form for making a request. Alternate translation: [please pursue them with your tempest]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **pursue them with your tempest, and terrify them with your whirlwind**
UST make them run away afraid as if a great storm were driving them off
(תִּרְדְּפֵם בְּסַעֲרָךְ וּבְסוּפָתְךָ תְבַהֲלֵם)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [pursue and terrify them with your swirling tempest]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| terrify them | afraid |

# Psalms 83:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Fill their faces {with} shame, that they may seek your name, Yahweh.* | *Completely disgrace them so that they will acknowledge who you are, Yahweh.* |

ULT **Fill their faces {with} shame**
UST Completely disgrace them
(מַלֵּא פְנֵיהֶם קָלוֹן)

The psalmist is using the imperative form **Fill their faces with shame** to make a request to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a natural form for making a request. Alternate translation: [Please fill their faces with shame]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Fill their faces {with} shame**
UST Completely disgrace them
(מַלֵּא פְנֵיהֶם קָלוֹן)

Here, **their faces** represents their public identity or reputation. The psalmist is asking God to bring shame upon these enemies publicly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Bring shame upon them publicly]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Fill their faces {with} shame**
UST Completely disgrace them
(מַלֵּא פְנֵיהֶם קָלוֹן)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **shame**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Make them thoroughly ashamed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **that they may seek your name**
UST so that they will acknowledge who you are
(וְיבַקְשׁוּ שִׁמְךָ)

The phrase **that they may seek your name** states the goal or purpose of the request in the first part of the verse. The psalmist is asking God to shame the enemies so that they will turn to God. Use a connector in your language that introduces a goal or purpose. Alternate translation: [to the end that they may seek your name]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **that they may seek your name**
UST so that they will acknowledge who you are
(וְיְבַקְשׁוּ שִׁמְךָ)

Here, **your name** represents God himself and his authority. The psalmist is asking that the enemies would turn to seek God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that they may seek you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {with} shame | disgrace |
| that they may seek | so that they will acknowledge |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 83:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May they have shame and be terrified, eternities of eternity, and may they have disgrace and may they perish.* | *Embarrass them and make them always afraid. Humiliate them until they die.* |

**ULT May they have shame and be terrified, eternities of eternity, and may they have disgrace and may they perish**
UST Embarrass them and make them always afraid. Humiliate them until they die
(יֵבֹ֤שׁוּ וְיִבָּהֲלוּ֙ עֲדֵי־עַ֣ד וְיַחְפְּר֖וּ וְיֹאבֵֽדוּ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [May they be utterly shamed and destroyed forever]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT May they have shame**
UST Embarrass them
(יֵבֹ֤שׁוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **shame**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [May they be ashamed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and be terrified**
UST and make them … afraid
(וְיִבָּהֲלוּ֙)

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and may God terrify them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT and may they have disgrace**
UST Humiliate them
(וְיַחְפְּר֖וּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **disgrace**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and may they be disgraced]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May they have shame | Embarrass them |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| eternities of | always |
| eternity | always |
| and may they have disgrace | Humiliate them |
| and may they perish | until they die |

# Psalms 83:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And may they know that you, your name {is} Yahweh, you alone {are} the Most High over all of the earth.* | *Then they will know that you alone, Yahweh, are the Most High God who rules over everyone in the world.* |

**ULT And may they know**
**UST** Then they will know
(וְיֵדְעוּ)

The phrase **may they know** refers to the enemies described in verses 2–8. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this explicit. Alternate translation: [And may those enemies know]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT your name {is} Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh
(שִׁמְךָ יְהוָה)

Asaph is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is or to refer to his reputation. Alternate translation: [you are Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And may they know | Then they will know |
| {is} Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {are} the Most High | are the Most High God |

# Psalms 84

## Psalm 84 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

While Psalm 84 is not identified explicitly in its superscription as a “song of ascents” like Psalms 120–134, it nevertheless seems to be that same type of psalm. It encourages and praises going to the temple in Jerusalem. Apparently writing from the perspective of his arrival at the temple, the psalmist describes how he longed to be there and the journey he made to get there. The superscription indicates that a Korahite Levite wrote this psalm, but it was evidently one who lived and worked at some distance from Jerusalem.

1. Celebration of the temple (1–4)
2. The journey to the temple (5–7)
3. Prayer for Yahweh to preserve the king (8–9)
4. Celebration of Yahweh, the God of this temple, for his goodness (10–12)

# Psalms 84:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; on Gittith. Of the sons of Korah. A psalm.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: Accompany the song with a stringed instrument. One of the Korahites wrote this psalm.* |

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **Gittith**
UST a stringed instrument
(הַגִּתִּית)

See how you translated the term **Gittith** in the superscription to Psalm 8.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Korah | One of the Korahites wrote |
| A psalm | this psalm |

# Psalms 84:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *How amiable {are} your dwellings, Yahweh of Armies!* | *Yahweh, commander of the heavenly armies, what a wonderful place your temple is!* |

**ULT How amiable {are} your dwellings**
**UST** what a wonderful place your temple is
(מַה־יְּדִידוֹת מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ)

The psalmist is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of amazement at the beauty of God's dwelling place. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [Your dwellings are so lovely]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {are} your dwellings | your temple is |
| Yahweh of Armies | Yahweh, commander of the heavenly armies |

# Psalms 84:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My soul longs and even faints for the courts of Yahweh; my heart and my flesh cry out to the living God.* | *I long greatly, deep inside, to be in the courtyards of Yahweh's temple. With my whole being I call out to the only true God.* |

**ULT My soul longs and even faints**
**UST** I long greatly, deep inside
(נִכְסְפָה וְגַם־כָּלְתָה ׀ נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using one part of himself, his **soul**, to mean all of himself in the act of longing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I long and even faint]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT longs and even faints**
**UST** I long greatly
(נִכְסְפָה וְגַם־כָּלְתָה)

The terms **longs** and **faints** mean similar things. The psalmist 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 yearns]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT my heart and my flesh cry out**
**UST** With my whole being I call out
(לִבִּי וּבְשָׂרִי יְרַנְּנוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of **my heart and my flesh** as if they were living things that could **cry out**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my heart and my flesh groan loudly]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT my heart and my flesh**
**UST** With my whole being
(לִבִּי וּבְשָׂרִי)

The psalmist is referring to all of himself by naming two major components, **my heart** and **my flesh**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [with my whole being I]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **my heart**
UST With my whole being
(לִבִּי)

Here, **my heart** represents the psalmist's desires and feelings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my inner self]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| My soul | deep inside |
| for the courts of | to be in the courtyards of … temple |
| Yahweh | Yahweh's |
| cry out | I call out |
| God | God |

# Psalms 84:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Even the sparrow has found a house, and the swallow, a nest for herself, where she may lay her young— your altars, Yahweh of Armies, my king and my God.* | *Even little birds have built their nests near your temple, and that is where they are taking care of their babies. Yahweh, commander of the heavenly armies, you are my king and my God.* |

ULT **and the swallow, a nest for herself**
UST little birds … their nests
(וּדְרוֹר ו֫קֵן לָהּ)

The psalmist 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 swallow has found a nest for herself]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a house | nests |
| your altars | near your temple |
| Yahweh of Armies | Yahweh, commander of the heavenly armies |
| my king | you are my king |
| and my God | and my God |

# Psalms 84:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The happinesses of the dwellers of your house! They praise you continually. Selah* | *What a good life people have who live by your temple! They worship you continually there. Selah* |

ULT **The happinesses of**
UST What a good life … have
(אַשְׁרֵי)

The psalmist is using a phrase **The happinesses of** that expresses a strong feeling of joy or blessing. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy are]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **your house**
UST by your temple
(בֵּיתֶךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of the temple of Yahweh as if it were a **house** in which he lived. Alternate translation: [your temple]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your house | by your temple |
| They praise you | They … you continually there |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 84:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The happinesses of the man, strength to him {is} in you! Highways {are} in their heart.* | *What a good life people have whom you make strong so that they can travel to your temple as they greatly desire!* |

ULT **The happinesses of**
UST What a good life … have
(אַשְׁרֵי)

See how you translated the phrase “The happinesses of” in the previous verse.

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **the man**
UST people
(אָדָם)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [the person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **strength to him {is} in you**
UST whom you make strong
(עֻזּוֹ־לוֹ בָךְ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [you make him strong]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Highways {are} in their heart**
UST so that they can travel to your temple as they greatly desire
(מְסִלּוֹת בִּלְבָבָם)

The psalmist is speaking of the desire for pilgrimage as if there were **highways** in the hearts of the people. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They desire to make the journey to your temple] or [Pilgrimage journeys are in their thoughts]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **{are} in their heart**
> UST as they greatly desire
> (בִּלְבָבָם)

The pronoun **their** refers to the kind of person described as **the man** in the first part of the verse. The psalmist shifts from singular to plural because he is speaking of everyone who fits this description. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [are in his heart]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **{are} in their heart**
> UST as they greatly desire
> (בִּלְבָבָם)

Here, **their heart** represents the desires and intentions of the people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [are in their thoughts]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

# Psalms 84:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Passing through in the Valley of Baca, they make it a spring; the early rain also covers {it} {with} blessings.* | *As they pass through the {arid} Valley of Baca, they dig wells to look for water, and God sends autumn rains that fill those wells with life-giving water.* |

ULT **they make it a spring**
UST they dig wells to look for water
(מַעְיָן יְשִׁיתֻהוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of the pilgrims as if they transformed the Valley of Baca into **a spring** of water. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they find water there] or [they make it a place of refreshment]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{with} blessings**
UST with life-giving water
(בְּרָכוֹת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **blessings**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with good things from God]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a spring | wells to look for water |
| {with} blessings | with life-giving water |

# Psalms 84:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They go from strength to strength; {each} one appears before God in Zion.* | *They become stronger as they go, and each of them arrives at the temple in Zion where God is present.* |

**ULT They go**
**UST** as they go
(יֵלְכוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to the pilgrims described in verses 5 and 6 who are traveling to God's temple. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The pilgrims go]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT from strength to strength**
**UST** They become stronger
(מֵחַ֣יִל אֶל־חָ֑יִל)

The psalmist is using **from strength to strength** as a common expression meaning that the pilgrims grow increasingly strong as they travel. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with ever-increasing strength]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| strength | They become stronger |
| God | where God is present |
| in Zion | the temple in Zion |

# Psalms 84:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, God of armies, hear my prayer; listen, God of Jacob. Selah* | *Yahweh, you are the God who commands the heavenly armies. Please answer my prayer. You are the God whom we Israelite people worship. Please do what I ask. Selah* |

**ULT my prayer**
**UST** my prayer
(תְּפִלָּתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **prayer**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what I pray]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| God of armies | you are the God who commands the heavenly armies |
| God | you are the God |
| my prayer | my prayer |
| God | You are the God whom … worship |
| of Jacob | we Israelite people |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 84:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *See our shield, God, and regard the face of your anointed.* | *God, please treat favorably the king you have appointed to protect us.* |

ULT **our shield**
UST to protect us
(מָגִנֵּנוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of God as if he were a **shield** that protects in battle. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [our protector] or [the one who shields us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the face of your anointed**
UST please treat favorably the king you have appointed
(פְּנֵי מְשִׁיחֶךָ)

Here, **the face** represents the person of the anointed king. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your anointed one]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **your anointed**
UST the king you have appointed
(מְשִׁיחֶךָ)

The psalmist is using the adjective **anointed** 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: [your anointed one]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| our shield | to protect us |
| God | God |
| your anointed | the king you have appointed |

# Psalms 84:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For a day in your courts {is} better than a thousand. I choose to stand at the threshold in the house of my God {rather} than dwell in the tents of wickedness.* | *It is better be in your temple courtyards for a single day than to be anywhere else for a thousand days. I would rather stand at the entrance to the courtyard of my God's temple than stay in any of the {comfortable} homes where wicked people live.* |

ULT **For**
UST It is better
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for the request made in verses 8 and 9. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **than a thousand**
UST than to be anywhere else for a thousand days
(מֵאָלֶף)

The psalmist says **than a thousand** as an extreme statement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [than any number of days elsewhere]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **in the tents of wickedness**
UST in any of the {comfortable} homes where wicked people live
(בְּאָהֳלֵי־רֶשַׁע)

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: [the tents of wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in the tents of wickedness**
UST in any of the {comfortable} homes where wicked people live
(בְּאָהֳלֵי־רֶשַׁע)

Here, **the tents** represents the homes and dwellings of wicked people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the homes of wickedness]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in your courts | be in your temple courtyards |
| {is} better | It is better |
| I choose | I would rather |
| to stand at the threshold | stand at the entrance |
| in the house of | to the courtyard of … temple |
| my God | my God’s |
| in the tents of | in any of the {comfortable} homes where … live |
| wickedness | wicked people |

# Psalms 84:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For Yahweh God {is} a sun and a shield; Yahweh gives favor and glory. He does not withhold good from the ones walking in blamelessness.* | *Yahweh our God makes us prosper, just as the sun makes crops grow, and he protects us, just as a shield protects a warrior. He is kind to us and honors us. Yahweh gives people who live rightly every good thing that they need.* |

ULT **For**
UST Yahweh
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a further reason for the psalmist's desire to be in God's courts. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **{is} a sun and a shield**
UST makes us prosper, just as the sun makes crops grow, and he protects us, just as a shield protects a warrior
(שֶׁמֶשׁ ו וּמָגֵן)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh God as if he were **a sun** that gives life and light and **a shield** that protects from harm. If these images communicate well in your language, please use them. If not, you could express them as comparisons. Alternate translation: [the one who gives us life like the sun and protects us like a shield]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **gives favor and glory**
UST He is kind to us and honors us
(חֵן וְכָבוֹד יִתֵּן)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **favor** and **glory**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [treats people favorably and honors them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **good**
UST good thing that they need
(טֽוֹב)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [good things]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **from the ones walking in blamelessness**
UST people who live rightly
(לַהֹלְכִ֥ים בְּתָמִֽים)

The psalmist is speaking of how a person lives as if that were a path that the person was **walking** along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the ones living in blamelessness]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in blamelessness**
UST rightly
(בְּתָמִֽים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **blamelessness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [blamelessly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh God | Yahweh our God |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and a shield | and he protects us, just as a shield protects a warrior |
| favor | He is kind to us |
| and glory | and honors us |
| good | good thing that they need |
| in blamelessness | rightly |

# Psalms 84:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh of Armies, the happinesses of the man trusting in you!* | *Yahweh, commander of the heavenly armies, what a good life people have who trust you!* |

ULT **the happinesses of**
UST what a good life … have
(אַשְׁרֵי)

The psalmist is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of joy or blessing. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [oh, how happy is]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **the man**
UST people
(אָדָם)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [the person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh of Armies | Yahweh, commander of the heavenly armies |
| trusting | who trust |

# Psalms 85

## Psalm 85 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 85 is a psalm of supplication or lament. In its core, it presents three of the basic elements of that type of psalm. (See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.) It was most likely written shortly after the first group of Judeans returned from exile in Babylon. Its first part is a recollection of how Yahweh has begun to restore the people, and its concluding part is a vision of how he will do that comprehensively. The supplication in the middle is the psalmist's plea to him to move the people from their difficult present into their hopeful future in light of what he has already done for them in the past.

1. Recollection of Yahweh's restoration of the people (1–3)
2. Cry for help (4–7)
3. Petition (7)
4. Statement of trust (8)
5. Prediction of Yahweh's future mercies (9–13)

# Psalms 85:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician. Of the sons of Korah. A psalm.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: One of the Korahites wrote this psalm.* |

> ULT **For the chief musician**
> UST This is a note for the worship leader
> (לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Korah | One of the Korahites wrote |
| A psalm | this psalm |

# Psalms 85:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You favored your land, Yahweh; you restored the captivity of Jacob.* | *Yahweh, you have brought back the Israelites who were exiles so that this land can be prosperous again.* |

ULT **You favored your land, Yahweh; you restored the captivity of Jacob**
UST Yahweh, you have brought back the Israelites who were exiles so that this land can be prosperous again
(רָצִיתָ יְהוָה אַרְצֶךָ שַׁבְתָּ שבות יַעֲקֹב)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [You showed favor to your land, Yahweh, by restoring the captivity of your people] or [You favored your land, Yahweh; indeed, you restored the captivity of Jacob]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Jacob**
UST the Israelites
(יַעֲקֹב)

The psalmist is using the name of a man, **Jacob**, to refer to his descendants. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the name of the people instead. Alternate translation: [the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You favored | can be prosperous again |
| your land | so that this land |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| you restored | you have brought back |
| the captivity of | who were exiles |
| Jacob | the Israelites |

# Psalms 85:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You bore the iniquity of your people; you covered all of their sin. Selah* | *You forgave all the sins that your people committed. Selah* |

ULT **You bore the iniquity of your people; you covered all of their sin**
UST You forgave all the sins that your people committed
(נָשָׂאתָ עֲוֹן עַמֶּךָ כִּסִּיתָ כָּל־חַטָּאתָם)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [You completely forgave all the sins of your people]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **You bore the iniquity of your people**
UST You forgave … the sins that your people committed
(נָשָׂאתָ עֲוֹן עַמֶּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of forgiving sin as if that were to physically carry the burden of the ones who sinned. If your language does not have a comparable expression, or if this image does not communicate well, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You forgave the iniquity of your people]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the iniquity of your people**
UST the sins that your people committed
(עֲוֹן עַמֶּךָ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to mean that **your people** committed **the iniquity**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the possessive form with a verb or in some other way. Alternate translation: [the wickedness that your people did]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the iniquity of**
UST the sins that … committed
(עֲוֹן)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **the iniquity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what your people did wrong]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **you covered all of their sin**
UST You forgave all the sins that … committed
(כִּסִּיתָ כָּל־חַטָּאתָם)

The psalmist is speaking of forgiving sin as if it were covering something so that it could no longer be seen. If your language does not have a comparable expression, or if this image does not communicate well, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you forgave all of their sin]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **their sin**
UST the sins that … committed
(חַטָּאתָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **their sin**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what they did sinfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| You bore | You forgave |
| the iniquity of | the sins that … committed |
| their sin | the sins that … committed |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 85:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You gathered up all of your wrath; you turned back from the burning of your nose.* | *You completely ceased being angry with us and stopped punishing us severely.* |

**ULT** **You gathered up all of your wrath; you turned back from the burning of your nose**
**UST** You completely ceased being angry with us and stopped punishing us severely
(אָסַפְתָּ כָל־עֶבְרָתֶךָ הֵשִׁיבוֹתָ מֵחֲרוֹן אַפֶּךָ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [You completely stopped being angry with us]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT** **your wrath**
**UST** being angry with us
(עֶבְרָתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **your wrath**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how wrathful you were]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT** **the burning of your nose**
**UST** punishing us severely
(מֵחֲרוֹן אַפֶּךָ)

Meaning fierce anger, **the burning of your nose** was a common expression. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your fierce anger]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You gathered up | You … ceased |
| your wrath | being angry with us |

# Psalms 85:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Restore us, God of our salvation, and break up your vexation with us.* | *God, you are the one who saves us. Please stop being upset with us, and make us strong again.* |

**ULT Restore us, God of our salvation**
**UST** God, you are the one who saves us … and make us strong again
(שׁוּבֵנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ)

The psalmist is using the imperative form to make a request to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a form that is more natural for a request. Alternate translation: [Please restore us, God of our salvation]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT God of our salvation**
**UST** God, you are the one who saves us
(אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **God** as characterized by **salvation**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the possessive form in another way. Alternate translation: [God who saves us]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT our salvation**
**UST** you are the one who saves us
(יִשְׁעֵנוּ)

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: [saving us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and break up your vexation with us**
**UST** Please stop being upset with us
(וְהָפֵר כַּעַסְךָ עִמָּנוּ)

The psalmist is using the imperative form to make a request to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a form that is more natural for a request. Alternate translation: [and please break up your vexation with us]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **your vexation**
UST being upset
(כַּעַסֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **your vexation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how vexed you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Restore us | and make us strong again |
| God of | God |
| our salvation | you are the one who saves us |

# Psalms 85:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Will you be angry with us forever? Will you prolong your nose to generation and generation?* | *Please do not be continually angry with us and with our children and grandchildren.* |

ULT **Will you be angry with us forever**
UST Please do not be continually angry with us
(הַלְעוֹלָם תֶּאֱנַף־בָּנוּ)

The psalmist is using the question form to express a plea. If you would not use the question form for this function in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [Please do not be angry with us forever.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Will you prolong your nose to generation and generation**
UST Please do not be … angry … and with our children and grandchildren
(תִּמְשֹׁךְ אַפְּךָ לְדֹר וָדֹר)

The psalmist is using the question form to express a plea. If you would not use the question form for this function in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [Please do not prolong your anger to every generation.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **your nose**
UST Please do not be … angry
(אַפְּךָ)

The psalmist is using the word **nose** to represent anger, since a person's nose may flare or become hot when angry. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the name of the emotion instead. Alternate translation: [your anger]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to generation and generation**
UST and with our children and grandchildren
(לְדֹר וָדֹר)

The expression **to generation and generation** was a common expression meaning "for a long time into the future." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for all future generations]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| forever | continually |
| to generation | and with our children |
| and generation | and grandchildren |

# Psalms 85:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You, will you not return? May you revive us, that your people may rejoice in you.* | *Please help us so that we will thrive again. Then we, your people, will be happy because of you.* |

**ULT** **You, will you not return**
**UST** Please help us
(הֲלֹא־אַתָּה תָּשׁוּב)

The psalmist is using the question form to express a plea. If you would not use the question form for this function in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [Please return to us.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT** **You, will you not return**
**UST** Please help us
(הֲלֹא־אַתָּה תָּשׁוּב)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb form translated as **will you not return** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that he is posing the question to Yahweh. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, will you not return]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT** **May you revive us**
**UST** so that we will thrive again
(תְּחַיֵּנוּ)

The psalmist is using a jussive form to express a wish directed to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a form that is more natural for a request. Alternate translation: [Please revive us]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **that your people**
UST we, your people
(וְעַמְּךָ)

The psalmist has been speaking to God using the pronoun **us**, referring to himself and the people together, but now he switches to the third person, saying **your people**. The psalmist is referring to the same group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could maintain the same person throughout. Alternate translation: [we, your people]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May you revive us | so that we will thrive again |
| may rejoice | Then … will be happy |

# Psalms 85:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Make us see your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh, and give your salvation to us.* | *Yahweh, please treat us kindly as you promised and rescue us from our troubles.* |

ULT **Make us see your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh, please treat us kindly as you promised
(הַרְאֵנוּ יְהוָה חַסְדֶּךָ)

The psalmist is using the imperative form to make a request to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a form that is more natural for a request. Alternate translation: [Please make us see your covenant faithfulness]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Make us see your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh, please treat us kindly as you promised
(הַרְאֵנוּ יְהוָה חַסְדֶּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of experiencing God's covenant faithfulness as if it were something that could be physically seen. If your language does not have a comparable expression, or if this image does not communicate well, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Make us experience your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **your covenant faithfulness**
UST kindly as you promised
(חַסְדֶּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **your covenant faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how faithful you are to your covenant with us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and give your salvation to us**
UST and rescue us from our troubles
(וְיִשְׁעֲךָ תִּתֶּן־לָנוּ)

The psalmist is using the imperative form to make a request to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a form that is more natural for a request. Alternate translation: [and please give your salvation to us]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **and give your salvation to us**
UST and rescue us from our troubles
(וְיִשְׁעֲךָ֥ תִּתֶּן־לָֽנוּ׃)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **your salvation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and give your saving help to us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh, and give your salvation to us**
UST Yahweh … kindly as you promised and rescue us from our troubles
(יְהוָ֗ה חַסְדֶּךָ֥ וְיִשְׁעֲךָ֥ תִּתֶּן־לָֽנוּ׃)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to mean that both **covenant faithfulness** and **salvation** come from God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the possessive form in another way. Alternate translation: [the covenant faithfulness that you show, Yahweh, and the salvation that you give us]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your covenant faithfulness | kindly as you promised |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and … your salvation | and rescue … from our troubles |

# Psalms 85:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let me hear what God Yahweh will speak, for he will speak peace to his people and to his faithful ones, but let them not return to folly.* | *I am going to listen to what Yahweh, my God, says to me. I believe he will say that he will make his people thrive if they are loyal to him. However, they must not do foolish things anymore.* |

ULT **Let me hear**
UST I am going to listen
(אֶשְׁמְעָה)

Up to this point, the psalmist has been speaking on behalf of the community, using **us** and **we**. Now the psalmist shifts to speaking individually, saying **me**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could clarify this. Alternate translation: [Let me, the psalmist, hear]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **for he will speak peace**
UST I believe he will say that he will make … thrive
(כִּי ׀ יְדַבֵּר שָׁלוֹם)

In this verse, the result is stated before the reason. The psalmist wants to hear what God will speak, and the reason is that God will speak **peace** to his people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order and put the reason before the result. Alternate translation: [because he will speak peace]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **peace**
UST that he will make … thrive
(שָׁלוֹם)

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: [peaceful things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **but let them not return to folly**
UST However, they must not do foolish things anymore
(וְאַל־יָשֻׁובוּ לְכִסְלָה)

The psalmist is saying what he wants **his people** to do. See the discussion in the introduction to Psalms about this form of speech and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [but they should not return to folly]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **but let them not return**
UST However, they must not do … anymore
(וְאַל־יָשֻׁובוּ)

The pronoun **them** refers to the people and faithful ones mentioned earlier in the verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the referent more explicitly. Alternate translation: [but let his people not return]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **but let them not return to folly**
UST However, they must not do foolish things anymore
(וְאַל־יָשֻׁובוּ לְכִסְלָה)

The psalmist is speaking of resuming a sinful way of life as if it were physically turning around and going back to a place. If your language does not have a comparable expression, or if this image does not communicate well, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but let them not begin acting foolishly again]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to folly**
UST foolish things
(לְכִסְלָה)

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: [to foolish behavior]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | my God |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| peace | that he will make … thrive |
| his faithful ones | they are loyal to him |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to folly | foolish things |

# Psalms 85:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Surely his salvation {is} near to his reverent {ones}, for glory to dwell in our land.* | *He is surely ready to help people who deeply respect him. Then he will be gloriously present with us in our land.* |

ULT **his salvation**
UST to help
(יִשְׁעָ֑ו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **his salvation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [his saving help]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to his reverent {ones}**
UST people who deeply respect him
(לִ֝ירֵאָ֗יו)

The psalmist is using the adjective **reverent** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [to the people who revere him]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **for glory to dwell in our land**
UST Then he will be gloriously present with us in our land
(לִשְׁכֹּ֣ן כָּ֭בוֹד בְּאַרְצֵֽנוּ)

The psalmist is using the word **for** to introduce the purpose for which God's salvation is near. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make the purpose relationship more explicit. Alternate translation: [so that glory may dwell in our land]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **for glory to dwell in our land**
UST Then he will be gloriously present with us in our land
(לִשְׁכֹּ֣ן כָּ֭בוֹד בְּאַרְצֵֽנוּ)

The psalmist is using the word **glory** to represent God's manifest presence among his people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state this meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for God's glorious presence to dwell in our land]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **glory**
UST gloriously
(כָּבוֹד)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [glorious presence]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Surely his salvation {is} near to his reverent {ones}, for glory to dwell in our land**
UST He is surely ready to help people who deeply respect him. Then he will be gloriously present with us in our land
(אַךְ קָרוֹב לִירֵאָיו יְשׁוּעָתוֹ לִשְׁכֹּן כָּבוֹד בְּאַרְצֵנוּ)

In this verse, both uses of the pronoun **his** refer to Yahweh, and the pronoun **our** refers to the psalmist and the people of Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could clarify the referents. Alternate translation: [Surely Yahweh's salvation is near to the people who revere Yahweh, for glory to dwell in the land of the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| his salvation | to help |
| to his reverent {ones} | people who deeply respect him |
| glory | gloriously |
| in our land | in our land |

# Psalms 85:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Covenant faithfulness and truth will meet together; righteousness and peace will kiss.* | *He will be faithfully kind and true to us. He will do what is right and make us peaceful.* |

ULT **Covenant faithfulness and truth will meet together; righteousness and peace will kiss**
UST He will be faithfully kind and true to us. He will do what is right and make us peaceful
(חֶסֶד־וֶאֱמֶת נִפְגָּשׁוּ צֶדֶק וְשָׁלוֹם נָשָׁקוּ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [God will be completely faithful, true, righteous, and peaceful toward his people]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Covenant faithfulness and truth will meet together**
UST He will be faithfully kind and true to us
(חֶסֶד־וֶאֱמֶת נִפְגָּשׁוּ)

The psalmist speaks of **Covenant faithfulness** and **truth** as if they were people who could **meet together**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [God will be both faithful to his covenant and true to his word at the same time]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **Covenant faithfulness and truth**
UST faithfully kind and true
(חֶסֶד־וֶאֱמֶת)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **Covenant faithfulness** and **truth**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [Being faithful to his covenant and being true to his word]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **righteousness and peace will kiss**
UST He will do what is right and make us peaceful
(צֶדֶק וְשָׁלוֹם נָשָׁקוּ)

The psalmist speaks of **righteousness** and **peace** as if they were people who could **kiss** in greeting. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [doing what is right and having peace will go together]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **righteousness and peace**
UST what is right and make us peaceful
(צֶדֶק וְשָׁלוֹם)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **righteousness** and **peace**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [acting rightly and being at peace]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Covenant faithfulness | faithfully kind |
| righteousness | what is right |
| and peace | and make us peaceful |
| will kiss | He will do |

# Psalms 85:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Truth will sprout from the earth, and righteousness will look down from the heavens.* | *People on earth will be faithful to God, and God will act justly toward us from heaven.* |

**ULT Truth will sprout from the earth**
**UST** People on earth will be faithful to God
(אֱמֶת מֵאֶרֶץ תִּצְמָח)

The psalmist speaks of **Truth** as if it were a plant that could **sprout from the earth**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Faithfulness will flourish among people on earth]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT Truth**
**UST** will be faithful to God
(אֱמֶת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **Truth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Truthful communication]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and righteousness will look down from the heavens**
**UST** and God will act justly toward us from heaven
(וְצֶדֶק מִשָּׁמַיִם נִשְׁקָף)

The psalmist speaks of **righteousness** as if it were a person who could **look down from the heavens**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the right actions of God will descend from the heavens]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT and righteousness**
**UST** will act justly toward us
(וְצֶדֶק)

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 just actions]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from the earth | People on earth |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and righteousness | will act justly toward us |
| from the heavens | and God … from heaven |

# Psalms 85:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Also, Yahweh will give the good, and our land will give its produce.* | *Yes, Yahweh will give us good things, and our land will produce abundant harvests.* |

> ULT **and our land will give its produce**
> UST and our land will produce abundant harvests
> (וְאַרְצֵנוּ תִּתֵּן יְבוּלָהּ)

The psalmist speaks of **our land** as if it were a person who could **give** something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and our land will yield its produce]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the good | good things |
| and our land | and our land |
| its produce | abundant harvests |

# Psalms 85:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Righteousness walks before him, and it puts his steps in the way.* | *As he considers what to do, he will recognize what the right thing is to do, and he will do that.* |

**ULT Righteousness walks before him**
**UST** As he considers what to do, he will recognize what the right thing is to do
(צֶדֶק לְפָנָיו יְהַלֵּךְ)

The psalmist speaks of **Righteousness** as if it were a person who could **walk** ahead of Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will act rightly in all he does] or [Righteousness accompanies all that Yahweh does]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT Righteousness**
**UST** he will recognize what the right thing is
(צֶדֶק)

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: [What is right]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Righteousness walks before him, and it puts his steps in the way**
**UST** As he considers what to do, he will recognize what the right thing is to do, and he will do that
(צֶדֶק לְפָנָיו יְהַלֵּךְ וְיָשֵׂם לְדֶרֶךְ פְּעָמָיו)

The pronouns **him** and **his** refer to Yahweh. The pronoun **it** refers to righteousness. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the referent more explicitly. Alternate translation: [Righteousness walks before Yahweh, and righteousness puts Yahweh's steps in the way]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Righteousness | he will recognize what the right thing is |

# Psalms 86

## Psalm 86 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 86 is a psalm of supplication or lament. It presents all of the basic elements of that type of psalm. (Some elements are repeated.) See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Cry for help (1–4)
2. Statement of trust (5)
3. Cry for help (6)
4. Statement of trust (7–10)
5. Petition (11)
6. Vow of praise (12–13)
7. Description of troubles (14)
8. Petition (15–17)

# Psalms 86:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A prayer. Of David. Incline your ear, Yahweh; answer me, for I {am} poor and needy.* | *A prayer of David. Yahweh, I am poor and helpless, so please do what I ask.* |

ULT **Incline your ear, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh … please do what I ask
(הַטֵּה־יְהוָה אָזְנְךָ)

David is using the term **ear** to mean hearing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Pay attention to me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Incline your ear, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh … please do what I ask
(הַטֵּה־יְהוָה אָזְנְךָ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please listen to me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **answer me**
UST please do what I ask
(עֲנֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please answer me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **for I {am} poor and needy**
UST I am poor and helpless, so
(כִּי־עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן אָנִי)

The word **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because I am poor and needy]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **{am} poor and needy**
UST am poor and helpless
(עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן)

The terms **poor** and **needy** mean similar things. David 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 poor]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| A prayer | A prayer |
| Of David | of David |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 86:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Guard my soul, for I {am} faithful. You, my God, save your servant, the one trusting in you.* | *I am loyal to you, so please protect me. I worship you as my God and I trust you, so please save me.* |

> ULT **Guard my soul**
> UST please protect me
> (שָׁמְרָה נַפְשִׁי)

David is using **soul** to represent his whole person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Guard me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

> ULT **Guard my soul**
> UST please protect me
> (שָׁמְרָה נַפְשִׁי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please guard my soul]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

> ULT **for I {am} faithful**
> UST I am loyal to you, so
> (כִּי־חָסִיד אָנִי)

The word **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because I am a godly one]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

> ULT **save your servant**
> UST I worship you … so please save me
> (הוֹשַׁ֣ע עַבְדֶּ֣ךָ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please save your servant]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

> ULT **the one trusting in you**
> UST and I trust you
> (הַבּוֹטֵ֖חַ אֵלֶ֑יךָ)

The phrase **the one trusting in you** refers to David himself. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [because I trust in you]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Guard | please protect |
| my soul | me |
| {am} faithful | am loyal to you |
| my God | as my God |
| save | so please save me |
| your servant | I worship you |
| the one trusting | and I trust |

# Psalms 86:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Favor me, Lord, for to you I call all of the day.* | *I have been crying out to you continually, Lord, so please be kind to me.* |

**ULT Favor me**
**UST** please be kind to me
(חָנֵּנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please be gracious to me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT for to you I call all of the day**
**UST** I have been crying out to you continually … so
(כִּי אֵלֶיךָ אֶקְרָא כָּל־הַיּוֹם)

The word **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because to you I call all the day]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT all of the day**
**UST** continually
(כָּל־הַיּוֹם)

David is saying **all the day** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [all day long]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Favor me | please be kind to me |
| Lord | Lord |
| I call | I have been crying out |

# Psalms 86:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, Lord, I lift up my soul.* | *I am asking you to help me, Lord, as someone who worships you, so please make me happy by doing that.* |

**ULT Gladden the soul of your servant**
**UST** as someone who worships you … please make me happy by doing that
(שַׂמַּח נֶפֶשׁ עַבְדֶּךָ)

David is using **soul** to represent his whole person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Make glad your servant]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT Gladden the soul of your servant**
**UST** as someone who worships you … please make me happy by doing that
(שַׂמַּח נֶפֶשׁ עַבְדֶּךָ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please make glad the soul of your servant]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT for to you, Lord, I lift up my soul**
**UST** I am asking you to help me, Lord … so
(כִּי אֵלֶיךָ אֲדֹנָי נַפְשִׁי אֶשָּׂא)

The word **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because to you, Lord, I lift up my soul]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **I lift up my soul**
UST I am asking … to help me
(נַפְשִׁי אֶשָּׂא)

Here David is speaking of directing his devotion to God as if he were physically **lifting up** his soul to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I pray to you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Gladden | please make … happy by doing that |
| the soul of | me |
| your servant | as someone who worships you |
| Lord | Lord |
| my soul | I am asking … to help me |

# Psalms 86:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you, Lord, {are} good and forgiving and plentiful of covenant faithfulness to all of the ones calling on you.* | *Do this, Lord, because you are good and you forgive people's sins. You very faithfully love everyone who prays to you.* |

ULT **For you, Lord, {are} good and forgiving**
UST Do this, Lord, because you are good and you forgive people's sins
(כִּֽי־אַתָּ֣ה אֲדֹנָ֣י טֹ֖וב וְסַלָּ֑ח)

The word **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Because you, Lord, are good and forgiving]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **covenant faithfulness**
UST You … faithfully love
(חֶ֝סֶד)

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: [faithfully keeping your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Lord | Lord |
| {are} good | are good |
| and forgiving | and you forgive people's sins |
| covenant faithfulness | You … faithfully love |
| the ones calling on you | who prays to you |

# Psalms 86:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Listen {to} my prayer, Yahweh, and attend to the voice of my pleas.* | *Yahweh, I am pleading with you in prayer to help me; please do what I ask.* |

ULT **Listen {to} my prayer, Yahweh, and attend to the voice of my pleas**
UST Yahweh, I am pleading with you in prayer to help me; please do what I ask
(הַאֲזִינָה יְהוָה תְּפִלָּתִי וְהַקְשִׁיבָה בְּקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנוֹתָי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, listen carefully to my earnest prayer]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Listen {to} my prayer, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh … in prayer … please do what I ask
(הַאֲזִינָה יְהוָה תְּפִלָּתִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please listen to my prayer, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **{to} my prayer**
UST in prayer
(תְּפִלָּתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **prayer**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to what I pray]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and attend to the voice of my pleas**
UST I am pleading with you … to help me; please do what I ask
(וְהַקְשִׁיבָה בְּקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנוֹתָי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [and please attend to the voice of my pleas]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **to the voice of my pleas**
UST I am pleading with you … to help me
(בְּקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנוֹתָי)

Here, **voice** represents the content of what David is saying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my pleas]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **my pleas**
UST I am pleading with you … to help me
(תַּחֲנוּנוֹתָי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **pleas**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what I plead]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {to} my prayer | in prayer |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my pleas | I am pleading with you … to help me |

# Psalms 86:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In the day of my trouble I call on you, for you will answer me.* | *Whenever I am in trouble, I call out to you, because I know that you will help me.* |

ULT **In the day of my trouble**
UST Whenever I am in trouble
(בְּיוֹם צָרָתִי)

David is using **In the day of my trouble** as a common expression to mean "at the time of my trouble." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [When trouble comes to me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **for you will answer me**
UST because I know that you will help me
(כִּי תַעֲנֵנִי)

The word **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because you answer me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my trouble | I am in trouble |
| I call on you | I call out to you |

# Psalms 86:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *There is none like you among the gods, Lord, and there is nothing like your works.* | *Lord, among all the gods that the nations worship, there is none like you; none of them has done the great things that you have done.* |

ULT **There is none like you among the gods, Lord, and there is nothing like your works**
UST Lord, among all the gods that the nations worship, there is none like you; none of them has done the great things that you have done
(אֵין־כָּמֹוךָ בָאֱלֹהִים ׀ אֲדֹנָי וְאֵין כְּמַעֲשֶׂיךָ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [You are greater than all other gods, Lord, and your works surpass all others]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| among the gods | among all the gods that the nations worship |
| Lord | Lord |

# Psalms 86:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *All of the nations that you have made will come and bow down to your face, Lord, and they will glorify your name.* | *Lord, the nations that you have made will all come and bow down before you, and they will praise you.* |

ULT **All of the nations**
UST the nations … all
(כָּל־גּוֹיִם)

David is saying **All of the nations** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [Many nations]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **and bow down to your face**
UST and bow down before you
(וְיִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here, **your face** represents your presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [bow down before you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and they will glorify your name**
UST and they will praise you
(וְיכַבְּדוּ לִשְׁמֶךָ)

David is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is and to refer to his reputation. Alternate translation: [and they will glorify you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and they will glorify your name**
UST and they will praise you
(וְיכַבְּדוּ לִשְׁמֶךָ)

The pronoun **they** refers to the nations that Yahweh has made. The pronoun **your** refers to the Lord. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the nations will glorify your name, Lord]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the nations | the nations |
| and bow down | and bow down |
| Lord | Lord |
| and they will glorify | and they will praise |

# Psalms 86:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you {are} great and are doing wonderful things; you {are} God, you alone.* | *They will do this because you are great and you do amazing things; you are the only true God.* |

**ULT For you {are} great**

**UST** They will do this because you are great

(כִּי־גָדוֹל אַתָּה)

The word **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Because you are great]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| wonderful things | amazing things |
| {are} God | are the … God |

# Psalms 86:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Teach me your way, Yahweh. that I may walk in your truth. Unite my heart to fear your name.* | *Yahweh, please teach me how you want me to live so that I will act properly, as you wish. Give me a sincere desire to honor you.* |

ULT **Teach me your way, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh, please teach me how you want me to live
(הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה ׀ דַּרְכֶּךָ)

Here David 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 helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Teach me how you want me to live]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Teach me your way, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh, please teach me how you want me to live
(הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה ׀ דַּרְכֶּךָ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please teach me your way]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **that I may walk in your truth**
UST so that I will act properly, as you wish
(אֶהֱלֵךְ בַּאֲמִתֶּךָ)

Here David is speaking of living according to God’s truth as if he were **walking** along a path. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will live according to your truth]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **that I may walk in your truth**
UST so that I will act properly, as you wish
(אֶהֱלֵךְ בַּאֲמִתֶּךָ)

Here, **I will walk in your truth** marks David’s faithful living as the goal or purpose of the teaching he requests. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that I may walk in your truth]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **in your truth**
UST properly, as you wish
(בַּאֲמִתֶּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **trustworthiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what you show to be true]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Unite my heart**
UST Give me a sincere desire
(יַחֵד לְבָבִי)

Here, **heart** represents David's will and desires. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Unite my will]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Unite my heart**
UST Give me a sincere desire
(יַחֵד לְבָבִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please unite my heart]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **to fear your name**
UST to honor you
(לְיִרְאָה שְׁמֶךָ)

David is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is and to refer to his reputation. Alternate translation: [to fear you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| to fear | to honor |

# Psalms 86:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will thank you, Lord my God, with all of my heart, and I will glorify your name forever.* | *Lord my God, I will thank you wholeheartedly, and I will praise you forever.* |

ULT **with all of my heart**
UST wholeheartedly
(בְּכָל־לְבָבִי)

Here the **heart** represents where David's thoughts and feelings exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with all of my being]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and I will glorify your name**
UST and I will praise you
(וַאֲכַבְּדָה שִׁמְךָ)

David is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is and to refer to his reputation. Alternate translation: [I will glorify you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Lord | Lord |
| my God | my God |
| and I will glorify | and I will praise |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 86:13

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *For your covenant faithfulness {is} great toward me, and you have delivered my soul from lowest Sheol.* | *I will do that because you have been so faithfully kind to me; you have kept me from going way down into the place where dead people are.* |

ULT **For your covenant faithfulness {is} great toward me**
UST I will do that because you have been so faithfully kind to me
(כִּי־חַסְדְּךָ גָּדוֹל עָלָי)

The word **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Because your covenant faithfulness is great toward me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **your covenant faithfulness**
UST you have been … kind
(חַסְדְּךָ)

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: [how faithfully you keep your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and you have delivered my soul**
UST you have kept me
(וְהִצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי)

David is using **soul** to represent his whole person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and you have delivered me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your covenant faithfulness | you have been … kind |
| and you have delivered | you have kept |
| my soul | me |
| from … Sheol | from going … into the place where dead people are |

# Psalms 86:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God, the arrogant arise against me, and the congregation of the violent seek my life, and they do not set you before them.* | *God, proud people are attacking me. Yes, a group of cruel people is trying to kill me; those people do not respect you.* |

ULT **the arrogant**
UST proud people
(זֵדִים)

David is using the adjective **arrogant** 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: [arrogant people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the violent**
UST cruel people
(עָרִיצִים)

David is using the adjective **violent** 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: [violent people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **seek my life**
UST is trying to kill me
(בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי)

David is using **seek my life** as a common expression to mean "try to kill me." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [try to kill me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

> ULT **and they do not set you before them**
> UST those people do not respect you
> (וְלֹא שָׂמֻוךָ לְנֶגְדָּם)

David is using **they have not set you before them** as a common expression to mean "they do not pay attention to you" or "they do not regard you." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they do not consider you]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

> ULT **and they do not set you before them**
> UST those people do not respect you
> (וְלֹא שָׂמֻוךָ לְנֶגְדָּם)

The pronoun **they** refers to the arrogant and the violent ones described earlier in the verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and these enemies do not set you before them]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| the arrogant | proud people |
| and the congregation of | Yes, a group of |
| seek | is trying |

# Psalms 86:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But you, Lord, {are} a merciful and gracious God, long of nostrils and plentiful of covenant faithfulness and truth.* | *But you, Lord, are a God who is merciful and kind. You do not quickly become angry, and you are so faithfully kind and true to us.* |

ULT **But you, Lord**
UST But you, Lord
(וְאַתָּה אֲדֹנָי)

David uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between the enemies described in the previous verse and Yahweh's character. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [However, you, Lord]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **{are} a merciful and gracious God**
UST are a God who is merciful and kind
(אֵל־רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן)

The terms **merciful** and **gracious** mean similar things. David 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 compassionate]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **long of nostrils**
UST You do not quickly become angry
(אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם)

David is using **long of nostrils** as a common expression to mean "slow to become angry." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [slow to anger]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **and plentiful of covenant faithfulness and truth**
UST and you are so faithfully kind and true to us
(וְרַב־חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant faithfulness** and **truth**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [and being so very faithful to your covenant and being truthful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Lord | Lord |
| {are} a … God | are a God |
| merciful | who is merciful |
| and gracious | and kind |
| covenant faithfulness | and you are … faithfully kind |

# Psalms 86:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Turn to me and favor me; give your strength to your servant, and save the son of your female servant.* | *Consider my situation and be kind to me; make me, your servant, strong. Help me as if I had been born in your household.* |

ULT **Turn to me and favor me**
UST Consider my situation and be kind to me
(פְּנֵה אֵלַי וְחָנֵּנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please turn to me and favor me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Turn to me**
UST Consider my situation
(פְּנֵה אֵלַי)

The psalmist is speaking as if God were not looking at him and he is asking him to **turn to** him and pay attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Please pay attention to me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **give your strength to your servant**
UST make me, your servant, strong
(תְּנָה־עֻזְּךָ לְעַבְדֶּךָ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please give your strength to your servant]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **give your strength to your servant**
UST make me, your servant, strong
(תְּנָה־עֻזְּךָ לְעַבְדֶּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [make your servant strong]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and save the son of your female servant**
UST Help me as if I had been born in your household
(וְהוֹשִׁ֥יעָה לְבֶן־אֲמָתֶֽךָ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [and please save the son of your female servant]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **the son of your female servant**
UST as if I had been born in your household
(לְבֶן־אֲמָתֶֽךָ)

David is using **the son of your female servant** as a common expression to indicate that he was born into Yahweh's service. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your servant from birth]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and favor me | and be kind to me |
| your strength | strong |
| to your servant | me, your servant |
| and save | Help me |
| your female servant | as if I had been born in your household |

# Psalms 86:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Work for me a sign for good, that the ones hating me may see and have shame, for you, Yahweh, you help me and comfort me.* | *Do something to show that you are helping me so that my enemies will see it, and it will embarrass them. I believe that you, Yahweh, will help me and comfort me.* |

ULT **Work for me a sign for good**
UST Do something to show that you are helping me
(עֲשֵׂה־עִמִּי אוֹת לְטוֹבָה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please work for me a sign for good]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **that the ones hating me may see and have shame**
UST so that my enemies will see it, and it will embarrass them
(וְיִרְאוּ שֹׂנְאַי וְיֵבֹשׁוּ)

Here, **that the ones hating me may see and have shame** marks the enemies' shame as the goal or purpose of the sign David requests. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that the ones hating me will see and have shame]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **for you, Yahweh, you help me and comfort me**
UST I believe that you, Yahweh, will help me and comfort me
(כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה עֲזַרְתַּנִי וְנִחַמְתָּנִי)

The word **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because you, Yahweh, have help me and comfort me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **for you, Yahweh, you help me and**
UST I believe that you, Yahweh, will help me
(כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה עֲזַרְתַּנִי)

David is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **have helped** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that Yahweh personally is the one who helps him. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [you yourself, Yahweh, have helped me]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| a sign | something |
| for good | to show that you are helping |
| and have shame | and it will embarrass them |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 87

## Psalm 87 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 87 is a psalm of praise. It is a specific type of praise psalm, a “song of Zion.” See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Celebration of how Yahweh chose Zion as the place for his temple (1–3)
2. Celebration of how people from all nations will worship Yahweh (4–6)
3. Celebration of how Yahweh’s presence in Zion blesses people (7)

# Psalms 87:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Of the sons of Korah. A psalm. A song. His foundation {is} on the mountains of holiness.* | *One of the Korahites wrote this song. Yahweh established his city on mountains that he made holy.* |

**ULT Of the sons of Korah**
**UST** One of the Korahites wrote
(לִבְנֵי־קֹרַח)

The word **sons** refers to the descendants of Korah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Of those who are descended from Korah]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT His foundation**
**UST** Yahweh established his city
(יְסוֹדָתוֹ)

The pronoun **His** refers to Yahweh, who is named in the next verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh's foundation]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT His foundation {is} on the mountains of holiness**
**UST** Yahweh established his city on mountains that he made holy
(יְסוֹדָתוֹ בְּהַרְרֵי־קֹדֶשׁ)

Without naming it, the psalmist is speaking of the city of Zion as if it were a building that has a **foundation**. This represents the idea that God has firmly established the city. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The city he has established is on the mountains of holiness]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT {is} on the mountains of holiness**
**UST** on mountains that he made holy
(בְּהַרְרֵי־קֹדֶשׁ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **mountains** that are characterized by **holiness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [mountains that are holy]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **{is} on the mountains of holiness**
UST on mountains that he made holy
(בְּהַרְרֵי־קֹדֶשׁ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **holiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [is on the mountains that are holy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Korah | One of the Korahites wrote |
| A psalm | this song |
| His foundation | Yahweh established his city |
| holiness | that he made holy |

# Psalms 87:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh is loving the gates of Zion more than all of the dwellings of Jacob.* | *He loves the city of Zion more than any other place where Israelites live.* |

**ULT the gates of Zion**
**UST** the city of Zion
(שַׁעֲרֵי צִיּוֹן)

The psalmist is using **the gates of Zion** to represent the entire city of Zion. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Zion itself]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT the dwellings of Jacob**
**UST** other place where Israelites live
(מִשְׁכְּנוֹת יַעֲקֹב)

Here, **the dwellings of Jacob** represents the places where the descendants of Jacob live. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the places where the descendants of Jacob live]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | He |
| is loving | loves |
| the gates of | the city of |
| Zion | Zion |
| the dwellings of | other place where … live |
| Jacob | Israelites |

# Psalms 87:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Glorious things are spoken of you, city of God. Selah* | *People say wonderful things about this city that belongs to God. Selah* |

ULT **Glorious things are spoken of you**
UST People say wonderful things about
(נְכְבָּדוֹת מְדֻבָּר בָּךְ)

The expression **Glorious things are spoken of you** uses a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [God declares glorious things about you]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **are spoken of you, city of God**
UST People say … about this city that belongs to God
(מְדֻבָּר בָּךְ עִיר הָאֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist is speaking to the city of Zion as if it could hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about how honored Zion is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if the psalmist were speaking to people about Zion. Alternate translation: [spoken about Zion, the city of God]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

ULT **city of God**
UST this city that belongs to God
(עִיר הָאֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean that Zion is the city where God dwells. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [city where God dwells]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Glorious things | wonderful things |
| of God | to God |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 87:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will mention Rahab and Babylon to the ones knowing me; behold, Philistia and Tyre with Cush— "This one was born there."* | *{Yahweh says,} "When I talk about people who know me, this will include Egyptians and Babylonians. Indeed, I will also say about Philistines and Tyrians and Cushites, 'This person is a native of Zion.'"* |

ULT **I will mention**
UST {Yahweh says,} "When I talk about
(אַזְכִּיר)

The pronoun **I** refers to Yahweh, who is the speaker from this point in the psalm. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [I, Yahweh, will mention]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Rahab**
UST Egyptians
(רַהַב)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Egypt as if it were the sea monster **Rahab**. The psalmist may be comparing Egypt to Rahab because of the way God rescued Israel from Israel at the Sea of Reeds. It is not referring to the person named Rahab mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. You could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Egypt]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to the ones knowing me**
UST people who know me, this will include
(לְיֹדְעָי)

In the phrase **the ones knowing me**, the pronoun **me** refers to Yahweh, who is the speaker. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the ones knowing me, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **behold**
UST Indeed, I will also say about
(הִנֵּה)

Yahweh is using the term **behold** to focus his listeners' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [take note]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Philistia and Tyre with Cush**
UST Philistines and Tyrians and Cushites
(פְּלֶשֶׁת וְצוֹר עִם־כּוּשׁ)

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: [I will also mention Philistia and Tyre with Cush]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **This one was born there**
UST This person is a native of Zion
(זֶ֣ה יֻלַּד־שָׁ֑ם)

This is a quotation that Yahweh says about each person from the nations he has listed. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this with a natural way of introducing direct quotations in your language.

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **was born**
UST is a native
(יֻלַּד)

The expression **was born** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [began life]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Rahab | Egyptians |
| and Babylon | and Babylonians |
| to the ones knowing me | people who know me, this will include |
| Philistia | Philistines |
| and Tyre | and Tyrians |
| Cush | Cushites |

# Psalms 87:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And of Zion it will be said, "Man and man was born in her, and he, he will establish her, the Most High."* | *People will say about Zion, "Every one of those people is a native of that city," and God Most High will personally keep Zion strong.* |

**ULT it will be said**
**UST** People will say
(יֵאָמֵר)

The expression **it will be said** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [everyone will declare]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT Man and man was born in her**
**UST** Every one of those people is a native of that city
(אִישׁ וְאִישׁ יֻלַּד־בָּהּ)

The psalmist is using **Man and man** as a common expression of the culture to mean "each and every person." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Each person was born in her] or [Person after person was born in her]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT Man and man was born in her**
**UST** Every one of those people is a native of that city
(אִישׁ וְאִישׁ יֻלַּד־בָּהּ)

This is a direct quotation of what people will say about Zion. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this with a natural way of introducing direct quotations in your language.

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

> ULT **was born**
> UST is a native
> (יֻלַּד)

The expression **was born** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [began life]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

> ULT **and he, he will establish her, the Most High**
> UST and God Most High will personally keep Zion strong
> (וְהִוא יְכוֹנְנֶהָ עֶלְיוֹן)

The pronoun **he** refers to God Most High. The psalmist repeats the pronoun **he** for emphasis before naming **the Most High** directly. He is emphasizing that it is only God who can do this. IIf a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [God Most High himself will establish her]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And of Zion | about Zion |
| the Most High | God Most High |

# Psalms 87:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh will recount in the writing of the peoples, "This {one} was born there." Selah* | *When Yahweh registers each of those people, he will record, "This person is a native of Zion." Selah* |

**ULT in the writing of the peoples**
**UST** When … registers each of those people
(בִּכְתָוֹב עַמִּים)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean a record that documents the peoples. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the record that lists the peoples]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT in the writing of**
**UST** When … registers
(בִּכְתָוֹב)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **writing**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what is written about]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT This {one} was born there**
**UST** This person is a native of Zion
(זֶה יֻלַּד־שָׁם)

This is a quotation that Yahweh will record about each person from the nations. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this with a natural way of introducing direct quotations in your language.

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

**ULT was born**
**UST** is a native
(יֻלַּד)

The expression **was born** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [began life]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| will recount | he will record |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 87:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And the singers, like the pipers, "All of my springs {are} in you."* | *Singers and musicians {will celebrate and say}, "Zion, everything that makes me flourish comes from you!"* |

**ULT And the singers, like the pipers**
**UST** Singers and musicians {will celebrate and say}
(וְשָׁרִים כְּחֹלְלִים)

The psalmist 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 singers, like the pipers, will declare]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT like the pipers**
**UST** musicians {will celebrate and say}
(כְּחֹלְלִים)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the pipers** play music, so **the singers** also make music. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [together with the pipers]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT All of my springs {are} in you**
**UST** Zion, everything that makes me flourish comes from you
(כָּל־מַעְיָנַי בָּךְ)

The singers are speaking of Zion as if it were a place from which **springs** of water flow. This represents the idea that Zion is the source of all life and blessing. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [All that sustains our lives comes from you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **All of my springs {are} in you**
> UST Zion, everything that makes me flourish comes from you
> (כָּל־מַעְיָנַי בָּךְ)

This is a direct quotation of what the singers and pipers will say. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this with a natural way of introducing direct quotations in your language.

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my springs | that makes me flourish |

# Psalms 88

## Psalm 88 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 88 is a psalm of supplication or lament. Because the psalmist is feeling such despair, he does not make a statement of trust or a vow of praise, and he does not even make a petition. (The psalmist observes instead in verses 10–12 that if Yahweh does not heal him, he will not be able to praise him.) So only two of the basic elements of a psalm of supplication are present. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Cry for help (1–2)
2. Description of troubles (3–8)
3. Cry for help (9–14)
4. Description of troubles (15–18)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Who wrote this psalm?

The superscription to Psalm 88 says that it is both a “psalm of the sons of Korah” and a “maskil of Heman the Ezrahite.” The explanation for this is probably that the first part of the superscription belongs at the end of Psalm 87 (whose superscription attributes it to “the sons of Korah”). See the discussion of this in the introduction to the book of Psalms. As that discussion indicates, there is significant movement among biblical scholars toward seeing the musical instructions at the start of many psalm inscriptions as subscriptions to the previous psalms. However, published versions of the Bible do not yet tend to present them that way. Unless there is a Bible translation in your region that does, we recommend that you follow the current approach and retain both attributions in this superscription. The UST models one way to do that.

# Psalms 88:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A song. A psalm. Of the sons of Korah. For the chief musician. On "Weakness of Afflicting." A maskil of Heman the Ezrahite.* | *One of the Korahites wrote this song. This is a note for the worship leader: The tune is "Weakness of Afflicting." Heman the Ezrahite wrote this song.* |

ULT **A maskil of**
UST this song
(מַשְׂכִּיל)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **maskil**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **On "Weakness of Afflicting**
UST The tune is "Weakness of Afflicting
(עַל־מָחֲלַת לְעַנּוֹת)

The phrase that the ULT translates as **Weakness of Afflicting** could be the name of the tune of this psalm. It might also be a musical instruction See how you translated the term **Weakness** in the superscription to Psalm 53. (The addition of the term **Afflicting** here seems to refer to what the psalmist says in verse 9, "My eye mourns from affliction.") Alternate translation: [perform this psalm about affliction in a minor key] or [perform this psalm about affliction in a somber tone]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm | this song |
| Korah | One of the Korahites wrote |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of Afflicting | of Afflicting |

# Psalms 88:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, God of my salvation, {by} day, in the night, I cry out before you.* | *Yahweh, you are the God who saves me. I continually ask you to help me.* |

ULT **my salvation**
UST who saves me
(יְשׁוּעָתִֽי)

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: [saving me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{by} day, in the night, I cry out**
UST I continually ask … to help me
(יוֹם־צָעַ֥קְתִּי בַלָּ֗יְלָה)

The psalmist is referring to all times by naming two extremes, **day** and **night**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all the time I cry out]

**Support Reference:** Merism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| God of | you are the God |
| my salvation | who saves me |
| I cry out | I … ask … to help me |

# Psalms 88:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let my prayer come to your face; incline your ear to my cry.* | *Please pay attention to what I am saying as I pray to you.* |

**ULT Let my prayer come to your face; incline your ear to my cry**
**UST** Please pay attention to what I am saying as I pray to you
(תָּבוֹא לְפָנֶיךָ תְּפִלָּתִי הַטֵּה־אָזְנְךָ לְרִנָּתִי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Let my prayer come to your face, indeed, please listen to what I cry out to you]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT my prayer**
**UST** as I pray to you
(תְּפִלָּתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **prayer**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what I pray]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT to your face**
**UST** Please pay attention to
(לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here, **to your face** represents being in front of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [into your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **incline your ear to my cry**
UST Please pay attention to what I am saying
(הַטֵּה־אָזְנְךָ לְרִנָּתִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please pay attention to my cry]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **incline your ear**
UST Please pay attention to
(הַטֵּה־אָזְנְךָ)

The psalmist is using the term **ear** to mean hearing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [listen]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to my cry**
UST what I am saying
(לְרִנָּתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **cry**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to what I cry out]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my prayer | as I pray to you |
| to my cry | what I am saying |

# Psalms 88:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For my soul is full of troubles, and my life has come near to Sheol.* | *I ask this because I have experienced so many bad things that I cannot endure any more; I am about to die and go to the place where dead people are.* |

ULT **For my soul is full of troubles**
UST I ask this because I have experienced so many bad things that I cannot endure any more
(כִּי־שָׂבְעָה בָרָעוֹת נַפְשִׁי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because my soul is full of troubles]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **my soul**
UST I
(נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using the term **soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my whole being]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **of troubles**
UST bad things
(בָרָעוֹת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **troubles**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [troubling things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and my life has come near to Sheol**
UST I am about to die and go to the place where dead people are
(וְחַיַּי לִשְׁאוֹל הִגִּיעוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if his life were a journey that had nearly arrived at **Sheol**, which is the name of the realm of the dead. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am about to die]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my soul | I |
| of troubles | bad things |
| to Sheol | die and go to the place where dead people are |

# Psalms 88:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I am reckoned with the ones going down {into} the pit; I have become like a man without strength,* | *People expect me to die soon because I have so little strength left.* |

ULT **I am reckoned**
UST People expect me
(נֶחְשַׁבְתִּי)

The expression **I am reckoned** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [People reckon me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **the ones going down {into} the pit**
UST to die soon
(יֹרְדֵי בֽוֹר)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if the dead were literally going down into **the pit** which associated with Sheol, the realm of the dead. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the ones who are dying]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **like a man without strength**
UST I … so little strength
(כְּגֶבֶר אֵין־אֱיָל)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a man without strength** is helpless, so is the psalmist. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [as a helpless man]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **strength**
UST strength
(אֱיָל)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [anyone to make him strong]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {into} the pit | to die soon |
| strength | strength |

# Psalms 88:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *free among the ones having died, like the slain lying in the grave, whom you do not remember them anymore, and they, they are cut off from your hand.* | *It is as if I belong among dead people who are lying in their graves. It seems that you are no longer aware of such people and you stop taking care of them.* |

ULT **free among the ones having died**
UST It is as if I belong among dead people
(בַּמֵּתִים חָפְשִׁי)

The psalmist actually means to communicate the opposite of the literal meaning of what he is saying here. If a speaker of your language would not do that, you could translate the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [abandoned among the dead]

**Support Reference:** Irony

ULT **like the slain lying in the grave**
UST It is as if I belong among dead people who are lying in their graves
(כְּמוֹ חֲלָלִים ׀ שֹׁכְבֵי קָבֶר)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the slain lying in the grave** are forgotten and helpless, so is the psalmist. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [as forgotten as corpses lying in the grave]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **whom you do not remember them anymore, and they, they are cut off from your hand**
UST It seems that you are no longer aware of such people and you stop taking care of them
(אֲשֶׁר לֹא זְכַרְתָּם עוֹד וְהֵמָּה מִיָּדְךָ נִגָּזָרוּ)

In the second half of the verse, the psalmist shifts from using **whom** to repeating **they, they**. Both refer to the dead. The doubled pronoun **they, they** reflects an emphasis in the original language on the finality of their separation from God.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **whom you do not remember them**
UST It seems that you are no … aware of such people
(אֲשֶׁר לֹא זְכַרְתָּם)

It might seem that the expression **whom you do not remember them** contains extra information that would not be natural to express in your language. If so, you could shorten it. Alternate translation: [whom you do not remember] or [You do not remember them]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

ULT **and they, they are cut off from your hand**
UST and you stop taking care of them
(וְהֵמָּה מִיָּדְךָ נִגְזָרוּ)

The expression **they are cut off** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [and they, you have cut them off from your hand]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **they are cut off**
UST and you stop
(נִגְזָרוּ)

The psalmist is using **cut off** as a common expression of the culture to mean "removed." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they are removed]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **from your hand**
UST taking care of
(מִיָּדְךָ)

Here, **hand** represents the power and care 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 your care]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| free | It is as if I belong |
| the slain | among dead people |
| in the grave | in their graves |

# Psalms 88:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have set me in the pit of the depths, in dark places, in deep places.* | *It is as though you have thrown me down to the bottom of a deep, dark pit.* |

ULT **in the pit of the depths**
UST down to the bottom of a … pit
(בְּבֹור תַּחְתִּיֹּות)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if **the pit of the depths** were literally a deep hole into which God had placed him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in the lowest depths of suffering]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in dark places, in deep places**
UST deep, dark
(בְּמַחֲשַׁכִּים בִּמְצֹולֹות)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if **dark places** and **deep places** were the realm of death and separation from God. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in places of gloom and despair]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the pit of | a … pit |

# Psalms 88:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your wrath rests heavily on me, and you overwhelm {me} {with} all of your waves. Selah* | *I feel as if you are angry with me, and that is like an oppressive burden to me. It is as if I am drowning in your anger. Selah* |

ULT **Your wrath rests heavily on me, and you overwhelm {me} {with} all of your waves**
UST I feel as if you are angry with me, and that is like an oppressive burden to me. It is as if I am drowning in your anger
(עָלַי סָמְכָה חֲמָתֶךָ וְכָל־מִשְׁבָּרֶיךָ עִנִּיתָ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [You overwhelm me greatly with your wrath and your waves]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Your wrath rests heavily**
UST I feel as if you are angry with me, and that is like an oppressive burden
(סָמְכָה חֲמָתֶךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of **wrath** as if it were a heavy weight that could press down on someone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You are very angry with me]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **Your wrath**
UST I feel as if you are angry with me
(חֲמָתֶךָ)

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: [Your being so angry]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your waves**
UST It is as if I am drowning
(מִשְׁבָּרֶיךָ)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if God's judgment were **waves** of water crashing over him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all of your punishments]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Your wrath | I feel as if you are angry with me |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 88:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have distanced my acquaintances from me; you have made me abominations to them. {I am} shut in, and I do not go out.* | *Because my illness is so unpleasant and you have not healed me, my friends stay away from me, and I am not able to leave my home {to visit anyone}.* |

ULT **You have distanced my acquaintances from me; you have made me abominations to them**
UST Because my illness is so unpleasant and you have not healed me, my friends stay away from me
(הִרְחַקְתָּ מְיֻדָּעַי מִמֶּנִּי שַׂתַּנִי תוֹעֵבוֹת לָמוֹ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [You have distanced my acquaintances from me by making me so disgusting to them]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **you have made me abominations to them**
UST Because my illness is so unpleasant and you have not healed me
(שַׂתַּנִי תוֹעֵבוֹת לָמוֹ)

The pronoun **them** refers to the psalmist's acquaintances mentioned in the previous phrase.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **{I am} shut in, and I do not go out**
UST and I am not able to leave my home {to visit anyone}
(כָּלֻא וְלֹא אֵצֵא)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [I am shut in so that I do not go out]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **{I am} shut in**
UST and I am … able to leave my home
(כָּלֻא)

The expression **shut in** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [You have confined me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **{I am} shut in**
UST and I am … able to leave my home
(כָּלָֽא)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if he were literally **shut in** like a prisoner. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am trapped]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my acquaintances | my friends |
| abominations | Because my illness is so unpleasant |

# Psalms 88:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My eye mourns from affliction. I call out to you, Yahweh, in all of the day; I spread out my palms to you.* | *My eyes are swollen because I cry so much. Yahweh, throughout the day I call out to you for help as I spread out my hands toward you {in prayer}.* |

ULT **My eye mourns**
UST My eyes are swollen
(עֵינִי דָאֲבָה)

Here, **My eye mourns** represents the psalmist himself weeping. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I weep]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **affliction**
UST I cry so much
(עֹנִי)

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: [being afflicted]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **I call out to you, Yahweh, in all of the day; I spread out my palms to you**
UST Yahweh, throughout the day I call out to you for help as I spread out my hands toward you {in prayer … }
(קְרָאתִיךָ יְהוָה בְּכָל־יוֹם שִׁטַּחְתִּי אֵלֶיךָ כַפָּי)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [I call out to you, Yahweh, all day, spreading out my palms to you]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **my palms**
UST my hands
(כַפָּי)

Here, **palms** represents the act of praying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my hands in prayer]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| mourns | are swollen |
| affliction | I cry so much |
| I call out to you | I call out to you for help |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 88:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Will you do a wonder for the ones having died? Or will the Raphaites arise? Will they thank you? Selah* | *If I were to die, it would be too late for you to do a miracle to help me. Dead people do not come back to life and praise you! Selah* |

**ULT Will you do a wonder for the ones having died**
**UST** If I were to die, it would be too late for you to do a miracle to help me
(הֲלַמֵּתִים תַּעֲשֶׂה־פֶּלֶא)

The psalmist is using the question form to express his belief that God does not do wonders for the dead. 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: [You do not do a wonder for the ones having died.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT a wonder**
**UST** a miracle to help me
(פֶּלֶא)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wonder**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a wonderful thing]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Or will the Raphaites arise**
**UST** Dead people do not come back to life
(אִם־רְפָאִים יָקוּמוּ)

If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [And will the Raphaites arise?]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

**ULT Or will the Raphaites arise**
**UST** Dead people do not come back to life
(אִם־רְפָאִים יָקוּמוּ)

The psalmist is using the question form to express his belief that the Raphaites do not arise. 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: [The Raphaites will certainly not arise!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **will the Raphaites**
UST Dead people
(רְפָאִים)

The word **Raphaites** is the name of a people group. Here it refers to the spirits of the dead in Sheol.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **Will they thank you**
UST and praise you
(יוֹדוּךָ)

The psalmist is using the question form to express his belief that the dead do not thank God. 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: [They will certainly not thank you!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| a wonder | a miracle to help me |
| will the Raphaites | Dead people |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 88:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Will your covenant faithfulness be recounted in the grave, your faithfulness in Abaddon?* | *Dead bodies in graves do not talk about how you faithfully love us. In the place where dead people go, no one talks about how faithful you are.* |

ULT **Will your covenant faithfulness be recounted in the grave, your faithfulness in Abaddon**
UST Dead bodies in graves do not talk about how you faithfully love us. In the place where dead people go, no one talks about how faithful you are
(הֲיְסֻפַּר בַּקֶּבֶר חַסְדֶּךָ אֱמוּנָתְךָ בָּאֲבַדּוֹן)

The psalmist is using the question form to express his belief that no one recounts God's covenant faithfulness in the grave. 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: [Your covenant faithfulness will not be recounted in the grave, nor your faithfulness in Abaddon.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Will your covenant faithfulness be recounted in the grave, your faithfulness in Abaddon**
UST Dead bodies in graves do not talk about how you faithfully love us. In the place where dead people go, no one talks about how faithful you are
(הֲיְסֻפַּר בַּקֶּבֶר חַסְדֶּךָ אֱמוּנָתְךָ בָּאֲבַדּוֹן)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Will your covenant faithfulness be recounted in the grave and in the realm of the dead]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Will your covenant faithfulness be recounted in the grave**
UST Dead bodies in graves do not talk about how you faithfully love us
(הֲיְסֻפַּר בַּקֶּבֶר חַסְדֶּךָ)

The expression **be recounted** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Will anyone recount your covenant faithfulness in the grave]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **your covenant faithfulness**
UST how you faithfully love us
(חַסְדֶּךָ)

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: [your being faithfully committed to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your faithfulness in Abaddon**
UST In the place where dead people go, no one talks about how faithful you are
(אֱמוּנָתְךָ בָּאֲבַדּוֹן)

The psalmist 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 will your faithfulness be recounted in Abaddon]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **your faithfulness**
UST no one talks about how faithful you are
(אֱמוּנָתְךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [your being faithful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your covenant faithfulness | how you faithfully love us |
| your covenant faithfulness | how you faithfully love us |
| in the grave | Dead bodies in graves |

# Psalms 88:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Will your wonder be known in the darkness, or your righteousness, in the land of forgetfulness?* | *No one in that dark place sees the amazing things you do; no one in the place where no one remembers anything knows how good you are.* |

ULT **Will your wonder be known in the darkness, or your righteousness, in the land of forgetfulness**
UST No one in that dark place sees the amazing things you do; no one in the place where no one remembers anything knows how good you are
(הֲיִוָּדַע בַּחֹשֶׁךְ פִּלְאֶךָ וְצִדְקָתְךָ בְּאֶרֶץ נִשְׁיָּה)

The psalmist is using the question form to express his belief that God's wonder and righteousness are not known in the darkness or the land of forgetfulness. 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: [Your wonder will not be known in the darkness nor your righteousness, in the land of forgetfulness.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Will your wonder be known in the darkness, or your righteousness, in the land of forgetfulness**
UST No one in that dark place sees the amazing things you do; no one in the place where no one remembers anything knows how good you are
(הֲיִוָּדַע בַּחֹשֶׁךְ פִּלְאֶךָ וְצִדְקָתְךָ בְּאֶרֶץ נִשְׁיָּה)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Will your wonder and your righteousness be known in the darkness of the land of forgetfulness]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **your wonder**
UST the amazing things you do
(פִּלְאֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wonder**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [wonderful deeds]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Will your wonder be known in the darkness**
UST No one in that dark place sees the amazing things you do
(הֲיִוָּדַע בַּחֹשֶׁךְ פִּלְאֶךָ)

The expression **be known** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Will anyone know your wonder in the darkness]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **or your righteousness, in the land of forgetfulness**
UST no one in the place where no one remembers anything knows how good you are
(וְצִדְקָתְךָ בְּאֶרֶץ נְשִׁיָּה)

The psalmist 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 will your righteousness be known in the land of forgetfulness]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **or your righteousness**
UST no one … knows how good you are
(וְצִדְקָתְךָ)

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: [or your righteous acts]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in the land of forgetfulness**
UST in the place where no one remembers anything
(בְּאֶרֶץ נְשִׁיָּה)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if the place of the dead were literally **the land of forgetfulness**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the place where everything is forgotten]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **forgetfulness**
UST no one remembers anything
(נְשִׁיָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **forgetfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [forgetting everything]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Will … be known | No one … sees |
| your wonder | the amazing things you do |
| or your righteousness | no one … knows how good you are |

# Psalms 88:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But I, I cry out to you, Yahweh, and in the morning my prayer precedes you.* | *But I {am still alive,} Yahweh, and I am calling out to you to help me. It is as if my prayer is already there waiting for you when you get up in the morning.* |

ULT **But I, I cry out to you, Yahweh, and in the morning my prayer precedes you**
UST But I {am still alive,} Yahweh, and I am calling out to you to help me. It is as if my prayer is already there waiting for you when you get up in the morning
(וַאֲנִי ׀ אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה שִׁוַּעְתִּי וּבַבֹּקֶר תְּפִלָּתִי תְקַדָּמֶךָּ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [But I cry out to you every morning, Yahweh, and my prayer comes before you]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **But I, I cry out to you, Yahweh**
UST But I {am still alive,} Yahweh, and I am calling out to you to help me
(וַאֲנִי ׀ אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה שִׁוַּעְתִּי)

The psalmist uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between his crying out to Yahweh and the silence of the dead in verses 10–12. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [However, I cry out to you, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **But I**
UST But I {am still alive … }
(וַאֲנִי)

The psalmist uses an independent pronoun, **I**, before the verb to emphasize that he, in contrast to the dead who cannot praise God, still cries out to Yahweh. Your language may use a similar construction to indicate emphasis.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **my prayer precedes you**
UST It is as if my prayer is already there waiting for you
(תְּפִלָּתִי תְקַדָּמֶךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of **my prayer** as if it were a living thing that could go ahead of someone to meet God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I come before you with what I pray]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **my prayer**
UST my prayer
(תְּפִלָּתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **prayer**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what I pray]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| I cry out | and I am calling out … to help me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my prayer | my prayer |

# Psalms 88:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Why, Yahweh, do you reject my soul? {Why} do you hide your face from me?* | *Yahweh, please do not reject me! Please do not ignore me!* |

ULT **{ … Why, Yahweh, do you reject my soul? Why} do you hide your face from me**
UST Yahweh, please do not reject me! Please do not ignore me
(לָמָה יְהוָה תִּזְנַח נַפְשִׁי תַּסְתִּיר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Why, Yahweh, do you reject me and refuse to pay attention to me]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Why, Yahweh, do you reject my soul**
UST Yahweh, please do not reject me
(לָמָה יְהוָה תִּזְנַח נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using the question form to express deep anguish and frustration at feeling rejected by God. 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: [Yahweh, you should not reject my soul!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **my soul**
UST me
(נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using the term **soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **{Why} do you hide your face from me**
UST Please do not ignore me
(תַּסְתִּיר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי)

The psalmist is using the question form to express deep anguish at feeling that God is ignoring him. 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: [You should not hide your face from me!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **your face**
UST Please do not ignore
(פָּנֶיךָ)

Here, **face** represents God's presence and attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [yourself]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| do you reject | please do … reject |
| my soul | me |

# Psalms 88:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I {have been} weak and expiring since youth; I have borne your terrors; I must despair.* | *Since I was young, I have been so ill that I have nearly died. I have been sick for so long with this terrible illness that you permit that I have no more hope.* |

ULT **and expiring since youth**
UST Since … was young … that I have nearly died
(וְגֹוֵ֣עַ מִנֹּ֑עַר)

The psalmist is saying **expiring since youth** 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 near death for as long as I can remember]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **since youth**
UST Since … was young
(מִנֹּ֑עַר)

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: [since I was young]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your terrors**
UST with this terrible illness that you permit
(אֵמֶ֖יךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **terrors**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [things that terrify me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I have borne | I have been sick for so long |
| your terrors | with this terrible illness that you permit |

# Psalms 88:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your indignations pass over me; your terrors destroy me.* | *I feel as if you are very angry with me. This terrible illness that you permit has destroyed the good life I could have had.* |

ULT **Your indignations pass over me; your terrors destroy me**
UST I feel as if you are very angry with me. This terrible illness that you permit has destroyed the good life I could have had
(עָלַי עָבְרוּ חֲרוֹנֶיךָ בִּעוּתֶיךָ צִמְּתוּתְנִי)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Your indignations and terrors pass over me and destroy me]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Your indignations pass**
UST you are very angry
(עָבְרוּ חֲרוֹנֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of **indignations** as if they were living things that could pass over a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You sweep over me with your indignations]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **Your indignations**
UST you are very angry
(חֲרוֹנֶיךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **indignations**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Your expressions of how indignant you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your terrors destroy me**
UST This terrible illness that you permit has destroyed the good life I could have had
(בִּעוּתֶיךָ צִמְּתוּתְנִי)

The psalmist is speaking of **terrors** as if they were a living thing that could destroy someone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you destroy me with things that terrify me]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **your terrors**
UST This terrible illness that you permit
(בַּעוּתֶיךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **terrors**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the things you do that terrify me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your terrors | This terrible illness that you permit |
| destroy me | has destroyed the good life I could have had |

# Psalms 88:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They surround me like water all of the day; they close in upon me together.* | *The bad things that are happening to me are like floodwaters that continually surround me and are about to drown me.* |

ULT **They surround me like water all of the day; they close in upon me together**
UST The bad things that are happening to me are like floodwaters that continually surround me and are about to drown me
(סַבְּב֣וּנִי כַמַּ֣יִם כָּל־הַיּ֣וֹם הִקִּ֖יפוּ עָלַ֣י יָחַֽד)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [They surround me like water all of the day; indeed, they close in upon me together]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **They surround me**
UST that … surround me
(סַבְּב֣וּנִי)

The pronoun **They** refers to the indignations and terrors mentioned in verse 16.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **like water**
UST The bad things that are happening to me are like floodwaters
(כַמַּ֣יִם)

The point of this comparison is that just as **water** surrounds and engulfs a person on all sides, so do the psalmist's sufferings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [like a flood]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **all of the day**
UST continually
(כָּל־הַיּ֣וֹם)

The psalmist is saying **all of the day** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [constantly]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

# Psalms 88:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have distanced friend and acquaintance from me; the ones known to me {are} darkness.* | *Because you have allowed this illness, my friends and family members stay away from me. I can no longer see where they are.* |

ULT **You have distanced friend and acquaintance from me; the ones known to me {are} darkness**

UST Because you have allowed this illness, my friends and family members stay away from me. I can no longer see where they are

(הִרְחַקְתָּ מֻמַּנִּי אֹהֵב וְרֵעַ מְיֻדָּעַי מַחְשָׁךְ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [You have removed everyone I know from me, and I do not see them anymore]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the ones known to me {are} darkness**

UST I can no longer see where they are

(מְיֻדָּעַי מַחְשָׁךְ)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if **darkness** were literally his companion. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the only thing I know is loneliness and gloom]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| friend | my friends and family members |
| the ones known to me | they |

# Psalms 89

## Psalm 89 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 89 is a psalm of supplication or lament. It appears to have been written shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem to protest that while Yahweh had promised that David's descendants would always rule as kings, and Yahweh had the power to make sure that happened, he allowed enemies to destroy Jerusalem and depose the king. The psalmist uses three of the basic elements of a psalm of supplication. (See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.) However, before he does that, the psalmist praises Yahweh for his power, and he cites his covenant with David as grounds for praying for restoration. These two first parts of the psalm correspond roughly to the other two basic elements of a psalm of supplication, a vow of praise and a statement of trust.

1. Praise of Yahweh's power and greatness (1–18)
2. Yahweh's covenant with David (19–37)
3. Description of troubles (38–45)
4. Cry for help (46–49)
5. Petition (50–51)

Verse 52 is not part of the original psalm. It is a doxology (an expression of praise to God) that the editors of the book of Psalms added to mark the end of Book Three of the psalms. See how you translated the similar doxologies in 41:13 and 72:18–20.

# Psalms 89:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A maskil. Of Ethan the Ezrahite.* | *Ethan the Ezrahite wrote this song.* |

> ULT **A maskil**
> UST this song
> (מַשְׂכִּיל)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **maskil**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

# Psalms 89:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will sing the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh forever; to generation and generation I will make known your faithfulness with my mouth.* | *Yahweh, I will always sing about how faithfully you love your people. I will tell my children and grandchildren that you always do what you promise.* |

ULT **I will sing the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh forever; to generation and generation I will make known your faithfulness with my mouth**
UST Yahweh, I will always sing about how faithfully you love your people. I will tell my children and grandchildren that you always do what you promise
(חַסְדֵי יְהוָה עוֹלָם אָשִׁירָה לְדֹר וָדֹר ׀ אוֹדִיעַ אֱמוּנָתְךָ בְּפִי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [I will always sing about the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh; indeed, I will tell every generation how faithful you are]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the covenant faithfulness of**
UST about how faithfully you love your people
(חַסְדֵי)

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: [how Yahweh faithfully keeps his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your faithfulness**
UST that you always do what you promise
(אֱמוּנָתְךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how faithful you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **with my mouth**
UST I
(בְּפִי)

Here, **with my mouth** represents speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [by my words]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the covenant faithfulness of | about how faithfully you love your people |
| the covenant faithfulness of | about how faithfully you love your people |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| forever | always |
| to generation | my children |
| and generation | and grandchildren |
| I will make known | will tell |
| your faithfulness | that you always do what you promise |

# Psalms 89:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For I said, "Covenant faithfulness will be built up forever; the heavens, you establish your faithfulness in them."* | *I know that you will always love us faithfully. Just as the sky is permanent, so you will always be faithful to us.* |

ULT **For I said**
UST I know that
(כִּי־אָמַ֗רְתִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because I said]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **Covenant faithfulness will be built up**
UST you will … love us faithfully
(חֶ֭סֶד יִבָּנֶ֣ה)

Here Ethan is speaking as if covenant faithfulness were a structure that could be **built up**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Covenant faithfulness will be established] or [You will show covenant faithfulness]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Covenant faithfulness**
UST you will … love us faithfully
(חֶ֭סֶד)

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 way you faithfully love]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **will be built up**
UST you will … love us faithfully
(יִבָּנֶה)

The expression **will be built up** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [you will build up]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **your faithfulness**
UST so … will always be faithful to us
(אֱמוּנָתְךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how faithful you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **you establish your faithfulness in them**
UST is permanent, so you will always be faithful to us
(תָּכִן אֱמוּנָתְךָ בָּהֶם)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put the information about the heavens after the information about establishing faithfulness. Alternate translation: [you establish your faithfulness in the heavens]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Covenant faithfulness | you will … love us faithfully |
| Covenant faithfulness | you will … love us faithfully |
| forever | always |
| the heavens | Just as the sky |
| your faithfulness | so … will always be faithful to us |

# Psalms 89:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“I have cut a covenant with my chosen; I have sworn to David my servant:* | *Yahweh has said, “I made a covenant with the man I chose {to be the king of Israel}. That was David, who loyally obeyed me. I made a solemn promise to him.* |

ULT **I have cut a covenant with my chosen; I have sworn to David my servant**
UST Yahweh has said, “I made a covenant with the man I chose {to be the king of Israel}. That was David, who loyally obeyed me. I made a solemn promise to him
(כָּרַתִּי בְרִית לִבְחִירִי נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְדָוִד עַבְדִּי)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: [God said that he has cut a covenant with his chosen; he has sworn to David his servant]

**Support Reference:** Direct and Indirect Quotations

ULT **I have cut a covenant with my chosen; I have sworn to David my servant**
UST Yahweh has said, “I made a covenant with the man I chose {to be the king of Israel}. That was David, who loyally obeyed me. I made a solemn promise to him
(כָּרַתִּי בְרִית לִבְחִירִי נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְדָוִד עַבְדִּי)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [I swore an oath to David, my chosen servant]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a covenant | a covenant |
| with my chosen | with the man I chose {to be the king of Israel} |
| I have sworn | I made a solemn promise to him |
| to David | That was David |
| my servant | who loyally obeyed me |

# Psalms 89:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *‘Until forever I will establish your seed, and I will build up your throne to generation and generation.’” Selah* | *I said, ‘I will make sure that your descendants always rule as kings; yes, I will make sure that your dynasty never ends.’” Selah* |

ULT **Until forever I will establish your seed, and I will build up your throne to generation and generation.’” Selah**
UST I said, ‘I will make sure that your descendants always rule as kings; yes, I will make sure that your dynasty never ends.’” Selah
(עַד־עוֹלָם אָכִין זַרְעֶךָ וּבָנִיתִי לְדֹר־וָדֹר כִּסְאֶךָ סֶלָה)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: [I swore that I will establish his seed until forever, and I will build up his throne to generation and generation]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

ULT **I will establish your seed**
UST I said, ‘I will make sure that your descendants … rule as kings
(אָכִין זַרְעֶךָ)

Here Ethan is speaking as if descendants were **seed** that is planted. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will establish your descendants] or [I will establish your offspring]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and I will build up your throne to generation and generation**
UST yes, I will make sure that your dynasty never ends
(וּבָנִיתִי לְדֹר־וָדֹר כִּסְאֶךָ)

Ethan is using **build up your throne** as a common expression of the culture to mean “firmly establish your rule.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will firmly establish your rule] or [I will make your kingdom strong]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **your throne**
UST your dynasty
(כִּסְאֲךָ)

Here, **your throne** represents royal authority and rule. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your royal authority]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| forever | always |
| I will establish | I said, 'I will make sure that … rule as kings |
| your seed | your descendants |
| your throne | your dynasty |
| to generation | never ends |
| and generation | never ends |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 89:5

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And the heavens praise your wonder, Yahweh; your faithfulness also, in the assembly of the holy ones.* | *Yahweh, the angels in heaven praise you for the wonderful things you do, When those holy beings gather, they celebrate how you always do what you promise.* |

ULT **And the heavens praise your wonder**
UST the angels in heaven praise you for the wonderful things you do
(וְיוֹדוּ שָׁמַיִם פִּלְאֲךָ)

Ethan is speaking of **the heavens** as if they were a living thing that could praise God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And the beings in heaven praise your wonder]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **your faithfulness**
UST they celebrate how you always do what you promise
(אֱמוּנָתְךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how faithful you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in the assembly of the holy ones**
UST When those holy beings gather
(בִּקְהַל קְדֹשִׁים)

Ethan is using this possessive form to describe an assembly that is made up of the holy ones. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [in the assembly where the holy ones gather]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And … praise | praise you |
| the heavens | the angels in heaven |
| your wonder | for the wonderful things you do |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| your faithfulness | they celebrate how you always do what you promise |
| in the assembly of | When … gather |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the holy ones | those holy beings |

# Psalms 89:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For who in the sky arrays with Yahweh, compares to Yahweh among the sons of God?* | *No one in the sky is equal to Yahweh! None of the heavenly beings is like Yahweh!* |

**ULT For who in the sky arrays with Yahweh, compares to Yahweh among the sons of God**

**UST** No one in the sky is equal to Yahweh! None of the heavenly beings is like Yahweh
(כִּי מִי בַשַּׁחַק יַעֲרֹךְ לַיהוָה יִדְמֶה לַיהוָה בִּבְנֵי אֵלִים)

Ethan is using the question form to emphasize that no one is comparable to Yahweh. 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: [For no one in the sky arrays with Yahweh; no one compares to Yahweh among the sons of God.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT among the sons of God**

**UST** the heavenly beings
(בִּבְנֵי אֵלִים)

Here Ethan is speaking as if the heavenly beings were literal **sons of God** who were born from him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [among the heavenly beings] or [among the divine beings]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the sky | in the sky |
| with Yahweh | to Yahweh |
| among the sons of God | the heavenly beings |

# Psalms 89:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God is greatly dreaded in the council of the holy ones and feared above all of the ones around him.* | *When the holy beings gather together, they all respect God greatly. Everyone around his throne honors him.* |

**ULT is greatly dreaded in the council of the holy ones**
**UST** When the holy beings gather together, they all respect … greatly
(נַעֲרָץ בְּסוֹד־קְדֹשִׁים רַבָּה)

The expression **greatly dreaded** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is the holy ones. Alternate translation: [the holy ones greatly dread God]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT in the council of the holy ones**
**UST** When the holy beings gather together
(בְּסוֹד־קְדֹשִׁים)

Ethan is using this possessive form to describe a council that is made up of the holy ones. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [council where the holy ones gather]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| is … dreaded | they all respect |
| in the council of | When … gather together |
| the holy ones | the holy beings |
| and feared | honors him |

# Psalms 89:8

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Yahweh, God of Armies, who {is} like you, mighty Yah? And your faithfulness {is} your surroundings.* | *Yahweh, you are the God who commands the heavenly armies. No one is as mighty as you are! You are always faithful in every way.* |

**ULT who {is} like you, mighty Yah**
**UST** No one is as mighty as you are
(מִי־כָמֹוךָ חָסִין ו יָהּ)

Ethan is using the question form to emphasize that no one is like Yahweh. 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 is like you, mighty Yah!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT And your faithfulness {is} your surroundings**
**UST** You are always faithful in every way
(וֶאֱמוּנָתְךָ סְבִיבוֹתֶיךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [And you are characterized by how faithful you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Yah**
**UST** you are
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Yah | you are |
| God of Armies | you are the God who commands the heavenly armies |
| mighty | mighty as |
| And your faithfulness | You are always faithful |

# Psalms 89:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You are ruling over the surging of the sea; when its waves rise, you, you still them.* | *You control the sea so that it does not become too violent; when its waves become too large, you make them smaller.* |

**ULT You are ruling over the surging of the sea**
**UST** You control the sea so that it does not become too violent
(אַתָּה מֹוֹשֵׁל בִּגְאוּת הַיָּם)

Here Ethan is speaking as if the **surging of the sea** represented chaotic forces that oppose God. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You are ruling over the raging of the sea] or [You control the powerful forces of the sea]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT you, you still them**
**UST** you make them smaller
(אַתָּה תְּשַׁבְּחֵם)

Ethan is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that it is Yahweh alone who has the power to calm the waves. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [you alone still them]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| are ruling | control |

# Psalms 89:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You, you shattered Rahab like a slain one; with the arm of your strength you scattered your enemies.* | *It was you who {put the world in order as you created it, as if you had} completely destroyed the sea monster Rahab; You used your great power to defeat your enemies.* |

ULT **You, you shattered Rahab like a slain one**
UST It was you who {put the world in order as you created it, as if you had} completely destroyed the sea monster Rahab
(אַתָּה דִכֵּאתָ כֶחָלָל רָהַב)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a slain one** is completely defeated and left powerless, so is **Rahab**, the sea monster, after God shattered it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [You completely defeated Rahab, shattering it as one would kill an enemy]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **You, you shattered**
UST It was you who {put the world in order as you created it, as if you had} completely destroyed
(אַתָּה דִכֵּאתָ)

Ethan is stating the pronoun **You** separately, even though the verb already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that it was Yahweh himself who accomplished this mighty act. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [You yourself shattered]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **with the arm of your strength**
UST You used your great power
(בִּזְרוֹעַ עֻזֶּךָ)

Here, **the arm of your strength** represents God's great power. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your mighty power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **with the arm of your strength**
> UST You used your great power
> (בִּזְרֹועַ עֻזֶּךָ)

Ethan is using this possessive form to describe an arm that is characterized by strength. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [your strong arm]

**Support Reference:** Possession

> ULT **with the arm of your strength**
> UST You used your great power
> (בִּזְרֹועַ עֻזֶּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with your strong arm]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Rahab | the sea monster Rahab |
| like a slain one | { … had} completely destroyed |
| your strength | your great |
| you scattered | to defeat |
| your enemies | your enemies |

# Psalms 89:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To you {are} the heavens, also to you, the earth; the world and its fullness, you, you founded them.* | *Because you created the world and everything in it, the sky belongs to you, and the earth also belongs to you.* |

ULT **also to you, the earth**
UST and the earth also belongs to you
(אַף־לְךָ אָרֶץ)

Ethan 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: [also to you belongs the earth]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and its fullness**
UST and everything in it
(וּמְלֹאָהּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **fullness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [everything that fills it]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **you, you founded them**
UST Because you created
(אַתָּה יְסַדְתָּם)

Ethan is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that God himself is the one who established the world. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [you yourself founded them]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **To you {are} the heavens, also to you, the earth; the world and its fullness, you, you founded them**

UST Because you created the world and everything in it, the sky belongs to you, and the earth also belongs to you

(לְךָ שָׁמַיִם אַף־לְךָ אָרֶץ תֵּבֵל וּמְלֹאָהּ אַתָּה יְסַדְתָּם)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [You created and you own the entire world and everything in it]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {are} the heavens | the sky |
| the earth | the earth |
| the world | the world |
| you founded them | Because … created |

# Psalms 89:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The north and the south, you, you created them; Tabor and Hermon shout joyfully in your name.* | *You created the full extent of the world around us. You made everything to the north and to the south. You made everything to the west, where Mount Tabor is, and you made everything to the east, where Mount Hermon is. People throughout the world joyfully praise you because of who you are.* |

ULT **The north and the south**
UST the full extent of the world around us … everything to the north and to the south
(צָפוֹן וְיָמִין)

Ethan is referring to all of creation by naming two extremes, **the north** and **the south**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Everything in every direction]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **you, you created them**
UST You created … You made
(אַתָּה בְרָאתָם)

Ethan is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that God alone is the creator. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [you yourself created them]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Tabor and Hermon shout joyfully in your name**
UST You made everything to the west, where Mount Tabor is, and you made everything to the east, where Mount Hermon is. People throughout the world joyfully praise you because of who you are
(תָּבוֹר וְחֶרְמוֹן בְּשִׁמְךָ יְרַנֵּנוּ)

Ethan is speaking of **Tabor and Hermon** as if they were living things that could shout joyfully. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the people at Tabor and Hermon shout joyfully because of you]

**Support Reference:** Personification

> ULT **in your name**
> UST because of who you are
> (בְּשִׁמְךָ)

Ethan is using the term **name** to represent who the person is or to refer to the person's reputation. Alternate translation: [because of who you are]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| you created them | created … made |

# Psalms 89:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To you {is} an arm with might; your hand is strong; your right hand is high.* | *You are very powerful; yes, you are very strong, and you use your power to do great things.* |

**ULT** **might**
**UST** very
(גְּבוּרָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **might**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [an arm that is mighty]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT** **your hand is strong; your right hand is high**
**UST** yes, you are very strong, and you use your power to do great things
(תָּעֹז יָדְךָ תָּרוּם יְמִינֶךָ)

Here, **hand** represents the power or control of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your power is strong; your authority is supreme]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT** **your right hand is high**
**UST** and you use your power to do great things
(תָּרוּם יְמִינֶךָ)

Here Ethan is speaking as if God's power were **high** or physically elevated. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your right hand is exalted] or [your power is supreme]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT** **To you {is} an arm with might**
**UST** You are very powerful
(לְךָ זְרוֹעַ עִם־גְּבוּרָה)

Here, **arm** represents the power or control of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You have great power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| might | very |

# Psalms 89:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Righteousness and justice {are} the foundation of your throne; covenant faithfulness and truth precede your face.* | *As you rule, you always do what is right and just, and you are always faithful and true in everything you do.* |

ULT **Righteousness and justice**
UST what is right and just
(צֶדֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **righteousness** and **justice**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Acting rightly and judging fairly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{are} the foundation of your throne**
UST As you rule, you always do
(מְכוֹן כִּסְאֶךָ)

Ethan is using this possessive form to describe the base on which God's rule rests. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the foundation on which your throne rests]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **your throne**
UST As you rule
(כִּסְאֶךָ)

Here, **throne** represents God's royal authority and rule. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your rule]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **covenant faithfulness and truth precede your face**
UST and you are always faithful and true in everything you do
(חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת יְקַדְּמוּ פָּנֶיךָ)

Ethan is speaking of **covenant faithfulness and truth** as if they were living things that could walk before God as attendants. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you always show covenant faithfulness and truth in everything you do]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **covenant faithfulness and truth**
UST and you are always faithful and true
(חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant faithfulness** and **truth**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [being faithfully loving and being true to your promises]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **precede your face**
UST in everything you do
(יְקַדְּמוּ פָּנֶיךָ)

Here, **face** represents God's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [go before you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Righteousness and justice {are} the foundation of your throne**
UST As you rule, you always do what is right and just
(צֶדֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט מְכוֹן כִּסְאֶךָ)

Here Ethan is speaking as if God's rule were a building and righteousness and justice were its **foundation**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Your rule is based on righteousness and justice] or [You always rule righteously and justly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Righteousness | what is right |
| and justice | and just |
| {are} the foundation of | you always do |
| your throne | As you rule |
| covenant faithfulness | and you are always faithful |

# Psalms 89:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The happinesses of the people knowing the joyful shout! Yahweh, they walk in the light of your face.* | *Yahweh, the people who worship you with joyful shouts have truly good lives; they enjoy your favor as they live.* |

**ULT** **The happinesses of**
**UST** have truly good lives
(אַשְׁרֵי)

Ethan is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of joy or blessing. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy is] or [Truly blessed is]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

**ULT** **they walk in the light of your face**
**UST** they enjoy your favor as they live
(בְּאוֹר־פָּנֶיךָ יְהַלֵּכוּן)

Here Ethan is speaking as if people who live in God's favor **walk in the light** of Yahweh's face. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they live enjoying your favor] or [they live in the brightness of your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT** **they walk**
**UST** as they live
(יְהַלֵּכוּן)

Here Ethan is speaking as if living one's life were **walking** along a path. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they live] or [they conduct their lives]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT** **in the light of your face**
**UST** they enjoy your favor
(בְּאוֹר־פָּנֶיךָ)

Ethan is using this possessive form to describe light that comes from God's presence. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [in the light that shines from your face]

**Support Reference:** Possession

> ULT **your face**
> UST they enjoy your favor
> (פָּנֶיךָ)

Here, **face** represents God's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The happinesses of | have truly good lives |
| knowing | who worship you |
| the joyful shout | with joyful shouts |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 89:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In your name they rejoice all of the day, and in your righteousness they rise high;* | *They rejoice continually because of who you are, and they celebrate how you always do what is right.* |

ULT **In your name**
UST because of who you are
(בְּשִׁמְךָ)

Ethan is using the term **name** to represent who the person is or to refer to the person's reputation. Alternate translation: [Because of who you are]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and in your righteousness they rise high**
UST and they celebrate how you always do what is right
(וּבְצִדְקָתְךָ יָרוּמוּ)

Here Ethan is speaking as if being honored were to be physically rising **high**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and in your righteousness they are honored] or [and because you are righteous, you give them a high position]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and in your righteousness**
UST how you always do what is right
(וּבְצִדְקָתְךָ)

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: [because you are righteous]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they rejoice | They rejoice |
| and in your righteousness | how you always do what is right |

# Psalms 89:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *for you {are} the splendor of their strength, and by your favor you raise up our horn.* | *You make your people strong and glorious, and because you were pleased with us, you gave us a good king.* |

ULT **the splendor of their strength**
UST make your people strong and glorious
(תִּפְאֶרֶת עֻזָּמוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **splendor**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the one who makes their strength spendid]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **their strength**
UST make your people strong
(עֻזָּמוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how strong they are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and by your favor**
UST and because you were pleased with us
(וּבְרְצֹנְךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **favor**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and because you desired the best for us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **you raise up our horn**
UST you gave us a good king
(תָּרוּם קַרְנֵנוּ)

Here Ethan is speaking as if power were a **horn** that could be raised up. In this case, it is likely that he means that Yahweh has allowed them to have a powerful king. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you have allowed us to have a powerful king] or [you make us a strong nation]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the splendor of | and glorious |
| and by your favor | and because you were pleased with us |
| our horn | a good king |

# Psalms 89:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For our shield {is} to Yahweh, and our king, to the Holy {One} of Israel.* | *The one who protects us belongs to you, Yahweh; yes, our king belongs to you, the holy God whom we Israelites worship.* |

**ULT our shield {is} to Yahweh**
**UST** The one who protects us belongs to you, Yahweh
(לַיהוָה מָגִנֵּנוּ)

Here Ethan is speaking of the king who protects them as if he were a battle **shield**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [our protector belongs to Yahweh] or [Yahweh is the one who gave us our protector]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and our king, to the Holy {One} of Israel**
**UST** yes, our king belongs to you, the holy God whom we Israelites worship
(וְלִקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל מַלְכֵּנוּ)

Ethan 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 our king belongs to the Holy One of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT and our king, to the Holy {One} of Israel**
**UST** yes, our king belongs to you, the holy God whom we Israelites worship
(וְלִקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל מַלְכֵּנוּ)

Ethan is using this possessive form to describe the holy God with whom the Israelites are in a covenant relationship. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and our king belongs to the holy God with whom we Israelites are in a covenant relationship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| our shield | The one who protects us |
| {is} to Yahweh | belongs to you, Yahweh |
| and … to the Holy {One} of | yes … belongs to you, the holy God whom … worship |
| our king | our king |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Israel | we Israelites |

# Psalms 89:19

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Then you spoke in a vision to your faithful ones and said, "I have placed help on a warrior; I have raised up a chosen one from the people.* | *Long ago you spoke in a vision to the Israelites who were loyal to you. You said, "I have given strength to a mighty warrior; I have chosen a young man from among the people {to be the king}.* |

ULT **Then you spoke**
UST Long ago you spoke
(אָז דִּבַּרְתָּ)

Ethan is using the word translated as **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.

**Support Reference:** Introduction of a New Event

ULT **and said, I have placed help on a warrior; I have raised up a chosen one from the people**
UST You said, "I have given strength to a mighty warrior; I have chosen a young man from among the people {to be the king … }
(וַתֹּאמֶר שִׁוִּיתִי עֵזֶר עַל־גִּבּוֹר הֲרִימוֹתִי בָחוּר מֵעָם)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: [telling them that you have placed help on a warrior; you have raised up a chosen one from the people]

**Support Reference:** Direct and Indirect Quotations

ULT **help**
UST strength
(עֵזֶר)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **help**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [my helping hand]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| in a vision | in a vision |
| to your faithful ones | to the Israelites who were loyal to you |
| a warrior | a mighty warrior |
| a chosen one | I have chosen a young man |

# Psalms 89:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have found David my servant; I have anointed him with the oil of my holiness,* | *I have found David, who loyally obeys me, and I have had people anoint him with my holy oil {to appoint him as king}.* |

> ULT **with the oil of my holiness**
> UST with my holy oil
> (בְּשֶׁמֶן קָדְשִׁי)

Ethan is using the possessive form to describe **oil** that is characterized by **holiness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [my holy oil]

**Support Reference:** Possession

> ULT **with the oil of my holiness**
> UST with my holy oil
> (בְּשֶׁמֶן קָדְשִׁי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **holiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with my holy oil]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| David | David |
| my servant | who loyally obeys me |
| I have anointed him | and I have had people anoint him … to appoint him as king |
| with the oil of | with my … oil |
| my holiness | holy |

# Psalms 89:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *with whom my hand will be established; my arm will also strengthen him.* | *I will always support him with my power; indeed, I will make him strong.* |

ULT **my hand will be established**
UST I will always support … with my power
(יָדִי תִּכּוֹן)

The expression **my hand will be established** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form. If you need to say who does the action, the context indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [I will establish my hand]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **my hand will be established**
UST I will always support … with my power
(יָדִי תִּכּוֹן)

Here, **hand** represents the power or dominion of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my power will be established]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **my arm will also strengthen him**
UST indeed, I will make him strong
(אַף־זְרוֹעִי תְאַמְּצֶנּוּ)

Here, **arm** represents power or strength. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my power will also strengthen him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| will be established | I will always support |
| will … strengthen him | will make him strong |

# Psalms 89:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The enemy will not exact from him, and a son of wickedness will not oppress him.* | *He will never have to pay tribute to a foreign ruler, and no wicked enemy will defeat him.* |

ULT **and a son of wickedness**
UST and … wicked enemy
(וּבֶן־עַוְלָה)

God is using **son of** as a common expression of the culture to indicate that a person has a certain characteristic. In this case, the person has the characteristic of being wicked. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and a wicked person]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **wickedness**
UST and … wicked enemy
(עַוְלָה)

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: [people acting wickedly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The enemy | to a foreign ruler |
| wickedness | and … wicked enemy |

# Psalms 89:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I will crush his adversaries from his face, and I will strike down the ones hating him.* | *I will defeat his opponents when they fight against him; yes, I will destroy his enemies.* |

ULT **And I will crush his adversaries from his face, and I will strike down the ones hating him**

UST I will defeat his opponents when they fight against him; yes, I will destroy his enemies
(וְכַתּוֹתִי מִפָּנָיו צָרָיו וּמְשַׂנְאָיו אֶגּוֹף)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [I will completely destroy all of his enemies]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **from his face**

UST when they fight against him
(מִפָּנָיו)

Here, **face** represents a person's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from before him] or [from his presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his adversaries | his opponents |

# Psalms 89:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And my faithfulness and my covenant faithfulness {will be} with him, and in my name his horn will be high.* | *I will always be faithful to him and treat him kindly, and I will make him a great ruler by my own authority.* |

ULT **And my faithfulness and my covenant faithfulness {will be} with him**
UST I will always be faithful to him and treat him kindly
(וֶאֱמוּנָתִי וְחַסְדִּי עִמּוֹ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **faithfulness** and **covenant faithfulness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [I will be faithful to him and loyally love him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and in my name his horn will be high**
UST and I will make him a great ruler by my own authority
(וּבִשְׁמִי תָּרוּם קַרְנוֹ)

Here God is speaking as if David's strength and honor were a **horn** lifted high. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and by my authority he will be exalted] or [and in my name he will be powerful]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and in my name**
UST by my own authority
(וּבִשְׁמִי)

God is using the term **name** to represent who the person is or to refer to the person's reputation. Alternate translation: [by my authority]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And my faithfulness | I will always be faithful |
| and my covenant faithfulness | וְחַסְדִּי (ORIG QUOTE) |
| his horn will | a … ruler |

# Psalms 89:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I will set his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers.* | *I will make his realm extend from the Great Sea to the Euphrates River.* |

ULT **And I will set his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers**
UST I will make his realm extend from the Great Sea to the Euphrates River
(וְשַׂמְתִּי בַיָּם יָדוֹ וּבַנְּהָרוֹת יְמִינוֹ)

Here, **hand** and **right hand** represent the power or dominion 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 I will give him dominion over the sea and authority over the rivers]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **And I will set his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers**
UST I will make his realm extend from the Great Sea to the Euphrates River
(וְשַׂמְתִּי בַיָּם יָדוֹ וּבַנְּהָרוֹת יְמִינוֹ)

Here God is speaking as if David would physically place his hands on the sea and rivers to claim them. God means that David's rule will extend across a vast territory. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And his rule will extend from the sea to the rivers] or [And he will rule over the land from the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And I will set | I will make … extend |
| on the sea | from the Great Sea |

# Psalms 89:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He, he will call to me, 'You {are} my Father, my God and the rock of my salvation.'* | *He will call out to me, 'You are my Father; you are my God, the one who protects me and saves me!'* |

ULT **He, he will call to me, 'You {are} my Father, my God and the rock of my salvation**
UST He will call out to me, 'You are my Father; you are my God, the one who protects me and saves me
(הוּא יִקְרָאֵנִי אָבִי אָתָּה אֵלִי וְצוּר יְשׁוּעָתִי)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: [He will call to me that I am his Father, his God, and the rock of his salvation]

**Support Reference:** Direct and Indirect Quotations

ULT **He, he will call to me**
UST He will call out to me
(הוּא יִקְרָאֵנִי)

God is stating the pronoun **He** separately, even though the verb already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that his chosen one is the one who will name God as his father. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [My chosen one will call to me]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **and the rock of my salvation**
UST the one who protects me and saves me
(וְצוּר יְשׁוּעָתִי)

Here God is speaking as if he were a **rock** that provides stability and protection. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the one who saves and protects me] or [my strong savior]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the rock of my salvation**
UST the one who protects me and saves me
(וְצוּר יְשׁוּעָתִי)

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: [and the rock who saves me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| he will call to me | will call out to me |
| my Father | are my Father |
| my God | are my God |
| my salvation | and saves me |

# Psalms 89:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I, I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.* | *For my part, I will treat him as if he were my firstborn son, and I will make him the greatest of all the kings on the earth.* |

**ULT And I, I will make him the firstborn**
**UST** For my part, I will treat him as if he were my firstborn son, and I will make him
(אַף־אֲנִי בְּכוֹר אֶתְּנֵהוּ)

God is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that he is the one who will personally exalt David in response to David's faithfulness. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [Indeed, I will make him]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT I will make him the firstborn**
**UST** will treat him as if he were my firstborn son, and I will make him
(בְּכוֹר אֶתְּנֵהוּ)

Here God is speaking of David's privileged status as if he were a **firstborn** son, who holds the most honored position in the family. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will give him the highest honor] or [I will give him the privileges of a firstborn son]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the firstborn | as if he were my firstborn son |
| the kings of | all the kings on |
| the earth | the earth |

# Psalms 89:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will keep my covenant faithfulness for him forever, and my covenant will be confirmed to him.* | *I will always love him faithfully, and I will always honor my covenant with him.* |

**ULT I will keep my covenant faithfulness for him forever**
UST I will always love him faithfully
(לְעוֹלָם אשמור־לוֹ חַסְדִּי)

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: [I will always be loyally faithful to him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will keep | I will … love |
| my covenant faithfulness | faithfully |
| my covenant faithfulness | faithfully |
| forever | always |
| and my covenant | and … my covenant |
| will be confirmed | I will always honor |

# Psalms 89:29

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And I will set up his seed forever and his throne like the days of the heavens.* | *I will make sure that his descendants always rule as kings, so that his dynasty lasts as long as the sky exists.* |

**ULT And I will set up his seed forever**
**UST** I will make sure that his descendants always rule as kings
(וְשַׂמְתִּי לָעַד זַרְעוֹ)

Here God is speaking of David's descendants as if they were **seed**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will establish his descendants forever]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and his throne like the days of the heavens**
**UST** so that his dynasty lasts as long as the sky exists
(וְכִסְאוֹ כִּימֵי שָׁמָיִם)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the days of the heavens** endure without end, so will **his throne** endure. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and his throne will last as long as the heavens endure]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT and his throne**
**UST** so that his dynasty
(וְכִסְאוֹ)

Here, **throne** represents royal authority and the right to rule. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and his royal authority]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And I will set up | I will make sure that … rule as kings |
| his seed | his descendants |
| forever | always |
| and his throne | so that his dynasty |
| the heavens | the sky |

# Psalms 89:30

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *If his sons forsake my law and they do not walk in my judgments,* | *However, if his descendants disobey my instructions and do not live according to what I have decreed,* |

ULT **If his sons forsake my law**
UST However, if his descendants disobey my instructions
(אִם־יַֽעַזְבוּ בָנָיו תּוֹרָתִֽי)

Here, **If his sons forsake my law** introduces a possible condition. God will only do the things in the following verse if this condition happens. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that could happen.

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

ULT **and they do not walk in my judgments**
UST and do not live according to what I have decreed
(וּבְמִשְׁפָּטַי לֹא יֵלֵכוּן)

Here God is speaking as if people who obey his commands were **walking** along a path. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [do not live according to my decrees] or [do not obey my rules]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **If his sons forsake my law and they do not walk in my judgments**
UST However, if his descendants disobey my instructions and do not live according to what I have decreed
(אִם־יַֽעַזְבוּ בָנָיו תּוֹרָתִי וּבְמִשְׁפָּטַי לֹא יֵלֵכוּן)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [If his sons completely reject and disobey my commandments]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **If his sons forsake my law and they do not walk in my judgments**
UST However, if his descendants disobey my instructions and do not live according to what I have decreed
(אִם־יַֽעַזְבוּ֥ בָ֝נָ֗יו תּוֹרָתִ֥י וּבְמִשְׁפָּטַ֥י לֹא־יֵלֵכֽוּן)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **law** and **judgments**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [If his sons forsake what I have taught them and do not walk in the way that I have told them to live]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| forsake | disobey |
| my law | my instructions |
| and … in my judgments | and … according to what I have decreed |

# Psalms 89:31

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *if they profane my statutes and they do not keep my commandments,* | *if they treat my decrees as something they can ignore, and if they do not obey my commands,* |

ULT **if they profane my statutes and they do not keep my commandments**
UST if they treat my decrees as something they can ignore, and if they do not obey my commands
(אִם־חֻקֹּתַי יְחַלֵּלוּ וּמִצְוֹתַי לֹא יִשְׁמֹרוּ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **statutes** and **commandments**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [if they profane the rules I have established and they do not do the things I have commanded them to do]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they profane | they treat … as something they can ignore |
| my statutes | my decrees |

# Psalms 89:32

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *then I will punish their transgression with a rod and their iniquity with blows.* | *then I will punish them to correct them because of the wrong things they have done as if I were hitting them with a rod.* |

ULT **then I will punish**
UST then I will punish them to correct them
(וּפָקַדְתִּי)

This verse introduces the consequence of the condition proposed in the previous verse. Use a natural form in your language for introducing the consequence of this possible condition. Alternate translation: [then I will visit]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

ULT **then I will punish their transgression with a rod**
UST then I will punish them to correct them because of the wrong things they have done as if I were hitting them with a rod
(וּפָקַדְתִּי בְשֵׁבֶט פִּשְׁעָם)

Here, **rod** represents guiding, protecting, and directing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will discipline them for their transgression]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **then I will punish their transgression with a rod and their iniquity with blows**
UST then I will punish them to correct them because of the wrong things they have done as if I were hitting them with a rod
(וּפָקַדְתִּי בְשֵׁבֶט פִּשְׁעָם וּבִנְגָעִים עֲוֹנָם)

God is using this possessive forms, **their transgression** and **their iniquity**, to assign to them the ownership of their behaviors. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [then I will punish the transgression they commit with a rod and the iniquity they commit with blows]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **then I will punish their transgression with a rod and their iniquity with blows**
UST then I will punish them to correct them because of the wrong things they have done as if I were hitting them with a rod
(וּפָקַדְתִּי בְשֵׁבֶט פִּשְׁעָם וּבִנְגָעִים עֲוֹנָם)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **transgression** and **iniquity**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [then I will punish the ways they have rebelled with a rod and the wrong they have done with blows]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| then I will punish | then I will punish them to correct them |
| their transgression | because of the wrong things they have done |
| with a rod | as if I were hitting them with a rod |
| their iniquity | because of the wrong things they have done |

# Psalms 89:33

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But my covenant faithfulness I will not break off from him, and I will not deal falsely in my faithfulness.* | *But I will not stop faithfully loving David; I will not fail to do what I promised {for his descendants}.* |

ULT **But my covenant faithfulness**
UST faithfully loving
(וַחַסְדִּי)

God uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between the punishment he will bring in the previous verse and the loyal love he will not withdraw. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Nonetheless, my covenant faithfulness]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **But my covenant faithfulness I will not break off from him, and I will not deal falsely in my faithfulness**
UST But I will not stop faithfully loving David; I will not fail to do what I promised {for his descendants … }
(וַחַסְדִּי לֹא־אָפִיר מֵעִמּוֹ וְלֹא־אֲשַׁקֵּר בֶּאֱמוּנָתִי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant faithfulness** and **faithfulness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [But I will not stop being loyally faithful to him, and I will not be unfaithful to what I promised]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| But my covenant faithfulness | faithfully loving |
| But my covenant faithfulness | faithfully loving |
| in my faithfulness | what I promised {for his descendants} |

# Psalms 89:34

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will not profane my covenant, and I will not change the utterance of my lips* | *I will not break my covenant; no, I will not take back what I said.* |

> ULT **and I will not change the utterance of my lips**
> UST no, I will not take back what I said
> (וּמוֹצָא שְׂפָתַי לֹא אֲשַׁנֶּה)

Here, **the utterance of my lips** represents what God has spoken. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and I will not change what I have spoken]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **and I will not change the utterance of my lips**
> UST no, I will not take back what I said
> (וּמוֹצָא שְׂפָתַי לֹא אֲשַׁנֶּה)

God is using the possessive form to describe what his **lips** have produced as speech. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and I will not change my words]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will … profane | I will … break |
| my covenant | my covenant |

# Psalms 89:35

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Once I have sworn by my holiness, 'If I should lie to David!* | *I guaranteed my promise to David by my own holy character. I said that I was not lying to him, and I meant it.* |

**ULT by my holiness**
**UST** by my own holy character
(בְּקָדְשִׁי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **holiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [by my holy character]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT If I should lie to David**
**UST** to David … I said that I was not lying to him
(אִם־לְדָוִד אֲכַזֵּב)

Following the custom of the culture, God 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 second part of this condition. Alternate translation: [I will certainly not lie to David!]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I have sworn | I guaranteed my promise |
| by my holiness | by my own holy character |
| I should lie | I said that I was … lying to him |
| to David | to David |

# Psalms 89:36

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *His seed will be forever, and his throne, like the sun before me.* | *I promised solemnly that his descendants would rule as kings forever. Yes, I said that I would preserve his dynasty just as I have made the sun to shine in the sky always.* |

**ULT His seed will be forever**
UST I promised solemnly that his descendants would rule as kings forever
(זַרְעוֹ לְעוֹלָם יִהְיֶה)

Here God is speaking of descendants as if they were **seed**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [His descendants will be forever]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and his throne, like the sun before me**
UST Yes, I said that I would preserve his dynasty just as I have made the sun to shine in the sky always
(וְכִסְאוֹ כַּשֶּׁמֶשׁ נֶגְדִּי)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the sun** is enduring and permanent, so is **his throne**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [his throne will endure permanently like the sun before me]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT His seed will be forever, and his throne, like the sun before me**
UST I promised solemnly that his descendants would rule as kings forever. Yes, I said that I would preserve his dynasty just as I have made the sun to shine in the sky always
(זַרְעוֹ לְעוֹלָם יִהְיֶה וְכִסְאוֹ כַּשֶּׁמֶשׁ נֶגְדִּי)

God 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: [His seed will be forever, and his throne will be forever, like the sun before me]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| His seed | I promised solemnly that his descendants |
| forever | forever |
| and his throne | Yes, I said that I would preserve his dynasty |

# Psalms 89:37

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *It will be established forever like the moon, yes, the attested witness in the sky.’” Selah* | *The moon appears in the sky dependably each month, and in the same way, David’s dynasty will always endure.” Selah* |

**ULT It will be established forever like the moon**
**UST** The moon … and in the same way, David’s dynasty will always endure
(כְּיָרֵחַ יִכּוֹן עוֹלָם)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the moon** is permanent and enduring, so is **the dynasty of David**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [I will establish it forever, as permanent as the moon]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT It will be established**
**UST** David’s dynasty will … endure
(יִכּוֹן)

The expression **It will be established** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form. If you need to say who does the action, the context indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [I will establish it]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT yes, the attested witness in the sky**
**UST** appears in the sky dependably each month
(וְעֵד בַּשַּׁחַק נֶאֱמָן)

Here God is speaking of the moon as if it were **the attested witness in the sky**, as though it testifies to the permanence of his covenant. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [which is a faithful sign in the sky]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| It will be established | David’s dynasty will … endure |
| forever | always |
| yes, the … witness | appears |
| attested | dependably each month |
| in the sky | in the sky |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 89:38

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *But you, you have rejected and spurned; you have passed yourself over from your anointed one.* | *Yet now it appears that you have completely rejected David's descendant who was our king. It appears that you have abandoned him.* |

ULT **But you, you have rejected**
UST Yet now it appears that you have completely rejected
(וְאַתָּה זָנַחְתָּ)

Ethan is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize the sharp contrast between God's promises and his present actions. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [But you yourself have rejected]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **But you, you have rejected**
UST Yet now it appears that you have completely rejected
(וְאַתָּה זָנַחְתָּ)

Ethan uses the word **But** here to indicate a contrast between God's covenant promises in the previous verses and his present treatment of the anointed king. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language.

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **you have rejected and spurned**
UST have completely rejected
(זָנַחְתָּ וַתִּמְאָס)

The terms **rejected** and **spurned** mean similar things. Ethan 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: [you have completely rejected]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| you have rejected | have completely rejected |
| your anointed one | David's descendant who was our king … him |

# Psalms 89:39

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have voided the covenant of your servant; you have profaned his crown to the ground.* | *It seems as though you are disregarding the covenant you made with David. You have allowed his dynasty to end, as if you had not promised to preserve it.* |

ULT **the covenant of your servant**
UST the covenant you made with David
(בְּרִית עַבְדֶּךָ)

Ethan is using the possessive form to describe the **covenant** that God made with his **servant**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [covenant you made with your servant]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **you have profaned his crown to the ground**
UST You have allowed his dynasty to end, as if you had not promised to preserve it
(חִלַּלְתָּ לָאָרֶץ נִזְרוֹ)

Here Ethan is speaking as if God had thrown the king's **crown to the ground**, treating his royal dignity as something that could be physically cast down. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you have completely dishonored his royal dignity]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the covenant of | the covenant you made with |
| your servant | David |
| you have profaned | You have allowed … to end, as if you had not promised to preserve it |
| his crown | his dynasty |

# Psalms 89:40

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have broken down all of his walls; you have made his fortifications a ruin.* | *You have allowed enemies to break down all the walls that protected his city {of Jerusalem}. It had strong defenses, but you have allowed those enemies to reduce them to ruins.* |

ULT **You have broken down all of his walls; you have made his fortifications a ruin**
UST You have allowed enemies to break down all the walls that protected his city {of Jerusalem}. It had strong defenses, but you have allowed those enemies to reduce them to ruins
(פָּרַ֣צְתָּ כָל־גְּדֵרֹתָ֑יו שַׂ֖מְתָּ מִבְצָרָ֣יו מְחִתָּֽה)

Here Ethan is speaking as if God had literally destroyed **walls** and **fortifications**, though he may be referring to the king's defenses and protections more broadly. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You have removed all of his protections; you have let his defenses fall apart]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his fortifications | It had strong defenses |
| a ruin | to ruins |

# Psalms 89:41

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *All of the passers of the way plunder him; he has become a reproach to his neighbors.* | *Now people can come along and steal the things that remain in the city. People in the surrounding countries are ridiculing us Israelites.* |

ULT **All of the passers of the way plunder him; he has become a reproach to his neighbors**

UST Now people can come along and steal the things that remain in the city. People in the surrounding countries are ridiculing us Israelites

(שַׁסּוּהוּ כָּל־עֹבְרֵי דָּרֶךְ הָיָה חֶרְפָּה לִשְׁכֵנָיו)

Here, **plunder him** represents plundering the people who live in the city of Jerusalem. Here, the current anointed king is most likely representing the people of Israel over whom he rules. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language.

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **he has become a reproach to his neighbors**

UST People in the surrounding countries are ridiculing us Israelites

(הָיָה חֶרְפָּה לִשְׁכֵנָיו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **reproach**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [he has become someone whom his neighbors ridicule]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| plunder him | and steal the things that remain in the city |
| a reproach | are ridiculing us Israelites |
| to his neighbors | People in the surrounding countries |

# Psalms 89:42

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have raised up the right hand of his adversaries; you have made all of his enemies rejoice.* | *You have allowed our enemies to become strong, and they are celebrating how they have defeated us.* |

**ULT the right hand of his adversaries**
**UST** You have allowed our enemies to become strong
(יְמִין צָרָיו)

Here, **the right 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: [the power of his adversaries]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his adversaries | our enemies |
| you have made … rejoice | and … are celebrating how they have defeated us |
| his enemies | they |

# Psalms 89:43

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have also turned back the edge of his sword, and you have not made him stand in battle.* | *Our armies have had to retreat from battles because you have not helped us when we fight.* |

> ULT **the edge of his sword**
> UST Our armies … from battles
> (צְוּר חַרְבּוֹ)

Here, **the edge of his sword** represents his military capability. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the effectiveness of his sword]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **the edge of his sword**
> UST Our armies … from battles
> (צְוּר חַרְבּוֹ)

Ethan is using the possessive form to describe the **edge** that is part of the **sword**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [his sharp sword]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his sword | Our armies … from battles |

# Psalms 89:44

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have made his splendor cease, and you have cast his throne to the ground.* | *Our kingdom is no longer glorious, and we no longer have a king.* |

**ULT You have made his splendor cease**
**UST** Our kingdom is no longer glorious
(הִשְׁבַּתָּ מִטְּהֳרֹו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **splendor**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [You have made him no longer splendid]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and you have cast his throne to the ground**
**UST** and we no longer have a king
(וַתָּכַסְאֹו לָאָרֶץ מִגַּרְתָּה)

Here, **throne** represents the king's royal authority. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and you have taken away his royal authority]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his splendor | Our kingdom … glorious |
| and … his throne | a king |

# Psalms 89:45

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have shortened the days of his youth; you have covered him over with shame. Selah* | *We are no longer strong, as young men are. This has disgraced us completely. Selah* |

ULT **You have shortened the days of his youth**
UST We are no longer strong, as young men are
(הִקְצַרְתָּ יְמֵי עֲלוּמָיו)

Here Ethan is speaking as if God had physically **shortened** a period of time. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You have cut short his time of youthful vigor]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the days of his youth**
UST as young men are
(יְמֵי עֲלוּמָיו)

Here, **the days** represent the time period of his youth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the time of his youth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the days of his youth**
UST as young men are
(יְמֵי עֲלוּמָיו)

Ethan is using the possessive form to describe the **days** during which he was young. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the days when he was young]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the days of his youth**
UST as young men are
(יְמֵי עֲלוּמָיו)

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: [the time when he was young]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **you have covered him over with shame**
UST This has disgraced us completely
(הֶעֱטֵ֣תָ עָלָ֣יו בּוּשָׁ֑ה)

Here Ethan is speaking as if shame were a garment with which God had **covered** the king. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you have caused him to be thoroughly ashamed]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **with shame**
UST This has disgraced
(בּוּשָׁ֑ה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **shame**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with what is shameful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| with shame | This has disgraced |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 89:46

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Until when, Yahweh? Will you hide yourself forever? Will your wrath burn like fire?* | *Yahweh, please help us, and do not delay! Do not keep neglecting us! Do not keep being so angry with us!* |

**ULT Until when, Yahweh? Will you hide yourself forever**
**UST** Yahweh, please help us, and do not delay! Do not keep neglecting us
(עַד־מָ֣ה יְהוָ֣ה תִּסָּתֵ֣ר לָנֶ֑צַח)

Ethan is using the question form to express his grief and impatience at God's prolonged withdrawal. 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: [Yahweh, this has gone on too long! You must not hide yourself forever.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT Will you hide yourself**
**UST** Do not … neglecting us
(תִּסָּתֵֽר)

Here Ethan is speaking as if God would physically **hide** himself, though he means that God has withdrawn his favor and presence. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Will you withhold your favor]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Will your wrath burn like fire**
**UST** Do not keep being so angry with us
(תִּבְעַ֖ר כְּמוֹ־אֵ֣שׁ חֲמָתֶֽךָ׃)

The point of this comparison is that just as **fire** consumes intensely, so does **God's wrath** consume. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [Will your wrath consume us intensely like fire]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **Will your wrath burn like fire**
UST Do not keep being so angry with us
(תִּבְעַר כְּמוֹ־אֵשׁ חֲמָתֶךָ)

Ethan is using the question form to express his distress at God's ongoing anger. 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: [Your wrath burns like fire!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **your wrath**
UST Do not keep being … angry with us
(חֲמָתֶךָ)

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: [how angry you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| forever | keep |
| your wrath | Do not keep being … angry with us |

# Psalms 89:47

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Remember me, what life {is}, for what emptiness you created all of the sons of man.* | *Please remember how short human lives are! Please remember that you created us human beings as mere mortals!* |

**ULT Remember me, what life {is}**
**UST** Please remember how short human lives are! Please remember that
(זְכָר־אֲנִי מֶה־חָלֶד)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please remember me, what life is]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Remember me, what life {is}, for what emptiness you created all of the sons of man**
**UST** Please remember how short human lives are! Please remember that you created us human beings as mere mortals
(זְכָר־אֲנִי מֶה־חָלֶד עַל־מַה־שָּׁוְא בָּרָאתָ כָל־בְּנֵי־אָדָם)

Ethan is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling, grief at the brevity and futility of human life. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [Please remember that we human beings are mere mortals!]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

**ULT for what emptiness**
**UST** as mere mortals
(עַל־מַה־שָּׁוְא)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **emptiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with what mortality]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

> ULT **all of the sons of man**
> UST us human beings
> (כָּל־בְּנֵי־אָדָם)

The psalmist is using **sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean “human beings.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all of humanity]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| you created | you created |

# Psalms 89:48

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *What man will live and not see death, will deliver his soul from the hand of Sheol? Selah* | *No one can live forever and never die; everyone must go to the place where dead people are. Selah* |

ULT **will live and not see death, will deliver his soul from the hand of Sheol**
UST can live … and never die; everyone must go to the place where dead people are
(יִֽחְיֶ֤ה וְלֹא יִרְאֶ֣ה־מָ֑וֶת יְמַלֵּ֥ט נַפְשׁ֗וֹ מִיַּד־שְׁא֥וֹל)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [will live forever, escaping death and Sheol]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **What man will live and not see death, will deliver his soul from the hand of Sheol**
UST No one can live forever and never die; everyone must go to the place where dead people are
(מִ֤י גֶ֨בֶר֙ יִֽחְיֶ֤ה וְלֹא יִרְאֶ֣ה־מָ֑וֶת יְמַלֵּ֥ט נַפְשׁ֗וֹ מִיַּד־שְׁא֥וֹל)

Ethan is using the question form to assert that no one can avoid death. 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 man will live and not see death or deliver his soul from the hand of Sheol.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **What man**
UST No one … forever
(מִ֤י גֶ֨בֶר֙)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [What person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **and not see death**
UST and never die
(וְלֹא יִרְאֶה־מָּוֶת)

Here Ethan is speaking of dying as if it were to **see death**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and not experience dying]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and not see death**
UST and never die
(וְלֹא יִרְאֶה־מָּוֶת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **death**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and not see himself dying]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **from the hand of Sheol**
UST must go to the place where dead people are
(מִיַּד־שְׁאוֹל)

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: [from the power of Sheol]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| will deliver | must go |
| his soul | everyone |
| Sheol | to the place where dead people are |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 89:49

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Where {are} your former covenant faithfulnesses, Lord, {which} you swore to David in your faithfulness?* | *Lord, you promised David that you would faithfully love us Israelites, and you did. You always keep your promises{, so please help us}!* |

**ULT Where {are} your former covenant faithfulnesses, Lord, which} you swore to David in your faithfulness**

UST Lord, you promised David that you would faithfully love us Israelites, and you did. You always keep your promises{, so please help us … }

(אַיֵּה ׀ חֲסָדֶיךָ הָרִאשֹׁנִים ׀ אֲדֹנָי נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְדָוִד בֶּאֱמוּנָתֶךָ)

Ethan is using the question form to express his grief and to accuse God of failing to act on his promises. 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: [Lord, your former covenant faithfulnesses are nowhere to be seen, the ones which you swore to David in your faithfulness!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT Where {are} your former covenant faithfulnesses, Lord, which} you swore to David in your faithfulness**

UST Lord, you promised David that you would faithfully love us Israelites, and you did. You always keep your promises{, so please help us … }

(אַיֵּה ׀ חֲסָדֶיךָ הָרִאשֹׁנִים ׀ אֲדֹנָי נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְדָוִד בֶּאֱמוּנָתֶךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant faithfulnesses** and **faithfulness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Where are the ways you were formerly faithful to your covenant, Lord, that you faithfully swore to David]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {are} your … covenant faithfulnesses | that you would faithfully love us Israelites |
| {are} your … covenant faithfulnesses | that you would faithfully love us Israelites |
| Lord | Lord |
| {which} you swore to | you promised |
| David | David |
| in your faithfulness | You always keep your promises |

# Psalms 89:50

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Remember, Lord, the reproach of your servants; my carrying in my bosom all of many peoples* | *Lord, consider the insulting things that many people are saying about us who loyally obey you! I deeply feel the pain of all those insults.* |

ULT **Remember, Lord, the reproach of your servants**
UST Lord, consider the insulting things that … are saying about us who loyally obey you … those insults
(זְכֹר אֲדֹנָי חֶרְפַּת עֲבָדֶיךָ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please remember, Lord, the reproach of your servants]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **the reproach of your servants**
UST the insulting things that … are saying about us who loyally obey you … those insults
(חֶרְפַּת עֲבָדֶיךָ)

Ethan is using the possessive form to describe the **reproach** that is directed against God's **servants**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how people reproach your servants]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the reproach of**
UST the insulting things that … are saying about … those insults
(חֶרְפַּת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **reproach**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how people reproach]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **my carrying in my bosom**
UST I deeply feel the pain of
(שְׂאֵתִי בְּחֵיקִי)

Ethan shifts from the plural **your servants** to the singular **my** because he is now speaking of his own personal experience of bearing the insults. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could make this shift explicit. Alternate translation: [how I carry in my heart]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **in my bosom**
UST I deeply feel the pain of
(בְּחֵיקִי)

Here, **in my bosom** represents bearing a heavy burden personally and intimately. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [within myself]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Lord | Lord |
| the reproach of | the insulting things that … are saying about … those insults |
| your servants | us who loyally obey you |
| my carrying | I deeply feel the pain of |

# Psalms 89:51

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *with which your enemies have taunted, Yahweh, with which they have taunted the footsteps of your anointed.* | *Yahweh, do something to stop your enemies from mocking the actions of the king you appointed.* |

ULT **the footsteps of your anointed**
UST the actions of the king you appointed
(עִקְּבוֹת מְשִׁיחֶךָ)

Here, **the footsteps** represent everywhere the anointed king goes. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your anointed wherever he goes]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the footsteps of your anointed**
UST the actions of the king you appointed
(עִקְּבוֹת מְשִׁיחֶךָ)

Ethan is using the possessive form to describe the **footsteps** that belong to God's **anointed** king. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [wherever your anointed goes]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your enemies | do something to stop your enemies |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| your anointed | the king you appointed |

# Psalms 89:52

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Blessed {be} Yahweh forever! Amen and amen.* | *May people always bless Yahweh! Amen! Yes, amen!* |

**ULT Blessed {be} Yahweh**
**UST** May people … bless Yahweh
(בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה)

The expression **Blessed be** is a passive verbal form. The psalmist is expressing his desire to praise Yahweh. If it would be unnatural to use that form for this purpose, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [We bless Yahweh] or [Let us praise Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT Amen and amen**
**UST** Amen! Yes, amen
(אָמֵן ׀ וְאָמֵן)

Ethan is repeating the word **Amen** for emphasis as a way of concluding Book 3 of Psalms (73–89). If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [May it certainly be so!]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Blessed | May people … bless |
| {be} Yahweh | Yahweh |
| forever | always |
| Amen | Amen |
| and amen | Yes, amen |

# Psalms 90

## Psalm 90 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 90 is a “wisdom psalm.” It instructs people how to be wise by honoring Yahweh and obeying him. (See the discussion of the types of psalms in the Introduction to Psalms.)

This psalm is a poem, the words to a song, and so the ULT sets its lines farther to the right on the page than ordinary text in order to show that they are poetry.

1. God’s eternity and human mortality (1–6)
2. People perish when God punishes them for sin (7–12)
3. A prayer for God’s mercy and favor (13–17)

The first part of verse 1, “A prayer of Moses, the man of God,” is the superscription to this psalm. Format it in the way that you have decided to format the other superscriptions in the book of Psalms.

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Singular “you” and “your”

The pronouns “you” and “your” are singular throughout this psalm because Moses is addressing Yahweh directly. So use the singular forms of those pronouns in your translation if your language marks a distinction between singular and plural “you.”

#### Exclusive “we,” “us,” and “our”

The pronouns “we,” “us,” and “our” are exclusive throughout this psalm because Moses is speaking to Yahweh on behalf of the Israelites. So use the exclusive forms of those pronouns in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

# Psalms 90:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A prayer of Moses, the man of God.* | |

> **לְמֹשֶׁה אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִים**(ORIG QUOTE)

Here the superscription is providing some background information to remind readers who Moses was. The expression **man of God** is used to indicate that Moses was associated with God in a special way. Alternate translation: [of Moses, who represented God in his covenant with the Israelites]

**Support Reference:** Background Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| תְּפִלָּה (ORIG QUOTE) | תְּפִלָּה (ORIG QUOTE) |
| לְמֹשֶׁה (ORIG QUOTE) | לְמֹשֶׁה (ORIG QUOTE) |
| אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִים (ORIG QUOTE) | אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִים (ORIG QUOTE) |

# Psalms 90:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Lord, you have been a habitation to us in generation and generation.* | *A prayer by the prophet Moses Lord, you have been like a home for us throughout our generations.* |

**ULT you have been a habitation to us**
**UST** you have been like a home for us
(מָעוֹן אַתָּה הָיִיתָ לָּנוּ)

Moses is speaking as if God were actually a **habitation** or place for the Israelites to live. He means that God has protected the Israelites, just as the walls of a home provide shelter. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you have protected us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT you**
**UST** you
(אַתָּה)

As the introduction to this psalm discusses, the pronoun **you** is singular here and throughout the psalm because Moses is addressing Yahweh directly. So use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

**ULT in generation and generation**
**UST** throughout our generations
(בְּדֹר וָדֹר)

Moses is using **in generation and generation** as a common expression of his culture to mean "in every generation." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in every generation] or [throughout all generations]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Lord | Lord |
| in generation | throughout our generations |
| and generation | throughout our generations |

# Psalms 90:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, even from forever to forever, you {are} God.* | *Before you created the mountains, before you formed the earth and everything that is in it, you were eternally God, and you will be God forever.* |

ULT **Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world**
UST Before you created the mountains, before you formed the earth and everything that is in it
(בְּטֶרֶם ׀ הָרִים יֻלָּדוּ וַתְּחוֹלֵל אֶרֶץ וְתֵבֵל)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Consider how you have decided as a translation team to represent Hebrew poetry in your translation, here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Before you created anything at all on the earth]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world**
UST Before you created the mountains, before you formed the earth and everything that is in it
(בְּטֶרֶם ׀ הָרִים יֻלָּדוּ וַתְּחוֹלֵל אֶרֶץ וְתֵבֵל)

Moses is speaking as if the **mountains** on earth had actually been **born** and as if God had actually **brought forth**, that is, given birth to, the **earth** and the **world**. He means that God created these things. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Before you created the mountains or formed the earth and the world]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the earth and the world**
UST the earth and everything that is in it
(אֶרֶץ וְתֵבֵל)

The terms **earth** and **world** mean similar things. Moses 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 entire earth]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **even from forever to forever**
UST you were eternally God, and … forever
(וּמֵעוֹלָם עַד־עוֹלָם)

Moses is referring to all of time by naming two extremes, eternity past and eternity future. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [throughout all of time]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **you {are} God**
UST you will be God
(אַתָּה אֵל)

As the ULT indicates by using brackets, the verb here is understood, so translators must decide what tense best fits the context. It would be conventional in many languages to use the past tense when describing something that was true a long time ago, so many languages might ordinarily say “you were God.” But Moses means that Yahweh was God long ago, that he is God now, and that he will continue to be God forever into the future. To convey this, the ULT uses the present tense, saying **you are God**. Decide what tense would best convey the meaning in your own language.

**Support Reference:** Irregular Use of Tenses

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the earth | the earth |
| and the world | and everything that is in it |
| even from forever | you were eternally God, and … forever |
| forever | you were eternally God, and … forever |
| {are} God | will be God |

# Psalms 90:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You cause man to return to dust, and you say, "Return, sons of man."* | *{When people die,} you cause their corpses to become soil again; you change their corpses to become dirt like that from which {the first} man was created.* |

ULT **You cause man to return to dust, and you say, "Return, sons of man**
UST { … When people die,} you cause their corpses to become soil again; you change their corpses to become dirt like that from which {the first} man was created
(תָּשֵׁב אֱנוֹשׁ עַד־דַּכָּא וַתֹּאמֶר שׁוּבוּ בְנֵי־אָדָם)

Moses is describing one event, **man** returning to **dust**, before describing another event that preceded it, God telling him to do that. If it would be helpful your language, you may wish to relate these events in the order in which they happened. Alternate translation: [You say, "Return, sons of man," and you cause man to return to dust]

**Support Reference:** Order of Events

ULT **man**
UST their corpses
(אֱנוֹשׁ)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [people]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **You cause man to return to dust … Return**
UST { … When people die,} you cause their corpses to become soil again; you change their corpses to become
(תָּשֵׁב אֱנוֹשׁ עַד־דַּכָּא & שׁוּבוּ)

Moses is using the expression **return to dust** to mean "die." It is an allusion to the way that God formed the first man from the dust of the ground, as described in Genesis 2:7. This is one of several mild or poetic ways in which Moses refers to death in this psalm. Your language may have a similar expression that you can use here in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: [You cause people to pass away… Pass away] or [You cause people to die … It is time for you to die]

**Support Reference:** Euphemism

> ULT **sons of man**
> UST dirt like that from which {the first} man was created
> (בְּנֵי־אָדָם)

The psalmist is using **sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean “human beings.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [human beings]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

# Psalms 90:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For a thousand years in your eyes {are} like the day before when it has passed, and a watch in the night.* | *When you consider time, a thousand years are {as short as} one day that passes; you consider that they are {as short as} a few hours in the night.* |

ULT **For**
UST When
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an affirmation. Alternate translation: [Indeed]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **in your eyes**
UST you consider time
(בְּעֵינֶיךָ)

Moses is using the common expression of his culture **in your eyes** to mean "in your perspective." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in your perspective]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **{ … are} like the day before when it has passed, and a watch in the night**
UST are {as short as} one day that passes; you consider that they are {as short as} a few hours in the night
(כְּיוֹם אֶתְמוֹל כִּי יַעֲבֹר וְאַשְׁמוּרָה בַלָּיְלָה)

The point of these comparisons is that both of the times that Moses mentions seem very short to people: **the day before**, once it is over, and a **watch in the night** that lasts only a few hours. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [seem very short, like yesterday, when it is over, or like a three-hour watch in the night]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| years | years |
| and a watch | you consider that they are {as short as} a few hours |

# Psalms 90:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You flood them away—they are sleep; in the morning, like grass, it passes along.* | *You cause people to die suddenly; they live {only a short time} as a dream lasts {only a short time}. They are like grass in the morning that comes and goes.* |

ULT **You flood them away**
UST You cause people to die suddenly
(זַרְמָתָם)

The pronoun **them** refers to people, that is, to the "sons of man" whom Moses mentions in verse 3, not to the "thousand years" that he mentions in verse 4. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [You flood people away]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **You flood them away**
UST You cause people to die suddenly
(זַרְמָתָם)

Moses is speaking as if God actually used a **flood** of water to sweep people **away** from the earth. He is using the image to convey the idea that God may cause people to die suddenly, unexpectedly, and with no recourse. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You bring people's lives to a swift end]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **they are sleep**
UST they live {only a short time} as a dream lasts {only a short time}
(שֵׁנָ֣ה יִהְיֽוּ)

Moses is speaking as if people were actually **sleep**. This could mean: (1) that Moses is using the term **sleep** as a mild way of referring to death. Alternate translation: [then they are dead] or (2) that Moses is illustrating the brevity of human life by comparing it to **sleep** that lasts only a few hours and then is over. Alternate translation: [their lives are short, like a few hours of sleep that soon end]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **like grass, it passes along**
UST They are like grass … that comes and goes
(כָּחָצִיר יַחֲלֹף)

The pronoun **it** refers to the life of a human being as compared to grass. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [like grass, a person's life passes along]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **like grass, it passes along**
UST They are like grass … that comes and goes
(כָּחָצִיר יַחֲלֹף)

The point of this comparison is that just as grass **passes along** through its brief cycle of life, so human life lasts for only a short time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [A person's life is short, like grass that quickly passes along]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You flood them away | You cause people to die suddenly |

# Psalms 90:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In the morning it sprouts and passes along; in the evening it withers and dries up.* | *In the morning the grass sprouts and develops, then in the evening it dries up and completely withers.* |

ULT **In the morning it sprouts and passes along; in the evening it withers and dries up**
UST In the morning the grass sprouts and develops, then in the evening it dries up and completely withers
(בַּבֹּקֶר יָצִיץ וְחָלָף לָעֶרֶב יְמוֹלָל וְיָבֵשׁ)

Moses says that grass lives for only a single day, lasting only from **morning** to **evening**, as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [Grass blossoms and grows for only a short time; very soon it withers and dries up]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **it withers and dries up**
UST it dries up and completely withers
(יְמוֹלָל וְיָבֵשׁ)

The terms **withers** and **dries up** mean similar things. Moses 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 dries up completely]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and dries up | and completely withers |

# Psalms 90:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For by your nose, we perish, and by your wrath we are terrified.* | *Similarly, {because of the sins that we commit,} you become angry with us; you terrify us and then you destroy us.* |

**ULT For by your nose, we perish, and by your wrath we are terrified**
**UST** Similarly, {because of the sins that we commit,} you become angry with us; you terrify us and then you destroy us
(כִּי־כָלִינוּ בְאַפֶּךָ וּבַחֲמָתְךָ נִבָּהָלְנוּ)

Moses is referring to God's **nose** as a common expression of his culture to mean God's anger. Your language and culture may also associate anger with a particular part of the body. If so, in your translation you could use an expression involving that part of the body. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: [by your anger we perish, and by your wrath we are terrified]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT For by your nose, we perish, and by your wrath we are terrified**
**UST** Similarly, {because of the sins that we commit,} you become angry with us; you terrify us and then you destroy us
(כִּי־כָלִינוּ בְאַפֶּךָ וּבַחֲמָתְךָ נִבָּהָלְנוּ)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to reverse the order of the phrases, since people would first be **terrified** by God's **wrath** and then they would **perish** when he destroyed them in his anger. Alternate translation: [by your wrath we are terrified, and by your anger we perish]

**Support Reference:** Order of Events

**ULT and by your wrath we are terrified**
**UST** { … because of the sins that we commit,} you become angry with us; you terrify us
(וּבַחֲמָתְךָ נִבָּהָלְנוּ)

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 your wrath terrifies us]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| we perish | and then you destroy us |
| and by your wrath | {because of the sins that we commit,} you become angry with us |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| we are terrified | you terrify us |

# Psalms 90:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have set our iniquities before you, our hidden {sin} in the light of your face.* | *It is as though you place our sins in front of you; spreading out even our secret sins where you can see them.* |

ULT **You have set our iniquities before you, our hidden {sin} in the light of your face**
UST It is as though you place our sins in front of you; spreading out even our secret sins where you can see them
(שַׁתָּה עֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ לְנֶגְדֶּךָ עֲלֻמֵּנוּ לִמְאוֹר פָּנֶיךָ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word to show that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [You have studied our iniquities, yes, you have carefully examined our hidden sin]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **You have set our iniquities before you**
UST It is as though you place our sins in front of you
(שַׁתָּה עֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ לְנֶגְדֶּךָ)

Moses is speaking as if God had actually **set** the **iniquities** of the Israelites in front of him where he could see them. The idea is that God is paying attention to the wrong things that the Israelites have done, and God is punishing them for doing those things, as the previous verse indicates. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You examine our iniquities]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **our hidden {sin} in the light of your face**
UST spreading out even our secret sins where you can see them
(עֲלֻמֵּנוּ לִמְאוֹר פָּנֶיךָ)

Moses 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, you have set our hidden sin in the light of your face]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **our hidden {sin}**
UST spreading out even our secret sins
(עֲלֻמֵּנוּ)

The term **hidden** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [our sin that we have hidden]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **in the light of your face**
UST where you can see them
(לִמְאוֹר פָּנֶיךָ)

Moses is speaking as if there were actually **light** shining from God's **face** that allowed him to see clearly what was in front of him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [where you can clearly see it]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| our iniquities | our sins |
| our hidden {sin} | spreading out even our secret sins |

# Psalms 90:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For all of our days turn in your wrath; we end our years like a sigh.* | *Because you are angry with us, you cause our lives to end; the years that we live pass as quickly as a sigh passes.* |

ULT **all of our days turn**
UST you cause our lives to end
(כָּל־יָמֵינוּ פָּנָוּ)

Moses is using **our days turn** as a common expression of his culture to describe **days** turning into nights, that is, to describe the light of day fading as evening approaches. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all of our days fade away] or [all of our days end]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **all of our days turn**
UST you cause our lives to end
(כָּל־יָמֵינוּ פָּנָוּ)

Moses is using the parts of a lifetime, the **days** of which it consists, to mean an entire lifetime. So in this image, he is speaking of a lifetime that consists of many days as if it were a single day. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [our lifetimes fade away] or [our lifetimes end]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **we end our years**
UST the years that we live pass as quickly
(כִּלֵּינוּ שָׁנֵינוּ)

In this phrase as well, Moses is using the parts of a lifetime, the **years** of which it consists, to mean an entire lifetime. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [our lives end]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **like a sigh**
UST as a sigh passes
(כְּמוֹ־הֶגֶה)

The point of this comparison could be: (1) that just as a **sigh** is a brief utterance, so people come to the **end** of their **years** after only a brief time, Alternate translation: [after only a brief time] or (2) that just as someone might **sigh** when they are sad, so we end our lives in despair. Alternate translation: [in sadness]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in your wrath | you are angry with us |
| our years | the years that we live |

# Psalms 90:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The days of our years, in them {are} 70 years, or, if by strength, 80 years but their expanse is trouble and sorrow, for it passes quickly, and we fly away.* | *People live for {only} seventy years; if they are strong, {some of them live} for eighty years. But throughout our time we have much pain and troubles; our lives soon end, and we die.* |

ULT **The days of our years, in them {are} 70 years**
UST People live for {only} seventy years
(יְמֵי־שְׁנוֹתֵינוּ בָהֶם שִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה)

Moses is using **The days of our years** as a common expression of his culture to mean "our lifetimes." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [All our born days are 70 years] or [We humans tend to live for 70 years]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **or, if by strength**
UST if they are strong
(וְאִם בִּגְבוּרֹת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [or, if we are strong]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **it passes quickly**
UST our lives soon end
(גָּז חִישׁ)

The pronoun **it** refers to the human lifetime. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [our lifetime passes quickly]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and we fly away**
UST and we die
(וַנָּעֻפָה)

Moses is referring to death in a poetic way by using the phrase **fly away**. Depending on what is helpful in your language, you could use a polite or poetic way of referring to this in your language, or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [and we depart] or [and then we die]

**Support Reference:** Euphemism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| our years | People live for {only} |
| years | years |
| by strength | they are strong |
| is trouble | we have much pain |

# Psalms 90:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Who knows the power of your nose, or your wrath according to your fear?* | *No one has fully experienced the powerful things that you can do to people when you are angry with them, No, people are not adequately afraid of how you can punish them because you are angry with them.* |

ULT **Who knows the power of your nose, or your wrath according to your fear**
UST No one has fully experienced the powerful things that you can do to people when you are angry with them, No, people are not adequately afraid of how you can punish them because you are angry with them
(מִי־יוֹדֵעַ עֹז אַפֶּךָ וּכְיִרְאָתְךָ עֶבְרָתֶךָ)

Moses 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. Since Moses says “we” and “us” throughout the rest of the psalm, you could say “we” here in your translation. Alternate translation: [We ought to know the power of your anger, and we ought to know your wrath according to your fear!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **your nose**
UST when you are angry with them
(אַפֶּךָ)

See how you translated the term **nose** in verse 7. Alternate translation: [your anger]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **or your wrath according to your fear**
UST No, people are not adequately afraid of how you can punish them because you are angry with them
(וּכְיִרְאָתְךָ עֶבְרָתֶךָ)

Moses 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 knows your wrath according to your fear]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT or your wrath according to your fear**
**UST** No, people are not adequately afraid of how you can punish them because you are angry with them
(וּכְיִרְאָתְךָ עֶבְרָתֶךָ)

Moses is using the possessive form **your fear** to describe not fear that God has, but fear or reverent respect that people have for God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [or who fears you in a way that accords with your wrath] or [and we ought to fear you in a way that accords with your wrath against sin]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| knows | has fully experienced |
| the power of | the powerful things that you can do to people |
| or … according to your fear | No, people are not adequately afraid of |
| your wrath | how you can punish them because you are angry with them |

# Psalms 90:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *So teach {us} to number our days that we might bring in a heart of wisdom.* | *So teach us to realize that we live for only a short time in order that we may think wisely {about how we use our time}.* |

ULT **So teach {us} to number our days**
UST So teach us to realize that we live for only a short time
(לִמְנוֹת יָמֵינוּ כֵּן הוֹדַע)

Moses is speaking as if he actually wanted God to help the Israelites **number** or count how many **days** they would be alive. The implication is that if they did this, they would realize how few days they actually have to live. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [So help us to recognize how short our lives actually are]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **that we might bring in a heart of wisdom**
UST in order that we may think wisely {about how we use our time}
(וְנָבִא לְבַב חָכְמָה)

Moses may be using the expression **bring in** to speak of the results of learning to number one's days as if they were actually a harvest of crops that one had cultivated. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that we might acquire a heart of wisdom]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **that we might bring in a heart of wisdom**
UST in order that we may think wisely {about how we use our time}
(וְנָבִא לְבַב חָכְמָה)

Here the **heart** represents the thoughts. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that we might acquire a mind of wisdom]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **that we might bring in a heart of wisdom**
UST in order that we may think wisely {about how we use our time}
(וְנָבִא לְבַב חָכְמָה)

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 we might acquire a wise mind] or [that we might understand how to live wisely]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| teach {us} | teach us |
| wisdom | wisely |

# Psalms 90:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Return, Yahweh! Until when? Have compassion on your servants.* | *Yahweh, how long will you be angry with us? Pity us who serve you.* |

ULT **Return, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh … you be angry with us
(שׁוּבָה יְהוָה)

Moses is using an emphatic imperative form here. It may be appropriate in your culture for someone to address God using an emphatic imperative, and your language may have such a form that you can use in your translation. But if people in your culture would not consider it appropriate for someone to address God in this way, you could translate this as a request rather than as a command. Alternate translation: [Please return, Yahweh.]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Return, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh … you be angry with us
(שׁוּבָה יְהוָה)

This could mean: (1) that Moses wants Yahweh to stop being angry and stop punishing the Israelites. He would be speaking as if Yahweh's anger were literally a place from which he could **Return**. Alternate translation: [Stop being angry, Yahweh!] (2) that Moses wants Yahweh to abide peacefully among his people, protecting them and blessing them. This would be an allusion to the prayer that Moses always prayed in the wilderness when the cloud of Yahweh stopped moving and the Israelites made camp, as recorded in Numbers 10:36, "Return, Yahweh, to the multitudes of the thousands of Israel." Alternate translation: [Dwell peacefully among us, Yahweh.]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Until when**
UST how long will
(עַד־מָתָי)

Moses 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 in your language. Alternate translation: [Until when will you continue to be angry with us] or [For how long will you continue to be angry with us]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **Until when**
UST how long will
(עַד־מָתָי)

Moses 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 hope that your anger will not last long.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Have compassion on your servants**
UST Pity us who serve you
(וְהִנָּחֵם עַל־עֲבָדֶיךָ)

Moses is speaking of himself and his fellow Israelites in the third person as **your servants** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person. Alternate translation: [us, your servants]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Have compassion | Pity |
| your servants | who serve you |

# Psalms 90:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Satisfy us in the morning {with} your covenant faithfulness and we will rejoice and be glad in all of our days.* | *Each morning, show us that it is enough for us if you love us faithfully as you have promised that you would do. {Show us this} so that we may shout joyfully and be happy all during the years that we live.* |

ULT **in the morning**
UST Each morning, show us
(בַּבֹּקֶר)

Moses is speaking as if he actually wanted God to **Satisfy** the Israelites **in the morning**, that is, at the beginning of an actual day. He could mean: (1) that he wants God to be eager to treat the Israelites mercifully. He would be using the expression **in the morning** by allusion to the way that people get up early in the morning to do something they are eager to do. Alternate translation: [eagerly] or [soon]; (2) that he wants God to treat the Israelites mercifully after a time of trouble. He would be speaking of that time of trouble as if it had actually been a night and of the time after it as if it were actually a morning. Alternate translation: [after this time of trouble]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{with} your covenant faithfulness**
UST if you love us faithfully as you have promised that you would do
(חַסְדֶּךָ)

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: [with all the ways you are faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and we will rejoice and be glad**
UST {Show us this} so that we may shout joyfully and be happy
(וְנִרְנְּנָה וְנִשְׂמְחָה)

The terms **rejoice** and **be glad** mean similar things. Moses is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be helpful for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [and we will rejoice greatly] or [and we will be very glad]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

> ULT **in all of our days**
> UST all during the years that we live
> (בְּכָל־יָמֵינוּ)

Moses is using the term **days** to refer to a specific time, the human lifetime, since time is made up of days. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for all of the rest of our lives]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **in all of our days**
> UST all during the years that we live
> (בְּכָל־יָמֵינוּ)

Moses is saying that the Israelites will rejoice for **all** of the rest of their lives as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [throughout our lives]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {with} your covenant faithfulness | if you love us faithfully as you have promised that you would do |
| and we will rejoice | {Show us this} so that we may shout joyfully |
| and be glad | and be happy |

# Psalms 90:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Make us glad according to the days you afflicted us the years we have seen trouble.* | *Cause us now to be happy for as many years as you afflicted us and we experienced bad things.* |

ULT **according to the days you afflicted us the years we have seen trouble**
UST for as many years as you afflicted us and we experienced bad things
(כִּימוֹת עִנִּיתָנוּ שְׁנוֹת רָאִינוּ רָעָה)

Moses is using the terms **days** and **years** to refer to specific times, since time is made up of days and years. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. However, since the Israelites were **afflicted** and did experience **trouble** for a specific number of days and years, you may decide to retain those terms in your translation. Alternate translation: [for the same amount of time that you have afflicted us, yes, for the same amount of time that we have experienced trouble] or [for as many days as you have afflicted us, yes, for as many years as we have experienced trouble]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the years we have seen trouble**
UST and we experienced bad things
(שְׁנוֹת רָאִינוּ רָעָה)

Moses 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 in your language. Alternate translation: [yes, make us glad for as many years as we have seen trouble]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Make us glad | Cause us now to be happy |
| according to the days | for as many years as |
| you afflicted us | you afflicted us |
| the years | and we experienced |
| trouble | bad things |

# Psalms 90:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May your work be seen by your servants, and your majesty by their sons.* | *Enable us who serve you to see the {great} things that you do, and enable our descendants to see your glorious power {also}.* |

ULT **May your work be seen by your servants, and your majesty by their sons**
UST Enable us who serve you to see the {great} things that you do, and enable our descendants to see your glorious power {also … }
(יֵרָאֶה אֶל־עֲבָדֶיךָ פָּעֳלֶךָ וְהַדְרְךָ עַל־בְּנֵיהֶם)

Moses 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 in your language. Alternate translation: [May your work be seen by your servants, and may your majesty be seen by their sons]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **May your work be seen by your servants, and your majesty by their sons**
UST Enable us who serve you to see the {great} things that you do, and enable our descendants to see your glorious power {also … }
(יֵרָאֶה אֶל־עֲבָדֶיךָ פָּעֳלֶךָ וְהַדְרְךָ עַל־בְּנֵיהֶם)

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 your servants see your work, and may their sons see your majesty]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **May your work be seen by your servants**
UST Enable us who serve you to see the {great} things that you do
(יֵרָאֶה אֶל־עֲבָדֶיךָ פָּעֳלֶךָ)

Moses is speaking about himself and his fellow Israelites in the third person as **your servants** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person. Alternate translation: [May your work be seen by us, your servants] or [May we, your servants, see your work]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and your majesty by their sons**
UST and enable our descendants to see your glorious power {also}
(וְהַדְרְךָ֥ עַל־בְּנֵיהֶֽם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **majesty**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and may their sons recognize how majestic you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **by their sons**
UST enable our descendants to see … also
(עַל־בְּנֵיהֶֽם)

Moses is using the term **sons** to mean "descendants." Alternate translation: [to their descendants]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your servants | us who serve you |
| and your majesty | and … your glorious power |

# Psalms 90:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May the favor of the Lord our God be upon us. And the work of our hands, establish for us; indeed, the work of our hands, establish it.* | *Lord, our God, give us your blessings and enable us to be successful; yes, cause us to be successful in everything that we do!* |

**ULT May the favor of the Lord our God be upon us**
**UST** Lord, our God, give us your blessings
(וִיהִי ׀ נֹעַם אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָלֵינוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **favor**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [May the Lord our God favor us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT And the work of our hands … indeed, the work of our hands**
**UST** and … us … us … in everything that we do
(וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ & וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ)

Here, **hands** represent the capacity to do something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And the work that we do … indeed, the work that we do]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the favor of | your blessings |
| the Lord | Lord |
| our God | our God |
| And the work of | and … us |
| establish | enable … to be successful |
| establish it | yes, cause … to be successful |

# Psalms 91

## Psalm 91 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 91 is a “psalm of trust.” (See the discussion of the types of psalms in the General Introduction to Psalms.)

This psalm is a poem, the words to a song, and so the ULT sets its lines farther to the right on the page than ordinary text in order to show that they are poetry.

1. The psalmist describes how Yahweh protects those who trust him (1–13)
2. Yahweh describes how he protects those who trust him (14–16)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Singular “you” and “your”

The pronouns “you” and “your” are singular in verses 1–13 because the psalmist is speaking individually to people whom he wants to encourage to trust Yahweh. So use the singular forms of those pronouns in your translation if your language marks a distinction between singular and plural “you.”

# Psalms 91:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one dwelling in the shelter of the Most High will remain in the shadow of Shaddai.* | *Those people whom God Most High protects will be able to rest safely because Shaddai cares for them.* |

**ULT The one dwelling in the shelter of the Most High**
**UST** Those people whom God Most High protects
(יֹשֵׁב בְּסֵתֶר עֶלְיוֹן)

The psalmist is speaking as if the **Most High**, that is, God, were actually a **shelter** in which a person could live. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The one who depends on the Most High for protection]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the Most High**
**UST** God Most High
(עֶלְיוֹן)

The psalmist is using this expression as a title for God. Your language may have a comparable title that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. If you have already translated Psalm 18, see how you translated this title in Psalms 18:13. Alternate translation: [God Most High] or [the Supreme God]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

**ULT will remain in the shadow of Shaddai**
**UST** will be able to rest safely because Shaddai cares for them
(בְּצֵל שַׁדַּי יִתְלוֹנָן)

The psalmist is speaking as if God actually had a **shadow**. He is using the image to represent care, the way a shadow provides a cool place to rest in hot climates. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [will continually experience Shaddai's care]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Shaddai**
**UST** Shaddai
(שַׁדַּי)

The word **Shaddai** is a name for God. If you have already translated Psalm 68, see how you translated this name in Psalms 68:14. Alternate translation: [the Almighty]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the shelter of | protects |
| the Most High | God Most High |
| Shaddai | Shaddai |

# Psalms 91:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will say to Yahweh, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, I trust in him."* | *I will declare to Yahweh, "You protect me; you are like a stronghold in which I am safe. You are my God, the one in whom I trust."* |

**ULT I will say to Yahweh, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, I trust in him**
**UST** I will declare to Yahweh, You protect me; you are like a stronghold in which I am safe. You are my God, the one in whom I trust
(אֹמַר לַיהוָה מַחְסִי וּמְצוּדָתִי אֱלֹהַי אֶבְטַח־בּוֹ)

The word translated **to** could indicate: (1) that the psalmist is saying this to Yahweh. You may wish to use second-person pronouns to indicate this. Alternate translation: [I will say to Yahweh, "You are my refuge and my fortress; you are my God, I trust in you"]; (2) that the psalmist is saying this about Yahweh. You may wish to use third-person pronouns to indicate this. Alternate translation: [I will say regarding Yahweh, "He is my refuge and my fortress; he is my God, I trust in him"]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

**ULT My refuge and my fortress**
**UST** You protect me; you are like a stronghold in which I am safe
(מַחְסִי וּמְצוּדָתִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if Yahweh were actually a **refuge** and a **fortress**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The source of my safety and my protection]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT My refuge and my fortress**
**UST** You protect me; you are like a stronghold in which I am safe
(מַחְסִי וּמְצוּדָתִי)

The terms **refuge** and **fortress** mean similar things. The psalmist is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be helpful for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [The one who keeps me completely safe]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | to Yahweh |
| My refuge | You protect me |
| and my fortress | you are like a stronghold in which I am safe |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my God | You are my God |
| I trust | the one in whom I trust |

# Psalms 91:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For he will rescue you from the snare of the trapper, from the plague of calamities.* | *He will rescue you from all hidden traps and save you from deadly diseases.* |

ULT **will rescue you**
UST rescue … and save
(יַצִּ֥ילְךָ)

As the Introduction to this psalm discusses, the pronoun **you** is singular here and throughout the psalm because the psalmist is speaking individually to people whom he wants to encourage to trust Yahweh. So use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

ULT **from the snare of the trapper, from the plague of calamities**
UST from all hidden traps … you from deadly diseases
(מִפַּ֣ח יָ֭קוּשׁ מִדֶּ֣בֶר הַוּ֑וֹת)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **plague**. He means plagues in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [from traps that people set for you and from deadly plagues]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **from the snare of the trapper**
UST from all hidden traps
(מִפַּ֣ח יָ֭קוּשׁ)

The psalmist is speaking as if the individual whom he is addressing were a bird or small animal that a **trapper** was trying to catch in a **snare**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from anyone who would deceptively try to harm you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **from the plague of calamities**
> UST you from deadly diseases
> (מֵדֶבֶר הַוּוֹת)

The psalmist 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 in your language. Alternate translation: [and he will also rescue you from the plague of calamities]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

> ULT **from the plague of calamities**
> UST you from deadly diseases
> (מֵדֶבֶר הַוּוֹת)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to describe a **plague** that would cause **calamities**, meaning, specifically, many deaths. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from every deadly plague]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| will rescue you | rescue … and save |
| from the snare of | from all hidden traps |
| from the plague of | diseases |
| calamities | you from deadly |

# Psalms 91:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will shelter. His faithfulness {is} a shield and rampart.* | *He will protect you as a bird does who covers her young under her wings. You will be safe in his care. As he faithfully does what he has promised, that is like a shield or strong wall that will protect you.* |

ULT **He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will shelter**
UST He will protect you as a bird does who covers her young under her wings. You will be safe in his care
(בְּאֶבְרָתוֹ | יָסֶךְ לָךְ וְתַחַת־כְּנָפָיו תֶּחְסֶה)

These two phrases mean similar things. Translate them according to the decisions your team has made regarding translating parallelism in Hebrew poetry. Alternate translation: [He will cover you with his feathers, so you will be able to shelter under his wings] or [You will shelter under the cover of his wings]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will shelter**
UST He will protect you as a bird does who covers her young under her wings. You will be safe in his care
(בְּאֶבְרָתוֹ | יָסֶךְ לָךְ וְתַחַת־כְּנָפָיו תֶּחְסֶה)

The psalmist is speaking as if Yahweh were a bird and as if the individual he is addressing were one of its chicks. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He will protect you the way a bird protects its chicks by covering them with its wings]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **His faithfulness {is} a shield and rampart**
UST As he faithfully does what he has promised, that is like a shield or strong wall that will protect you
(צִנָּה וְסֹחֵרָה אֲמִתּוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking as if Yahweh's **faithfulness** were actually a **shield** and **buckler**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [His faithfulness is dependable protection]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **His faithfulness {is} a shield and rampart**
UST As he faithfully does what he has promised, that is like a shield or strong wall that will protect you
(צִנָּה וְסֹחֵרָה אֲמִתּוֹ)

The word translated as **rampart** could refer to: (1) a wall around a city that would protect it from enemy attack. In that case, the psalmist would be using a shield that protected an individual soldier and a wall that protected an entire city to mean protection in general. Alternate translation: [His faithfulness is like military protection] or (2) a small shield. In that case, the psalmist would be using a large shield and a small shield together to mean all of the armor that a soldier would wear into battle. Alternate translation: [His faithfulness is like protective armor]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **His faithfulness {is} a shield and rampart**
UST As he faithfully does what he has promised, that is like a shield or strong wall that will protect you
(צִנָּה וְסֹחֵרָה אֲמִתּוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [He will faithfully protect you like a shield and buckler]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| you will shelter | You will be safe |
| His faithfulness | As he faithfully does what he has promised |
| {is} a shield | that is like a shield |

# Psalms 91:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You will not be afraid of the terror of the night, of the arrow {that} flies by day,* | *You will not be afraid of things that happen during the night that could terrorize you or of arrows {that your enemies will shoot at you} during the day.* |

ULT **the terror of the night, of the arrow {that} flies by day**
UST that happen during the night that could terrorize you or of arrows {that your enemies will shoot at you} during the day
(מִפַּחַד לָיְלָה מֵחֵץ יָעוּף יוֹמָם)

The psalmist is using things that might happen at **night** and during the **day** to mean things that might happen at any time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [of any dangers that might harm you at any time]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **the terror of the night**
UST that happen during the night that could terrorize you
(מִפַּחַד לָיְלָה)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to describe something that might happen during the **night** that would cause a person to feel **terror**. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [of terrifying things that might happen during the night]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **of the arrow {that} flies by day**
UST or of arrows {that your enemies will shoot at you} during the day
(מֵחֵץ יָעוּף יוֹמָם)

The psalmist 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 in your language. Alternate translation: [and you will not be afraid of the arrow that flies by day]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **of the arrow {that} flies by day**
UST or of arrows {that your enemies will shoot at you} during the day
(מֵחֵ֣ץ יָע֣וּף יוֹמָ֑ם)

The psalmist is speaking of how an **arrow … flies** without indicating that this is the result of someone shooting it from a bow. This may create the impression that an arrow is a living thing that can fly on its own. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate the agent who is responsible for the arrow flying. Alternate translation: [of an arrow that someone might shoot at you]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **of the arrow {that} flies by day**
UST or of arrows {that your enemies will shoot at you} during the day
(מֵחֵ֣ץ יָע֣וּף יוֹמָ֑ם)

The psalmist is using one type of weapon, an **arrow**, to mean weapons in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [of any weapon that someone might use to try to harm you]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| You will … be afraid of | be afraid of things |
| the terror of | that happen … that could terrorize you |

# Psalms 91:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *of the plague {that} walks in darkness, of the destruction that wastes {at} midday.* | *You will not be afraid of plagues that infect people in the night or of other evil forces that kill people in the light of day.* |

ULT **of the plague {that} walks in darkness, of the destruction that wastes {at} midday**
UST You will not be afraid of plagues that infect people in the night or of other evil forces that kill people in the light of day
(מִדֶּבֶר בָּאֹפֶל יַהֲלֹךְ מִקֶּטֶב יָשׁוּד צָהֳרָיִם)

The psalmist 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 you will not be afraid of the plague that walks in darkness, and you will not be afraid of the destruction that wastes at midday]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **of the plague {that} walks in darkness, of the destruction that wastes {at} midday**
UST You will not be afraid of plagues that infect people in the night or of other evil forces that kill people in the light of day
(מִדֶּבֶר בָּאֹפֶל יַהֲלֹךְ מִקֶּטֶב יָשׁוּד צָהֳרָיִם)

The psalmist is using things that might happen secretly and things that might happen openly to mean things that might happen in any way. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [You will not have to be concerned about dangers that you cannot see coming or those that you can see coming]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **{that} walks**
UST that infect people
(יַהֲלֹךְ)

The psalmist is speaking of a **plague** as if it were a living thing that **walks** around. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that spreads]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **in darkness**
UST in the night
(בָּאֹפֶל)

The psalmist is speaking as if this plague were actually spreading from person to person **in the darkness**, meaning at night. He means that the plague spreads without people realizing it, in the same way that people do not realize what is happening in the darkness of night because they cannot see it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [invisibly]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **of the destruction that wastes**
UST or of other evil forces that kill people
(מִקֶּטֶב יָשׁוּד)

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: [of destructive things that cause great damage]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{at} midday**
UST in the light of day
(צָהֳרָיִם)

Here, **midday**, the time when the sun is brightest in the sky, represents "openly and obviously." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in broad daylight]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| of the plague | You will not be afraid of plagues |
| of the destruction | or of other evil forces |
| that wastes | that kill people |

# Psalms 91:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A thousand may fall at your side, and a myriad at your right hand; it will not approach toward you.* | *Even if a thousand people fall dead alongside you, even if ten thousand people are dying around you, the deadly thing will not harm you.* |

ULT **A thousand may fall at your side, and a myriad at your right hand; it will not approach toward you**
UST Even if a thousand people fall dead alongside you, even if ten thousand people are dying around you, the deadly thing will not harm you
(יִפֹּל מִצִּדְּךָ ׀ אֶ֥לֶף וּרְבָבָ֗ה מִימִינֶ֫ךָ אֵלֶ֥יךָ לֹ֣א יִגָּֽשׁ)

The psalmist is using a hypothetical situation to help his listeners appreciate how confidently they can trust God to protect them. Use the natural form in your language for expressing a hypothetical situation. Alternate translation: [Suppose a thousand fell at your side. Suppose a myriad fell at your right hand. Even then, it would not approach toward you]

**Support Reference:** Hypothetical Situations

ULT **A thousand may fall at your side, and a myriad at your right hand**
UST Even if a thousand people fall dead alongside you, even if ten thousand people are dying around you
(יִפֹּל מִצִּדְּךָ ׀ אֶ֥לֶף וּרְבָבָ֗ה מִימִינֶ֫ךָ)

The psalmist 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: [A thousand may fall at your side, and a myriad may fall at your right hand]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **A thousand may fall at your side, and a myriad at your right hand**
UST Even if a thousand people fall dead alongside you, even if ten thousand people are dying around you
(יִפֹּל מִצִּדְּךָ ׀ אֶ֥לֶף וּרְבָבָ֗ה מִימִינֶ֫ךָ)

The psalmist is using the term **fall** to mean “die,” since people typically fall down when they die. Be sure that it is clear in your translation that he is not referring to people falling down accidentally. Alternate translation: [A thousand may die at your side, and a myriad may die at your right hand]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **it will not approach toward you**
> UST the deadly thing will not harm you
> (אֵלֶיךָ לֹא יִגַּשׁ)

The pronoun **it** refers to any deadly danger such as the psalmist has described in verses 5 and 6. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [no deadly dangerous thing will approach toward you]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **it will not approach toward you**
> UST the deadly thing will not harm you
> (אֵלֶיךָ לֹא יִגַּשׁ)

Since the psalmist says that people may die right next to and all around the individual whom he is addressing, he does not mean that danger will actually **not** even **approach** that individual. Rather, he is using this expression as an overstatement to mean that dangerous things will not kill him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [no deadly dangerous thing will kill you]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

# Psalms 91:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You will only observe with your eyes and see the recompense of the wicked.* | *All you need to do is watch and you will see that God is punishing evil people!* |

ULT **observe with your eyes**
UST is watch
(בְּעֵינֶיךָ תַבִּיט)

It might seem that the expression **observe with your eyes** contains extra information that would be unnatural to express in your language. If so, you can shorten it. Alternate translation: [observe]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

ULT **and see the recompense of the wicked**
UST and you will see that God is punishing evil people
(וְשִׁלֻּמַת רְשָׁעִים תִּרְאֶה)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to describe the **wicked** receiving a **recompense**, not the wicked giving a recompense to someone. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and see the wicked receiving their recompense]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **and see the recompense of the wicked**
UST and you will see that God is punishing evil people
(וְשִׁלֻּמַת רְשָׁעִים תִּרְאֶה)

The psalmist is speaking as if God were actually repaying the wicked an amount that was due to them. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. You could also state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and see God paying the wicked back for what they have done] or [and see God punishing the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the wicked**
UST evil people
(רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist 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]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the wicked | evil people |

# Psalms 91:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Because you have made Yahweh, my refuge, the Most High, your dwelling,* | *This is because you trust Yahweh, God Most High, who protects me, to also protect you.* |

**ULT you have made Yahweh, my refuge, the Most High, your dwelling**
UST you trust Yahweh, God Most High, who protects me, to also protect you
(אַתָּה יְהוָה מַחְסִי עֶלְיוֹן שַׂמְתָּ מְעוֹנֶךָ)

The psalmist is speaking as if Yahweh were actually a **refuge** in which a person could take shelter and a **dwelling** in which a person could live. See how you translated the expression "dwelling in the shelter" in 91:1 and the expression "My refuge" in 91:2. Alternate translation: [you are depending on Yahweh, the source of my safety, the Most High, for your protection]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my refuge | who protects me |
| the Most High | God Most High |

# Psalms 91:10

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *evil will not happen to you, and a plague will not approach your tent.* | *Therefore, nothing evil will happen to you; no plague will affect your family* |

ULT **evil will not happen to you, and a plague will not approach your tent**
UST Therefore, nothing evil will happen to you; no plague will affect your family
(לֹא־תְאֻנֶּה אֵלֶיךָ רָעָה וְנֶגַע לֹא־יִקְרַב בְּאָהֳלֶךָ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The first phrase states the general idea, and then the second phrase gives a specific example. Translate these phrases according to the decisions your team has made regarding translating parallelism in Hebrew poetry. Alternate translation: [evil will not happen to you; no, a plague will not come near to your tent] or [bad things will not happen to you where you live]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **evil will not happen to you, and a plague will not approach your tent**
UST Therefore, nothing evil will happen to you; no plague will affect your family
(לֹא־תְאֻנֶּה אֵלֶיךָ רָעָה וְנֶגַע לֹא־יִקְרַב בְּאָהֳלֶךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of how **evil will not happen** and **a plague will not come near** without indicating that these are the results of Yahweh's actions on behalf of those who trust in him. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate Yahweh's agency explicitly here. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will prevent evil from happening to you; yes, he will keep plagues from coming near to your tent]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **your tent**
UST your family
(בְּאָהֳלֶךָ)

The psalmist is using one kind of home, a **tent**, to mean all kinds of homes. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your home]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| evil | evil |
| and a plague | plague |
| your tent | your family |

# Psalms 91:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For he will command his angels concerning you, to guard you in all of your ways.* | *because Yahweh will command his angels to protect you in whatever you are doing.* |

ULT **he will command**
UST Yahweh will command
(יְצַוֶּה)

The pronoun **he** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [God will command]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **in all of your ways**
UST to protect … in whatever
(בְּכָל־דְּרָכֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of the activities of the individual he is addressing as if they were **ways** or paths that the individual was walking along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in all of your activities]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his angels | his angels |
| to guard you | you are doing |

# Psalms 91:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They will lift you up in their hands, lest you hit your foot against a stone.* | *They will even hold you up with their hands so that you will not hurt your foot on a big stone.* |

**ULT lest you hit your foot against a stone**
**UST** so that you will not hurt your foot on a big stone
(פֶּן־תִּגֹּף בָּאֶבֶן רַגְלֶךָ)

The psalmist is using one harmful thing that might happen to a person, hitting his **foot** against a **stone**, to mean every kind of harmful thing that might happen to a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [so that harmful things do not happen to you]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT lest you hit your foot against a stone**
**UST** so that you will not hurt your foot on a big stone
(פֶּן־תִּגֹּף בָּאֶבֶן רַגְלֶךָ)

The psalmist is using the word translated as **lest** to introduce an outcome that he does not want to happen. Because of this, he first reassures the person he is addressing that God's angels will protect him so that this will not happen. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that avoiding this outcome is the purpose of the instruction. Alternate translation: [Otherwise, you might hit your foot against a stone] or [Otherwise, harmful things might happen to you]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| against a stone | on a big stone |

# Psalms 91:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You will tread on the lion and the adder; you will trample the young lion and the serpent.* | *Yahweh will not allow your enemies to harm you; even if strong lions and poisonous snakes attack you, you will defeat them!* |

ULT **You will tread on the lion and the adder; you will trample the young lion and the serpent**

UST Yahweh will not allow your enemies to harm you; even if strong lions and poisonous snakes attack you, you will defeat them

(עַל־שַׁחַל וָפֶתֶן תִּדְרֹךְ תִּרְמֹס כְּפִיר וְתַנִּין)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **lion**, **adder**, **young lion**, or **serpent**. He means such animals in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using plural forms. Alternate translation: [You will tread on lions and adders; you will trample young lions and serpents]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **You will tread on the lion and the adder; you will trample the young lion and the serpent**

UST Yahweh will not allow your enemies to harm you; even if strong lions and poisonous snakes attack you, you will defeat them

(עַל־שַׁחַל וָפֶתֶן תִּדְרֹךְ תִּרְמֹס כְּפִיר וְתַנִּין)

The psalmist may be using the terms **tread** and **trample** to mean “defeat.” People in this culture would force defeated enemies to lie down and then place a foot on top of them to show how completely they had defeated them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You will defeat any lion or adder that attacks you; yes, you will defeat any young lion or serpent that attacks you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **You will tread on the lion and the adder; you will trample the young lion and the serpent**

UST Yahweh will not allow your enemies to harm you; even if strong lions and poisonous snakes attack you, you will defeat them

(עַל־שַׁחַל וָפֶתֶן תִּדְרֹךְ תִּרְמֹס כְּפִיר וְתַנִּין)

The psalmist is using a hypothetical situation to help the individual he is addressing appreciate how Yahweh will protect him. Use a natural form in your language for expressing a hypothetical situation. To do that, it may be helpful to combine the two parallel phrases in this verse. Alternate translation: [Suppose a lion or a snake attacks you. Yahweh will enable you to defeat it, and it will not harm you] or [If a lion or a snake attacks you, you will defeat it and it will not harm you]

**Support Reference:** Hypothetical Situations

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the lion | your enemies |
| you will trample | Yahweh will not allow … to harm you … you will defeat them |
| the young lion | even if strong lions |
| and the serpent | and poisonous snakes attack you |

# Psalms 91:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“Because he clings to me, indeed I will deliver him. I will protect him because he knows my name.* | *Yahweh says, “I will rescue those who love me; I will protect them because they know me.* |

**ULT Because he clings to me**
**UST** Yahweh says … those who love me
(כִּי בִי חָשַׁק)

This is the beginning of a direct quotation from Yahweh. You may wish to indicate that in your translation, using a natural way of introducing direct quotations in your language. Alternate translation: [Yahweh says, “Because he clings to me”]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

**ULT he clings to me**
**UST** those who love me
(בִּי חָשַׁק)

The psalmist assumes that his listeners will know that by **cling**, he means to cling to someone out of love and devotion. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [he is devoted to me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT he knows my name**
**UST** they know me
(יָדַע שְׁמִי)

The word **name** could refer to: (1) Yahweh as a person, since each person has a name. Alternate translation: [he knows me personally]; (2) Yahweh’s reputation, which reflects his character. Alternate translation: [he knows my character and so trusts me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| indeed I will deliver him | I will rescue |
| I will protect him | I will protect them |
| he knows | they know |

# Psalms 91:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He will call me and I will answer him. I {will be} with him in trouble; I will rescue him and I will honor him.* | *When they call out to me, I will answer them. I will help them when they are experiencing trouble; I will rescue them and honor them.* |

**ULT and I will answer him**
**UST** I will answer them
(וְאֶעֱנֵֽהוּ)

The psalmist assumes that his listeners will know that by **answer**, he means that Yahweh will help this individual. Yahweh will not simply speak back to the person in response to his **call** for help. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and I will help him]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He will call me | When they call out |
| in trouble | when they are experiencing trouble |
| I will rescue him | will help them |
| and I will honor him | I will rescue them and honor them |

# Psalms 91:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will satisfy him {with} length of days, and I will show him my salvation."* | *I will reward them by enabling them to live a long time, and I will save them."* |

**ULT {with} length of days**
**UST** by enabling them to live a long time
(אֹ֣רֶךְ יָמִ֑ים)

The psalmist is using the term **days** to refer to a specific time, the human lifetime. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with a long life]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT and I will show him my salvation**
**UST** and I will save them
(וְאַרְאֵ֖הוּ בִּישׁוּעָתִֽי)

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: [and I will cause him to experience me saving him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my salvation | and I will save them |

# Psalms 92

## Psalm 92 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 92 is a psalm of praise for God's kindness and faithfulness. (See: faithful, faithfulness, trustworthy)

1. It is good to praise the Lord (1–4)
2. God's works are great and his ways are deep (5–9)
3. God strengthens and honors the righteous (10–11)
4. The righteous will flourish (12–15)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Justice

God causes evil people to be destroyed and good people to be happy and useful, even after they grow old. (See: just, justice, unjust, injustice, justify, justification and evil, wicked, wickedness, unpleasant)

# Psalms 92:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *It is good to give thanks to Yahweh and to sing praises to your name, Most High,* | *Yahweh, it is good for people to thank you and to sing as they praise you, the Most High God.* |

ULT **and to sing praises to your name**
UST and to sing as they praise you
(וּלְזַמֵּר לְשִׁמְךָ)

Here **name** represents God himself. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: [and to sing praises to you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| It is good | it is good |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and to sing praises | and to sing |
| Most High | the Most High God |

# Psalms 92:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to proclaim your covenant faithfulness in the morning and your truthfulness in the nights,* | *It is good to proclaim every morning that you faithfully love us and to declare each night that everything that you say is true,* |

**ULT to proclaim your covenant faithfulness in the morning**
**UST** It is good to proclaim every morning that you faithfully love us
(לְהַגִּיד בַּבֹּקֶר חַסְדֶּךָ)

The abstract noun **covenant faithfulness** refers to God's faithful love for the people with whom he made a covenant. If your language does not use abstract nouns, you can translate this using another form. Alternate translation: [to proclaim in the morning that you are faithful to your covenant people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and your truthfulness in the nights**
**UST** and to declare each night that everything that you say is true
(וֶאֱמוּנָתְךָ בַּלֵּילוֹת)

The writer 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 to proclaim your truthfulness every night]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT and your truthfulness**
**UST** and to declare … that everything that you say is true
(וֶאֱמוּנָתְךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **truthfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and that you are truthful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to proclaim | It is good to proclaim |
| your covenant faithfulness | that you faithfully love us |

# Psalms 92:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *with a ten {string} and with a lyre; with a melody on a harp.* | *{singing} {to the music} of {instruments that have} ten {strings} and of lyres {and} with {musicians playing} melodies on a harp.* |

**ULT a ten {string}**
**UST** instruments that have} ten {strings}
(עָשׂוֹר)

A **ten string** is a kind of musical instrument with multiple strings. If your readers would not be familiar with what a ten string is, you could use the name of a similar instrument that your readers would recognize, or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [an instrument with ten strings]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a lyre | lyres |
| on a harp | on a harp |

# Psalms 92:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you, Yahweh, have made me glad through your deeds. I will sing for joy because of the deeds of your hands.* | *I do this, Yahweh, because what you have done makes me happy; I sing joyfully because of the things that you do.* |

**ULT through your deeds**
**UST** what you have done
(בְּפָעָלֶךָ)

The abstract noun **deeds** refers to actions. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express this with a verb phrase. Alternate translation: [by the things you have done]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT because of the deeds of your hands**
**UST** because of the things that you do
(בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ)

Here, **your hands** represents the capability of Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [because of the things that you have accomplished]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| you, Yahweh | Yahweh |
| have made me glad | makes me happy |
| I will sing for joy | I sing joyfully |

# Psalms 92:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *How great are your deeds, Yahweh! Your thoughts are very deep.* | *Yahweh, the things that you do are great! We cannot understand all that you think.* |

**ULT Your thoughts are very deep**
**UST** We cannot understand all that you think
(מְאֹד עָמְקוּ מַחְשְׁבֹתֶיךָ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of God's **thoughts** as if they were a deep pool of water because we cannot see or reach them. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [Your thoughts are like a deep pool to us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Your thoughts**
**UST** that you think
(מַחְשְׁבֹתֶיךָ)

The word **thoughts** is an abstract noun that refers to what someone thinks. Some languages may not use abstract nouns. If this is true in your language, you could translate this with a verb, such as "what you think." Alternate translation: [The things you think] or [Your plans]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| great | are great |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 92:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A brutish person does not know, nor does a stupid {one} understand this:* | *These are things that foolish people do not know about, things that dolts cannot understand:* |

ULT **A brutish person does not know, nor does a stupid {one} understand this**
UST These are things that foolish people do not know about, things that dolts cannot understand
(אִישׁ־בַּעַר לֹא יֵדָע וּכְסִיל לֹא־יָבִין אֶת־זֹאת)

These two phrases **A brutish person does not know** and **a stupid one does not understand this** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [A foolish person neither knows nor understands this] or [The foolish person completely fails to understand this]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **a stupid {one}**
UST that … dolts
(וּכְסִיל)

The psalmist is using the adjective **stupid** 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: [any stupid person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **this**
UST These are things … things
(אֶת־זֹאת)

The pronoun **this** refers to what the psalmist goes on to explain in verse 7 about wicked people. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the following truth]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| does … know | do … know about |
| does … understand | understand |

# Psalms 92:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *When the wicked sprout like grass, and all evildoers thrive, they will be destroyed for eternity.* | *{They do not understand that} when the number of wicked people increases as blades of grass increase, and {when it seems that} all those who do what is evil prosper, Yahweh will destroy them forever.* |

ULT **When the wicked sprout like grass**
UST {They do not understand that} when the number of wicked people increases as blades of grass increase
(בִּפְרֹחַ רְשָׁעִים ׀ כְּמוֹ עֵשֶׂב)

This is a simile that speaks of wicked people appearing and growing **like grass**. Grass springs up and spreads quickly but does not last long. This emphasizes that wicked people may seem to prosper for a while, but their success will be brief. Alternate translation: [When the wicked appear quickly and seem to be everywhere as grass does]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **they will be destroyed for eternity**
UST Yahweh will destroy them forever
(לְהִשָּׁמְדָם עֲדֵי־עַד)

The words **they will be destroyed** express in passive form what Yahweh will do to the wicked. If your language does not use passive forms or if the passive form would be confusing here, you can translate this with an active form. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will destroy them completely]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **they will be destroyed**
UST Yahweh will destroy them
(לְהִשָּׁמְדָם)

The pronoun **they** refers to the wicked and evildoers. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the wicked and evildoers will be destroyed]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist 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]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the wicked | wicked people |
| all evildoers | all those who do what is evil |
| they will be destroyed | Yahweh will destroy them |
| eternity | forever |

# Psalms 92:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But you, Yahweh, {are} exalted forever.* | *But Yahweh, you will rule forever.* |

ULT **{are} exalted**
UST will rule
(מָרוֹם)

The expression **are exalted** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [will live on high]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {are} exalted | will rule |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 92:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For behold your enemies, Yahweh! For behold your enemies—they will perish! All those who do evil will be scattered.* | *Just look at your enemies, Yahweh! Your enemies will certainly die. You will destroy everyone who does wicked things.* |

ULT **All those who do evil will be scattered**
UST You will destroy everyone who does wicked things
(יִתְפָּרְדוּ כָּל־פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן)

This text uses the passive verb **will be scattered** without identifying who will do the action. The psalmist of the psalm may have written it this way to focus on what will happen to the evildoers rather than on who will scatter them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state this in active form with God as the subject, as in the alternate translation.
Alternate translation: [you will scatter all those who do evil]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your enemies | your enemies |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| they will perish | will … die |
| evil | wicked things |
| will be scattered | You will destroy |

# Psalms 92:10

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *But you have lifted up my horn like a wild ox; I am saturated with fresh oil.* | *But you have caused me to be as strong as a wild ox; you have caused me to be very joyful.* |

**ULT But you have lifted up my horn like a wild ox**
UST But you have caused me to be as strong … wild ox
(וַתָּרֶם כִּרְאֵים קַרְנִי)

Here, **horn** represents strength or power. The psalmist is describing how God has given him strength like that of a wild ox. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state plainly what the horn represents. Alternate translation: [But you have made me as strong as a wild ox]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT I am saturated with fresh oil**
UST as a … you have caused me to be very joyful
(בַּלֹּתִי בְּשֶׁמֶן רַעֲנָן)

Here the psalmist is speaking of himself as if he were an offering that is **saturated with fresh oil**. The abundance of oil represents God's abundant blessing and the joy that he feels as God has made him able to defeat his enemies. Alternate translation: [you have richly blessed me] or [I am filled with joy]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| But you have lifted up | But you have caused me to be |
| my horn | as strong |
| like a wild ox | wild ox |
| with … oil | you have caused me |

# Psalms 92:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My eye has looked on my foes, those rising up against me; those doing evil my ears have heard.* | *I have observed my enemies as they oppose me, and I have heard those evil men.* |

**ULT My eye has looked on my foes … my ears have heard**
**UST** I have observed my enemies … and I have heard
(וַתַּבֵּט עֵינִי בְּשׁוּרָי & תִּשְׁמַעְנָה אָזְנָי)

Here **eye** and **ears** represent the whole person who sees and hears. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I have seen my foes … I have heard]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT My eye has looked on my foes, those rising up against me; those doing evil my ears have heard**
**UST** I have observed my enemies as they oppose me, and I have heard those evil men
(וַתַּבֵּט עֵינִי בְּשׁוּרָי בַּקָּמִים עָלַי מְרֵעִים תִּשְׁמַעְנָה אָזְנָי)

Some scholars believe that these phrases imply what it is that the writer saw and heard. You could include this information if a translation of the Bible exists in your region that includes it. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to use the reading of the ULT. Alternate translation: [My eye has looked on my foes, those rising up against me, as you defeat them; those doing evil my ears have heard as you punish them]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| on my foes | my enemies |
| those doing evil | those evil men |

# Psalms 92:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The righteous {one} will flourish like the palm tree; he will grow like a cedar in Lebanon.* | *But righteous {people} will prosper like {flourishing} palm trees, they will grow like the {tall} cedar trees in Lebanon.* |

ULT **The righteous {one} will flourish like the palm tree**
UST But righteous {people} will prosper like {flourishing} palm trees
(צַדִּיק כַּתָּמָר יִפְרָח)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the palm tree** is resilient and long-lived, so is **The righteous one**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [The righteous one will be resilient and long-lived like a palm tree]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **he will grow like a cedar in Lebanon**
UST they will grow like the {tall} cedar trees in Lebanon
(כְּאֶרֶז בַּלְּבָנוֹן יִשְׂגֶּה)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a cedar** is strong and admired for being tall and stately, so is **The righteous one**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [he will be strong and admired like a cedar tree in Lebanon]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **The righteous {one}**
UST But righteous {people}
(צַדִּיק)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [Any righteous person] or [All righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **he will grow**
UST they will grow
(יִשְׂגֶּה)

The pronoun **he** refers to any righteous person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [they will grow]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The righteous {one} | But righteous {people} |
| like the palm tree | like {flourishing} palm trees |
| like a cedar | like the {tall} cedar trees |
| in Lebanon | in Lebanon |

# Psalms 92:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They are planted in the house of Yahweh; they flourish in the courts of our God.* | *They belong to Yahweh as securely as if they were trees with roots deep in his temple grounds. They are as prosperous and healthy as if they were trees growing in our God's courtyard.* |

> ULT **They are planted**
> UST They belong to … as securely as if they were trees with roots deep
> (שְׁתוּלִים)

The psalmist uses the passive verb **are planted** and does not tell who has done the planting. You may need to state clearly who did the planting if your language does not use passive verbs in this way. Alternate translation: [Yahweh has planted them] or [Yahweh takes care of them as if they were trees that he had planted]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

> ULT **They are planted**
> UST They belong to … as securely as if they were trees with roots deep
> (שְׁתוּלִים)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if righteous people were actually **planted** trees growing in Yahweh's house. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [they flourish like trees] or [they live securely]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **They are planted**
> UST They belong to … as securely as if they were trees with roots deep
> (שְׁתוּלִים)

The pronoun **They** refers to righteous people, who are those who are planted in Yahweh's house. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Righteous people are planted]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT they flourish**

**UST** They are as prosperous and healthy as if they were trees growing
(יַפְרִיחוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of righteous people as if they were plants that **flourish**, which means that they are strong and healthy. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this image differently or state this plainly without the image. Alternate translation: [they grow well] or [they prosper]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| They are planted | They belong to … as securely as if they were trees with roots deep |
| in the house of Yahweh | Yahweh … in his temple grounds |
| in the courts | in … courtyard |
| of our God | our God's |

# Psalms 92:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They bear fruit even when they are old; they are juicy and green,* | *They are like trees that continue to bear fruit even when they are old. They remain strong and full of energy, like trees that are full of sap and have abundant leaves.* |

ULT **They bear fruit**
UST They are like trees that continue to bear fruit
(יְנוּבֻ֗ון)

The psalmist is speaking of people who are faithful to God as if they were **fruit**-bearing trees. This image emphasizes how they continue to be productive and do good things. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They continue doing good things]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **They bear fruit**
UST They are like trees that continue to bear fruit
(יְנוּבֻ֗ון)

The pronoun **They** continues to refer to righteous people. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Righteous people, like trees, bear fruit]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **they are juicy and green**
UST They remain strong and full of energy, like trees that are full of sap and have abundant leaves
(דְּשֵׁנִ֥ים וְרַעֲנַנִּ֖ים יִהְיֽוּ)

Here the psalmist speaks of **juicy and green** as if the righteous people were plants that are healthy and full of life. This metaphor compares their spiritual and physical well-being to the freshness of a flourishing plant. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state plainly what this means. Alternate translation: [they remain strong and healthy] or [they always do what pleases God]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| They bear fruit | They are like trees that continue to bear fruit |
| They bear fruit | They are like trees that continue to bear fruit |
| when they are old | when they are old |

# Psalms 92:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to proclaim that Yahweh is just, my rock, and {there is} no unrighteousness in him.* | *That shows that Yahweh is just; he is like a huge rock behind which I am safe, and he never does anything that is unjust.* |

**ULT to proclaim that**
**UST** That shows that
(לְהַגִּיד כִּי)

If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [showing that] or [which shows that]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

**ULT my rock**
**UST** he is like a huge rock behind which I am safe
(צוּרִי)

Here the psalmist speaks of Yahweh as if he were a **rock**, because a large rock can provide protection and safety. You could keep this image in your translation if it is clear, or you could state the meaning plainly. See how you translated this in Psalm 18:2. Alternate translation: [the one who protects me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and {there is} no unrighteousness in him**
**UST** and he never does anything that is unjust
(וְלֹא־עַוְלָתָה בּוֹ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of **unrighteousness** as if it were a substance or object that could be present in or absent from someone. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he is always righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and {there is} no unrighteousness in him**
**UST** and he never does anything that is unjust
(וְלֹא־עַוְלָתָה בּוֹ)

The phrase **no unrighteousness** uses two negative words to express a positive meaning. The psalmist is saying that God is completely righteous. If your language does not use double negatives, you could express this with a positive statement. Alternate translation: [and he is always righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| to proclaim | That shows |
| Yahweh is | Yahweh |
| just | is just |
| and {there is} … unrighteousness | does anything that is unjust |

# Psalms 93

## Psalm 93 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 93 is a “worship psalm” about the power of Yahweh.

1. Yahweh reigns in glory and strength (1–2)
2. Yahweh is stronger than chaos and opposition (3–4)
3. Yahweh is trustworthy and holy (5)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh’s power

Yahweh is all powerful; He even controls the ocean.

# Psalms 93:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh reigns; he wears majesty; Yahweh wears, he girds himself with, strength. Indeed, the world is firmly established; it cannot be moved.* | *Yahweh, you are the King! It is as though you are wearing royal robes that are majestic and powerful. You are the one who put the world firmly in place, and no one can move it {out of its place}.* |

ULT **Yahweh reigns**
UST Yahweh, you are the King
(יְהוָה מָלָךְ)

Verses 1 and 4 of this psalm refer to Yahweh as "he" and verses 2,3, and 5 refer to him as "you." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use "you" throughout the psalm, as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

ULT **he wears majesty**
UST It is as though … are wearing royal robes that are majestic
(גֵּאוּת לָבֵשׁ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **majesty**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [he is majestic]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **he wears majesty; Yahweh wears, he girds himself with, strength**
UST It is as though you are wearing royal robes that are majestic and powerful
(גֵּאוּת לָבֵשׁ יְהוָה עֹז הִתְאַזָּר)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if **majesty** and **strength** were actually garments that Yahweh **wears**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he displays his majesty; Yahweh's strength is obvious for all to see]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Yahweh wears, he girds himself with, strength**
UST It is as though you are wearing royal robes … and powerful
(לָבֵשׁ יְהוָה עֹז הִתְאַזָּר)

The terms **wears** and **girds himself with** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [Yahweh wraps strength all around himself]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **Yahweh wears, he girds himself with, strength**
UST It is as though you are wearing royal robes … and powerful
(לָבֵשׁ יְהוָה עֹז הִתְאַזָּר)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is obviously powerful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the world is firmly established**
UST put the world firmly in place
(תִּכּוֹן תֵּבֵל)

The expression **is firmly established** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [you have firmly established the world]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **it cannot be moved**
UST and no one can move it {out of its place}
(בַּל־תִּמּוֹט)

The expression **be moved** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [no one can ever move it]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh, you |
| reigns | are the King |
| majesty | that are majestic |
| he girds himself with | It is as though … are wearing royal robes |
| strength | and powerful |
| the world | the world |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| is firmly established | put … firmly in place |

# Psalms 93:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your throne is established from before; you are from everlasting.* | *You have been king since long ago; you have always existed.* |

**ULT Your throne is established from before**
**UST** You have been king since long ago
(נָכוֹן כִּסְאֲךָ מֵאָז)

The expression **is established** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [You established your throne in ancient times]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT Your throne**
**UST** You … king
(כִּסְאֲךָ)

Here, **throne** represents royal authority and rule. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Your kingship]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Your throne | You … king |
| is established | have been |
| from everlasting | have always existed |

# Psalms 93:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The seas rise, Yahweh; the seas have lifted up their voice; the seas lift up their pounding {waves}.* | *Yahweh, the oceans rise up; their waves {loudly} pound {against the shore}; {it is as though} they roar with a powerful voice.* |

ULT **The seas**
UST the oceans
(נְהָרוֹת)

The word translated as **seas** here refers to any kind of moving water; in other contexts it is translated as “rivers” or “floods” (See: “the River” in Psalms 72:8), but “seas” has been chosen here because seas, not rivers, have **pounding waves**.

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the seas have lifted up their voice**
UST {it is as though} they roar with a powerful voice
(נָשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת קוֹלָם)

The psalmist is speaking of **the seas** as if they were living things that could lift their voices. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the seas make a roaring noise]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 93:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *More than the sounds of many waters, than the mighty breakers of the sea, Yahweh on high is mighty.* | *But you are more powerful than the roar of those oceans; you are more powerful than the huge ocean waves! You are Yahweh, the one who is great and powerful!* |

ULT **More than the sounds of many waters, than the mighty breakers of the sea, Yahweh on high is mighty**
UST But you are more powerful than the roar of those oceans; you are more powerful than the huge ocean waves! You are Yahweh, the one who is great and powerful
(מִקֹּלוֹת ׀ מַ֤יִם רַבִּ֨ים אַדִּירִ֖ים מִשְׁבְּרֵי־יָ֑ם אַדִּ֖יר בַּמָּר֣וֹם יְהוָֽה)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put the information about **Yahweh on high is mighty** before the comparisons **than the sounds of many waters** and **than the mighty breakers of the sea**. Alternate translation: [Yahweh on high is mightier than the sounds of many waters, than the mighty breakers of the sea]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **than the mighty breakers of the sea**
UST you are more powerful than the huge ocean waves
(אַדִּירִ֖ים מִשְׁבְּרֵי־יָֽם)

By **breakers of the sea**, the psalmist means the waves of the sea that crash onto the shore. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [than the mighty waves of the sea crashing on land]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **on high**
UST is great
(בַּמָּר֣וֹם)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if God were actually in a place **on high**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [who is greater than everything else]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| mighty | huge |
| Yahweh | You are Yahweh, the one who |
| is mighty | and powerful |

# Psalms 93:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your decrees are very trustworthy; holiness adorns your house, Yahweh, for length of days.* | *Yahweh, your laws are completely reliable; your temple is a beautifully holy place. {That will be true} forever.* |

ULT **holiness adorns your house**
UST your temple is a beautifully holy place
(לְבֵיתְךָ נַאֲוָה־קֹדֶשׁ)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if **holiness** were actually a decoration that **adorns** or beautifies the temple. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your house is beautiful because you are holy] or [your holiness is what attracts people to your house]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **holiness adorns your house**
UST your temple is a beautifully holy place
(לְבֵיתְךָ נַאֲוָה־קֹדֶשׁ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **holiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [your house is beautiful because you are holy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **for length of days**
UST {That will be true} forever
(לְאֹרֶךְ יָמִים)

The psalmist is using **length of days** as a common expression of his culture to mean "forever." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for always]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Your decrees | your laws |
| are … trustworthy | are … reliable |
| holiness | holy |
| your house | your temple |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 94

## Psalm 94 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 94 is a prayer requesting that evil people be punished. (See: evil, wicked, wickedness, unpleasant)

1. A cry for Yahweh's justice (1–7)
2. Yahweh sees and will judge (8–11)
3. Yahweh disciplines and helps his people (12–15)
4. Yahweh is the refuge of the oppressed (16–23)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Justice

Evil people expect God to ignore their injustices. But God knows what they are doing and will punish them for their evil deeds. (See: just, justice, unjust, injustice, justify, justification)

# Psalms 94:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God of vengeance, Yahweh, God of vengeance, shine forth!* | *Yahweh, you are a God who punishes {your enemies}. So reveal {to them} who you are!* |

**ULT God of vengeance, Yahweh, God of vengeance**
**UST** Yahweh, you are a God who punishes {your enemies}
(אֵל־נְקָמוֹת יְהוָה אֵל נְקָמוֹת)

Here, **God of vengeance, Yahweh, God of vengeance** the psalmist is using repetition for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, the God who avenges]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

**ULT God of vengeance … God of vengeance**
**UST** you are a God who punishes {your enemies}
(אֵל־נְקָמוֹת & אֵל נְקָמוֹת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **vengeance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [God who avenges … God who avenges]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT shine forth**
**UST** So reveal {to them} who you are
(הוֹפִיעַ)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if God were actually a light that could **shine forth**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [Reveal yourself] or [Let them see how majestic you are]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God of | you are a God |
| vengeance | who punishes {your enemies} |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 94:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Rise up, judge of the earth, return recompense upon the proud.* | *You are the one who judges all people on the earth; so take action and give the arrogant people what they deserve.* |

**ULT Rise up**
**UST** so take action
(הִנָּשֵׂא)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if God were actually someone who was sitting or lying down and needed to **rise up**. The psalmist means that God should take action to judge the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Take action] or [Act now]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT of the earth**
**UST** the earth
(הָאָרֶץ)

Here, **the earth** represents all the people who live on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [of all people]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT return recompense upon**
**UST** and give the arrogant people what they deserve
(הָשֵׁב גְּמוּל עַל)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **recompense**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [pay back] or [punish]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT the proud**
**UST** the arrogant people
(גֵּאִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **proud** 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: [proud people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| judge | You are the one who judges all people on |
| the proud | the arrogant people |

# Psalms 94:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Until when will the wicked, Yahweh, until when will the wicked rejoice?* | *Yahweh, wicked people just continue to be glad, and that is not right!* |

**ULT Until when will the wicked, Yahweh, until when will the wicked rejoice**
**UST** Yahweh, wicked people just continue to be glad, and that is not right
(עַד־מָתַי רְשָׁעִים ׀ יְהוָה עַד־מָתַי רְשָׁעִים יַעֲלֹזוּ)

The psalmist is using the question form **Until when will the wicked, Yahweh, until when will the wicked rejoice** to express his frustration and to make an urgent appeal to God for action. 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: [Yahweh, the wicked have been rejoicing much too long.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT Until when will the wicked, Yahweh, until when will the wicked**
**UST** Yahweh, wicked people just continue to be glad, and that is not right
(עַד־מָתַי רְשָׁעִים ׀ יְהוָה עַד־מָתַי רְשָׁעִים)

These two phrases **Until when will the wicked, Yahweh** and **until when will the wicked** are basically the same. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating it again. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. Or if it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, just how long will you allow the wicked to rejoice?]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT the wicked**
**UST** Yahweh, wicked people just continue to be glad, and that is not right
(רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist 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]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the wicked | Yahweh, wicked people just continue to be glad, and that is not right |
| Yahweh | Yahweh, wicked people just continue to be glad, and that is not right |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the wicked | Yahweh, wicked people just continue to be glad, and that is not right |
| rejoice | Yahweh, wicked people just continue to be glad, and that is not right |

# Psalms 94:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They pour out, they speak, arrogance; all doers of evil praise themselves.* | *They abundantly speak arrogant things; all people who do evil things say that they are great people.* |

ULT **They pour out, they speak**
UST They abundantly speak
(יַבִּיעוּ יְדַבֵּרוּ)

The phrases **pour out** and **speak** express a single idea. The word **pour out** tells more about **speak**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [In large amounts, they speak]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

ULT **arrogance**
UST arrogant things
(עָתָק)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **arrogance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [arrogant words]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **evil**
UST evil things
(אָוֶן)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evil**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [evil actions]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| arrogance | arrogant things |
| evil | evil things |
| praise themselves | say that they are great people |

# Psalms 94:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They crush your people, Yahweh; they afflict your inheritance.* | *Yahweh, it is as though those wicked people were crushing us, your people; they distress the people who belong to you alone.* |

**ULT They crush**
**UST** it is as though those wicked people were crushing
(יְדַכְּאוּ)

The psalmist is speaking as if the wicked people were literally **crushing** God's people with physical force. He means that they are oppressing them severely. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They oppress]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT your inheritance**
**UST** the people who belong to you alone
(וְנַחֲלָתְךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of God's people as if they were actually **your inheritance**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your own people]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| they afflict | they distress |
| your inheritance | the people who belong to you alone |

# Psalms 94:6

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *They kill the widow and the sojourner, and they murder the fatherless.* | *They murder widows, people from other countries, and also young people who have no fathers.* |

ULT **the widow and the sojourner, and they murder the fatherless**
UST widows, people from other countries, and also young people who have no fathers
(אַלְמָנָה וְגֵר & וְיִתוֹמִים יְרַצֵּחוּ)

Here, **the widow and the sojourner** and **the fatherless** represent vulnerable people in general, not specific individuals. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use expressions that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [widows and sojourners & they murder those without fathers]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **They kill the widow and the sojourner, and they murder the fatherless**
UST They murder widows, people from other countries, and also young people who have no fathers
(אַלְמָנָה וְגֵר יַהֲרֹגוּ וְיִתוֹמִים יְרַצֵּחוּ)

The terms **kill** and **murder** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [They kill the widow, the sojourner, and the fatherless]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| They kill | They murder |
| they murder | also |

# Psalms 94:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They say, “Yah does not see, the God of Jacob does not perceive.”* | *Those wicked people think to themselves, “Yahweh does not see {any of this}; the God whom the Israelites worship does not notice {the evil things that we do}.”* |

ULT **They say**
UST Those wicked people think to themselves
(וַיֹּאמְרוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to the wicked people mentioned in the previous verses. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The wicked people say]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **They say**
UST Those wicked people think to themselves
(וַיֹּאמְרוּ)

The implication is that the wicked people are thinking these thoughts silently to themselves rather than speaking them aloud to others. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [They say to themselves]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **does not see … does not perceive**
UST does not see {any of this} … does not notice {the evil things that we do}
(לֹא יִרְאֶה & וְלֹא־יָבִין)

The implication is that God does not see or perceive what the wicked people are doing. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [does not see what we do … does not perceive what we do]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Yah does not see, the God of Jacob does not perceive**
UST Yahweh does not see {any of this}; the God whom the Israelites worship does not notice {the evil things that we do … }
(לֹ֣א יִרְאֶה־יָּ֑הּ וְלֹא־יָבִ֥ין אֱלֹהֵ֖י יַעֲקֹֽב)

These two phrases **Yah does not see** and **the God of Jacob does not perceive** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Yahweh does not see, no, the God of Jacob does not perceive]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yah | Yahweh |
| the God | the God whom |
| of Jacob | the Israelites worship |
| does … perceive | does … notice {the evil things that we do} |

# Psalms 94:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Understand, stupid ones among the people! O fools, when will you have insight?* | *You wicked people in Israel need to understand {what is right}; you have been stupid and foolish far too long!* |

**ULT O fools, when will you have insight**
**UST** need to understand {what is right} … and foolish far too long
(וּכְסִילִ֗ים מָתַ֥י תַּשְׂכִּֽילוּ)

The psalmist 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: [You fools need to gain insight!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT will you have insight**
**UST** need to understand {what is right}
(תַּשְׂכִּֽילוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **insight**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [will you behave insightfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Understand, stupid ones among the people! O fools, when will you have insight**
**UST** You wicked people in Israel need to understand {what is right}; you have been stupid and foolish far too long
(בִּינ֣וּ בֹ֭עֲרִים בָּעָ֑ם וּ֝כְסִילִ֗ים מָתַ֥י תַּשְׂכִּֽילוּ)

These two phrases **Understand, stupid ones among the people** and **O fools, when will you have insight** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea in a different form. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [Get insight and understanding, you stupid, foolish people!]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Understand | need to understand {what is right} |
| O fools | and foolish |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| will you have insight | need to understand {what is right} |

# Psalms 94:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one planting the ear, does he not hear? Or the one forming the eye, does he not observe?* | *Since Yahweh is the one who made ears, of course he can hear {what you say}! Not only that, he created eyes; so of course he can see {the evil things that you do}!* |

ULT **The one planting the ear**
UST Since Yahweh is the one who made ears
(הַנֹּטַע אֹזֶן)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if God were actually **planting the ear**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The one creating the ear]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **does he not hear**
UST of course he can hear {what you say}
(הֲלֹא יִשְׁמָע)

The psalmist 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: [he certainly does hear!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **does he not observe**
UST so of course he can see {the evil things that you do}
(הֲלֹא יַבִּיט)

The psalmist 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: [he certainly does observe!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The one planting | Since Yahweh is the one who made |

# Psalms 94:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one instructing nations, does he not rebuke? Does the one teaching mankind lack knowledge?* | *He corrects {the leaders of} other nations, so he will punish {you}, as well. He has taught people everything that they know, so of course he knows everything {that you do}.* |

**ULT does he not rebuke**
**UST** so he will punish {you}, as well
(הֲלֹא יוֹכִיחַ)

The psalmist 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: [he will certainly rebuke you!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT Does the one teaching mankind lack knowledge**
**UST** He has taught people everything that they know, so of course he knows everything {that you do … }
(הַמְלַמֵּד אָדָם דָּעַת)

The psalmist 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: [The one teaching mankind certainly does not lack knowledge.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT nations**
**UST** {the leaders of} other nations
(גּוֹיִם)

Here, **nations** represents the people of all nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [people of all nations]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Does the one teaching mankind lack knowledge**
UST He has taught people everything that they know, so of course he knows everything {that you do … }
(הַמְלַמֵּד אָדָם דָּעַת)

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: [Is there anything that the one teaching mankind does not know]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The one instructing | He corrects |
| he … rebuke | so he will punish {you}, as well |
| nations | {the leaders of} other nations |
| Does the one teaching | He has taught people everything that they know, so of course he knows everything {that you do … } |
| lack knowledge | He has taught people everything that they know, so of course he knows everything {that you do … } |

# Psalms 94:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh knows the thoughts of mankind, that they are vapor.* | *Yahweh knows everything that people are thinking; he knows that what they think is evil and useless.* |

**ULT the thoughts of mankind**
**UST** that people are thinking
(מַחְשְׁבוֹת אָדָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **thoughts**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the things that people are thinking]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT they are vapor**
**UST** what they think is evil and useless
(הֵמָּה הָבֶל)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if people's thoughts were actually **vapor**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [they are unimportant and useless]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| knows | knows everything |

# Psalms 94:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The joys of the man whom you instruct, Yah, and from your law you teach him,* | *Yahweh, how fortunate are those who allow you to discipline them, {how fortunate are} those whom you teach from your laws!* |

**ULT The joys of**
**UST** how fortunate
(אַשְׁרֵי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **joys**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [How joyful is]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT the man**
**UST** are those
(הַגֶּבֶר)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [the person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The joys of | how fortunate |
| you instruct | allow you to discipline them |
| Yah | Yahweh |
| and from your law | from your laws |

# Psalms 94:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to give rest to him from days of evil until a pit is dug for the wicked.* | *You relieve those people from bad things when they happen, and someday you will punish the wicked people and stop them from doing wicked things.* |

ULT **to give rest to him**
UST You relieve those people
(לְהַשְׁקִיט לוֹ)

Here, **to give rest to him** marks this clause as the goal or purpose of God instructing and teaching the blessed person. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [which will allow him to have rest]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **from days of evil**
UST from bad things when they happen
(מִימֵי רָע)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **days** that are characterized by **evil**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [during evil days]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **a pit is dug**
UST you will punish … and stop them from doing wicked things
(יִכָּרֶה & שָׁחַת)

The expression **a pit is dug** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [Yahweh digs a pit]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **a pit is dug for the wicked**
UST you will punish the wicked people and stop them from doing wicked things
(יִכָּרֶה לָרָשָׁע שָׁחַת)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if God's punishment of the wicked were actually **a pit** being dug. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh punishes the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| from days of | when they happen |
| evil | from bad things |
| a pit | and stop them from doing wicked things |
| for the wicked | the wicked people |

# Psalms 94:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For Yahweh will not forsake his people and he will not abandon his inheritance.* | *This will happen because Yahweh will not reject his people; he will not desert those who belong to him.* |

**ULT Yahweh will not forsake his people and he will not abandon his inheritance**
**UST** Yahweh will not reject his people; he will not desert those who belong to him
(לֹא־יִטֹּשׁ יְהוָה עַמּוֹ וְנַחֲלָתוֹ לֹא יַעֲזֹב)

These two phrases **will not forsake his people** and **he will not abandon his inheritance** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will not forsake his people, no, he will not abandon his inheritance]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT and he will not abandon his inheritance**
**UST** he will not desert those who belong to him
(וְנַחֲלָתוֹ לֹא יַעֲזֹב)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if the people of Israel were actually **his inheritance**. He means that they are the people who belong to God in a special way, like a treasured possession that is passed down in a family. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he will not abandon Yahweh's own people]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT For**
**UST** This will happen because
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| will … forsake | will … reject |
| and … his inheritance | those who belong to him |
| he will … abandon | he will … desert |

# Psalms 94:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For judgment will return to the right; and all the upright in heart {are} after it.* | *Yes, someday judges will again decide matters fairly for people, and all honest people will be pleased about that.* |

ULT **For**
UST Yes
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [It will happen that]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **judgment will return to the right**
UST someday judges will again decide matters fairly for people
(עַד־צֶ֥דֶק יָשׁ֗וּב מִשְׁפָּ֫ט)

Here, **judgment** represents “judges” or “the judicial system.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [judges will return to making right judgments]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the right**
UST decide matters fairly for people
(צֶ֫דֶק)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **the right**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [being right]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and all the upright in heart {are} after it**
UST and all honest people will be pleased about that
(וְאַחֲרָ֥יו כָּל־יִשְׁרֵי־לֵֽב)

The implication is that all the upright in heart will support and follow righteous judgment when it is restored. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and all the upright in heart are in favor of that]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| judgment | judges |
| will return | someday … will again |
| the right | decide matters fairly for people |
| the upright | honest people |

# Psalms 94:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? Who will stand up for me against the workers of wickedness?* | *{But when evil people oppressed me,} I could find no one to defend me against the wicked things that evil people did to me.* |

**ULT Who will rise up for me against the evildoers**
UST { … But when evil people oppressed me,} I could find no one to defend me against … that evil people
(מִֽי־יָ֭קוּם לִ֣י עִם־מְרֵעִ֑ים)

The psalmist 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 cannot find anyone who will will rise up for me against the evildoers.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT Who will stand up for me against the workers of wickedness**
UST { … But when evil people oppressed me,} I could find no one to defend … against the wicked things … did to me
(מִֽי־יִתְיַצַּ֣ב לִ֣י עִם־פֹּ֑עֲלֵי אָֽוֶן)

The psalmist 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 cannot find anyone who will stand up for me against the workers of wickedness.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? Who will stand up for me against the workers of wickedness**
UST { … But when evil people oppressed me,} I could find no one to defend me against the wicked things that evil people did to me
(מִֽי־יָקוּם לִ֥י עִם־מְרֵעִ֑ים מִֽי־יִתְיַצַּב ־לִ֥י עִם־פֹּעֲלֵ֖י אָֽוֶן)

These two phrases **Who will rise up for me against the evildoers** and **Who will stand up for me against the workers of wickedness** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? I say again, who will stand up for me against the workers of wickedness]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the workers of wickedness**
UST the wicked things … did
(פֹּעֲלֵ֖י אָֽוֶן)

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: [the people doing wicked things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| wickedness | the wicked things |

# Psalms 94:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Unless Yahweh {had been} a help to me, shortly my soul would have dwelt in silence.* | *If Yahweh had not helped me {at that time}, I would have gone quickly to the place where dead people say nothing.* |

ULT **Unless Yahweh {had been} a help to me, shortly my soul would have dwelt in silence**

UST If Yahweh had not helped me {at that time}, I would have gone quickly to the place where dead people say nothing

(לוּלֵי יְהוָה עָזְרָתָה לִּי כִּמְעַט ו שָׁכְנָה דוּמָּה נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist says **Unless Yahweh had been a help to me** to introduce an imaginary situation to help explain what would have happened without God's help. Use a natural method in your language for introducing an imaginary situation. Alternate translation: [Only because Yahweh was a help to me, my soul did not shortly dwell in silence]

**Support Reference:** Hypothetical Situations

ULT **{had been} a help to me**

UST had … helped me {at that time}, I would have

(עָזְרָתָה לִּי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **help**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [had helped me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **my soul**

UST people

(נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using one part of a person, his **soul**, to mean all of him in the act of dying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **would have dwelt in silence**
UST gone … to the place where dead … say nothing
(שָׁכְנָה דוּמָּה)

The psalmist is referring to death in a polite way by using the phrase **would have dwelt in silence**. Depending on what is helpful in your language, you could use a polite way of referring to this in your language, or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [would have been killed]

**Support Reference:** Euphemism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my soul | people |

# Psalms 94:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *When I said, "My foot is slipping," Your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh, supported me.* | *Just when I thought, "I am about to die," then, Yahweh, you saved me by being faithful and loving to me.* |

**ULT When I said**
**UST** Just when I thought
(אִם־אָמַ֥רְתִּי)

By **When I said**, the psalmist means "When I said to myself" or "When I thought to myself." You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [When I said to myself]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT My foot is slipping**
**UST** I am about to die
(מָ֭טָה רַגְלִ֑י)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if his life were actually **a foot that was slipping**. He means that he was in great trouble or danger. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am in big trouble] or [I need help]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Your covenant faithfulness**
**UST** by being faithful and loving to me
(חַסְדְּךָ֥)

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: [Because you are faithful to your covenant, you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Your covenant faithfulness | by being faithful and loving to me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 94:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *When my cares within me {are} many, your consolations gladden my soul.* | *Whenever I am very worried, you comfort me and cause me to be happy.* |

**ULT When my cares within me {are} many**
**UST** Whenever I am very worried
(בְּרֹ֤ב שַׂרְעַפַּ֨י בְּקִרְבִּ֗י)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **cares**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [When I am worried about many things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT your consolations gladden my soul**
**UST** you comfort me and cause me to be happy
(תַּנְחוּמֶ֗יךָ יְ֭שַׁעֲשְׁעוּ נַפְשִׁ֑י)

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: [your console me, which makes my soul glad]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT my soul**
**UST** me … me
(נַפְשִׁ֑י)

The psalmist is using **my soul** to represent all of himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my soul | me … me |

# Psalms 94:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Can a throne of destruction be your ally, one creating injustice by statute?* | *Corrupt rulers, those who establish laws that allow people to do what is not right, cannot be your friends.* |

ULT **Can a throne of destruction be your ally, one creating injustice by statute**
UST Corrupt rulers, those who establish laws that allow people to do what is not right, cannot be your friends
(הֲיִחָבְרְךָ כִּסֵּא הַוּוֹת יֹצֵר עָמָל עַל־חֹק)

The psalmist is using the question form to express that God cannot be allied with corrupt rulers. 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: [You can have nothing to do with a throne of destruction, one who creates injustice by statute.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **a throne of destruction**
UST Corrupt rulers
(כִּסֵּא הַוּוֹת)

Here, **throne** represents a ruler who has authority. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a ruler who destroys people]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **a throne of destruction**
UST Corrupt rulers
(כִּסֵּא הַוּוֹת)

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: [a throne that destroys]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **one creating injustice by statute**
UST those who establish laws that allow people to do what is not right
(יֹצֵר עָמָל עַל־חֹק)

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: [one who creates unjust statutes]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a throne | rulers |
| of destruction | Corrupt |
| one creating | those who establish |
| injustice | that allow people to do what is not right |
| statute | laws |

# Psalms 94:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They conspire together against the life of the righteous and they condemn innocent blood.* | *They plot together how to destroy righteous people, and they declare that innocent people must die.* |

ULT **They conspire together**
UST They plot together
(יָגֹודּוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to the corrupt rulers from the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Such thrones of destruction conspire together] or [Wicked rulers like that conspire together]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **against the life of the righteous**
UST how to destroy righteous people
(עַל־נֶפֶשׁ צַדִּיק)

The psalmist is using **against the life of** as a common expression of his culture to mean "to kill" or "to destroy." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to kill the righteous]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **and they condemn innocent blood**
UST and they declare that innocent people must die
(וְדָם נָקִי יַרְשִׁיעוּ)

The psalmist is using **innocent blood** as a common expression of his culture to mean "innocent people" or "people who do not deserve to die." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and they condemn innocent people to death]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **the righteous**
UST righteous
(צַדִּיק)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **righteous** person. He means righteous people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [all righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the righteous | righteous |
| they condemn | they declare that |
| innocent | innocent people |

# Psalms 94:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But Yahweh has been to me a high tower, and my God, the rock of my refuge.* | *But Yahweh has become like a fortress for me; my God is like a huge rock that protects me.* |

ULT **a high tower**
UST like a fortress
(לְמִשְׂגָּב)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were **a high tower** because that is a place of protection. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [my protector]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and my God, the rock**
UST my God is like a huge rock
(וֵאלֹהַי לְצוּר)

The psalmist 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 my God has been the rock]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and my God, the rock**
UST my God is like a huge rock
(וֵאלֹהַי לְצוּר)

The psalmist speaks of having God protect him as if God were a place where the psalmist could go to be safe. See how “rock” and “refuge” are translated in Psalms 62:7. Alternate translation: [and my God has kept me safe by his power]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and my God**
UST my God is
(וֵאלֹהַי)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean the God whom he worships. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and the God whom I worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| a high tower | like a fortress |
| and my God | my God is |
| of my refuge | that protects me |

# Psalms 94:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He will return on them their iniquity and he will destroy them in their wickedness. Yahweh our God will destroy them.* | *He will do to those wicked leaders the terrible things that they have done to others; he will get rid of them because they do wicked things. Yes, Yahweh our God will get rid of them.* |

**ULT He will return on them their iniquity**
**UST** He will do to those wicked leaders the terrible things that they have done to others
(וַיָּ֣שֶׁב עֲלֵיהֶ֣ם ׀ אֶת־אוֹנָ֑ם)

This could mean: (1) that Yahweh will do the same things to them that they did. Alternate translation: [He will do to them the evil things that they have done to others] or (2) that Yahweh will punish them for their evil. Alternate translation: [He will punish them for the evil things that they have done to others]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT on them**
**UST** to those wicked leaders
(עֲלֵיהֶ֣ם)

The pronoun **them** refers to the corrupt rulers mentioned in verses 20–21. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [on those wicked rulers]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT their iniquity**
**UST** the terrible things that they have done to others
(אֶת־אוֹנָ֑ם)

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: [the sinful things that they have done]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and he will destroy them in their wickedness**
**UST** he will get rid of them because they do wicked things
(וּבְרָעָתָ֥ם יַצְמִיתֵ֑ם)

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: [and he will destroy them their wicked activities]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and he will destroy them in their wickedness**
UST he will get rid of them because they do wicked things
(וּבְרָעָתָם יַצְמִיתֵם)

This could mean: (1) that Yahweh will destroy them because of their wickedness. Alternate translation: [because they have done wicked things] or (2) that Yahweh will destroy them while they are doing wicked things. Alternate translation: [while they are doing wicked things]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and he will destroy them in their wickedness. Yahweh our God will destroy them**
UST he will get rid of them because they do wicked things. Yes, Yahweh our God will get rid of them
(וּבְרָעָתָם יַצְמִיתֵם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

These two phrases **he will destroy them in their wickedness** and **Yahweh our God will destroy them** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [and he will destroy them in their wickedness. It is Yahweh our God who will destroy them]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **our God**
UST our God
(אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean the God whom they worship. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the God whom we worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| their iniquity | the terrible things that they have done to others |
| and … in their wickedness | because they do wicked things |
| he will destroy them | he will get rid of them |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| our God | our God |

# Psalms 95

## Psalm 95 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 95 is the first in a series of six “worship psalms” (Psalms 95–100).

1. Call to worship (1–5)
2. Call to bow in worship (6–7a)
3. Warning to listen and obey (7b–11)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### God’s care

God made everything and takes good care of people. People should not be stubborn, as the Israelites were in the days of Moses. The Israelites with Moses wandered in the desert for 40 years.

# Psalms 95:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Come, let us sing to Yahweh; let us shout to the rock of our salvation!* | *{Everyone,} come and let us sing to Yahweh; let us shout joyfully to the one who protects us and saves us!* |

ULT **to the rock of our salvation**
UST to the one who protects us and saves us
(לְצ֖וּר יִשְׁעֵֽנוּ)

Here the writer is speaking as if Yahweh were a **rock**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. See how “rock” and “of my salvation” are translated in Psalms 18:46. Alternate translation: [to our protector and savior]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to the rock of our salvation**
UST to the one who protects us and saves us
(לְצ֖וּר יִשְׁעֵֽנוּ)

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: [to our steadfast savior]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | to Yahweh |
| let us shout | let us shout joyfully |
| of our salvation | and saves us |

# Psalms 95:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let us meet his face with thanksgiving; with psalms, let us sing joyfully to him.* | *Let us thank him as we come before him and sing joyful psalms as we praise him.* |

**ULT Let us meet his face**
**UST** as we come before him
(נְקַדְּמָה פָּנָיו)

Here, **his face** represents being in the presence of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Let us go into his presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT with thanksgiving**
**UST** Let us thank him
(בְּתוֹדָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **thanksgiving**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [as we thank him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| with psalms | psalms |
| let us sing joyfully | and sing joyful |

# Psalms 95:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For Yahweh {is} a great God and a great king above all gods,* | *Because Yahweh is a great God. He is a great king who rules over all other spirit beings.* |

> ULT **above all gods**
> UST who rules over all other spirit beings
> (עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִֽים)

The term “god,” when applied to a being other than Yahweh, can refer to an idol, but, as here, it can also refer to any lesser spirit being. Alternate translation: [above any other spiritual being]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **above all gods**
> UST who rules over all other spirit beings
> (עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִֽים)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if Yahweh were actually positioned **above all gods** in a physical sense. He means that Yahweh is superior to all other gods. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [who is superior to all other gods]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} a … God | is a … God |
| and a … king | He is a … king |
| gods | spirit beings |

# Psalms 95:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *who in his hand {has} the depths of the earth; and the heights of the mountains {are} to him,* | *He controls the whole earth. From the deepest places to the highest mountains, it belongs to him.* |

**ULT in his hand {has}**
UST controls
(בְּיָדוֹ)

The psalmist is using **in his hand** as a common expression of his culture to mean "in his control" or "under his authority." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in his control]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT the depths of the earth; and the heights of the mountains**
UST the whole earth. From the deepest places to the highest mountains
(מֶחְקְרֵי־אֶרֶץ וְתוֹעֲפ֥וֹת הָרִים)

The psalmist is referring to all of the earth by naming two extremes, **the depths of the earth** and **the heights of the mountains**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [every part of the earth; they all]

**Support Reference:** Merism

**ULT {are} to him**
UST it belongs to him
(לֽוֹ)

The psalmist is using **are to him** as a common expression of his culture to mean "belong to him" or "are his." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [are his]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of the earth | the whole earth |

# Psalms 95:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *who to him {is} the sea, and he, he made it, and his hands formed the dry land.* | *The seas are his because he is the one who made them. He also made the dry land.* |

**ULT who to him {is}**
**UST** are his
(אֲשֶׁר־לֹו)

The psalmist is using **who to him is** as a common expression of his culture to mean "who owns." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [who owns]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT and he, he made it**
**UST** because he is the one who made them
(וְהוּא עָשָׂהוּ)

The writer is stating the pronoun **he** separately, even though the verb translated as **he made it** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that Yahweh is the one who made the sea. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [and it was he who made it]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and his hands formed the dry land**
**UST** He also made the dry land
(וְיַבֶּשֶׁת יָדָיו יָצָרוּ)

Here the word **hands** represents the action of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he himself formed the dry land]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and … the dry land | also … the dry land |

# Psalms 95:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel to the face of Yahweh, our maker:* | *{Everyone,} come, let us worship him and bow down {before him}. Let us kneel before Yahweh, who is the one who made us.* |

**ULT and bow down; let us kneel**
**UST** him and bow down {before him}. Let us kneel
(וְנִכְרָעָה נִּבְרְכָה)

The phrases **bow down** and **kneel** describe symbolic actions by which people showed submission and reverence to God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of these actions in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [and show that we submit]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

**ULT to the face of**
**UST** before
(לִפְנֵי)

Here, **to the face of** represents being in front of Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in the presence of]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| let us worship | let us worship |
| and bow down | him and bow down {before him} |
| let us kneel | Let us kneel |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| our maker | who is the one who made us |

# Psalms 95:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For he {is} our God, and we {are} the people of his pasture and the flock of his hand. Today —if only you would listen to his voice!* | *{Do this} because he is our God, and we are the people whom he protects, like sheep that a shepherd takes care of. I desire that today you may hear what Yahweh is saying to you.* |

**ULT our God**
**UST** our God
(אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean the God whom we worship. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the God whom we worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT the people of his pasture**
**UST** the people whom he protects
(עַם מַרְעִיתוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking as if the people were like God's sheep in **his pasture**. He means that the people are like God's sheep that he provides for. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the people who belong to him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and the flock of his hand**
**UST** like sheep that a shepherd takes care of
(וְצֹאן יָדוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking here of God's people as if they were **the flock of his hand**. This image portrays God as a shepherd who personally cares for and guides his people like sheep. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the group that he directs and guards]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **if only you would listen**
UST I desire that … you may hear
(אִם & תִּשְׁמָעוּ)

The psalmist says **if only you would listen** to introduce a wish that God's people would obey him. Use a natural method in your language for introducing a wish. Alternate translation: [I wish you would listen]

**Support Reference:** Hypothetical Situations

ULT **to his voice**
UST what Yahweh is saying to you
(בְּקֹלֹו)

Here, **voice** represents what God says. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to what he says]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| our God | our God |
| and the flock | like sheep |

# Psalms 95:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“Do not harden your heart, as {at} Meribah, as {on} the day of Massah in the wilderness,* | *He says, “Do not become stubborn as your ancestors did at Meribah, and as they did long ago at Massah in the wilderness.* |

**ULT Do not harden your heart**
**UST** He says, “Do not become stubborn
(אַל־תַּקְשׁוּ לְבַבְכֶם)

The psalmist is using **harden your heart** as a common expression of his culture to mean “become stubborn” or “refuse to listen and obey.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Do not be obstinate]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT as {at} Meribah … Massah**
**UST** as your ancestors did at Meribah … at Massah
(כִּמְרִיבָה & מַסָּה)

The words **Meribah** and **Massah** are the names of places.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| harden | Do … become stubborn |
| in the wilderness | in the wilderness |

# Psalms 95:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *where your fathers tested me, tried me, though they had seen my deeds.* | *There your ancestors tested whether I would continue to be patient with them. They wanted to see if they could do evil things and not have me punish them. They did this even though they had seen me perform many miracles.* |

ULT **tested me, tried me**

UST tested whether I would continue to be patient with them. They wanted to see if they could do evil things and not have me punish them

(בְּחָנוּנִי & נִסּוּנִי)

The terms **tested me** and **tried me** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [tested my patience] or [refused to trust me]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| tested me | tested whether I would continue to be patient with them |

# Psalms 95:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For 40 years I was angry with the generation and said, ‘They are a people wandering of heart and they, they have not known my ways.’* | *For 40 years I was angry with those people. I said about them, ‘Those people are unreliable. They completely refuse to obey my commands.’* |

ULT **For 40 years**
UST For 40 years
(אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה)

Translate this number according to the conventions of your own language and culture. Alternate translation: [For forty years]

**Support Reference:** Numbers

ULT **wandering of heart**
UST are unreliable
(תֹּעֵי לֵבָב)

God is using **wandering of heart** as a common expression of his culture to mean “tending to stray” or “lacking in commitment.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [blowing hot and cold] or [lacking in commitment]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **and they, they have not known**
UST They completely refuse to obey
(וְהֵם לֹא־יָדְעוּ)

The pronouns **they, they** refer to the people of Israel whom God is describing. The psalmist is stating the pronoun **they** separately, even though the verb translated as **they have not known** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that these very people failed to know God’s ways. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the emphasis here. Alternate translation: [and those very people have not known]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **my ways**
UST my commands
(דְּרָכַי)

Here God is speaking of how he wants people to live as if that were **ways** that people could walk along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the way that I teach people to live]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| years | years |
| with the generation | with those people |
| they have … known | to obey |

# Psalms 95:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Therefore I vowed in my nose, ‘if they enter into my rest.’”* | *So because I was very angry, I solemnly said about them, ‘They will never enter {the land of Canaan} where I would have allowed them to rest!’”* |

ULT **in my nose**
UST because I was very angry
(בְּאַפִּי)

God is using **in my nose** as a common expression of the culture to mean “in my anger.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in my anger]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **if they enter into my rest**
UST They will never enter {the land of Canaan} where I would have allowed them to rest
(אִם־יְבֹאוּן אֶל־מְנוּחָתִי)

Following the custom of the culture, God is swearing an oath by stating the first part of a condition (**If they enter into my rest**) but not the second part (“then”). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explicitly state the second part of this condition. Alternate translation: [If they enter into my rest, then I am not Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Oath Formulas

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I vowed | I solemnly said about them |

# Psalms 96

## Psalm 96 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 96 is one of six “worship psalms” (Psalms 95–100).

1. Call to sing and declare Yahweh’s greatness (1–6)
2. Call the nations to worship (7–9)
3. Yahweh’s reign and coming judgment (10–13)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh, the king

Yahweh is king over all the earth and is worthy of all praise.

# Psalms 96:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sing to Yahweh a new song; sing to Yahweh, all the earth.* | *Sing to Yahweh a new song! All you people throughout the earth, sing to Yahweh!* |

ULT **all the earth**
UST All you people throughout the earth
(כָּל־הָאָֽרֶץ)

Here, **all the earth** represents all the people who live on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all you people who live on the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 96:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sing to Yahweh, bless his name; announce his salvation from day to day.* | *Sing to Yahweh and praise him! Every day proclaim to others that he has saved us.* |

ULT **bless his name**
UST and praise him
(בָּרֲכִ֥ו שְׁמֹ֑ו)

Here, **name** represents who Yahweh is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [bless everything that he is]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **his salvation**
UST that he has saved us
(יְשׁוּעָתֹ֗ו)

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: [that he is the one who saves]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **from day to day**
UST Every day
(מִיֹּ֣ום ׀ לְיֹ֣ום)

The psalmist is using **from day to day** as a common expression of his culture to mean "continually" or "regularly." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [every day]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | Yahweh |
| bless | and praise |
| announce | proclaim to others |
| his salvation | that he has saved us |

# Psalms 96:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Recount his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all the peoples.* | *Tell about how glorious he is to all people groups; tell all peoples everywhere the marvelous things that he has done.* |

**ULT his glory**
**UST** how glorious he is
(כְּבוֹדָ֑ו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [that he is extremely great]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT his marvelous deeds**
**UST** the marvelous things that he has done
(נִפְלְאוֹתָ֗יו)

The psalmist 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: [recount his marvelous deeds]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Recount | Tell about |
| his glory | how glorious he is |
| among the nations | to all people groups |
| his marvelous deeds | the marvelous things that he has done |

# Psalms 96:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For Yahweh is great and is to be praised greatly. He is to be feared above all gods.* | *Do this because Yahweh is great, and he deserves very much for people to praise him; people should revere him more than all other gods.* |

**ULT For**
**UST** Do this because
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT and is to be praised**
**UST** and he deserves … for people to praise him
(וּמְהֻלָּל)

The expression **is to be praised** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and everyone should praise him]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT He is to be feared**
**UST** people should revere him
(נוֹרָא הוּא)

The expression **He is to be feared** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Everyone should fear him]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and is to be praised | and he deserves … for people to praise him |
| is to be feared | people should revere |
| gods | gods |

# Psalms 96:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but Yahweh made the heavens.* | *This is true because all of the gods that the other peoples worship are only idols, but it is Yahweh who made the heavens!* |

**ULT For**
**UST** This is true because
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [You see,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the gods | the gods that |
| are idols | worship are only idols |
| but Yahweh | but it is Yahweh |
| the heavens | the heavens |

# Psalms 96:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Splendor and majesty {are} to his face. Strength and beauty {are} in his sanctuary.* | *Yahweh is magnificent and majestic. His holy house shows how strong and beautiful he is.* |

**ULT Splendor and majesty {are} to his face**
**UST** Yahweh is magnificent and majestic
(הוֹד־וְהָדָר לְפָנָיו)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **Splendor** and **majesty**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [His presence is splendid and majestic]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Strength and beauty {are}**
**UST** how strong and beautiful he is
(עֹז וְתִפְאָרֶת)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **Strength** and **beauty**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [He is strong and beautiful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT {are} to his face**
**UST** Yahweh
(לְפָנָיו)

Here, **to his face** represents "in his presence." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [are in his presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Splendor | is magnificent |
| and majesty | and majestic |
| in his sanctuary | His holy house shows |

# Psalms 96:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Ascribe to Yahweh, clans of peoples, ascribe to Yahweh glory and strength.* | *You peoples in nations all over the earth, Proclaim that Yahweh is the one who is truly glorious and strong!* |

**ULT Ascribe to Yahweh … ascribe to Yahweh**
**UST** Proclaim that Yahweh is the one who is truly
(הָבוּ לַיהוָה & הָבוּ לַיהוָה)

These two phrases **Ascribe to Yahweh** and **ascribe to Yahweh** repeat the same meaning. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating it again. If it would be helpful to your readers, you say this once and express the emphasis in another way, as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT clans of peoples**
**UST** You peoples in nations all over the earth
(מִשְׁפְּחוֹת עַמִּים)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean clans that belong to various peoples or clans from among the peoples. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [all clans in all peoples]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT glory and strength**
**UST** glorious and strong
(כָּבוֹד וָעֹז)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **glory** and **strength**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [the fact that he is glorious and strong]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | that Yahweh |
| clans of | You peoples in |
| glory | glorious |
| and strength | and strong |

# Psalms 96:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Give to Yahweh the glory of his name. Bring an offering and come into his courts.* | *Praise Yahweh as he deserves for us to praise him; bring an offering and come to his temple.* |

**ULT Give to Yahweh the glory of his name**
**UST** Praise Yahweh as he deserves for us to praise him
(הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Praise Yahweh because he is the glorious one]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT the glory of his name**
**UST** as he deserves for us to praise him
(כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ)

Here, **name** represents who God is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the glory of who he is]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the glory of | as he deserves for us to praise him |
| an offering | an offering |
| into his courts | to his temple |

# Psalms 96:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Bow down to Yahweh in the splendor of holiness; tremble from his face, all the earth.* | *Bow down before Yahweh because he is marvelously holy. Everyone on earth should tremble because of who he is.* |

ULT **Bow down**
UST Bow down
(הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ)

To **Bow down** was a symbolic action by which people showed reverence and submission to Yahweh. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Bow down in worship]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **in the splendor of holiness**
UST because he is marvelously holy
(בְּהַדְרַת־קֹדֶשׁ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **splendor** and **holiness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [because he is splendid and holy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **tremble**
UST should tremble
(חִילוּ)

To **tremble** was a symbolic action by which people showed reverent fear and awe before God's holy presence. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [tremble in reverent awe]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **from his face**
UST because of who he is
(מִפָּנָיו)

The psalmist is using **from his face** as a common expression of the culture to mean "because of" or "on account of." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [because of him]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **all the earth**
UST Everyone on earth
(כָּל־הָאָרֶץ)

Here, **all the earth** represents all the people who live on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all you people of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Bow down | Bow down |
| to Yahweh | before Yahweh |
| in the splendor | because he is marvelously |
| of holiness | holy |
| tremble | should tremble |

# Psalms 96:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Say among the nations, "Yahweh reigns." Indeed, the world is established; it cannot be shaken. He judges the peoples with evenness.* | *Say to {all} the people groups, "Yahweh is the king!" He put the world in its place, and nothing will ever be able to move it. He judges {all} the peoples fairly.* |

ULT **the world is established**
UST He put the world in its place
(תִּכּוֹן תֵּבֵל)

The expression **the world is established** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [he established the world]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **it cannot be shaken**
UST nothing will ever be able to move it
(בַּל־תִּמּוֹט)

The expression **it cannot be shaken** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [nothing can shake it]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **He judges**
UST He judges
(יָדִין)

This could mean: (1) Yahweh always judges the peoples with evenness, as in the UST, or (2) on the future day of judgment, Yahweh will judge the peoples with evenness. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will judge]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the nations | people groups |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| reigns | is the king |
| the world | the world in its place |
| is established | He put |
| be shaken | will ever be able to move it |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He judges | He judges |

# Psalms 96:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar and its fullness.* | *All the beings that are in the heavens should be glad, and all the people on the earth should rejoice. The oceans and all the creatures that are in the oceans should roar {to praise Yahweh}.* |

ULT **Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar**
UST All the beings that are in the heavens should be glad, and all the people on the earth should rejoice. The oceans and all the creatures that are in the oceans
(יִשְׂמְחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְתָגֵל הָאָרֶץ יִרְעַם הַיָּם)

Here the psalmist is calling on the heavens, earth, and sea to respond with praise to Yahweh. This is the author's way of expressing that all of creation should respond to Yahweh with joy and praise. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about "let" and "may" and follow the decision of your team on how you could express this with statements about what creation should do, as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **and its fullness**
UST should roar {to praise Yahweh}
(וּמְלֹאֹו)

By **its fullness**, the psalmist means all of the creatures that fill the sea. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and all of the creatures that fill it]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice**
UST All the beings that are in the heavens should be glad, and all the people on the earth should rejoice
(יִשְׂמְחוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְתָגֵל הָאָרֶץ)

This could mean: (1) **the heavens** and **the earth** represent those who dwell in those places. Alternate translation: [Let those who live in the heavens be glad and let those who live on the earth rejoice] or (2) the heavens and the earth are spoken of as if they had emotions like people have. Alternate translation: [The heavens should be glad and the earth should rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Let … be glad | should rejoice |
| the heavens | All the beings that are in the heavens |
| and let … rejoice | should be glad |

# Psalms 96:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let the fields rejoice and all that is in them. Then let all the trees in the forest shout for joy* | *Let it be as though the fields and everything that is in them are rejoicing. Then let it be as though all the trees in the forests are singing joyfully* |

**ULT Let the fields rejoice and all that is in them. Then let all the trees in the forest shout for joy**

**UST** Let it be as though the fields and everything that is in them are rejoicing. Then let it be as though all the trees in the forests are singing joyfully

(יַעֲלֹ֤ז שָׂדַי֙ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־בּ֔וֹ אָ֖ז יְרַנְּנ֥וּ כָל־עֲצֵי־יָֽעַר)

Here the psalmist is speaking of **fields** and **trees** as if they were living things that could **rejoice** and **shout for joy**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Let it be as though the fields and all that is in them are celebrating. Then let it be as though all the trees in the forest are shouting happily]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| rejoice | Let it be as though … are rejoicing |
| shout for joy | let it be as though … are singing joyfully |
| shout for joy | let it be as though … are singing joyfully |

# Psalms 96:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to the face of Yahweh, for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with his faithfulness.* | *in front of Yahweh. They should do this because he is coming to judge everyone on the earth, and this is certain. He will judge all the people fairly according to what he knows is true.* |

ULT **to the face of**
UST in front of
(לִפְנֵי)

Here, **to the face of** represents being in front of Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [before]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **for he is coming, for he is coming**
UST They should do this because he is coming … and this is certain
(כִּי בָא כִּי בָא)

These two phrases **for he is coming** and **for he is coming** are the same. The words are repeated to emphasize their meaning. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [for it is sure that he is coming]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the earth**
UST everyone on the earth
(הָאָרֶץ)

Here, **the earth** represents the people who live on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the world**
UST everyone on the earth
(תֵּבֵל)

Here, **the world** represents everyone who lives in the world. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [everyone in the world]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **with righteousness**
UST fairly
(בְּצֶדֶק)

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: [righteously]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **with his faithfulness**
UST according to what he knows is true
(בֶּאֱמוּנָתוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [faithfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the earth … the world**
UST everyone on the earth
(הָאָרֶץ & תֵּבֵל)

The terms **the earth** and **the world** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [everyone … everyone]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **and the peoples with his faithfulness**
UST all the people … according to what he knows is true
(וְעַמִּים בֶּאֱמוּנָתוֹ)

The writer 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 will judge the peoples with his faithfulness]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| to judge | to judge |
| He will judge | He will judge |
| the world | everyone on the earth |
| with righteousness | fairly |
| with his faithfulness | according to what he knows is true |

# Psalms 97

## Psalm 97 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 97 is one of six “worship psalms” (Psalms 95–100).

1. Yahweh reigns in power and glory (1–6)
2. Idols are exposed as worthless (7–9)
3. The righteous are called to love and rejoice in Yahweh (10–12)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh’s authority

All people who worship idols are disgraced because Yahweh rules over all the world.

# Psalms 97:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh reigns; let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad.* | *Yahweh is the king! I want everyone on the earth to be glad and I want all the people who live on the land in and around the oceans to {also} rejoice {about that}!* |

**ULT let the earth**
**UST** everyone on the earth
(הָאָרֶץ)

Here, **the earth** represents the people who live on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [let the people on the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT let the many coastlands**
**UST** all the people who live on the land in and around the oceans
(אִיִּים רַבִּים)

Here, **coastlands** represents the people who live on the coastlands. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [let the people on the many coastlands]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| reigns | is the king |
| rejoice | I want … to be glad |
| be glad | and I want … to {also} rejoice {about that} |

# Psalms 97:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Clouds and darkness surround him. Righteousness and justice {are} the foundation of his throne.* | *There are very dark clouds all around him; he always rules righteously and justly.* |

**ULT Clouds and darkness**
**UST** There are very dark clouds
(עָנָן וַעֲרָפֶל)

The phrase **Clouds and darkness** expresses a single idea. The word **darkness** tells more about **clouds**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [Dark clouds]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

**ULT Righteousness and justice {are}**
**UST** righteously and justly
(צֶדֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **Righteousness** and **justice**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Ruling righteously and justly is]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT the foundation of his throne**
**UST** he always rules
(מְכוֹן כִּסְאוֹ)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if the way in which Yahweh rules were actually **the foundation of his throne**. The psalmist means that righteousness and justice are the basis on which God rules. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the very basis of his reign]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **of his throne**
UST he … rules
(כִּסְאֹו)

Here, **throne** represents God's rule as king. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [of his rule as king]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Righteousness | righteously |
| and justice {are} | and justly |
| the foundation | always |
| of his throne | he … rules |

# Psalms 97:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Fire goes to his face and burns his adversaries all around.* | *He sends fire out in front of him, and {that fire} burns all of his enemies.* |

ULT **to his face**
UST out in front of him
(לְפָנָיו)

Here, **to his face** represents being in front of him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [before him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his adversaries | his enemies |

# Psalms 97:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *His lightning lights up the world; the earth sees and trembles.* | *All around the world he sends his bright lightning; people on the earth see {it}, and it causes them {to be afraid and} to tremble.* |

**ULT the earth sees**
**UST** people on the earth see {it}
(רָאֲתָה & הָאָרֶץ)

The psalmist 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 earth sees the lightning]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT the earth sees and trembles**
**UST** people on the earth see {it}, and it causes them {to be afraid and} to tremble
(רָאֲתָה וַתָּחֶל הָאָרֶץ)

Here, **the earth** represents the people who live on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people of the earth see and tremble]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT and trembles**
**UST** and it causes them {to be afraid and} to tremble
(וַתָּחֶל)

The implication is that the earth trembles with fear when it sees God's lightning. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and trembles with fear]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the world | All around the world |
| and trembles | and it causes them {to be afraid and} to tremble |

# Psalms 97:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The mountains melt like wax from to the face of Yahweh, from to the face of the Lord of all the earth.* | *The mountains melt like wax before Yahweh; he is the Lord who rules over all of the earth.* |

ULT **melt like wax**
UST melt like wax
(כַּדּוֹנַג נָמַסּוּ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **wax** melts easily when heated, so the **mountains** will easily crumble before Yahweh's power. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [crumble as easily as wax melts]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **from to the face of**
UST before
(מִלִּפְנֵי)

Here, **from to the face of** represents the mountains reacting to being in the presence of Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [before the presence of]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **from to the face of Yahweh, from to the face of the Lord of all the earth**
UST before Yahweh; he is the Lord who rules over all of the earth
(מִלִּפְנֵי יְהוָה מִלִּפְנֵי אֲדוֹן כָּל־הָאָרֶץ)

These two phrases **from to the face of Yahweh** and **from to the face of the Lord of all the earth** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [from the presence of Yahweh, the Lord of all the earth]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the Lord of | he is the Lord |

# Psalms 97:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the peoples see his glory.* | *Everything that people can see in the heavens makes it clear that he is righteous, and all the people groups see how glorious he is.* |

**ULT The heavens declare his righteousness**
**UST** Everything that people can see in the heavens makes it clear that he is righteous
(הִגִּידוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם צִדְקֹו)

The psalmist is speaking of **the heavens** as if they were a living thing that could **declare** Yahweh's righteousness. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The heavens display his righteousness so clearly, it is as though they declare it]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT his righteousness**
**UST** he is righteous
(צִדְקֹו)

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: [that he is righteous]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT his glory**
**UST** how glorious he is
(כְּבוֹדֹו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [that he is glorious]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The heavens | Everything that people can see in the heavens |
| declare | makes it clear that |
| his righteousness | he is righteous |
| his glory | how glorious he is |

# Psalms 97:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let all those serving a carved image have shame, those boasting in worthless idols— bow down to him, all you gods!* | *Everyone who worships carved images should be ashamed; all those who are proud of their useless false gods should be ashamed. All those gods should bow down to worship Yahweh!* |

ULT **those boasting in worthless idols**
UST all those who are proud of their useless false gods should be ashamed
(הַמִּתְהַלְלִים בָּאֱלִילִים)

The psalmist 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: [let those boasting in worthless idols feel shame]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **bow down to him**
UST should bow down to worship Yahweh
(הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ־לוֹ)

The pronoun **him** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [bow down to Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **bow down to him**
UST should bow down to worship Yahweh
(הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ־לוֹ)

To **bow down to him** was a symbolic action by which people showed worship and submission to a deity. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [bow down in worship to him]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

ULT **bow down to him, all you gods**
UST All those gods should bow down to worship Yahweh
(הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ־לוֹ כָּל־אֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist has been addressing his audience, but now he briefly addresses **all you gods**, even though he knows that these gods cannot hear him. He does this in order to express more powerfully his feelings about Yahweh's supremacy over all other so-called gods. If it would be helpful in your language, you could introduce this more clearly and put the rest of this address in quote marks. Alternate translation: [I would tell those worthless idols to bow down to him]

**Support Reference:** Aside

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let … have shame | should be ashamed |
| those serving | who worships |
| a carved image | carved images |
| those boasting | all those who are proud of |
| in worthless idols | their useless false gods should be ashamed |
| bow down | should bow down to worship |
| you gods | those gods |

# Psalms 97:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Zion heard and was glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of your judgments, Yahweh.* | *The people of Jerusalem heard {Yahweh's just decrees} and they were happy {about them}; people in the other cities in Judah also {heard and} rejoiced because you judge {people} justly, Yahweh.* |

**ULT Zion heard and was glad**
UST The people of Jerusalem heard {Yahweh's just decrees} and they were happy {about them}
(שָׁמְעָה וַתִּשְׂמַח ׀ צִיּוֹן)

Here, **Zion** represents the people who live in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [The people living in Zion heard and were glad]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT Zion heard**
UST The people of Jerusalem heard {Yahweh's just decrees}
(שָׁמְעָה & צִיּוֹן)

The psalmist 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: [Zion heard Yahweh's judgments]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT and was glad**
UST and they were happy {about them}
(וַתִּשְׂמַח)

The psalmist 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 was glad to hear them]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and the daughters of Judah**
UST people in the other cities in Judah
(בְּנוֹת יְהוּדָה)

The psalmist is speaking as if the towns and cities throughout the territory of Judah were actually **daughters of Judah**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the people in the smaller towns in Judah]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **your judgments**
UST you judge {people} justly
(מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **judgments**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the righteous way that you judge]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Zion | The people of Jerusalem |
| and was glad | and they were happy {about them} |
| Judah | in Judah |
| rejoiced | also {heard and} rejoiced |
| your judgments | you judge {people} justly |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 97:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you, Yahweh, are most high above all the earth. You are exalted far above all gods.* | *Of course, Yahweh, you are the supreme king who rules over all the earth; You are far more powerful than any other spirit beings.* |

ULT **For**
UST Of course
(כִּי)

**For** introduces not a reason but an explanation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a word or phrase that makes this relationship clearer. Alternate translation: [After all,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **are most high above**
UST the supreme king who rules over
(עֶלְיוֹן עַל)

The psalmist is speaking here as if Yahweh were actually **most high above** all the earth in a physical, spatial sense. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [are completely in charge of]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **You are exalted far above**
UST You are far more powerful than
(אָתָּה נַעֲלֵיתָ עַל)

The psalmist is speaking as if Yahweh were actually **exalted** in a physical, spatial sense high above all other things. The psalmist means that Yahweh has supreme authority and power over all creation. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You have much more authority than]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT all gods**
**UST** any other spirit beings
(כָּל־אֱלֹהִֽים)

The term “god,” when applied to a being other than Yahweh, can refer to an idol, but, as here, it can also refer to any lesser spirit being. Alternate translation: [every other being]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| are most high | the supreme king who rules |
| You are exalted | You are … more powerful |
| gods | other spirit beings |

# Psalms 97:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Lovers of Yahweh, hate evil! The protector of the lives of his faithful, from the hand of the wicked he snatches them.* | *All you who love Yahweh, you must hate every evil thing {that people do}! Yahweh protects those who are faithful to him; he rescues them when wicked people try to harm them.* |

ULT **evil**
UST every evil thing {that people do}
(רָ֑ע)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evil**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [all that is evil]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **of his faithful**
UST who are faithful to him
(חֲסִידָ֗יו)

The psalmist is using the adjective **faithful** 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: [of everyone loyal to him]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **from the hand of**
UST try to harm them
(מִיַּ֥ד)

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: [from the power of]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the wicked**
UST when wicked people
(רְשָׁעִֽים)

The psalmist 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: [bad people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **he snatches them**
UST he rescues them
(יַצִּילֵם)

The psalmist is speaking here as if Yahweh actually **snatches** his faithful ones from danger. The image is of someone quickly grabbing something to pull it away from harm. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he saves them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Lovers of | All you who love |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| evil | every evil thing {that people do} |
| The protector | Yahweh protects |
| of his faithful | who are faithful to him |
| the wicked | when wicked people |

# Psalms 97:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Light is sown for the righteous and for the upright of heart, gladness.* | *He makes good things happen for righteous people and he causes those who are honest to rejoice.* |

ULT **Light is sown**
UST He makes good things happen
(אוֹר זָרֻעַ)

The psalmist is speaking as if **light** were actually seeds that could be sown in the ground. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [He scatters light like seeds]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Light is sown**
UST He makes good things happen
(אוֹר זָרֻעַ)

The psalmist is speaking here of good and beneficial things as if they were **light**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He gives good things]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Light is sown**
UST He makes good things happen
(אוֹר זָרֻעַ)

The expression **Light is sown** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh sows light]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **for the righteous**
UST for righteous people
(לַצַּדִּיק)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [for those who are righteous]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and for the upright of heart, gladness**
UST and he causes those who are honest to rejoice
(וְלִישָׁרֵי־לֵ֝ב שִׂמְחָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **gladness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and he makes glad the upright of heart]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and for the upright of heart**
UST and he causes those who are honest
(וְלִישָׁרֵי־לֵֽב)

The psalmist is using **upright of heart** as a common expression of his culture to mean "sincere in their inner beings" or "honest in their intentions." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and for those who are sincere in their inner beings]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **gladness**
UST to rejoice
(שִׂמְחָה)

The psalmist 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: [gladness is sown]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| for the righteous | for righteous people |
| and for the upright of | and he causes those who are honest |
| gladness | to rejoice |

# Psalms 97:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Be glad in Yahweh, you righteous; and give thanks to the remembrance of his holiness!* | *You righteous people, let Yahweh make you glad, and thank him, the one we all know to be holy!* |

**ULT in Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh
(בַּיהוָה)

The psalmist is speaking as if being glad were actually something that could happen at a location, **in Yahweh**. He means that the righteous should be glad because of Yahweh or should find their gladness in their relationship with Yahweh. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [because of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT you righteous**
**UST** You righteous people
(צַדִּיקִים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [you who are righteous]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT to the remembrance of his holiness**
**UST** the one we all know to be holy
(לְזֵכֶר קָדְשׁוֹ)

The psalmist is using **to the remembrance of his holiness** as a common expression of his culture to mean “to his holy name” or “to him, whose reputation is holiness.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to his holy name] or [to him, whose reputation is holiness]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Be glad | let … make you glad |
| in Yahweh | Yahweh |
| you righteous | You righteous people |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his holiness | to be holy |

# Psalms 98

## Psalm 98 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 98 is one of six “worship psalms” (Psalms 95–100).

1. Sing a new song for Yahweh’s saving work (1–3)
2. Shout and rejoice in worship (4–6)
3. All creation celebrates Yahweh’s righteous rule (7–9)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Praise

Everyone and every thing should sing praises to Yahweh because he is worthy of all praise.

# Psalms 98:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A psalm. Sing to Yahweh a new song, for he has done marvelous things; his right hand and the arm of his holiness have brought him salvation.* | *A psalm. Sing to Yahweh a new song because he has done wonderful things! By being powerfully holy he has saved {his people}.* |

ULT **his right hand and the arm of his holiness**
UST By being powerfully holy
(יְמִינוֹ וּזְרוֹעַ קָדְשׁוֹ)

Here, **his right hand and the arm of his holiness** represents God's great power. The psalmist is using body parts to refer to God's strength and ability to act. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his great and holy power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and the arm of his holiness**
UST By being powerfully holy
(וּזְרוֹעַ קָדְשׁוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **holiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and his holy arm]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **have brought him salvation**
UST he has saved {his people}
(הוֹשִׁיעָה־לּוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **salvation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Make sure that your translation communicates that Yahweh is the one who saves his people; he is not the one who is saved. Alternate translation: [have saved his people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Sing**
UST Sing to
(שִׁירוּ)

The word **Sing**, along with all of the command forms in this psalm, is plural here, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm | A psalm |
| to Yahweh | Yahweh |
| marvelous things | wonderful things |
| his holiness | By being powerfully holy |
| have brought … salvation | has saved {his people} |

# Psalms 98:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh has made known his salvation; to the eyes of the nations he has revealed his righteousness.* | *Yahweh has shown openly that he saves {his people}; he has revealed to people all over the world that he always does what is right.* |

ULT **his salvation**
UST that he saves {his people}
(יְשׁוּעָתֹו)

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: [to everyone that he saves people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to the eyes of the nations**
UST to people all over the world
(לְעֵינֵי הַגּוֹיִם)

Here, **eyes** represents the sight or observation of people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in full view of the nations]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the nations**
UST people all over the world
(הַגּוֹיִם)

Here, **the nations** represents the people of all the nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people of all the nations]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **his righteousness**
UST that he always does what is right
(צִדְקָתֹו)

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: [that he is righteous]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| has made known | has shown openly |
| his salvation | that he saves {his people} |
| the nations | people all over the world |
| his righteousness | that he always does what is right |

# Psalms 98:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He remembers his covenant loyalty and his faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.* | *He is always loyal to his covenant to be faithful to the Israelite people. Even the people who live in the most remote places of the earth will see that our God saves {his people}.* |

ULT **He remembers**
UST He is always
(זָכַר)

By **He remembers**, the psalmist does not mean that God could forget something, since God cannot forget anything. He means that God consistently knows and acts according to his covenant loyalty and faithfulness. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [He bears in mind]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **his covenant loyalty and his faithfulness**
UST loyal to his covenant to be faithful
(חַסְדּוֹ וְאֶמוּנָתוֹ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant loyalty** and **faithfulness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [that he has committed to love and to be faithful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to the house of Israel**
UST to the Israelite people
(לְבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **house** means all the people descended from a particular person. It envisions them as if they were one household living together. So **the house of Israel** figuratively means all the people descended from the patriarch Jacob, who was also known as Israel. Alternate translation: [to the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the ends of the earth**
UST Even the people who live in the most remote places of the earth
(אַפְסֵי־אָ֑רֶץ)

The psalmist is referring to all of the earth by naming the extremes, **the ends of the earth**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [people all over the earth]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **the salvation of our God**
UST that our God saves {his people}
(אֵ֥ת יְשׁוּעַ֗ת אֱלֹהֵ֫ינוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **salvation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Make sure that your translation communicates that Yahweh is the one who saves his people; he is not the one who is saved. Alternate translation: [how our God saves people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **of our God**
UST our God
(אֱלֹהֵ֫ינוּ)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean the God whom the people worship. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [from the God whom we worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| He remembers | He is always |
| his covenant loyalty | loyal to his covenant |
| and his faithfulness | to be faithful |
| to the house | to the … people |
| of Israel | Israelite |
| the earth | the earth |
| the salvation | that … saves {his people} |
| of our God | our God |

# Psalms 98:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Shout to Yahweh, all the earth; burst into song, sing for joy, and make music!* | *All you people everywhere should shout joyfully to Yahweh; praise him while you sing joyfully and make music!* |

ULT **all the earth**
UST All you people everywhere
(כָּל־הָאָרֶץ)

Here, **all the earth** represents all the people who live on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all people on the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **burst into song**
UST praise him
(פִּצְחוּ)

By **burst into song**, the psalmist means that people should suddenly begin singing with great emotion. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [express your joy by singing]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **sing for joy**
UST while you sing joyfully
(וְרַנְּנוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **joy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [sing joyfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Shout | should shout joyfully |
| to Yahweh | to Yahweh |
| sing for joy | while you sing joyfully |

# Psalms 98:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Make music to Yahweh with the harp, with the harp and the voice of a song.* | *Play to Yahweh on a harp, and sing along as you play.* |

**ULT with the harp**
**UST** on a harp
(בְּכִנּוֹר)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **harp**. He means harps in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [with harps]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**ULT with the harp, with the harp**
**UST** on a harp … as you play
(בְּכִנּוֹר בְּכִנּוֹר)

The psalmist repeats the phrase **with the harp** to emphasize its meaning. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [with the harp, yes, with the harp]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT and the voice of a song**
**UST** and sing along
(וְקוֹל זִמְרָה)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to describe singing that is characterized by being vocal rather than instrumental. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and with people singing]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | to Yahweh |
| with the harp | on a harp |

# Psalms 98:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *With trumpets and the sound of the shofar, shout to the face of the King, Yahweh!* | *{Some of you should} blow trumpets and ram's horns {while others} shout joyfully to Yahweh, our king!* |

ULT **to the face of**
UST to
(לִפְנֵי)

Here, **to the face of** represents being in front of the King, Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [before]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **shout**
UST {while others} shout joyfully
(הָרִ֑יעוּ)

Here, **shout** refers to joyfully cheering in front of Yahweh. Be sure that your translation does not communicate that this is angry shouting. Alternate translation: [raise a cheer]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| With trumpets | {Some of you should} blow trumpets |
| the shofar | and ram's horns |
| the King | our king |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 98:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let the sea roar and its fulness, the world and the dwellers in it!* | *The oceans and all {the creatures} that are in the oceans should roar {to praise Yahweh}. The earth itself and everyone on it should do the same!* |

ULT **and its fulness**
UST and all {the creatures} that are in the oceans
(וּמְלֹאֹו)

The psalmist 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 let its fullness roar]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and its fulness**
UST and all {the creatures} that are in the oceans
(וּמְלֹאֹו)

By **its fullness**, the psalmist means all the creatures that live in the sea. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and everything that fills it]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the world and the dwellers in it**
UST The earth itself and everyone on it should do the same
(תֵּבֵל וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ)

The psalmist 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: [let the world and the dwellers in it roar]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **the world**
UST The earth itself … should do the same
(תֵּבֵל)

Here the psalmist is speaking of **the world** as if it were a living thing that could shout. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [let it be as though the world were shouting]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the world | The earth itself … should do the same |

# Psalms 98:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let the rivers clap palm; let the mountains rejoice together* | *It should seem as though the rivers were clapping their hands {to praise Yahweh} and that the hills were singing together joyfully* |

**ULT Let the rivers clap palm**
**UST** It should seem as though the rivers were clapping their hands {to praise Yahweh}
(נְהָרוֹת יִמְחֲאוּ־כָף)

The psalmist is speaking of **rivers** as if they were living beings that could **clap palm**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Let it be as though the rivers clap palm]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT Let the rivers clap palm**
**UST** It should seem as though the rivers were clapping their hands {to praise Yahweh}
(נְהָרוֹת יִמְחֲאוּ־כָף)

The psalmist is using **clap palm** as a common expression of his culture to mean "clap their hands." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Let the rivers clap their hands]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT let the mountains rejoice together**
**UST** and that the hills were singing together joyfully
(יַחַד הָרִים יְרַנֵּנוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of **the mountains** as if they were living things that could **rejoice**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [let it be as though the mountains rejoice together]

**Support Reference:** Personification

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| let … rejoice | were singing … joyfully |

# Psalms 98:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to the face of Yahweh who is coming to judge the earth; he will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with fairness.* | *before Yahweh because he will come to judge everyone on the earth! He will judge all the people in the world justly and fairly.* |

ULT **to the face of**
UST before
(לִפְנֵי)

Here, **to the face of** represents being in front of the King, Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in the presence of]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the earth**
UST on the earth
(הָאָרֶץ)

Here, **the earth** represents the people who live on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the world**
UST in the world
(תֵּבֵל)

Here, **the world** represents the people who live in the world. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people in the world]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **he will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with fairness**
UST He will judge all the people in the world justly and fairly
(יִשְׁפֹּט־תֵּבֵל בְּצֶדֶק וְעַמִּים בְּמֵישָׁרִים)

These two phrases **he will judge the world with righteousness** and **the peoples with fairness** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [he will judge the world with righteousness, yes, he will judge the peoples with fairness]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **with righteousness**
UST justly
(בְּצֶדֶק)

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: [righteously]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **with fairness**
UST and fairly
(בְּמֵישָׁרִים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **fairness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [equally]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and the peoples with fairness**
UST all the people … and fairly
(וְעַמִּים בְּמֵישָׁרִים)

The psalmist 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 will judge the peoples with fairness]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| to judge | to judge everyone |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he will judge | He will judge |
| the world | in the world |
| with righteousness | justly |

# Psalms 99

## Psalm 99 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 99 is one of six “worship psalms” (Psalms 95–100).

1. Yahweh reigns over all peoples (1–3)
2. Yahweh loves justice and rules rightly (4–5)
3. Yahweh answers his faithful servants (6–9)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh’s justice

God is just and fair. Moses, Aaron and Samuel each prayed to him and obeyed him, and he answered their prayers. (See: just, justice, unjust, injustice, justify, justification)

# Psalms 99:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh reigns—let the peoples tremble—sitting {above} the cherubim; let the earth quake!* | *Yahweh is the supreme king, so all people should tremble {in front of him}! He sits on his throne {in the temple} above the {statues of} the cherubim, so the earth should quake!* |

ULT **Yahweh reigns—let the peoples tremble— sitting {above} the cherubim; let the earth quake**

UST Yahweh is the supreme king, so all people should tremble {in front of him}! He sits on his throne {in the temple} above the {statues of} the cherubim, so the earth should quake
(יְהוָה מָלָךְ יִרְגְּזוּ עַמִּים יֹשֵׁב כְּרוּבִים תָּנוּט הָאָרֶץ)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could move the phrase **let the peoples tremble** so that it does not interrupt the larger sentence. Alternate translation: [Yahweh reigns, sitting above the cherubim; let the peoples tremble and let the earth quake]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **sitting {above} the cherubim**

UST He sits on his throne {in the temple} above the {statues of} the cherubim
(יֹשֵׁב כְּרוּבִים)

If it would be helpful, you could explain in the text or a footnote that Yahweh is pictured here as sitting above the cherubim that are on the lid of the ark of the covenant, which is in his temple in Jerusalem. The biblical writers often spoke of the ark of the covenant as if it were Yahweh's footstool upon which he rested his feet as he sat on his throne in heaven above. Alternate translation: [he sits on his throne above the cherubim on the ark of the covenant]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| reigns | is the supreme king |
| let … tremble | so … should tremble {in front of him} |
| the cherubim | above the {statues of} the cherubim |
| let … quake | so … should quake |

# Psalms 99:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh in Zion {is} great, and he is high above all the peoples.* | *Yahweh is a mighty king in Jerusalem; he is also the supreme ruler of all peoples.* |

**ULT {is} great**
**UST** is a mighty king
(גָּדוֹל)

By **is great**, the psalmist means that Yahweh is powerful and mighty as a ruler. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [is a powerful ruler]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT and he is high above**
**UST** he is also the supreme ruler of
(וְרָם הוּא עַל)

The psalmist is speaking as if Yahweh were actually **high above** all the peoples in a physical sense. He means that Yahweh powerfully rules over all the peoples. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he powerfully rules over]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| in Zion | in Jerusalem |

# Psalms 99:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let them praise your great and fearsome name; holy {is} he.* | *They should praise you, Yahweh, because you are great and awesome! {They should say,} "He is holy!"* |

> ULT **your great and fearsome name**
> UST you, Yahweh, because you are great and awesome
> (שֵׁ֭מְךָ גָּד֣וֹל וְנוֹרָ֑א)

The psalmist is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is or to refer to Yahweh's reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you, who are great and fearsome]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **your great and fearsome name**
> UST you, Yahweh, because you are great and awesome
> (שֵׁ֭מְךָ גָּד֣וֹל וְנוֹרָ֑א)

In this psalm, the psalmist switches between talking about Yahweh in the third person and addressing him in second person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this verse in the third person. Alternate translation: [his great and fearsome name]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Let them praise | They should praise |
| and fearsome | and awesome |
| holy | They should say … holy |

# Psalms 99:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And the strength of the king: he loves justice. You, you have established fairness; you, you have done justice and righteousness in Jacob.* | *Yahweh is a mighty king {because} he loves what is just. You, Yahweh, have established what is fair. You have acted justly and righteously for the people of Israel.* |

ULT **And the strength of the king**
UST Yahweh is a mighty king
(וְעֹ֣ז מֶ֭לֶךְ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [And the king is strong]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **he loves justice**
UST {because} he loves what is just
(מִשְׁפָּ֣ט אָ֭הֵב)

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: [he loves doing what is just]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **You, you have established fairness**
UST You, Yahweh, have established what is fair
(אַתָּ֣ה כּוֹנַ֣נְתָּ מֵישָׁרִ֑ים)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you have established** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that Yahweh is the one who has established fairness. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [you are the one who has established fairness]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **you have established fairness**
UST You … have established what is fair
(כּוֹנַ֣נְתָּ מֵישָׁרִ֑ים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **fairness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [you have given us laws that are fair]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **you, you have done justice and righteousness**
UST You have acted justly and righteously
(מִשְׁפָּט וּצְדָקָה אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you have done** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that Yahweh is the one who has done justice and righteousness. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [you are the one who has done justice and righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **you have done justice and righteousness in Jacob**
UST have acted justly and righteously for the people of Israel
(מִשְׁפָּט וּצְדָקָה בְּיַעֲקֹב עָשִׂיתָ)

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: [everything that you have done for Jacob is just and right]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in Jacob**
UST for the people of Israel
(בְּיַעֲקֹב)

By **in Jacob**, the psalmist means in the land of Israel. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [in the land of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And the strength of | is a mighty |
| the king | Yahweh … king |
| he loves | {because} he loves |
| justice | what is just |
| you have established | You … have established |
| and righteousness | and righteously |
| in Jacob | for the people of Israel |

# Psalms 99:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Exalt Yahweh our God and worship at the stool for his feet. Holy {is} he.* | *Praise Yahweh, the God whom we worship! Bow down to him at {the temple, which is} his footstool. He is holy!* |

**ULT Exalt … and worship**
UST Praise … Bow down to him
(רוֹמְמוּ & וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ)

The command forms in this verse and verse 9 are plural, so use that form if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

**ULT and worship at the stool for his feet**
UST Bow down to him at {the temple, which is} his footstool
(וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לַהֲדֹם רַגְלָיו)

If it would be helpful, you could explain in the text or a footnote that the psalmist is continuing to picture Yahweh as sitting above the ark of the covenant, which is in his temple in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [and worship Yahweh before his throne in the temple]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Exalt | Praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| our God | the God whom we worship |
| and worship | Bow down to him |
| Holy | holy |

# Psalms 99:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Moses and Aaron {were} among his priests, and Samuel {was} among those calling his name. They called to Yahweh, and he, he answered them.* | *Moses and Aaron were two of his priests; Samuel also was someone who prayed to him. Those {three} cried out to Yahweh {to help them}, and he helped them.* |

ULT **{was} among those calling his name**
UST also was … him
(בְּקֹרְאֵי שְׁמֹו)

Here, **calling his name** represents praying to God or calling out to him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [was among those calling out to him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and he, he answered them**
UST and he helped them
(וְהוּא יַעֲנֵם)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **he** separately, even though the verb translated as **answered** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that Yahweh himself responded to Moses, Aaron, and Samuel. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [and he himself answered them]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **he answered them**
UST helped them
(יַעֲנֵם)

By **he answered them**, the psalmist means that God helped Moses, Aaron, and Samuel when they called out to him for assistance. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [he helped them]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Moses | Moses |
| and Aaron | and Aaron |
| {were} among his priests | were two of his priests |
| and Samuel | Samuel |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {was} among those calling | also was |
| They called | someone who prayed to |
| Yahweh | Yahweh {to help them} |

# Psalms 99:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In the pillar of cloud he spoke to them. They kept his testimonies and the statutes he gave to them.* | *He spoke to Moses and Aaron from the cloud that was {like} a {huge} pillar. They obeyed {all} the laws and commandments that he gave to them.* |

**ULT he spoke to them**
**UST** He spoke to Moses and Aaron
(וַיְדַבֵּר אֲלֵיהֶם)

The pronoun **them** refers to Moses and Aaron mentioned in the previous verse, since they were the ones whom Yahweh spoke to out of the cloud. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [he spoke to Moses and Aaron]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT They kept**
**UST** They obeyed
(שָׁמְרוּ)

The pronoun **They** probably includes Samuel here, along with Moses and Aaron, since Yahweh also spoke directly to him and he obeyed. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Moses, Aaron, and Samuel]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| In the pillar | that was {like} a {huge} pillar |
| his testimonies | {all} the laws |
| and the statutes | and commandments |

# Psalms 99:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh our God, you, you answered them. A forgiving God you were to them, but avenging concerning their deeds.* | *Yahweh, our God, you helped Moses, Aaron, and Samuel {when they cried out to you to help them}; you are the God who forgave them {for the sins that they had committed}, even though you punished them for the things that they did that were wrong.* |

**ULT** **our God**
**UST** our God
(אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean the God whom the people worship. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the God whom we worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT** **you, you answered them**
**UST** you helped Moses, Aaron, and Samuel when they cried out to you to help them
(אַתָּה עָנִיתָם)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you answered** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that God himself personally answered them. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [you answered them yourself]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT** **you answered them**
**UST** helped Moses, Aaron, and Samuel when they cried out to you to help them
(עָנִיתָם)

The pronoun **them** refers to Moses, Aaron, and Samuel. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [you answered Moses, Aaron, and Samuel]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **you answered them**
UST helped Moses, Aaron, and Samuel when they cried out to you to help them
(עֲנִיתָם)

The implication is that God answered Moses, Aaron, and Samuel by helping them when they called out to him in times of need. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [you helped them]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **their deeds**
UST the things that they did that were wrong
(עֲלִילוֹתָם)

Here the psalmist assumes that readers will know that **their deeds** refers to sinful or wrongful actions. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [their sinful deeds]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| A … God | the God |
| our God | our God |
| forgiving | who forgave … for the sins that they had committed |
| but avenging | even though you punished them |

# Psalms 99:9

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Exalt Yahweh our God, and worship at the hill of his holiness, for Yahweh our God is holy.* | *Praise Yahweh, our God, and worship him {at the temple} on his holy hill; {it is right to do that} because Yahweh, our God, is holy!* |

**ULT our God**
UST our God
(אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean the God whom the people worship. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the God whom we worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT at the hill of his holiness**
UST {at the temple} on his holy hill
(לְהַר קָדְשׁוֹ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **the hill** that is characterized by **his holiness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [at his holy hill]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT at the hill of his holiness**
UST {at the temple} on his holy hill
(לְהַר קָדְשׁוֹ)

By **the hill of his holiness**, the psalmist means the hill where God's holy temple is located. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [at the hill where his holy temple is located]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Exalt | Praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| our God | our God |
| and worship | and worship him |
| of his holiness | his holy |
| for … is holy | {it is right to do that} because … is holy |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| is holy | is holy |

# Psalms 100

## Psalm 100 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 100 is the last of this group of six “worship psalms” (Psalms 95–100).

1. Call to joyful praise (1–2)
2. Reason for worship: Yahweh is God (3)
3. Enter with thanksgiving and praise (4)
4. Yahweh’s character is the foundation of praise (5)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh’s care for his creation

God made mankind and takes good care of people.

# Psalms 100:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A psalm of thanksgiving. Shout to Yahweh, all the earth.* | *A psalm of thanksgiving. Everyone in the world should shout joyfully to Yahweh!* |

**ULT Shout to Yahweh**
**UST** should shout joyfully to Yahweh
(הָרִ֣יעוּ לַיהוָ֑ה)

The command forms such as **shout** are plural in this psalm because the psalmist is calling all people to praise God, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. See how "shout" is translated in Psalms 47:1. Alternate translation: [Raise a shout to Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

**ULT all the earth**
**UST** Everyone in the world
(כָּל־הָאָֽרֶץ)

Here, **all the earth** represents all the people who live on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all people on earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm | A psalm |
| to Yahweh | to Yahweh |

# Psalms 100:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Serve Yahweh with gladness; come to his face with rejoicing.* | *We should worship Yahweh gladly! We should come before him singing joyfully.* |

ULT **with gladness**
UST gladly
(בְּשִׂמְחָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **gladness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [gladly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to his face**
UST before him
(לְפָנָיו)

Here, **to his face** represents being in the presence of Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [into his presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **with rejoicing**
UST singing joyfully
(בִּרְנָנָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **rejoicing**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [singing joyful songs]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Serve | We should worship |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| with gladness | gladly |
| with rejoicing | singing joyfully |

# Psalms 100:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Know that Yahweh, he {is} God; he, he made us, and not we, his people and the sheep of his pasture.* | *We should acknowledge that Yahweh is God. It is he who made us; we did not make ourselves. We are the people who belong to him; we are like sheep that he cares for as a shepherd does.* |

ULT **Know**
UST We should acknowledge
(דְּעוּ)

The word translated as **Know** is a command. If, in your language, someone would not command someone else to know something, then use a form in your language that communicates an exhortation to fully realize something. Alternate translation: [Let us fully realize] or [You must believe that it is true]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Yahweh, he {is} God**
UST Yahweh is God
(יְהוָ֣ה ה֭וּא אֱלֹהִ֑ים)

The pronouns **Yahweh** and **he** both refer to God. The psalmist is stating the pronoun **he** separately, even though it could be omitted, in order to emphasize that it is Yahweh specifically who is God. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the emphasis here. Alternate translation: [it is Yahweh who is God]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **he, he made us**
UST It is he who made us
(הִ֭וּא־עָשָׂ֣נוּ)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **he** separately, even though the verb translated as **he made us** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that Yahweh is the one who made us and no one else. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [he is the one who made us]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and not we**
UST we did not make ourselves
(וְלֹא אֲנַחְנוּ)

Many ancient manuscripts read **and not we**. The ULT follows that reading. Other ancient manuscripts read “and we are his.” 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 we are his]

**Support Reference:** Textual Variants

ULT **and not we**
UST we did not make ourselves
(וְלֹא אֲנַחְנוּ)

The psalmist 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 it was not we who made ourselves]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and the sheep of his pasture**
UST we are like sheep that he cares for as a shepherd does
(וְצֹאן מַרְעִיתוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking here as if the people were actually **sheep** that belong to God. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he provides for us as though we were sheep in his pasture]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Know | We should acknowledge |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} God | is God |
| and the sheep | we are like sheep |

# Psalms 100:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him; bless his name.* | *Enter the gates {of his temple} thanking him; enter the courtyard {of his temple} singing songs to praise him! Thank him and praise him* |

ULT **with thanksgiving**
UST thanking him
(בְּתוֹדָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **thanksgiving**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [as you thank him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **with praise**
UST singing songs to praise him
(בִּתְהִלָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [as you praise him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **his name**
UST him
(שְׁמוֹ)

Here, **his name** represents who he is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his gates | the gates {of his temple} |
| and his courts | enter the courtyard {of his temple} |
| with praise | singing songs to praise him |
| bless | and praise |

# Psalms 100:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For Yahweh {is} good; his covenant faithfulness {is} to eternity and his truthfulness until generation and generation.* | *because Yahweh always does good things for us. He will faithfully love us forever, and he will always fulfill everything that he has promised.* |

ULT **For**
UST because
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [It is right to do this since]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **his covenant faithfulness {is} to eternity**
UST He will faithfully love us forever
(לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant faithfulness** and **eternity**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [he is eternally faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{is} to eternity**
UST forever
(לְעוֹלָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **eternity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [is everlasting]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **his truthfulness**
UST he will … fulfill everything that he has promised
(אֱמוּנָתוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **truthfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [he is trustworthy] or [he is truthful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and his truthfulness until generation and generation**
UST and he will always fulfill everything that he has promised
(וְעַד־דֹּר וָדֹר אֱמוּנָתֽוֹ)

The psalmist is using **generation and generation** as a common expression of his culture to mean “for all time” or “forever.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and his truthfulness endures for all time]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **and his truthfulness until generation and generation**
UST and he will always fulfill everything that he has promised
(וְעַד־דֹּר וָדֹר אֱמוּנָתֽוֹ)

The psalmist 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 truthfulness lasts until generation and generation]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} good | always does good things for us |
| his covenant faithfulness | He will faithfully love us |
| {is} to eternity | forever |
| generation | and … always |
| and generation | and … always |

# Psalms 101

## Psalm 101 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 101 is a psalm of David asking God's help to live as a person should. With God's help, David pledges to rule uprightly and to get rid of all evildoers.

1. David commits to upright life (1–2)
2. David rejects evil and deceit (3–7)
3. David promises justice and faithfulness (8)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Encouragement

David wanted to encourage all the good people in the land and restrain all the evil people. (See: evil, wicked, wickedness, unpleasant)

# Psalms 101:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A psalm of David I shall sing {of} covenant faithfulness and justice; to you, Yahweh, I shall sing praises.* | *David wrote this psalm. Yahweh, I will praise you with singing! I will sing that you are just and that you faithfully love us.* |

**ULT I shall sing**
**UST** I will sing
(אָשִׁירָה)

See the introduction to Psalms for an explanation of the word **shall**.

**ULT {of} covenant faithfulness and justice**
**UST** that you are just and that you faithfully love us
(חֶסֶד־וּמִשְׁפָּט)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant faithfulness** and **justice**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [about how you are always fair and promised to be faithful to us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm | wrote this psalm |
| of David | David |
| {of} covenant faithfulness | and that you faithfully love us |
| and justice | that you are just |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I shall sing praises | I will praise … with singing |

# Psalms 101:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I shall study the blameless way. When will you come to me? I will walk in the integrity of my heart within my house.* | *I will examine how to live in the right way. Yahweh, I need you to come and help me! In everything that I do in my household, I will sincerely try to do what is right.* |

ULT **the blameless way**
UST how to live in the right way
(בְּדֶרֶךְ תָּמִים)

By **the blameless way**, David means the way of living that is morally perfect and without fault. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the blameless way to live]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **When will you come to me**
UST Yahweh, I need you to come and help me
(מָתַי תָּבוֹא אֵלָי)

David is using the question form **When will you come to me** to emphasize the strength of his desire. 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 want you to come to me!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **I will walk**
UST I will … try to do
(אֶתְהַלֵּךְ)

David is speaking of how he will live his life as if it were the way in which he will **walk**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will behave]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the integrity of my heart**
UST sincerely … what is right
(בְּתֻם־לְבָבִי)

The phrase **in the integrity of my heart** was a common expression meaning "with complete honesty" or "with pure motives." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [being honest with everyone] or [with a clear conscience]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| blameless | right |
| in the integrity of | sincerely … what is right |
| my house | in my household |

# Psalms 101:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will not put a worthless thing before my eyes; I hate to do transgressions; it will not cling to me.* | *I will not tempt myself to do any bad thing. I hate any kind of sinful action; I will not allow myself to think about doing those things.* |

ULT **I will not put a worthless thing before my eyes**
UST I will not tempt myself to do any bad thing
(לֹא־אָשִׁית ׀ לְנֶגֶד עֵינַי דָּבָר־בְּלִיָּעַל)

David is using **put a worthless thing before my eyes** as a common expression of his culture to mean "consider doing a worthless thing" or "focus my attention on a worthless thing." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will not consider doing a worthless thing]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **to do transgressions**
UST any kind of sinful action
(עֲשֹׂה־סֵטִים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **transgressions**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [doing sinful things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **it will not cling to me**
UST I will not allow myself to think about doing those things
(לֹא יִדְבַּק בִּי)

David is speaking here as if wrongdoing were actually something physical that could **cling** to a person. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [doing transgressions will not be part of my behavior]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **it will not cling to me**
> UST I will not allow myself to think about doing those things
> (לֹא יִדְבַּק בִּי)

The pronoun **it** refers to the act of doing transgressions, seen in the previous clause. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [doing transgressions will not cling to me]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| a worthless thing | to do any bad thing |
| transgressions | any kind of sinful |

# Psalms 101:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A perverse heart will turn away from me; I will not know evil.* | *I will not be dishonest, and I will not do anything evil.* |

ULT **A perverse heart will turn away from me**
UST I will not be dishonest
(לֵבָב עִקֵּשׁ יָסוּר מִמֶּנִּי)

This could mean: (1) David will not allow himself to have a perverse heart. Alternate translation: [My heart will reject becoming perverse] or (2) David will not tolerate people with perverse hearts. Alternate translation: [People with perverse hearts will be far from me]

ULT **A perverse heart**
UST will not be dishonest
(לֵבָב עִקֵּשׁ)

Here David is speaking as if a person's intentions were his **heart**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Desiring to do perverse things]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **will turn away from me**
UST I will not be dishonest
(יָסוּר מִמֶּנִּי)

Here David is speaking as if perverse intentions were actually objects that could physically **turn away** from him. He means that he will not allow himself to be influenced by perverse thoughts or intentions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will avoid] or [I will not allow myself]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **I will not know evil**
UST and I will not do anything evil
(רָ֥ע לֹא אֵדָֽע)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evil**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [I will not know evil actions]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **I will not know evil**
UST and I will not do anything evil
(רָ֣ע לֹ֣א אֵדָֽע)

David is using **I will not know evil** as a common expression of his culture to mean "I will have nothing to do with evil." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will have nothing to do with evil] or [I will reject anything evil]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| perverse | will not be dishonest |
| I will … know | and I will … do |
| evil | anything evil |

# Psalms 101:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one slandering his neighbor in secret, him I will destroy. The {one} lofty of eyes and the {one} wide of heart, him I cannot.* | *I will get rid of anyone who secretly slanders someone else. I will not tolerate anyone who is proud or arrogant.* |

**ULT The one slandering his neighbor**
**UST** slanders someone else
(מְלוֹשְׁנִי & רֵעֵהוּ)

David is not referring to a specific person **slandering** a specific **neighbor**. He means people who slander neighbors in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Whoever slanders his neighbor]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**ULT The {one} lofty of eyes and the {one} wide of heart**
**UST** who is proud or arrogant
(גְּבַהּ־עֵינַיִם וּרְחַב לֵבָב)

The terms **lofty of eyes** and **wide of heart** mean similar things. David 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: [Any prideful person]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT The {one} lofty of eyes**
**UST** who is proud
(גְּבַהּ־עֵינַיִם)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **one lofty of eyes**. He means people with lofty eyes in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Whoever is lofty of eyes]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **The {one} lofty of eyes**
UST who is proud
(גְּבַהּ־עֵינַיִם)

David is using **lofty of eyes** as a common expression of his culture to mean “haughty” or “arrogant.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Any haughty person]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **and the {one} wide of heart**
UST or arrogant
(וּרְחַב לֵבָב)

David is not referring to a specific **one wide of heart**. He means all people with this characteristic. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and whoever is wide of heart]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **and the {one} wide of heart**
UST or arrogant
(וּרְחַב לֵבָב)

David is using **wide of heart** as a common expression of his culture to mean “proud” or “arrogant.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and any proud person]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **him I cannot**
UST I will not tolerate anyone
(אֹתּוֹ לֹא אוּכָל)

David is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. The full meaning is **him I cannot** tolerate or stand. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [him I cannot stand] or [him I cannot tolerate]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The one slandering | slanders |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his neighbor | someone else |
| I will destroy | I will get rid of |
| The {one} lofty of | who is proud |

# Psalms 101:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My eyes {are} on the faithful {ones} of the land to sit with me; The {one} walking in the way of integrity, he may serve me.* | *I look for people in this land who are loyal to God to help me rule {this nation}. Only people who behave honestly may work for me.* |

ULT **My eyes {are} on the faithful {ones} of**
UST I look for people … who are loyal to God
(עֵינַי ׀ בְּנֶאֱמְנֵי)

Here, **My eyes are on** represents David's attention or focus. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am seeking the faithful ones of]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to sit with me**
UST to help me rule {this nation}
(לָשֶׁבֶת עִמָּדִי)

The implication is that these faithful people will **sit with** David as advisors or officials in positions of authority. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [to rule under my authority]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **The {one} walking in the way of integrity**
UST Only people who behave honestly
(הֹלֵךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ תָּמִים)

Here David is speaking of living with integrity as if integrity were a path for his **walking**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [The one living with integrity]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **The {one} walking**
UST Only people who behave
(הֹלֵךְ)

David is not referring to a specific **one walking**. He means anyone walking in the way of integrity in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Anyone walking]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {are} on the faithful {ones} of | people … who are loyal to God |
| integrity | honestly |
| may serve me | may work for me |

# Psalms 101:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A doer of deceit will not remain within my house; a speaker of lies will not be established before my eyes.* | *I will not allow anyone who deceives others {to work} in my palace, and I will not allow anyone who tells lies to continue working for me.* |

ULT **A doer of deceit will not remain within my house; a speaker of lies will not be established before my eyes**
UST I will not allow anyone who deceives others {to work} in my palace, and I will not allow anyone who tells lies to continue working for me
(לֹא־יֵשֵׁב ׀ בְּקֶרֶב בֵּיתִי֮ עֹשֵׂה רְמִיָּה דֹּבֵר שְׁקָרִים לֹא־יִכּוֹן לְנֶגֶד עֵינָי)

These two phrases **A doer of deceit will not remain within my house** and **a speaker of lies will not be established before my eyes** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [A doer of deceit will not remain within my house, no, a speaker of lies will not be established before my eyes]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **A doer of deceit**
UST anyone who deceives others
(עֹשֵׂה רְמִיָּה)

David is not referring to a specific **doer of deceit**. He means deceitful people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Any doer of deceit]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **a speaker of lies**
UST anyone who tells lies
(דֹּבֵר שְׁקָרִים)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **speaker of lies**. He means speakers of lies in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [any speaker of lies]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **within my house**
UST {to work} in my palace
(בְּקֶרֶב בֵּיתִי)

The implication is that David is referring to his royal court or household staff, not just the physical building. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [as a member of my staff]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **will not be established**
UST and I will not allow … to continue working
(לֹא־יִכּוֹן)

The expression **will not be established** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I will not tolerate]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **before my eyes**
UST for me
(לְנֶגֶד עֵינָי)

Here, **before my eyes** represents "in my presence" or "under my supervision." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in my presence] or [under my supervision]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| deceit | anyone who deceives others |
| my house | my palace |
| lies | lies |
| will … be established | and I will … allow … to continue working |

# Psalms 101:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In the mornings I will destroy all the wicked of the land, to cut off all workers of evil from the city of Yahweh.* | *I will start every day by working to get rid of all of the wicked people in this land. I will expel everyone who does what is evil from this city that belongs to Yahweh.* |

ULT **In the mornings**
UST I will start every day
(לַבְּקָרִים)

By **In the mornings**, the psalmist means that he will consistently and regularly destroy the wicked, day after day. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Morning by morning] or [Each morning]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the wicked of**
UST wicked people
(רִשְׁעֵי)

The psalmist 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: [those who are wicked of]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **to cut off**
UST I will expel
(לְהַכְרִית)

The psalmist is using **cut off** as a common expression of the culture to mean “remove.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to remove]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **workers of evil**
UST who does what is evil
(פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evil**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [evildoers] or [people who do evil things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **from the city of Yahweh**
UST from this city that belongs to Yahweh
(מֵעִיר־יְהוָה)

The implication is that this **city** is Jerusalem, where God dwells with his people. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [from this city, which is Yahweh's city]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| I will destroy | by working to get rid of |
| the wicked of | wicked people |
| the land | in this land |
| evil | what is evil |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 102

## Psalm 102 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 102 is a “lament.”

1. Cry of distress and plea for mercy (1–11)
2. Confidence in Yahweh’s eternal purposes and mercy (12–17)
3. Call to record and remember Yahweh’s mercies (18–22)
4. Yahweh sustains and remains unchanging (23–28)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Salvation

The psalmist does not want to die young. He also wants to see Jerusalem saved. (See: save, saved, safe, salvation, rescue)

# Psalms 102:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hear my prayer, Yahweh; let my cry come unto you.* | *Yahweh, please listen to me when I pray to you; yes, please be attentive as I cry out to you!* |

ULT **Hear my prayer, Yahweh; let my cry come unto you**
UST Yahweh, please listen to me when I pray to you; yes, please be attentive as I cry out to you
(יְהוָה שִׁמְעָה תְפִלָּתִי וְשַׁוְעָתִי אֵלֶיךָ תָּבוֹא)

These two phrases **Hear my prayer, Yahweh** and **let my cry come unto you** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [Hear my prayer, Yahweh, as I cry out to you]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Hear my prayer**
UST please listen to me when I pray to you
(שִׁמְעָה תְפִלָּתִי)

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: [Please hear my prayer]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **let my cry come unto you**
UST yes, please be attentive as I cry out to you
(וְשַׁוְעָתִי אֵלֶיךָ תָּבוֹא)

The psalmist is speaking of **my cry** as if it were a living thing that could come to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [pay attention to what I cry to you]

**Support Reference:** Personification

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my prayer | when I pray to you |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my cry | yes … as I cry out |

# Psalms 102:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not hide your face from me on the day it distresses me. Incline your ear to me. On the day I call out, hurry, answer me.* | *When distressing things happen to me, please do not ignore me! Listen to me, and answer me quickly as soon as I call out to you!* |

**ULT Do not hide your face from me**
**UST** please do not ignore me
(אַל־תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ ׀ מִמֶּנִּי)

The psalmist is using **hide your face from me** as a common expression of his culture to mean "ignore me" or "reject me." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Do not turn your back on me] or [Do not reject me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT it distresses me**
**UST** distressing things happen to me
(צַר לִי)

Here the pronoun **it** could refer to: (1) any distressing thing in general. Alternate translation: [when things distress me] or (2) "the day" mentioned just before it. Alternate translation: [that distresses me]

**Support Reference:** Reflexive Pronouns

**ULT on the day … On the day**
**UST** When … as soon as
(בְּיוֹם & בְּיוֹם)

The phrase **on the day** appears twice in this verse with slightly different meanings. The first occurrence refers to any time when distressing things happen, while the second occurrence refers to the specific moment when the psalmist calls out to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use different expressions to distinguish between these general and specific time references, such as "when" for the first occurrence and "as soon as" or "the moment" for the second. Alternate translation: [when … At the time]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Incline your ear to me**
UST Listen to me
(הַטֵּה־אֵלַי אָזְנֶךָ)

The psalmist is using **Incline your ear to me** as a common expression of his culture to mean “pay attention to me” or “listen carefully to me.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Pay attention to me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| it distresses | distressing things happen |
| I call out | I call out to you |

# Psalms 102:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For my days expire like smoke, and my bones are charred like a fireplace.* | *Please hurry because my life is ending as quickly as smoke that disappears; my body feels like a fire is burning it.* |

ULT **For**
UST Please hurry because
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Do this because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **my days expire like smoke**
UST my life is ending as quickly as smoke that disappears
(כָּלוּ בָעָשָׁן יָמָי)

Here, **my days** refers to the author's life, and the idea of **smoke** is something that quickly disappears. Alternate translation: [my life passes away quickly]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **and my bones are charred like a fireplace**
UST my body feels like a fire is burning it
(וַעֲצָמוֹתַי כְּמוֹקֵד נָחָרוּ)

The psalmist is speaking as if his bones were actually **charred like a fireplace**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [and my bones feel like they are charred like a fireplace]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and my bones are charred like a fireplace**
UST my body feels like a fire is burning it
(וַעֲצָמוֹתַי כְּמוֹקֵד נָחָרוּ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a fireplace** becomes blackened and charred from repeated burning of fires in it, so the psalmist's **bones** feel burned and damaged from his suffering. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and my bones are charred like a fireplace that has had many fires in it]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **and my bones are charred like a fireplace**
UST my body feels like a fire is burning it
(וַעֲצָמוֹתַי כְּמוֹקֵד נָחָרוּ)

The expression **are charred** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and it feels like fire has charred my bones as it chars a fireplace]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

# Psalms 102:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My heart is struck like grass and withered, for I have forgotten to eat my bread.* | *I feel as though I am withering away like grass that the sun has scorched. You see, I do not even remember to eat any food.* |

**ULT My heart is struck like grass and withered**
**UST** I feel as though I am withering away like grass that the sun has scorched
(הוּכָּה־כָעֵשֶׂב וַיִּבַּשׁ לִבִּי)

The psalmist is using one part of himself, his **heart**, to mean all of himself in the act of withering away. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am struck like grass and withered]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT My heart is struck like grass and withered**
**UST** I feel as though I am withering away like grass that the sun has scorched
(הוּכָּה־כָעֵשֶׂב וַיִּבַּשׁ לִבִּי)

The psalmist is speaking here as if his heart were actually **grass** that has been **struck** and **withered**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [I feel as though my heart has been struck like grass and withered]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT My heart is struck like grass and withered**
**UST** I feel as though I am withering away like grass that the sun has scorched
(הוּכָּה־כָעֵשֶׂב וַיִּבַּשׁ לִבִּי)

Here the psalmist is making a comparison between his heart and grass to show how he feels. The point of this comparison is that just as **grass** becomes **withered** when it is struck down, so the psalmist's **heart** has become weak and almost lifeless. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [My heart feels as dead as grass that has been struck down and dried out]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **My heart is struck like grass and withered**
UST I feel as though I am withering away like grass that the sun has scorched
(הוּכָּה־כָעֵשָׂב וַיִּבַּשׁ לִבִּי)

The expression **My heart is struck like grass and withered** uses passive verbal forms. If your language would not use those forms, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [My heart feels as dead as grass that the sun has killed and dried]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **for**
UST You see
(כִּי)

Here the word **for** introduces not a reason but an explanation. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [indeed,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **my bread**
UST any food
(לַחְמִי)

The psalmist 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]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my bread | any food |

# Psalms 102:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *From the voice of my groaning, my bone clings to my flesh.* | *I groan aloud so much that my bones protrude under my skin.* |

> **ULT From the voice of my groaning**
> UST I groan aloud so much
> (מִקּוֹל אַנְחָתִי)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **voice** that is characterized by **groaning**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [From my loud groans]

**Support Reference:** Possession

> **ULT my bone clings**
> UST that my bones protrude
> (דָּבְקָה עַצְמִי)

The psalmist is using the singular **bone** to refer to all of his bones in the act of becoming extremely thin from distress. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my bones cling]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

# Psalms 102:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I am like an owl of the wilderness; I have become like a screech owl in the ruins.* | *I am {lonely and despised} like an owl in the desert; I have become like a screech owl in the ruins {of a town}.* |

ULT **I am like an owl of the wilderness; I have become like a screech owl in the ruins**
UST I am {lonely and despised} like an owl in the desert; I have become like a screech owl in the ruins {of a town … }
(דָּמִיתִי לְקָאַת מִדְבָּר הָיִיתִי כְּכוֹס חָרָבוֹת)

The psalmist is using two comparisons to describe his lonely and desolate condition. The point of those two comparisons is that just as **an owl of the wilderness** and **a screech owl in the ruins** are solitary creatures in desolate places, so is the psalmist in his distress. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [I have become as solitary and lonely as an owl of the wilderness or as a screech owl in the ruins]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **an owl of the wilderness**
UST lonely and despised … an owl in the desert
(לְקָאַת מִדְבָּר)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **an owl** that is characterized by **the wilderness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [an owl that lives in the wilderness]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **an owl**
UST lonely and despised … an owl
(לְקָאַת)

The word translated as “owl” here is obscure. Most scholars believe that the word refers to a type of owl. The ancient Greek translation used the word for “pelican” here, and that was followed by some older versions, although a pelican is a water bird that cannot live in a dry wilderness. If “pelican” is correct, then the psalmist is saying that he feels as though he is living in a place where he cannot survive. If “owl” is correct, then the psalmist is saying that he feels alone and abandoned. You may want to use the word that the major translation in your area uses.

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of the wilderness | in the desert |
| in the ruins | in the ruins {of a town} |

# Psalms 102:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I am alert, and I have become like a bird alone on a roof.* | *I lie awake {at night}; I am like a lonely bird sitting on a housetop.* |

ULT **I am alert**
UST I lie awake {at night}
(שָׁקַדְתִּי)

This could mean: (1) The psalmist is awake when he would like to be sleeping. Alternate translation: [I am unable to sleep] or (2) The psalmist is watching for Yahweh to answer him. Alternate translation: [I am watching]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and I have become like a bird alone**
UST I am like a lonely bird
(וָאֶהְיֶה כְּצִפּוֹר בּוֹדֵד)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a bird alone** is solitary and isolated, so is the psalmist. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and I have become as solitary as a bird alone]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I am alert | I lie awake {at night} |

# Psalms 102:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My enemies taunt me all the day; those mocking me swear by me.* | *During the whole of each day my enemies insult me. Those who make fun of me use my name when they curse people, saying, "May you be like him."* |

**ULT swear by me**

**UST** use my name when they curse people, saying, "May you be like him

(בִּי נִשְׁבָּעוּ)

By **swear by me**, the psalmist means that his enemies use his name as a curse, saying something like "May you become as miserable as he is." You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [refer to me when they curse people]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My enemies | my enemies |
| taunt me | insult me |
| those mocking me | Those who make fun of me |
| swear by me | use my name when they curse people, saying, "May you be like him |
| swear | when they curse people, saying, "May you be like him |

# Psalms 102:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *As ashes as bread I eat, and I mix my drink with weeping* | *It feels as though you have picked me up and thrown me away! Because you are so very angry with me, my food tastes like ashes and my tears fall into my drink. (vv9-10)* |

**ULT As ashes as bread**
(כִּי־אֵפֶר כַּלֶּחֶם)

The psalmist is speaking as if eating his **bread** were the same as eating **ashes**. He means that his food has no taste or appeal because of his deep sorrow and distress. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Bread and ashes taste the same to me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT As ashes as bread**
(כִּי־אֵפֶר כַּלֶּחֶם)

The psalmist 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: [My food is as ashes]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT with weeping**
(בִּבְכִי)

Here, **weeping** represents tears. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [with my tears]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT and I mix my drink**
(וְשִׁקֻּוַי מָסָכְתִּי)

The implication is that the psalmist's drink is mixed with his tears because he is weeping. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and my drink becomes mixed]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| as bread | כַּלֶּחֶם (ORIG QUOTE) |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| with weeping | בְּבְכִי (ORIG QUOTE) |

# Psalms 102:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *from the face of your fury and rage, for you have lifted me up and thrown me.* | *It feels as though you have picked me up and thrown me away! Because you are so very angry with me, my food tastes like ashes and my tears fall into my drink. (vv9-10)* |

**ULT from the face of your fury and rage, for you have lifted me up and thrown me**
(מִפְּנֵי־זַעְמְךָ וְקִצְפֶּךָ כִּי נְשָׂאתַנִי וַתַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי)

If it is more natural in your language to state the reason before the result, you could do so by moving this sentence to the previous verse. You would then present the combined verses as 102:9–10. Alternate translation: [because of your fury and rage, for you have lifted me up and thrown me, I eat ashes like bread and mix my drink with weeping]

**Support Reference:** Verse Bridges

**ULT from the face of**
(מִפְּנֵי)

The psalmist is using **from the face of** as a common expression of the culture to mean "because of" or "on account of." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [because of]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT your fury and rage**
(זַעְמְךָ וְקִצְפֶּךָ)

The phrase **fury and rage** expresses a single idea. The word **fury** tells more about the **rage**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [your furious rage]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

**ULT for**
(כִּי)

Here the word **for** introduces not a reason but an explanation. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [you see,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

**ULT you have lifted me up and thrown me**
(נָשָׂאתַנִי וַתַּשְׁלִיכֵנִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if God had literally **lifted** him **up** and **thrown** him away like an object. He means that he feels as though God has rejected and abandoned him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I feel like you have lifted me up and thrown me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your fury | זַעַמְךָ (ORIG QUOTE) |
| and rage | וְקִצְפֶּךָ (ORIG QUOTE) |

# Psalms 102:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My days {are} like a lengthening shadow, and I, like grass, have withered.* | *My time to remain alive is {coming to an end} like an evening shadow {that will soon be gone}. I have withered as grass withers {in the hot sun}.* |

ULT **My days {are}**
UST My time to remain alive
(יָמַי)

By **My days are** the psalmist means his remaining time to live. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [My remaining life is]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **My days {are} like a lengthening shadow**
UST My time to remain alive is {coming to an end} like an evening shadow {that will soon be gone … }
(יָמַי כְּצֵל נָטוּי)

The psalmist is making a comparison. The point of this comparison is that just as **a lengthening shadow** grows longer and fainter as evening approaches, and then it disappears, so **My days** are coming to an end. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [My days are ending like an evening shadow ends the day]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **and I, like grass, have withered**
UST I have withered as grass withers {in the hot sun}
(וַאֲנִי כָּעֵשֶׂב אִיבָשׁ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **grass** withers and dies, so the psalmist views himself as withering and dying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and I am dying as grass dies under the hot sun]

**Support Reference:** Simile

# Psalms 102:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But you, Yahweh, sit forever, and your remembrance {is} to generation and generation.* | *But Yahweh, you will rule forever on your royal throne; people of all times will talk about you.* |

ULT **sit forever**
UST will rule forever on your royal throne
(לְעוֹלָם תֵּשֵׁב)

By **sit forever** the psalmist means that Yahweh sits on a throne to rule as king forever. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [sit on your throne as king forever]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and your remembrance {is}**
UST will talk about you
(וְזִכְרְךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **remembrance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and you will be well-known]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to generation and generation**
UST people of all times
(לְדֹר וָדֹר)

The psalmist is using **to generation and generation** as a common expression of his culture to mean “throughout all generations” or “forever.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [throughout all generations]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | But Yahweh |
| forever | forever |
| to generation | people of all times |
| and generation | people of all times |

# Psalms 102:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You, you will arise, you will have mercy on Zion; for {it is} the time to favor her; for the appointed time has come.* | *You yourself will now act and be merciful to the people of Jerusalem; you will do this because it is now the time that you have set for you to be kind to them.* |

ULT **You, you will arise**
UST You yourself will now act
(אַתָּה תָקוּם)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **You** separately, even though the verb translated as **you will arise** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that it is God who will act to show mercy to Zion. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the emphasis here. Alternate translation: [It will be you who will now arise]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **you will arise**
UST You … will now act
(תָקוּם)

The psalmist is using **you will arise** as a common expression of the culture to indicate that God is about to begin taking action to help his people. He does not mean that God is getting out of bed or standing up from a seated position. If this expression does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you will go into action] or [you will do something]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Zion**
UST to the people of Jerusalem
(צִיּוֹן)

Here, **Zion** represents the people who live there. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people of Zion]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **you will have mercy on**
UST and be merciful
(תְּרַחֵם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **mercy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [you will act mercifully toward]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the appointed time**
UST that you have set
(מוֹעֵד)

The expression **the appointed time** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [the time that you have appointed]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| you will have mercy on | and be merciful |
| Zion | to the people of Jerusalem |
| {it is} the time | it is now the time |
| to favor her | for you to be kind to them |
| the appointed time | that you have set |
| the appointed time | that you have set |

# Psalms 102:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For your servants cherish her stones and favor her dust.* | *It is true that we who serve you love everything about Jerusalem.* |

ULT **For**
UST It is true that
(כִּֽי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation. You may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [After all,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **For your servants cherish her stones and favor her dust**
UST It is true that we who serve you love everything about Jerusalem
(כִּֽי־רָצ֣וּ עֲבָדֶ֣יךָ אֶת־אַבְנֶ֑יהָ וְאֶת־עֲפָרָ֥הּ יְחֹנֵֽנוּ)

The psalmist says **your servants cherish her stones and favor her dust** as an extreme statement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [For your servants absolutely love the city of Jerusalem]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **For your servants cherish her stones and favor her dust**
UST It is true that we who serve you love everything about Jerusalem
(כִּֽי־רָצ֣וּ עֲבָדֶ֣יךָ אֶת־אַבְנֶ֑יהָ וְאֶת־עֲפָרָ֥הּ יְחֹנֵֽנוּ)

The psalmist is referring to all of Jerusalem by naming two components that are opposite in size, **her stones** and **her dust**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [For your servants love all of the city]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **your servants**
UST we who serve you
(עֲבָדֶ֣יךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of himself and his people in the third person as **your servants** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person. Alternate translation: [we, your people,]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your servants | we who serve you |
| her stones | everything about Jerusalem |
| favor | everything about Jerusalem |

# Psalms 102:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The nations will fear the name of Yahweh, and all the kings of the earth, your glory.* | *Yahweh, someday the people of all nations will revere you, and all the kings on the earth will recognize how very glorious you are.* |

**ULT** **The nations**
**UST** the people of all nations
(גּוֹיִם)

Here, **The nations** represents the people of the nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [The people of the nations]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT** **will fear**
**UST** someday … will revere
(וְיִירְאוּ)

The word translated as **fear** includes the sense of awe and respect. Use a word that includes these ideas, if possible. Alternate translation: [will deeply respect]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT** **the name of Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh … you
(אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה)

Here, **name** represents who Yahweh is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [who Yahweh is]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT** **and all the kings of the earth, your glory**
**UST** and all the kings on the earth will recognize how very glorious you are
(וְכָל־מַלְכֵי הָאָרֶץ אֶת־כְּבוֹדֶךָ)

The psalmist 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 all the kings of the earth will fear your glory]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **your glory**
UST how very glorious you are
(אֶת־כְּבוֹדֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [you, because you are glorious]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The nations | the people of all nations |
| will fear | someday … will revere |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the kings of | the kings on |
| your glory | how very glorious you are |

# Psalms 102:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For Yahweh builds Zion; he appears in his glory.* | *You see, it is Yahweh who builds Jerusalem; he will appear {there} gloriously.* |

ULT **For**
UST You see
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation. You may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [After all,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **he appears in his glory**
UST he will appear {there} gloriously
(נִרְאָה בִּכְבוֹדוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [he is glorious as he appears]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | it is Yahweh |
| Zion | Jerusalem |
| in his glory | gloriously |

# Psalms 102:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He turns to the prayer of the destitute and he does not despise their prayer.* | *Yahweh listens to the prayers of {his} people who are homeless. He does not ignore them when they pray for him to help them.* |

ULT **He turns to the prayer of the destitute and he does not despise their prayer**
UST Yahweh listens to the prayers of {his} people who are homeless. He does not ignore them when they pray for him to help them
(פָּנָה אֶל־תְּפִלַּת הָעַרְעָר וְלֹא־בָזָה אֶת־תְּפִלָּתָם)

These two phrases **He turns to the prayer of the destitute** and **he does not despise their prayer** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [He turns to the prayer of the destitute; certainly, he does not despise their prayer]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **He turns to**
UST Yahweh listens to
(פָּנָה אֶל)

The psalmist is speaking as if God were physically **turning** himself toward the prayers of the destitute. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. If not, you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [He pays attention to]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the prayer of the destitute**
UST the prayers of {his} people who are homeless
(תְּפִלַּת הָעַרְעָר)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **prayer** that is characterized by **the destitute**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the destitute when he prays]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **and he does not despise their prayer**
UST He does not ignore them when they pray for him to help them
(וְלֹא־בָזָה אֶת־תְּפִלָּתָם)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word **despise**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [and he accepts their prayer]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the prayer of | the prayers of {his} people |
| their prayer | when they pray for him to help them |

# Psalms 102:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *This will be written for a future generation, and a people being created will praise Yah;* | *I will write these things down so that people in future years will know {what he has done}, {in order that} people who are not born yet will praise Yahweh.* |

**ULT This will be written**
**UST** I will write these things down
(תִּכָּתֵב זֹאת)

The expression **This will be written** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that 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 indicates that it is the psalmist. Alternate translation: [I will write this]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT and a people being created**
**UST** {in order that} people who are not born yet
(וְעַם נִבְרָא)

The expression **a people being created** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [and a people whom Yahweh is still creating]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT Yah**
**UST** Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name “Yahweh,” the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for a … generation | so that people in future years will know {what he has done} |
| being created | who are not born yet |
| will praise | will praise |
| Yah | Yahweh |

# Psalms 102:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *that he looked down from the height of his holiness; Yahweh from heaven regarded the earth,* | *{They will describe} how Yahweh looked down from his holy place in heaven and saw {what was happening on} the earth.* |

ULT **that**
UST {They will describe} how
(כִּי)

The connecting word **that** introduces the content of the praise mentioned in the previous verse. Use a way that is natural in your language to introduce what the praise is about. Alternate translation: [They will say that]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **that he looked down from the height of his holiness; Yahweh from heaven regarded the earth**
UST { … They will describe} how Yahweh looked down from his holy place in heaven and saw {what was happening on} the earth
(כִּי־הִשְׁקִיף מִמְּרוֹם קָדְשׁוֹ יְהוָה מִשָּׁמַיִם ׀ אֶל־אֶרֶץ הִבִּיט)

These two phrases **that he looked down from the height of his holiness** and **Yahweh from heaven regarded the earth** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [that he looked down from the height of his holiness; yes, Yahweh from heaven regarded the earth,]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **from the height of his holiness**
UST from his holy place
(מִמְּרוֹם קָדְשׁוֹ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **height** that is characterized by **holiness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from his holy high-place]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **from the height of his holiness**
UST from his holy place
(מִמְּרוֹם קָדְשׁוֹ)

The phrase **the height of his holiness** refers to heaven, where God dwells. The psalmist assumes that readers will understand that this is describing God's holy dwelling place above the earth. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [from heaven]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the earth**
UST and … { … on} the earth
(אֶל־אֶרֶץ)

Here, **the earth** represents the people living on earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the people living on earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| his holiness | his holy |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| from heaven | in heaven |
| the earth | and … { … on} the earth |

# Psalms 102:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to release the sons of execution.* | *Yahweh looked down in order to help the groaning prisoners. He looked down in order to set free the people whom their enemies were about to kill.* |

**ULT to hear … to release**
**UST** Yahweh looked down in order to help … He looked down in order to set free
(לִשְׁמֹעַ & לְפַתֵּחַ)

Here, **to hear** and **to release** mark these clauses as the goal or purpose of Yahweh looking down from heaven. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that he could hear … so that he could release]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

**ULT to hear**
**UST** Yahweh looked down in order to help
(לִשְׁמֹעַ)

By **to hear**, the psalmist means to respond to and help. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [to respond to] or [to relieve]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT the sons of execution**
**UST** the people whom their enemies were about to kill
(בְּנֵי תְמוּתָה)

The psalmist is using **sons of execution** as a common expression of the culture to indicate people who have a certain characteristic. In this case, these people have the characteristic of being condemned to death. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those doomed to die] or [those who would soon be executed]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to release | He looked down in order to set free |

# Psalms 102:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To recount the name of Yahweh in Zion and his praise in Jerusalem* | *As a result, people in Jerusalem will tell what Yahweh has done and praise him for it.* |

ULT **To recount the name of Yahweh in Zion and his praise in Jerusalem**
UST As a result, people in Jerusalem will tell what Yahweh has done and praise him for it
(לְסַפֵּר בְּצִיּוֹן שֵׁם יְהוָה וּתְהִלָּתוֹ בִּירוּשָׁלָם)

These two phrases **to recount the name of Yahweh in Zion** and **his praise in Jerusalem** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [to extol and praise the name of Yahweh in Zion]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the name of Yahweh**
UST what Yahweh has done
(שֵׁם יְהוָה)

Here, **the name of Yahweh** represents Yahweh's reputation or who he is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the great things that Yahweh is known for]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and his praise in Jerusalem**
UST in Jerusalem … and praise him for it
(וּתְהִלָּתוֹ בִּירוּשָׁלָם)

The psalmist 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 to recount his praise in Jerusalem]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and his praise**
UST and praise him for it
(וּתְהִלָּתוֹ)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean praise that is given to him. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and to praise him]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| To recount | As a result … will tell |
| of Yahweh | Yahweh |
| in Zion | people |
| and his praise | and praise him for it |
| in Jerusalem | in Jerusalem |

# Psalms 102:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *when peoples and kingdoms gather together to serve Yahweh.* | *This will happen when many peoples, including those from other kingdoms, gather to worship Yahweh together.* |

**ULT peoples and kingdoms**
**UST** many peoples, including those from other kingdoms
(עַמִּים & מַמְלָכוֹת)

The phrase **peoples and kingdoms** expresses a single idea. The word **kingdoms** tells more about **peoples**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [peoples from many kingdoms]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| when … gather | This will happen when … gather |
| and kingdoms | including those from other kingdoms |
| to serve | to worship |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 102:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He has broken my strength on the road. He has shortened my days.* | *{But now} he has caused me to become weak while I am still young; {I think that} I will not remain alive very long.* |

**ULT He has broken my strength**
**UST** {But now} he has caused me to become weak
(עִנָּה & כֹּחִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if his physical vitality were actually an object that God could **break**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He has weakened my body]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT on the road**
**UST** while I am still young
(בַּדָּרֶךְ)

The psalmist is speaking of his life as if it were actually **the road** that he was traveling along. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in the middle of my life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT my days**
**UST** {I think that} I will not remain alive very long
(יָמָי)

Here, **days** represents the psalmist's lifetime. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my lifetime]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

# Psalms 102:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I said, "My God, do not take me away in the middle of my days; your years {are} a generation of generations.* | *I say {to you}, "My God, do not let me die when I am only half-way through my lifetime! In contrast, you live forever!* |

**ULT do not take me away**
**UST** do not let me die
(אַל־תַּעֲלֵנִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if God would literally **take** him somewhere. He means that God would cause him to die. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [do not end my life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT my days**
**UST** my lifetime
(יָמַי)

Here, **days** represents "life." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my life]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT your years {are}**
**UST** In contrast, you live
(שְׁנוֹתֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking as if God's eternal existence were actually **years**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your lifespan is]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **a generation of generations**
UST forever
(בְּדֹ֣ר דֹּרִ֑ים)

The psalmist is using **a generation of generations** as a common expression of his culture to mean “forever” or “for all time.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [forever] or [unending]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **a generation of generations**
UST forever
(בְּדֹ֣ר דֹּרִ֑ים)

Some translations mark the end of this verse as the place where the direct quotation ends. Other translations consider that the direct quotation continues until the end of the psalm. You may wish to follow what the major translation in your area does.

**Support Reference:** Quote Markings

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| My God | My God |
| my days | my lifetime |
| your years {are} | In contrast, you live |
| a generation of | forever |
| generations | forever |

# Psalms 102:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Formerly you set the earth, and the heavens {are} the work of your hands.* | *You created the world long ago, and you are the one who made the heavens.* |

**ULT you set the earth**
**UST** You created the world
(הָאָרֶץ יָסַדְתָּ)

The psalmist is speaking as if the earth were actually **set** in place like an object that someone positions or establishes. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you made the earth what it is]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and the heavens {are} the work of your hands**
**UST** and you are the one who made the heavens
(וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ שָׁמָיִם)

Here, **hands** represents the power and creative ability of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the heavens are your creative work]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| you set | You created |
| the heavens {are} | the heavens |

# Psalms 102:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They, they will perish, but you, you will stand, and all of them will wear out like a garment; like clothing, you will pass them off, and they will pass away.* | *As for the earth and the heavens, they will disappear, but as for you, you will remain. All of it will wear out as clothes wear out. You will get rid of them as people get rid of old clothes, and they will no longer exist.* |

ULT **They, they will perish**
UST As for the earth and the heavens, they will disappear
(הֵ֭מָּה יֹאבֵ֣דוּ)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **They** separately, even though the verb translated as **they will perish** already contains that meaning. He is doing that for emphasis because he is contrasting the earth and heavens (which will perish) with God (who will remain). If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing that meaning here. Alternate translation: [As for them, they will perish]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **They, they will perish**
UST As for the earth and the heavens, they will disappear
(הֵ֭מָּה יֹאבֵ֣דוּ)

The pronouns **they** and **them** in this verse refers to the earth and the heavens mentioned in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The heavens and the earth will perish]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **but you, you will stand**
UST but as for you, you will remain
(וְאַתָּ֣ה תַעֲמֹ֑ד)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you will stand** already includes this meaning. He is doing that for emphasis because he is contrasting the permanence of God with the temporary nature of the heavens and the earth. If a speaker of your language would use explicit pronouns for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing that meaning here. Alternate translation: [but you, in contrast, will stand]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **you will stand**
UST you will remain
(תַּעֲמֹד)

The psalmist is speaking as if God would physically **stand**. This means that he will continue or endure. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you will continue] or [you will exist always]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **you will pass them off, and they will pass away**
UST You will get rid of them … and they will no longer exist
(תַּחֲלִיפֵם וְיַחֲלֹפוּ)

The psalmist is repeating forms of the same verb, translated here as **pass**, in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [you will completely remove them, and they will be completely gone]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| they will perish | they will disappear |

# Psalms 102:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But you {are} he, and your years will not end.* | *But you are Yahweh; you will always be.* |

**ULT But you {are} he**
**UST** But you are Yahweh
(וְאַתָּה־הוּא)

The pronoun **he** refers to Yahweh, the God who always is. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [But you are the one who is]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and your years**
**UST** you will always be
(וּשְׁנוֹתֶיךָ)

Here, **years** represents "existence" or "life." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and your existence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and your years | you will always be |

# Psalms 102:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The sons of your servants will abide, and their seed will be established to your face.”* | *The children of those who worship you will live safely {in Jerusalem}, and you will protect their descendants as they live in your presence.”* |

**ULT will abide**
**UST** will live safely {in Jerusalem}
(יִשְׁכֹּונוּ)

The implication is that the descendants will be safe and secure under God’s protection. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [will dwell securely]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT and their seed**
**UST** and … their descendants
(וְזַרְעָם)

The psalmist is speaking as if the people who will descend from God’s servants were actually their **seed**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and their descendants] or [and their children]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and their seed will be established**
**UST** and you will protect their descendants
(וְזַרְעָם & יִכֹּון)

The expression **their seed will be established** is a passive verbal form. If your language would not use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [and you will establish their seed]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **to your face**
UST as they live in your presence
(לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here, **to your face** represents being in Yahweh's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [before you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| of your servants | of those who worship you |
| and their seed | and … their descendants |
| will be established | you will protect |

# Psalms 103

## Psalm 103 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 103 is the first in a series of five “psalm of praise” to God (Psalm 103–107).

1. Call to bless Yahweh with whole being (1–2)
2. Yahweh’s forgiveness, healing, and provision (3–5)
3. Yahweh’s compassionate character (6–14)
4. Yahweh’s covenant faithfulness from everlasting (15–22)
5. Yahweh’s sovereign rule over all (19–22)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh’s grace

God shows his goodness to us by forgiving our sins and not punishing us as much as we deserve.

# Psalms 103:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Of David Bless Yahweh, my soul! And all of my inward parts, the name of his holiness.* | *A psalm of David I tell myself, "Praise Yahweh!" To everything that is within me, I say, "Praise him because he is holy!"* |

ULT **Bless Yahweh, my soul! And all of my inward parts, the name of his holiness**
UST I tell myself, "Praise Yahweh!" To everything that is within me, I say, "Praise him because he is holy
(בָּרְכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה וְכָל־קְרָבַי אֶת־שֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ)

The phrases **Bless Yahweh, my soul** and **all of my inward parts, the name of his holiness** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Bless Yahweh, my soul! Yes, all of my inward parts, bless the name of his holiness]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **my soul**
UST I tell myself
(נַפְשִׁי)

David is using the term **soul** to mean his entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [myself] or [my inner being]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the name of his holiness**
UST Praise him because he is holy
(אֶת־שֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ)

David 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 verse if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [bless the name of his holiness]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **the name of his holiness**
UST Praise him because he is holy
(אֶת־שֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ)

David is using the term **name** to refer to Yahweh's holy person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his holy person]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **And all of my inward parts**
UST To everything that is within me, I say
(וְכָל־קְרָבַי)

Here, **all of my inward parts** represents David's entire being from an internal perspective. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and everything that I am]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Of David | A psalm of David |
| Bless | Praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my soul | I tell myself |
| his holiness | because he is holy |

# Psalms 103:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Bless Yahweh, my soul! And do not forget all of his benefits.* | *I tell myself, "Praise Yahweh, and think about all of the kind things that he has done for me."* |

ULT **my soul**
UST I tell myself
(נַפְשִׁי)

Here, **my soul** represents David's entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [myself] or [my inner being]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **And do not forget**
UST and think about
(וְאַל־תִּשְׁכְּחִי)

If it would be clearer in your language, you could avoid using the double negative **do not forget** by expressing the idea in a positive form. Alternate translation: [and remember]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Bless | Praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my soul | I tell myself |

# Psalms 103:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one pardoning all your sins; the one healing all your diseases.* | *He forgives all of my sins, and he heals me from all of my sicknesses.* |

> ULT **The one pardoning all your sins**
> UST He forgives all of my sins
> (הַסֹּלֵחַ לְכָל־עֲוֹנֵכִי)

The pronoun **your** in verses 3–5 refers to “my soul” in verse 2. In this way, David is referring to himself. If “your” communicates the meaning well in your language, consider using that. Otherwise, consider using “my” here. Use the same translation decision for these phrases through verse 5. Alternate translation: [My soul, he is the one pardoning all your sins] or [He is the one pardoning all my sins]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The one pardoning | He forgives |
| your sins | my sins |

# Psalms 103:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one redeeming your life from the pit; the one crowning you with covenant faithfulness and mercy.* | *He rescues me from things that would kill me; he blesses me by faithfully loving me and acting mercifully to me.* |

ULT **your life**
UST me
(חַיָּיְכִי)

Here, **life** represents the entire person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **from the pit**
UST from things that would kill me
(מִשַּׁחַת)

Here, **the pit** represents death. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from dying]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the one crowning you with covenant faithfulness and mercy**
UST he blesses me by faithfully loving me and acting mercifully to me
(הַמְעַטְּרֵכִי חֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant faithfulness** and **mercy**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [the one keeping his covenant to love you and be merciful to you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the one crowning you with**
UST he blesses me
(הַמְעַטְּרֵכִי)

The psalmist is speaking of God as if he were a king placing a **crown** on the psalmist. He means that God is honoring and blessing him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one blessing you with] or [the one honoring you with]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The one redeeming | He rescues |
| from the pit | from things that would kill me |
| the one crowning you with | he blesses me |
| covenant faithfulness | by faithfully loving me |
| and mercy | and acting mercifully to me |

# Psalms 103:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one satisfying your ornaments with good; your youth renews itself like the eagle.* | *He gives me plenty of good things {during my entire life}. He makes me feel young {and strong} {as though I could fly high} like an eagle.* |

ULT **your ornaments**
UST during my entire life
(עָדְיֵךְ)

The phrase **your ornaments** is a translation of the written Hebrew text. This reading, however, does not seem to make sense. It seems that the scribe mistook the word translated as **ornaments** for a similar word that means "existence." The ancient Greek translation says, "your desires." You may want to follow one of those readings. Alternate translation: [your existence] or [your desires]

**Support Reference:** Alternative Readings

ULT **with good**
UST of good things
(בַּטּוֹב)

David is using the adjective **good** as a noun to mean good things. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [with good things]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **renews itself**
UST He makes me feel
(תִּתְחַדֵּשׁ)

The word **itself** indicates that the object of the verb is the same as the subject of the verb. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate that the same thing fills two roles in the sentence. Alternate translation: [becomes renewed]

**Support Reference:** Reflexive Pronouns

ULT **like the eagle**
UST {as though I could fly high} like an eagle
(כַּנֶּשֶׁר)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the eagle** is capable and strong, so **your youth** being renewed makes you feel capable and strong. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [like an eagle that can go wherever it desires to go]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| with good | of good things |
| like the eagle | {as though I could fly high} like an eagle |

# Psalms 103:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, doing righteousness and justice for all those being oppressed.* | *It is Yahweh who does all this! He does what is right and judges justly for all those whom people have been treating unfairly.* |

**ULT Yahweh, doing righteousness**
**UST** It is Yahweh who does all this! He does what is right
(עֹשֵׂה צְדָקוֹת יְהוָה)

David 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: [Yahweh, he is the one doing righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT righteousness and justice**
**UST** what is right and judges justly
(צְדָקוֹת & וּמִשְׁפָּטִים)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **righteousness** and **justice**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [what is right and just]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT those being oppressed**
**UST** those whom people have been treating unfairly
(עֲשׁוּקִים)

The expression **those being oppressed** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [people whom others are oppressing]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | It is Yahweh who does all this |
| righteousness | what is right |
| and justice | and judges justly |

# Psalms 103:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the children of Israel.* | *{Long ago} he revealed to Moses the way that he works; he showed to {our ancestors,} the people of Israel, the {mighty} things that he can do.* |

**ULT his deeds**
**UST** the {mighty} things that he can do
(עֲלִילוֹתָיו)

The psalmist 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 made known his deeds]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He made known | {Long ago} he revealed |
| to Moses | to Moses |
| Israel | Israel |

# Psalms 103:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh {is} merciful and gracious, long of nostrils and abundant in covenant faithfulness.* | *Yahweh acts mercifully and kindly; he does not quickly get angry {when we sin}; he always faithfully loves us.* |

**ULT long of nostrils**
**UST** he does not quickly get angry {when we sin}
(אֶֽרֶךְ אַפַּ֗יִם)

The psalmist is using **long of nostrils** as a common expression of his culture to mean "patient" or "slow to become angry." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [very patient]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT and abundant in covenant faithfulness**
**UST** he always faithfully loves us
(וְרַב־חָ֝סֶד)

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: [and always faithful to his covenant with us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} merciful | acts mercifully |
| and gracious | and kindly |
| covenant faithfulness | faithfully loves |

# Psalms 103:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He will not contend to the end, and he will not maintain forever.* | *He will not always rebuke us, and he will not remain angry forever.* |

ULT **He will not contend**
UST He will not … rebuke us
(לֹא & יָרִיב)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **contend** means to contend with us, his people. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [He will not contend with us]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **to the end**
UST always
(לָנֶצַח)

The implication is that God will not **contend** or remain angry for an unlimited length of time, but will eventually cease his anger. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [to the end of time]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and he will not maintain**
UST and he will not remain angry
(וְלֹא & יִטּוֹר)

The psalmist 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 will not maintain his anger]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 103:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He does not deal with us according to our sins, and he does not treat us according to our iniquities.* | *He does not punish us for our sins nearly as much as we deserve.* |

**ULT He does not deal with us according to our sins, and he does not treat us according to our iniquities**

**UST** He does not punish us for our sins nearly as much as we deserve
(לֹא בַחַטָּאֵינוּ עָשָׂה לָּנוּ וְלֹא כַעֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ גָּמַל עָלֵינוּ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way, as in the UST. Otherwise, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [He does not deal with us according to our sins; let me say again, he does not treat us according to our iniquities]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT He does not deal with us according to our sins, and he does not treat us according to our iniquities**

**UST** He does not punish us for our sins nearly as much as we deserve
(לֹא בַחַטָּאֵינוּ עָשָׂה לָּנוּ וְלֹא כַעֲוֹנֹתֵינוּ גָּמַל עָלֵינוּ)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that people's sins and iniquities deserve punishment from God. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [He does not give punishment to us that is as bad as our sins, and he does not treat us as badly as our iniquities deserve]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| according to our sins | for our sins nearly as much as we deserve |
| according to our iniquities | for our sins nearly as much as we deserve |

# Psalms 103:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For as the heavens are high above the earth, his covenant faithfulness is strong toward those fearing him.* | *Indeed, as high as the sky is above the earth, that is how much Yahweh faithfully loves everyone who reveres him.* |

ULT **For**
UST Indeed
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation of how great Yahweh's covenant faithfulness is toward those who fear him. You may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [You see,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **For as the heavens are high above the earth, his covenant faithfulness is strong toward those fearing him**
UST Indeed, as high as the sky is above the earth, that is how much Yahweh faithfully loves everyone who reveres him
(כִּי כִגְבֹהַּ שָׁמַיִם עַל־הָאָרֶץ גָּבַר חַסְדּוֹ עַל־יְרֵאָיו)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the heavens** are extremely **high above the earth**, so **his covenant faithfulness** is extremely **strong toward those fearing him**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [For just as it is impossible to measure how high the heavens are above the earth, it is also impossible to measure how strong his covenant faithfulness is toward those fearing him]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **his covenant faithfulness is strong**
UST that is how much Yahweh faithfully loves
(גָּבַר חַסְדּוֹ)

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: [that is how strongly committed he is to being faithful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the heavens | as the sky |
| his covenant faithfulness | Yahweh faithfully loves |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| is strong | that is how much |
| those fearing him | everyone who reveres him |

# Psalms 103:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *As far as the sunrise {is} from the sunset, he has removed our transgressions from us.* | *He has taken away the guilt for our sins and put it as far from us as the east is from the west.* |

ULT **As far as the sunrise {is} from the sunset, he has removed our transgressions from us**

UST He has taken away the guilt for our sins and put it as far from us as the east is from the west

(כְּרַחֵק מִזְרָח מִמַּעֲרָב הִרְחִיק מִמֶּנּוּ אֶת־פְּשָׁעֵינוּ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the sunrisefrom the sunset** is an immeasurable distance, so how far **he has removed our transgressions from us** is an immeasurable distance. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [Just as it is impossible to measure how far the sunrise is from the sunset, it is also impossible to measure how far he has removed our transgressions from us]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **As far as the sunrise {is} from the sunset, he has removed our transgressions from us**

UST He has taken away the guilt for our sins and put it as far from us as the east is from the west

(כְּרַחֵק מִזְרָח מִמַּעֲרָב הִרְחִיק מִמֶּנּוּ אֶת־פְּשָׁעֵינוּ)

The psalmist 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: [As far as the sunrise is from the sunset, that is how far he has removed our transgressions from us]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| our transgressions | the guilt for our sins |

# Psalms 103:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *As a father has compassion on his children, Yahweh has compassion on those fearing him.* | *Just as parents always love their children, Yahweh always loves those who revere him.* |

**ULT As a father has compassion on his children, Yahweh has compassion on those fearing him**

**UST** Just as parents always love their children, Yahweh always loves those who revere him
(כְּרַחֵם אָב עַל־בָּנִים רִחַם יְהוָה עַל־יְרֵאָיו)

The psalmist 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 a father has compassion on his children, in the same way, Yahweh has compassion on those fearing him]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT As a father has compassion on his children, Yahweh has compassion on those fearing him**

**UST** Just as parents always love their children, Yahweh always loves those who revere him
(כְּרַחֵם אָב עַל־בָּנִים רִחַם יְהוָה עַל־יְרֵאָיו)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a father has compassion on his children** very much, so also **Yahweh has compassion on those fearing him** very much. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [As a father has constant and strong compassion on his children, so Yahweh has constant and strong compassion on those fearing him]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT As a father has compassion on his children, Yahweh has compassion on**

**UST** Just as parents always love their children, Yahweh always loves those who revere him
(כְּרַחֵם אָב עַל־בָּנִים רִחַם יְהוָה עַל)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **compassion**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [As a father loves his children, Yahweh loves]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| As … has compassion | Just as … always love |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| has compassion | always loves |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| those fearing him | those who revere him |

# Psalms 103:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For he, he knows our form; remembering that we {are} dust.* | *Indeed, he certainly knows how weak we are; he remembers that he created us from dust.* |

ULT **For**
UST Indeed
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation. You may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [You see,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **our form**
UST how weak we are
(יִצְרֵנוּ)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **form** refers to the physical nature and constitution of human beings. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the weakness of our form] or [what weak stuff we are made of]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **he, he knows**
UST he certainly knows
(הוּא יָדָע)

The pronoun **he** in the phrase **he, he knows** refers to Yahweh. The repetition of the pronoun emphasizes that Yahweh, more than anyone else, knows the frailty of human beings. If your language has a way to express this emphasis naturally, you may want to use it in your translation. Alternate translation: [he, more than anyone, knows]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he knows | he … knows |

# Psalms 103:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A man, his days {are} like grass; like a flower of the field, thus he flourishes.* | *The lifetime of humans passes quickly, like that of grass. We are like wild flowers that bloom for a short while,* |

ULT **A man**
UST humans
(אֱנוֹשׁ)

David is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Any person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **his days {are} like grass**
UST The lifetime of … passes quickly, like that of grass
(כֶּחָצִיר יָמָיו)

Here, **days** represents a person's lifetime. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his lifetime is like the lifetime of grass]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **his days {are} like grass**
UST The lifetime of … passes quickly, like that of grass
(כֶּחָצִיר יָמָיו)

The psalmist is making a comparison to teach that just as **grass** lives for only a short time, so people live for only a short time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [his days are few, like the length of time that grass lives]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **like a flower of the field, thus he flourishes**
UST We are like wild flowers that bloom for a short while
(כְּצִיץ הַשָּׂדֶה כֵּן יָצִיץ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a flower of the field** flourishes for only a short time, so does a person's life last for only a short time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [like a flower of the field, the time when he flourishes is short]

**Support Reference:** Simile

# Psalms 103:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the wind passes over it, and it is no more, and its place does not acknowledge it again.* | *but then the wind blows over them and they disappear, and no one knows they were ever there.* |

**ULT For**
**UST** but then
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation of how people are like grass and flowers. You may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [Indeed,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

**ULT over it**
**UST** over them
(בּוֹ)

The pronoun **it** refers to the flower. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the flower]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and its place does not acknowledge it again**
**UST** and no one knows they were ever there
(וְלֹא־יַכִּירֶנּוּ עוֹד מְקוֹמוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of **its place** as if it were a person who could **acknowledge** something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and there is nothing in its place to indicate that it had been there]

**Support Reference:** Personification

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| does … acknowledge it | one knows |

# Psalms 103:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh {is} from everlasting to everlasting on those fearing him, and his righteousness {is} to the children of children,* | *But Yahweh will continue to faithfully love all those who revere him, forever. He will do what is right for generations of their children,* |

ULT **But the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh {is} from everlasting**
UST But Yahweh will continue to faithfully love
(וְחֶסֶד יְהוָה ׀ מֵעוֹלָם)

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: [But Yahweh will be faithful to his covenant from everlasting]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{is} from everlasting to everlasting**
UST continue to … forever
(מֵעוֹלָם וְעַד־עוֹלָם)

The psalmist is using **from everlasting to everlasting** as a common expression of his culture to mean “eternally” or “forever.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [lasts forever]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **and his righteousness {is}**
UST He will do what is right
(וְצִדְקָתוֹ)

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 he will be righteous]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to the children of children**
UST for generations of their children
(לִבְנֵי בָנִים)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **the children of children** refers to future generations. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [to their descendants]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| But the covenant faithfulness of | But … will … faithfully love |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} from everlasting | continue to |
| everlasting | forever |
| those fearing him | all those who revere him |
| and his righteousness {is} | He will do what is right |

# Psalms 103:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to the ones keeping his covenant, and to the ones remembering his precepts, to do them.* | *that is, he will act that way to all those who obey the covenant that he made with them. Yes, he will act that way to all those who obey what he has commanded us to do.* |

ULT **to the ones keeping his covenant, and to the ones remembering his precepts, to do them**

UST that is, he will act that way to all those who obey the covenant that he made with them. Yes, he will act that way to all those who obey what he has commanded us to do

(לְשֹׁמְרֵי בְרִיתוֹ וּלְזֹכְרֵי פִקֻּדָיו לַעֲשׂוֹתָם)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [to the ones keeping his covenant, that is, to the ones remembering his precepts, to do them]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **to the ones keeping … and to the ones remembering**

UST that is, he will act that way to all those who obey … Yes … will act that way to all those who obey

(לְשֹׁמְרֵי & וּלְזֹכְרֵי)

The pronoun **the ones** refers to people who fear Yahweh, as described in verse 17. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [to those children … and to the children] or [to those descendants … and to the descendants]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and to the ones remembering**

UST Yes … will act that way to all those who obey

(וּלְזֹכְרֵי)

The implication is that they are actively keeping God's precepts in their minds so that they can obey them. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [keeping in mind]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **to do them**
UST us to do
(לַעֲשׂוֹתָם)

Here, **to do them** marks this clause as the goal or purpose of **remembering his precepts**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [in order to do them]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his covenant | the covenant that he made with them |

# Psalms 103:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.* | *Yahweh rules as king in heaven. From there, he rules over everything.* |

**ULT has established his throne**
**UST** rules as king
(הֵכִין כִּסְאוֹ)

Here, **throne** represents the authority and power to rule. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [is the supreme ruler]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT and his kingdom**
**UST** From there
(וּמַלְכוּתוֹ)

Here, **kingdom** represents Yahweh ruling as king. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he, as king,]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| has established | rules as king |
| his throne | rules as king |
| in the heavens | in heaven |
| and his kingdom | From there |
| rules | he rules |

# Psalms 103:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Bless Yahweh, his angels, warriors of strength, doers of his word, listening to the voice of his word!* | *Praise Yahweh, you angels who belong to Yahweh, You powerful warriors who do what he tells you to do, you who obey what he commands!* |

ULT **listening to**
UST you who obey
(לְשֹׁמְעַ֗)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **listening to the voice of his word** means obeying what God says. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [obeying]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the voice of his word**
UST what he commands
(בְּקֹ֖ול דְּבָרֹֽו)

Here, **the voice of his word** represents what God says. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what he says]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Bless | Praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| his angels | you angels who belong to Yahweh |
| warriors of | You … warriors |
| strength | powerful |

# Psalms 103:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Bless Yahweh, all his hosts, ministering to him, doing his pleasure!* | *Praise Yahweh, all you armies of his angels, you who serve him and do what he desires!* |

**ULT his pleasure**
**UST** what he desires
(רְצוֹנְוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **pleasure**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what pleases him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Bless | Praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| ministering to him | you who serve him |

# Psalms 103:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Bless Yahweh, all his works, in all the places of his reign! Bless Yahweh, my soul!* | *All of the creatures that Yahweh has created should praise him! They should praise him in every place where he rules, {which is everywhere}! I say to myself, "Praise Yahweh!"* |

**ULT Bless Yahweh, all his works**
**UST** All of the creatures that Yahweh has created should praise him
(בָּרֲכוּ יְהוָה ׀ כָּל־מַעֲשָׂיו)

The psalmist is speaking to **all his works** that he knows cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about praising Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about all of Yahweh's works. Alternate translation: [I want all of Yahweh's works to bless him,]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

**ULT the places of his reign**
**UST** place where he rules, {which is everywhere}
(מְקוֹמוֹת מֶמְשַׁלְתּוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **his reign**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the places where he reigns]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT my soul**
**UST** I say to myself
(נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using the term **soul** to mean his entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my inner being]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Bless | should praise |
| Yahweh | him |
| his reign | where he rules, {which is everywhere} |
| Bless | Praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my soul | I say to myself |

# Psalms 104

## Psalm 104 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 104 is the second in the series of five “psalms of praise” to God (Psalm 103–107).

1. Yahweh’s greatness in creation (1–6)
2. Yahweh’s sustaining care over creation (7–30)
3. Yahweh’s glory declared forever (31–32)
4. Everlasting praise to Yahweh (33–35)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh’s creation

God has created everything good on earth, in the sky, and in the sea.

# Psalms 104:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Bless Yahweh, my soul! Yahweh my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendor and majesty,* | *I tell myself, "Bless Yahweh!" Yahweh, my God, you are magnificent! You are more majestic than a king appearing in his beautiful robes!* |

ULT **my soul**
UST I tell myself
(נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using the term **soul** to mean his entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [myself] or [my inner being]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **you are clothed with splendor and majesty**
UST You are more majestic than a king appearing in his beautiful robes
(הוֹד וְהָדָר לָבָשְׁתָּ)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were **clothed with splendor and majesty**. He means that Yahweh possesses splendor and majesty just as a king might wear magnificent robes. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent metaphor from your culture. Alternatively, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you are splendid and majestic]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **splendor and majesty**
UST You are more majestic than
(הוֹד וְהָדָר)

The terms **splendor** and **majesty** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [extreme magnificence]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **you are clothed with splendor and majesty**
UST You are more majestic than a king appearing in his beautiful robes
(הוֹד וְהָדָר לָבָשְׁתָּ)

The expression **you are clothed with splendor and majesty** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [you are splendid and majestic]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **you are clothed with splendor and majesty**
UST You are more majestic than a king appearing in his beautiful robes
(הוֹד וְהָדָר לָבָשְׁתָּ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **splendor** and **majesty**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [you are splendid and majestic]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Bless | Bless |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my soul | I tell myself |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my God | my God |
| splendor | You are more majestic than |
| and majesty | You are more majestic than |

# Psalms 104:2

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *wrapping light as the garment; spreading out the heavens as the tent curtain;* | *You use light {itself} as your robe; you spread out {all of} heaven as your tent.* |

**ULT wrapping light as the garment**
**UST** You use light {itself} as your robe
(עֹטֶה־אוֹר כַּשַּׂלְמָה)

The psalmist is making a comparison to describe how God wears light. The point of this comparison is that just as **a garment** covers and adorns a person, so **light** covers and adorns God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [putting light around you as though it were a garment]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT spreading out the heavens as the tent curtain**
**UST** you spread out {all of} heaven as your tent
(נוֹטֶה שָׁמַיִם כַּיְרִיעָה)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a tent curtain** is stretched out to provide shelter, so the **heavens** are stretched out by God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [spreading out the heavens as a man would spread out a tent curtain]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the heavens | {all of} heaven |
| as the tent curtain | as your tent |
| as the tent curtain | as your tent |

# Psalms 104:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the one setting his upper chambers on the waters; the one appointing the clouds his chariot; the one walking on the wings of the wind;* | *The rain clouds are like the upper rooms of your palace. The clouds are like chariots for you; the wind is like a bird that takes you wherever you want to go.* |

**ULT the one setting his upper chambers on the waters**
**UST** The rain clouds are like the upper rooms of your palace
(הַמְקָרֶה בַמַּיִם עֲלִיּוֹתָיו)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were **setting his upper chambers on the waters**. This image pictures God's dwelling place as being built above the sky, where the rain clouds are. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [It is as though you have set the upper chambers of your home on the waters in the sky]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the one appointing the clouds his chariot**
**UST** The clouds are like chariots for you
(הַשָּׂם־עָבִים רְכוּבוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a king or mighty warrior who rode across the sky with **the clouds** serving as his **chariot**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [It is as though you ride the clouds like chariots]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the one walking on the wings of the wind**
**UST** the wind is like a bird that takes you wherever you want to go
(הַמְהַלֵּךְ עַל־כַּנְפֵי־רוּחַ)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were someone who could **walk on the wings of the wind**. He means that Yahweh moves about freely and swiftly, as if he were riding on the wind itself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you move about freely as though you were flying along with the wind]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the one appointing | are like |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his chariot | chariots for you |

# Psalms 104:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *making the winds his messengers, flaming fire, his servants.* | *You send the winds like your messengers, {and you control} fire as your servant.* |

**ULT making the winds his messengers, flaming fire, his servants**
**UST** { … You send the winds like your messengers, and you control} fire as your servant
(עֹשֶׂה מַלְאָכָיו רוּחוֹת מְשָׁרְתָיו אֵשׁ לֹהֵט)

In these clauses, the subjects and objects are not marked, and could fill either role. They could mean: (1) Yahweh makes the winds his messengers and he makes flaming fire his servants, as in the ULT, or (2) Yahweh makes his messengers winds and he makes his servants flaming fire. Alternate translation: [making his messengers winds, and his servants, flaming fire]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT making the winds his messengers**
**UST** You send the winds like your messengers
(עֹשֶׂה מַלְאָכָיו רוּחוֹת)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were **making the winds his messengers**. This image means that Yahweh uses the winds to carry out his purposes, just as a king would send messengers to accomplish his will. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [sending the winds as he would send his messengers]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT flaming fire, his servants**
**UST** {and you control} fire as your servant
(מְשָׁרְתָיו אֵשׁ לֹהֵט)

The psalmist is speaking of **flaming fire** as if it were a person who could serve God. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [controlling flaming fire so that it serves him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **flaming fire, his servants**
UST {and you control} fire as your servant
(מְשָׁרְתָ֥יו אֵ֗שׁ לֹהֵֽט)

The psalmist 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: [making flaming fire his servants]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his messengers | like your messengers |
| his servants | as your servant |

# Psalms 104:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He set the earth upon its foundations; it will not be moved forever and ever.* | *You created the world to be secure, so that nothing can ever move it from its place.* |

**ULT He set the earth upon its foundations**
**UST** You created the world to be secure
(יָסַד־אֶרֶץ עַל־מְכוֹנֶיהָ)

The psalmist is speaking of **the earth** as if Yahweh had placed it **upon** physical **foundations** like a building is constructed on a foundation. The psalmist means that Yahweh created the world to be stable and secure. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He made the earth to be stable]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT it will not be moved**
**UST** so that nothing can … move it from its place
(בַּל־תִּמּוֹט)

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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [never can anyone move it]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He set | You created |
| the earth | the world |
| its foundations | to be secure |
| forever | ever |

# Psalms 104:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You covered it {with} the deep like a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.* | *Later, you covered the earth with a flood, like covering someone with clothing; water even covered the mountains.* |

**ULT {with} the deep**
**UST** with a flood
(תְּהוֹם)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **the deep** refers to the waters of the ocean or the primeval waters that once covered the earth. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [with deep water]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT like a garment**
**UST** like covering someone with clothing
(כַּלְבּוּשׁ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a garment** completely covers a person, so **the deep** completely covered the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [as completely as if that were its clothing]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT the waters stood above the mountains**
**UST** water even covered the mountains
(עַל־הָרִים יַעַמְדוּ־מָיִם)

The psalmist is speaking of **the waters** as if they were a living thing that could stand in a certain position. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the waters were higher than the mountains]

**Support Reference:** Personification

# Psalms 104:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *From your rebuke they fled; from your voice of thunder they hurried away.* | *Then you commanded the water, and it receded; yes, you spoke loudly, and the water rushed away.* |

ULT **From your rebuke they fled; from your voice of thunder they hurried away**
UST Then you commanded the water, and it receded; yes, you spoke loudly, and the water rushed away
(מִן־גַּעֲרָתְךָ֥ יְנוּסֻ֑ון מִן־ק֥וֹל רַ֝עַמְךָ֗ יֵחָפֵזֽוּן)

These two phrases **From your rebuke they fled** and **from your voice of thunder they hurried away** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could combine the phrases. Alternate translation: [From your thunderous rebuke they fled away]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **they fled … they hurried away**
UST and it receded … and the water rushed away
(יְנוּסֻ֑ון & יֵחָפֵזֽוּן)

The psalmist is speaking of **the waters** as if they were living things that could **flee** and **hurry away**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they receded … they went away]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **your voice of thunder**
UST yes, you spoke loudly
(ק֥וֹל רַ֝עַמְךָ֗)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **voice** that is characterized by **thunder**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [your thunderous voice]

**Support Reference:** Possession

> ULT **your voice of thunder**
> UST yes, you spoke loudly
> (קוֹל֣ רַֽעַמְךָ֣)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's **voice** as if it were **thunder** to express how loud it is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your loud voice]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your rebuke | Then you commanded the water |

# Psalms 104:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They ascended the mountains; they descended the valleys, to the place that you had appointed for them.* | *Part of the water ascended {to its place} above the mountains, and part of it descended the valleys {to its place in the earth}. All of it went {back} to the place that you had determined for it.* |

ULT **They ascended the mountains; they descended the valleys**
UST Part of the water ascended {to its place} above the mountains, and part of it descended the valleys {to its place in the earth … }
(יַעֲלוּ הָרִים יֵרְדוּ בְקָעוֹת)

**They** refers to “the waters” from verse 6. This reflects the idea from Genesis 7:11 that the flood waters came from where they had been stored both above the firmament and underground. Here it is saying that after the flood God returned the waters to those places, so some of it **ascended the mountains** to return to the heavens and some **descended the valleys** to return to their places underground.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **They ascended the mountains; they descended the valleys**
UST Part of the water ascended {to its place} above the mountains, and part of it descended the valleys {to its place in the earth … }
(יַעֲלוּ הָרִים יֵרְדוּ בְקָעוֹת)

Some translations take **the mountains** to be the subject of **ascended** and **the valleys** to be the subject of **descended**. This makes it difficult to translate the following verse however, since verse 9 continues to refer to the waters as “they.” If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to follow what it does here. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to follow the ULT. Alternate translation: [The mountains rose; the valleys descended]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they descended | and part of it descended |
| you had appointed | you had determined |

# Psalms 104:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You set a boundary they cannot pass; they will not return to cover the earth.* | *Then you set a boundary for the water that it cannot cross over. That boundary ensures that the water will never again cover the whole earth.* |

ULT **they … pass**
UST that it … cross over
(יַעֲבֹרוּן)

The pronoun **they** refers to the waters. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers.

Alternate translation: [the waters]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they will … return | again |

# Psalms 104:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one sending springs into the wadis— between the mountains they flow.* | *You make the springs that pour water into the stream beds; their water flows between the mountains.* |

**ULT The one sending**
**UST** You make
(הַמְשַׁלֵּחַ)

**The one** in verses 10, 13, and 14 refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, you send]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| springs | the springs |
| into the wadis | that pour water into the stream beds |

# Psalms 104:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They give drink to all his animals of the field; the wild donkeys break their thirst.* | *Those streams provide water for all of his wild animals to drink. The wild donkeys {drink the water and} are no longer thirsty.* |

**ULT They give drink to**
**UST** Those streams provide water … to drink
(יַשְׁקוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to the springs (mentioned in the previous verse). It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The streams of water give drink to]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT break their thirst**
**UST** {drink the water and} are no longer thirsty
(יִשְׂבְּרוּ צָמְאָם)

The psalmist is using **break their thirst** as a common expression to mean "quench their thirst" or "satisfy their thirst by drinking." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [quench their thirst] or [drink and are satisfied]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his animals | his … animals |
| the wild donkeys | The wild donkeys |

# Psalms 104:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Alongside them the birds of the heavens dwell; from between the branches they give voice.* | *Birds make their nests beside the streams. They sing among the branches {of the trees}.* |

**ULT Alongside them**
**UST** beside the streams
(עֲלֵיהֶם)

The pronoun **them** refers to the streams of water mentioned in verse 10. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Alongside the streams of water]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT they give voice**
**UST** They sing
(יִתְּנוּ־קוֹל)

The psalmist is using **they give voice** as a common expression of his culture to mean “they sing” or “they chirp.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they chirp]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the heavens | Birds |

# Psalms 104:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one watering the mountains from his upper chambers— from the fruit of your works the earth is satisfied.* | *From the heavens you send rain down on the mountains. As a result of doing this, you satisfy all of the creatures on earth {with many good things}.* |

ULT **The one watering**
UST you send rain down
(מַשְׁקֶה)

The psalmist is using the phrase **The one watering** to refer to God without using a pronoun. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a name or pronoun to clarify the referent. Alternate translation: [Yahweh waters]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **from his upper chambers**
UST From the heavens
(מֵעֲלִיּוֹתָיו)

The psalmist is speaking of the sky as if it were **upper chambers** in a building from which God sends rain down on the mountains. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from high in the sky]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **from the fruit of your works the earth is satisfied**
UST As a result of doing this, you satisfy all of the creatures on earth {with many good things}
(מִפְּרִי מַעֲשֶׂיךָ תִּשְׂבַּע הָאָרֶץ)

Here, **fruit** could be both literal and figurative. It could mean either of these things or both: (1) The work of watering the mountains produces literal fruit, which satisfies the creatures on earth. The next two verses list some of that fruit. Alternate translation: [this work of yours produces fruit, which satisfies the earth] or (2) The result of watering the mountains is that the earth is satisfied with the water. Alternate translation: [because you do this, the earth is satisfied]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the earth is satisfied**
UST you satisfy all of the creatures on earth
(תִּשְׂבַּע הָאָרֶץ)

Here, **the earth** represents the creatures that live on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the earthly creatures are satisfied]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from the fruit of | As a result of doing this … with many good things |

# Psalms 104:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one making grass grow for the cattle and plants for the work of man to bring forth bread from the earth.* | *You make grass to grow for the cattle {to eat}, and you make plants to grow for people to cultivate, so that they can make bread from {those plants that grew in} the soil.* |

ULT **The one making grass grow**
UST You make grass to grow
(מַצְמִיחַ חָצִיר)

The phrase **The one** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, who makes grass grow]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and plants**
UST and you make plants to grow
(וְעֵשֶׂב)

The psalmist 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 verse if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [and the one making plants grow]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **to bring forth**
UST so that they can make
(לְהוֹצִיא)

Here, **to bring forth** marks **bread from the earth** as the goal or purpose of **plants for the work of man**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [in order to produce]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **bread**
UST bread
(לֶחֶם)

The psalmist is using one kind of food, **bread**, to represent food in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [food]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for the cattle | for the cattle {to eat} |
| and plants | and you make plants to grow |
| bread | bread |

# Psalms 104:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And wine—he gladdens the heart of man, to make the face shine from oil, and bread—he sustains the heart of man.* | *You give us {grapes that produce} wine that makes us cheerful; you give us {olives that produce} oil to make our faces shine, and you give us {grain to make} bread that makes us strong.* |

**ULT And wine**
**UST** You give us {grapes that produce} wine
(וְיַיִן)

The psalmist 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 by providing wine]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT the heart of man**
**UST** us
(לְבַב־אֱנוֹשׁ)

Here the **heart** represents a person's inner self, including their emotions and sense of well-being. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all mankind] or [everyone]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT to make the face shine**
**UST** to make our faces shine
(לְהַצְהִיל פָּנִים)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **face**. He means faces in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [to make people's faces shine]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**ULT to make the face shine**
**UST** to make our faces shine
(לְהַצְהִיל פָּנִים)

The psalmist 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 gives olives to make the face shine]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT and bread**
**UST** and you give us {grain to make} bread
(וְלֶ֥חֶם)

The psalmist 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 by providing bread]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And wine | You give us {grapes that produce} wine |
| he gladdens | that makes … cheerful |
| from oil | you give us {olives that produce} oil |
| and bread | and you give us {grain to make} bread |

# Psalms 104:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The trees of Yahweh are satisfied— the cedars of Lebanon which he planted,* | *Yahweh, you send plenty of rain to water your cedar trees that you planted in Lebanon.* |

**ULT The trees of Yahweh are satisfied**
UST Yahweh, you send plenty of rain to water your … trees
(יִשְׂבְּעוּ עֲצֵי יְהוָה)

The psalmist is speaking of **the trees of Yahweh** as if they were living things that could be satisfied. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The trees of Yahweh get plenty of rain]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT the cedars of Lebanon which he planted**
UST cedar … that you planted in Lebanon
(אַרְזֵי לְבָנוֹן אֲשֶׁר נָטָע)

The psalmist 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 verse if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [the cedars of Lebanon which he planted are satisfied]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the cedars of | cedar |
| Lebanon | in Lebanon |
| he planted | you planted |

# Psalms 104:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *where birds make their nests there, the stork, the cypress tree her home,* | *Birds make their nests in those trees, and storks make their nests in the cypress trees.* |

ULT **where birds make their nests there**
UST Birds make their nests in those trees
(אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם צִפֳּרִים יְקַנֵּנוּ)

The expression **where birds make their nests there** contains extra information that would not be natural to express in many languages. The word **there** repeats the idea of **where**. If this would be unnatural in your language, you could shorten it. Alternate translation: [where birds make their nests]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

ULT **the stork, the cypress tree her home**
UST and storks make their nests in the cypress trees
(חֲסִידָה בְּרוֹשִׁים בֵּיתָהּ)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **stork**. He means storks in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [storks, cypress trees their home]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **the stork, the cypress tree her home**
UST and storks make their nests in the cypress trees
(חֲסִידָה בְּרוֹשִׁים בֵּיתָהּ)

The psalmist 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 stork makes the cypress tree her home]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the cypress tree | in the cypress trees |
| her home | make their nests |

# Psalms 104:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the high mountains for the wild goats, the cliffs, a refuge for the hyraxes.* | *High up in the mountains is where the wild goats live, and hyraxes live in the rocky cliffs.* |

**ULT the high mountains for the wild goats**
**UST** High up in the mountains is where the wild goats live
(הָרִים הַגְּבֹהִים לַיְעֵלִים)

The psalmist 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 high mountains are the home for the wild goats]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT the cliffs, a refuge for the hyraxes**
**UST** and hyraxes live in the rocky cliffs
(סְלָעִים מַחְסֶה לַשְּׁפַנִּים)

The psalmist 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 verse if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [the cliffs are a refuge for the hyraxes]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT for the hyraxes**
**UST** and hyraxes
(לַשְּׁפַנִּים)

A **hyrax** is a kind of small, furry animal that lives in rocky areas. If your readers would not be familiar with what a hyrax is, you could use the name of a similar animal that your readers would recognize, or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [for the rock badgers]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for the wild goats | is where the wild goats live |
| a refuge | live in |

# Psalms 104:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He made the moon for appointed times; the sun knows its setting.* | *Yahweh, you made the moon to indicate the times for our festivals, and you made the sun to always go down at the right time.* |

**ULT He made**
**UST** Yahweh, you made
(עָשָׂה)

The pronoun **He** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh made]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT for appointed times**
**UST** to indicate the times for our festivals
(לְמוֹעֲדִים)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that the **appointed times** are the festivals and religious observances that are determined by the phases of the moon. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [to indicate the times for the special days of each month]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT the sun knows its setting**
**UST** and you made the sun to always go down at the right time
(שֶׁמֶשׁ יָדַע מְבוֹאוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of **the sun** as if it were a living thing that could know when to set. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you made the sun to set at the proper time each night]

**Support Reference:** Personification

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for appointed times | to indicate the times for our festivals |
| for appointed times | to indicate the times for our festivals |
| knows | always … at the right time |

# Psalms 104:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You set darkness and it is night; in it all of his creatures of the forest crawl—* | *You bring darkness, and it becomes night when all of your forest animals prowl around.* |

ULT **and it is night**
UST and it becomes night
(וַיְהִי לָיְלָה)

The psalmist uses **and** to indicate that **it is night** is the result of God setting **darkness**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a result of what came before. Alternate translation: [and night happens] or [which creates night]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **in it**
UST when
(בּוֹ)

The pronoun **it** refers to the darkness. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [in the night]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his creatures of | your … animals |

# Psalms 104:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the young lions roaring for prey and seeking their food from God.* | *The young lions roar then as they seek their prey, looking for the food that you have provided for them.* |

**ULT and seeking their food from God**
**UST** looking for the food that you have provided for them
(וּלְבַקֵּשׁ מֵאֵל אָכְלָם)

The psalmist is speaking of the young lions as if they were **seeking their food from God**. He means that God provides food for the lions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [as though they are asking God to give them their food]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the young lions | The young lions |
| for prey | as they seek their prey |
| and seeking | looking for |
| from God | you |

# Psalms 104:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The sun rises, they retreat, and lie down in their dens.* | *At dawn, they go back to their dens and lie down.* |

> **ULT** **The sun rises**
> **UST** At dawn
> (תִּזְרַח הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that he means that the young lions retreat because **the sun rises** and it becomes daytime. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [When the sun rises]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

# Psalms 104:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Man goes out to his work and to his labor until evening.* | *{That is when} people go to their work; and they do their work until it is evening.* |

ULT **to his work and to his labor**
UST their work; and they do their work
(לְפָעֳלֹו וְלַעֲבֹדָתֹו)

The terms **work** and **labor** mean similar things. The psalmist 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 all of his work that he does]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **Man**
UST people
(אָדָם)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **Man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Each person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and to his labor | and they do their work |

# Psalms 104:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *How many {are} your works, Yahweh! You made all of them with wisdom; the earth is full of your creation.* | *Yahweh, you have made so many different kinds of things! You were very wise as you made them all. The earth is full of the creatures that you made.* |

**ULT with wisdom**
**UST** You were very wise
(בְּחָכְמָה)

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: [wisely] or [skillfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT your creation**
**UST** of the creatures that you made
(קִנְיָנֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **creation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what you have created]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| with wisdom | You were very wise |
| your creation | of the creatures that you made |

# Psalms 104:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *There {is} the sea, great and broad of hands; creeping things {are} there, and there is no number, living things, small with great.* | *We see the ocean, which is vastly wide between its shores! It is full of many kinds of wriggling creatures, so many that no one can count them. There are creatures ranging from small to big.* |

ULT **great and broad of hands**
UST which is vastly wide between its shores
(גָּדוֹל֣ וּרְחַב יָדָ֑יִם)

The terms **great** and **broad of hands** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [enormous in size]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **and broad of hands**
UST wide between its shores
(וּרְחַב יָדָ֑יִם)

The psalmist is using **broad of hands** as a common expression of his culture to mean that the shores of the sea are far apart. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and with distant shorelines]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **great**
UST which is vastly
(גָּדוֹל֣)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **great** refers to the sea's vast size or extent. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [large]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and there is no number**
UST so many that no one can count them
(וְאֵין מִסְפָּר)

The psalmist says **there is no number** as an extreme statement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [and there are too many to count]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **living things, small with great**
UST There are creatures ranging from small to big
(חַיּוֹת קְטַנּוֹת עִם־גְּדֹלוֹת)

The psalmist 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 small living things are there with the great living things]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **great**
UST big
(גְּדֹלוֹת)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **great** refers to the large size of some of the sea creatures. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [large]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **small with great**
UST ranging from small to big
(קְטַנּוֹת עִם־גְּדֹלוֹת)

The psalmist is using the adjectives **small** and **great** as nouns to mean small creatures and large creatures. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [small ones with large ones]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

> ULT **small with great**
> UST ranging from small to big
> (קְטַנּוֹת עִם־גְּדֹלוֹת)

The psalmist is referring to all of the living creatures in the sea by naming two extremes, **small** and **great**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [of every size together]

**Support Reference:** Merism

# Psalms 104:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Ships travel there; Leviathan, which you formed to play in it.* | *Ships sail on the sea. Leviathan is also there, the creature that you made to splash around in it.* |

**ULT Leviathan**

**UST** Leviathan is also there, the creature

(לִוְיָתָן)

The psalmist 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: [Leviathan travels there]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Leviathan | Leviathan is also there, the creature |

# Psalms 104:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *All of them look to you to give their food at its time.* | *All of these creatures depend on you to give them the food that they need at the right time.* |

**ULT All of them**
**UST** All of these creatures
(כֻּלָּם)

The pronoun **them** refers to all of the living creatures that the psalmist has been describing, including the sea creatures mentioned in the previous verses. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [All of these living creatures]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT look to you**
**UST** depend on you
(אֵלֶיךָ יְשַׂבֵּרוּן)

The psalmist is speaking of creatures depending on God for their food as if they were physically looking at someone for help. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [need you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| at its time | at the right time |

# Psalms 104:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You give to them; they gather {it}; you open your hand; they are satisfied {with} good.* | *When you give them the food that they need, then they gather it. You give it to them freely. They eat until they are full of your good things.* |

**ULT You give to them; they gather {it}**
**UST** When you give them the food that they need, then they gather it
(תִּתֵּן לָהֶם יִלְקֹטוּן)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that it is when God provides the food that the creatures gather it. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [When you give to them; then they gather it]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT you open your hand**
**UST** You give it to them freely
(תִּפְתַּח יָדֶךָ)

The psalmist is using **you open your hand** as a common expression of his culture to mean "you give generously." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you give generously]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT they are satisfied {with} good**
**UST** They eat until they are full of your good things
(יִשְׂבְּעוּן טוֹב)

The adjective **good** is functioning as a noun, referring to good things (specifically, good food that God provides). If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this with a noun phrase or indicate what kind of good things are meant. Alternate translation: [they are satisfied with the good food]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {with} good | your good things |

# Psalms 104:29

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You hide your face; they are terrified; you take away their breath; they expire and return to their dust.* | *But when you refuse to give food to them, they panic. When you cause them to stop breathing, they die; their bodies decay and become part of the soil.* |

**ULT You hide your face; they are terrified**
**UST** But when you refuse to give food to them, they panic
(תַּסְתִּיר פָּנֶיךָ יִבָּהֵלוּן)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that it is when God hides his face from his creatures that they then become terrified. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [When you hide your face; then they are terrified]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT You hide your face**
**UST** But when you refuse to give food to them
(תַּסְתִּיר פָּנֶיךָ)

The psalmist is using **You hide your face** as a common expression of his culture to mean "You withdraw your care" or "You turn away from them." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [When you ignore them]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT they are terrified**
**UST** they panic
(יִבָּהֵלוּן)

The expression **they are terrified** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [that terrifies them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **you take away their breath; they expire**
UST When you cause them to stop breathing, they die
(תֹּסֵ֣ף רוּחָ֣ם יִגְוָ֑עוּן)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that it is when God takes the breath away that creatures then expire. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [When you take away their breath; then they expire]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **and return to their dust**
UST their bodies decay and become part of the soil
(וְאֶל־עֲפָרָ֖ם יְשׁוּבֽוּן)

The psalmist is using **return to their dust** as a common expression of his culture to mean "die and decay." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and turn into dirt]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| their breath | When you cause them to stop breathing |
| return | their bodies decay and become part of the soil |

# Psalms 104:30

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You send out your breath; they are created, and you renew the face of the land.* | *When you cause {newborn} creatures to begin to breathe, they begin to live. You give new life to {all the living creatures on} the earth.* |

ULT **You send out your breath; they are created**
UST When you cause {newborn} creatures to begin to breathe, they begin to live
(תְּשַׁלַּח רוּחֲךָ יִבָּרֵאוּ)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that it is when God sends out his breath that creatures then begin to live. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [When you send out your breath; then they are created]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **You send out your breath; they are created**
UST When you cause {newborn} creatures to begin to breathe, they begin to live
(תְּשַׁלַּח רוּחֲךָ יִבָּרֵאוּ)

The same word that is translated as **breath** in this and the previous verse also means "spirit." If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to translate as it does. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to translate as the ULT does. Alternate translation: [You send out your Spirit; they are created]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **they are created**
UST they begin to live
(יִבָּרֵאוּ)

The expression **they are created** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [you create them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **the face of the land**
UST { … on} the earth
(פְּנֵי אֲדָמָה)

Here, **the face of the land** represents everything living on the surface of the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [everything living on the earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your breath | When you cause {newborn} creatures to begin to breathe |
| they are created | they begin to live |
| and you renew | You give new life to {all the living creatures … } |
| the land | earth |

# Psalms 104:31

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May the glory of Yahweh be forever; may Yahweh rejoice in his creation!* | *I want all of Yahweh's creatures to glorify him forever! I want Yahweh to rejoice about everything that he has created!* |

**ULT May the glory of Yahweh be forever**
**UST** I want all of Yahweh's creatures to glorify him forever
(יְהִי כְבוֹד יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [May his creatures honor Yahweh forever]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT in his creation**
**UST** everything that he has created
(בְּמַעֲשָׂיו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **creation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in what he has created]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May the glory of | all of … creatures to glorify |
| may … rejoice | I want … to rejoice about |
| Yahweh | Yahweh's … him |
| forever | forever |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| in his creation | everything that he has created |

# Psalms 104:32

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one looking at the earth, and it shakes—he touches the mountains, and they smoke.* | *He makes the earth shake just by looking at it! When he {merely} touches the mountains they start to burn!* |

**ULT The one looking at the earth**
**UST** He makes the earth … just by looking at it
(הַמַּבִּיט לָאָרֶץ)

The phrase **the one** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh looks at the earth]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT The one looking at the earth, and it shakes**
**UST** He makes the earth shake just by looking at it
(הַמַּבִּיט לָאָרֶץ וַתִּרְעָד)

The psalmist uses **and** to indicate that **it shakes** is the result of God **looking at the earth**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a result of what came before. Alternate translation: [the one looking at the earth, so that it shakes]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT he touches the mountains, and they smoke**
**UST** When he {merely} touches the mountains they start to burn
(יִגַּע בֶּהָרִים וְיֶעֱשָׁנוּ)

The psalmist uses **and** to indicate that **they smoke** is the result of God touching **the mountains**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a result of what came before. Alternate translation: [he touches the mountains, which causes them to smoke]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| at the earth | He makes the earth |
| and it shakes | shake |

# Psalms 104:33

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I shall sing to Yahweh in my life; I shall sing praise to my God during my existence.* | *I will sing to Yahweh as long as I live. I will praise my God until the day that I die.* |

ULT **to my God**
UST praise my God
(לֵאלֹהָי)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to describe his relationship with God. The phrase **my God** indicates the God whom the psalmist worships and serves. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to the God whom I worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **during my existence**
UST until the day that I die
(בְּעוֹדִי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the idea of **existence**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [while I am alive]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | to Yahweh |
| I shall sing praise | I will |
| to my God | praise my God |

# Psalms 104:34

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May my meditation be sweet to him; I, I will rejoice in Yahweh.* | *May Yahweh be pleased by all {these things} that I have thought about him. As for me, I will rejoice because I know him.* |

**ULT my meditation**
**UST** by all {these things} that I have thought about him
(שִׂיחִי)

By **my meditation**, the psalmist is probably referring to the things that he has expressed in this psalm. If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **meditation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the things that I have expressed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT May my meditation be sweet to him**
**UST** May Yahweh be pleased by all {these things} that I have thought about him
(יֶעֱרַב עָלָיו שִׂיחִי)

The psalmist is speaking of his **meditation** as if it were something that could have a sweet taste. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May my meditation please him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT I, I will rejoice**
**UST** As for me, I will rejoice
(אֲנֹכִי אֶשְׂמַח)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **I will rejoice** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize his personal commitment to rejoice in Yahweh. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [For my part, I will rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **in Yahweh**
UST because I know him
(בַּיהוָה)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a location that the psalmist could be **in**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [because of who Yahweh is]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my meditation | by all {these things} that I have thought about him |
| I will rejoice | I will rejoice |
| in Yahweh | because I know him |

# Psalms 104:35

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May sinners cease from the earth, and the wicked be no more. Bless Yahweh, my soul! Hallelu Yah!* | *However, I want sinners to disappear from the earth, and for there to be no more wicked people! I tell myself, "Bless Yahweh!" Praise Yahweh!* |

> ULT **and the wicked**
> UST and … wicked people
> (וּרְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean wicked people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [and wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

> ULT **and the wicked be no more**
> UST and for there to be no more wicked people
> (וּרְשָׁעִים ׀ עוֹד אֵינָֽם)

The psalmist 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 verse if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [and may the wicked be no more]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

> ULT **my soul**
> UST I tell myself
> (נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using the term **soul** to mean his entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [myself] or [my inner being]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ־יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| sinners | sinners |
| and the wicked | and … wicked people |
| Bless | Bless |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Yah | Yahweh |
| my soul | I tell myself |

# Psalms 105

## Psalm 105 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 105 is the third in a series of five “psalms of praise” to God (Psalm 103–107). Psalm 105 retells the history of Israel from Yahweh’s covenant with Abraham, to the people’s enslavement in Egypt, to Yahweh’s liberation of the people through the plagues in Egypt, to Yahweh giving them the land of Canaan.

1. Praise Yahweh and seek his works (1–6)
2. Yahweh’s covenant and deeds with the patriarchs (7–15)
3. Yahweh’s guidance over Joseph and Israel in Egypt (16–25)
4. Yahweh’s deliverance and provision in the wilderness (26–45)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh’s protection

God protected Abraham and Jacob. He worked throughout Israel’s history to bring Israel into the land he had promised them. (See: Promised Land)

# Psalms 105:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Give thanks to Yahweh, call on his name; make known his deeds among the peoples!* | *Give thanks to Yahweh; worship him and pray to him. Tell everyone in the world what he has done!* |

**ULT call on his name**
**UST** worship him and pray to him … what he
(קִרְאוּ בִשְׁמֹו)

The psalmist is using the term **name** to refer to Yahweh himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [call on him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| call on | worship him and pray to him |
| make known | Tell |

# Psalms 105:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sing to him, make music to him; exclaim about all of his marvelous deeds!* | *Sing to him; praise him with instruments; tell others about all of his wonderful miracles!* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| exclaim | tell others |
| his marvelous deeds | his wonderful miracles |

# Psalms 105:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Boast in the name of his holiness; let the heart of the seekers of Yahweh rejoice.* | *Be proud of Yahweh, who is the holy one. You people who worship Yahweh, rejoice!* |

ULT **in the name of his holiness**
UST of Yahweh, who is the holy one
(בְּשֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ)

Here, **the name of his holiness** represents Yahweh himself, who is holy. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in Yahweh, who is holy]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in the name of his holiness**
UST of Yahweh, who is the holy one
(בְּשֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **name** that is characterized by **holiness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in his holy name]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **let the heart of the seekers of Yahweh rejoice**
UST You people who worship Yahweh, rejoice
(יִשְׂמַח לֵב ׀ מְבַקְשֵׁי יְהוָה)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts, feelings, and desires exist. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [let the people who seek Yahweh rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **let the heart of the seekers of Yahweh rejoice**
UST You people who worship Yahweh, rejoice
(יִשְׂמַח לֵב ׀ מְבַקְשֵׁי יְהוָה)

The psalmist is speaking of people who desire to know Yahweh as if they were **seekers** of him, or trying to find him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [let the heart of those who desire to know Yahweh rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Boast | Be proud |
| his holiness | who is the holy one |
| of the seekers of | who worship |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| rejoice | rejoice |

# Psalms 105:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Seek Yahweh and his strength; search for his face continually.* | *Ask Yahweh to help you and to make you strong; always try to be with him!* |

**ULT Seek Yahweh and his strength**
UST Ask Yahweh to help you and to make you strong
(דִּרְשׁוּ יְהוָה וְעֻזּוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of needing to **Seek Yahweh** as if he were a lost object that needed to be sought and found. He means that the people should pray to Yahweh and desire to be in his presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Pray to Yahweh and ask for his strength]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and his strength**
UST and to make you strong
(וְעֻזּוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [for him to strengthen you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT search for his face**
UST try to be with him
(בַּקְּשׁוּ פָנָיו)

Here, **his face** represents his presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [seek his presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Seek | Ask … to help you |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and his strength | and to make you strong |
| search for | try to be |

# Psalms 105:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Recall the marvelous things that he has done, his miracles and the decrees from his mouth,* | *You people who are descendants of Yahweh's servant Abraham, you descendants of Jacob, the people whom Yahweh has chosen, think about all of the wonderful things that he has done; he performed miracles, and he proclaimed {righteous} judgments. (vv5-6)* |

**ULT and the decrees from his mouth**
(וּמִשְׁפְּטֵי־פִיהוּ)

Here, **his mouth** represents Yahweh speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the decrees that he spoke]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the marvelous things | נִפְלְאוֹתָיו (ORIG QUOTE) |
| his miracles | מֹפְתָיו (ORIG QUOTE) |
| and the decrees | וּמִשְׁפְּטֵי (ORIG QUOTE) |

# Psalms 105:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *seed of Abraham his servant, sons of Jacob, his chosen ones.* | *You people who are descendants of Yahweh's servant Abraham, you descendants of Jacob, the people whom Yahweh has chosen, think about all of the wonderful things that he has done; he performed miracles, and he proclaimed {righteous} judgments. (vv5-6)* |

**ULT seed of Abraham his servant, sons of Jacob, his chosen ones**
(זֶרַע אַבְרָהָם עַבְדּוֹ בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב בְּחִירָיו)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could move 105:6 before 105:7 as the UST does, in order to state who is being addressed before giving the content of the speech. You would then combine the verses into a verse bridge (105:5–6).

**Support Reference:** Verse Bridges

**ULT seed of Abraham**
(זֶרַע אַבְרָהָם)

The psalmist is speaking of the Israelites as if they were the **seed of Abraham**. He means that they are Abraham's descendants. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [descendants of Abraham]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT his servant**
(עַבְדּוֹ)

The pronoun **his** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh's servant]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT sons of Jacob**
(בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב)

The psalmist is speaking as if the people of Israel were the **sons** of Jacob. He means that they are his descendants. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [descendants of Jacob]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT his chosen ones**
(בְּחִירָיו)

The psalmist is using the adjective **chosen** as a noun to mean people who are chosen. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [those he has chosen]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| seed of | זֶרַע (ORIG QUOTE) |
| Abraham | אַבְרָהָם (ORIG QUOTE) |
| his servant | עַבְדּוֹ (ORIG QUOTE) |
| Jacob | יַעֲקֹב (ORIG QUOTE) |
| his chosen ones | בְּחִירָיו (ORIG QUOTE) |

# Psalms 105:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He is Yahweh, our God. His decrees {are} in all the earth.* | *He is Yahweh, the God whom we worship. He rules over people throughout the earth.* |

**ULT our God**
UST the God whom we worship
(אֱלֹהֵֽינוּ)

By using this possessive form, our God, the psalmist is not saying that the Israelites possess or control Yahweh. Rather he is using these words to indicate that Yahweh is the God whom the Israelites worship as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT His decrees {are} in all the earth**
UST He rules over people throughout the earth
(בְּכָל־הָאָ֥רֶץ מִשְׁפָּטָֽיו)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's decrees as if they were physical objects that existed **in all the earth**. He means that Yahweh's laws and judgments apply to all people everywhere on earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [His laws apply to everyone on earth]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| our God | the God whom we worship |
| His decrees | He rules |

# Psalms 105:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He remembers his covenant forever, the word he commanded for a thousand generations,* | *He never forgets the covenant that he made; that is, he will maintain what he promised for countless generations.* |

**ULT He remembers**
UST He never forgets
(זָכַר)

The psalmist assumes that his audience will understand that God's remembering is not merely recalling information but actively maintaining and fulfilling his commitments. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [He keeps in mind]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT He remembers his covenant forever, the word he commanded for a thousand generations**
UST He never forgets the covenant that he made; that is, he will maintain what he promised for countless generations
(זָכַר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ דָּבָר צִוָּה לְאֶלֶף דּוֹר)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [He remembers his covenant forever, yes, the word he commanded for a thousand generations]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT the word he commanded**
UST that is, he will maintain what he promised
(דָּבָר צִוָּה)

The psalmist 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 verse if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [he remembers the word he commanded]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **the word he commanded**
UST that is, he will maintain what he promised
(דָּבָר צִוָּה)

Here, **the word** represents the covenant that God spoke. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the covenant he commanded]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **for a thousand generations**
UST for countless generations
(לְאֶלֶף דּוֹר)

The psalmist is using **for a thousand generations** as a common expression of his culture to mean “for all time” or “forever.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for all time]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| his covenant | the covenant that he made |
| forever | He never forgets |
| generations | generations |

# Psalms 105:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *that he cut with Abraham and his oath to Isaac.* | *That is the covenant that he made with Abraham, and that he repeated with an oath to Isaac.* |

**ULT that he cut**
**UST** That is the covenant that he made
(אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת)

The psalmist is using the phrase **he cut** as a common expression of his culture to mean "he made." This idiom comes from the ancient practice of cutting animals in two as part of making a covenant. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that he made]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT that he cut**
**UST** That is the covenant that he made
(אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת)

The psalmist 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 verse if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [the covenant that he cut]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT and his oath**
**UST** and that he repeated with an oath
(וּשְׁבוּעָתוֹ)

The psalmist 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 he remembers his oath]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Abraham | Abraham |
| and his oath | and that he repeated with an oath |
| to Isaac | to Isaac |

# Psalms 105:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He confirmed it to Jacob as a statute; to Israel, an everlasting covenant,* | *Then he repeated it as a reliable covenant with Jacob, that is, with Israel, and it was a covenant that would last forever.* |

**ULT He confirmed it to Jacob as a statute; to Israel, an everlasting covenant**
UST Then he repeated it as a reliable covenant with Jacob, that is, with Israel, and it was a covenant that would last forever
(וַיַּעֲמִידֶהָ לְיַעֲקֹב לְחֹק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִית עוֹלָם)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [He confirmed it to Jacob as a statute; yes, to Israel, an everlasting covenant]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT to Israel, an everlasting covenant**
UST that is, with Israel, and it was a covenant that would last forever
(לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִית עוֹלָם)

The psalmist 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: [he confirmed it to Israel, an everlasting covenant]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He confirmed it | Then he repeated it |
| to Jacob | with Jacob |
| as a statute | as a reliable covenant |
| to Israel | that is, with Israel |
| an … covenant | and it was a covenant |
| everlasting | that would last forever |

# Psalms 105:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *saying, “I will give to you the land of Canaan {as} the portion of your inheritance,”* | *What Yahweh said to them was, “I will give to you the region of Canaan; that will be what you {and your descendants} inherit from me.”* |

**ULT saying**
UST What Yahweh said to them was
(לֵאמֹר)

This is the beginning of what Yahweh said. You may wish to mark the words of this speech with a first-level quotation mark at the beginning and end of them or with some other punctuation or convention that your language uses to indicate a direct quotation.

**Support Reference:** Quote Markings

**ULT your inheritance**
UST you {and your descendants} inherit from me
(נַחֲלַתְכֶם)

Here **your** is plural, indicating that Yahweh made this same covenant with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants. Use the plural form here if your language marks that distinction.

**Support Reference:** Forms of ‘You’ — Singular

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the land | the region |
| of Canaan | of Canaan |
| your inheritance | you {and your descendants} inherit from me |

# Psalms 105:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *when they were few in number, very few, and strangers in it.* | *Yahweh said that to the people of Israel when there were only a few of them. They were just a tiny group of people who were living in that land like strangers.* |

ULT **when they were**
UST Yahweh said that to the people of Israel when there were
(בִּהְיוֹתָם)

The pronoun **they** refers to the people of Israel. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **in it**
UST in that land
(בָּהּ)

The pronoun **it** refers to the land of Canaan. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [in the land of Canaan]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

# Psalms 105:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They wandered from nation to nation, from a kingdom to other people.* | *They continually wandered from one place to another, living in various kingdoms and people groups.* |

**ULT from nation to nation, from a kingdom to other people**
**UST** from one place to another, living in various kingdoms and people groups
(מִגּוֹי אֶל־גּוֹי מִמַּמְלָכָה אֶל־עַם אַחֵר)

These two phrases **from nation to nation** and **from a kingdom to other people** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [repeatedly from one kingdom to another]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT from a kingdom**
**UST** living in … kingdoms
(מִמַּמְלָכָה)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **kingdom**. He means kingdoms in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [from one kingdom]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from nation | from one place |
| nation | another |
| from a kingdom | living in … kingdoms |

# Psalms 105:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He did not allow anyone to oppress them; he rebuked kings because of them.* | *But Yahweh did not allow others to oppress the people of Israel. On their behalf, he warned kings {by saying to them},* |

**ULT because of them**
**UST** On their behalf
(עֲלֵיהֶם)

The pronoun **them** refers to the people of Israel. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [because of the people of Israel] or [for the sake of the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he rebuked | he warned … by saying to them |
| kings | kings |

# Psalms 105:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“Do not touch my anointed ones, and do not harm my prophets.”* | *“Do not harm the people whom I have chosen! Do nothing bad to my prophets!”* |

**ULT Do not touch my anointed ones**
UST Do not harm the people whom I have chosen
(אַל־תִּגְּעוּ בִמְשִׁיחָי)

This is the beginning of what God said to the kings. You may wish to mark the words of this speech with a first-level quotation mark at the beginning and end of them or with some other punctuation or convention that your language uses to indicate a direct quotation.

**Support Reference:** Quote Markings

**ULT Do not touch**
UST Do not harm
(אַל־תִּגְּעוּ)

The psalmist says **Do not touch** as a warning against doing even the slightest harm to emphasize God’s strictness about this. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [In no way should you hurt]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my anointed ones | the people whom I have chosen |
| and … my prophets | to my prophets |
| harm | Do … bad |

# Psalms 105:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He called for a famine on the land; he broke all of the staff of bread.* | *Yahweh created a famine in the land of Canaan, that is, all of the people there had no food to eat.* |

**ULT He called for a famine on the land**
**UST** Yahweh created a famine in the land of Canaan
(וַיִּקְרָא־רָעָב עַל־הָאָרֶץ)

The psalmist is speaking of the famine as if it were something that could hear and respond to Yahweh **calling** it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He made the land produce a famine]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT he broke all of the staff of bread**
**UST** that is, all of the people there had no food to eat
(כָּל־מַטֵּה־לֶחֶם שָׁבָר)

The psalmist is using **he broke all of the staff of bread** as a common expression of his culture to mean “he caused there to be a famine” or “he made it so that there was no food.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he made the land unable to produce food]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT bread**
**UST** that is, all of the people there had no food to eat
(לֶחֶם)

The psalmist 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]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He called for | Yahweh created |
| a famine | a famine |
| the staff of | that is, all of the people there had no food to eat |
| bread | that is, all of the people there had no food to eat |

# Psalms 105:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He sent a man ahead of them; Joseph was sold as a servant.* | *{So the people of Israel went to Egypt, but} before they went, Yahweh had already sent someone {there}. {He sent} Joseph, whom his brothers had sold to be a slave.* |

**ULT He sent**
**UST** Yahweh had already sent … there
(שָׁלַח)

The pronoun **He** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh sent]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT ahead of them**
**UST** {So the people of Israel went to Egypt, but} before they went
(לִפְנֵיהֶם)

The pronoun **them** refers to the people of Israel. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT Joseph was sold as a servant**
**UST** {He sent} Joseph, whom his brothers had sold to be a slave
(לְעֶבֶד נִמְכַּר יוֹסֵף)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that God orchestrated Joseph's sale into slavery as part of his plan to send Joseph ahead to Egypt. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Joseph was the man whom Yahweh sent ahead by allowing him to be sold as a servant]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Joseph | {He sent} Joseph |
| as a servant | to be a slave |

# Psalms 105:18

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *They oppressed his feet in a shackle; his neck went into the iron,* | *{Later, while Joseph was in prison in Egypt,} the guards trapped his feet in shackles, and they put an iron collar around his neck.* |

**ULT They oppressed**
**UST** { … Later, while Joseph was in prison in Egypt,} the guards trapped
(עִנּוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to the prison guards in Egypt. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The prison guards in Egypt oppressed]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT in a shackle**
**UST** in shackles
(בַּכֶּבֶל)

A **shackle** is a device made of metal used to restrain a prisoner by fastening around the ankles or wrists. If your readers would not be familiar with what a shackle is, you could use a more general term or explain it in a footnote. Alternate translation: [in metal restraints used to fasten a prisoner's wrists or ankles together]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**ULT the iron**
**UST** an iron collar
(בַּרְזֶל)

By **the iron**, the psalmist means an iron collar that was put around Joseph's neck. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [an iron collar attached to a chain]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the iron | an iron collar |

# Psalms 105:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *until the time of his word coming to pass. The speaking of Yahweh refined him.* | *{Joseph was in prison} until the time when the events that he had predicted happened. Yahweh spoke to him {during this time} and taught Joseph to trust him more.* |

**ULT his word**
**UST** the events that he had predicted
(דְּבָרוֹ)

Here, **his word** represents what Joseph said by using words. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the things that he said]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT refined him**
**UST** and taught Joseph to trust him more
(צְרָפָתְהוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's testing of Joseph as if Yahweh were a metalworker who **refined** him. This image pictures God's word purifying and strengthening Joseph's character during his time of suffering, just as fire removes impurities from metal. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [tested and taught him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the time of | the time when |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 105:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The king sent and released him; the one ruling the people, and liberated him.* | *The king of Egypt, the ruler of the people, commanded his servants who went to the prison and set Joseph free.* |

**ULT The king sent and released him; the one ruling the people, and liberated him**
**UST** The king of Egypt, the ruler of the people, commanded his servants who went to the prison and set Joseph free
(שָׁלַח מֶלֶךְ וַיַּתִּירֵהוּ מֹשֵׁל עַמִּים וַיְפַתְּחֵהוּ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [The king sent and released him; yes, the one ruling the people, and liberated him]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT The king sent and released him**
**UST** The king of Egypt … commanded his servants who went to the prison and set Joseph free
(שָׁלַח מֶלֶךְ וַיַּתִּירֵהוּ)

The psalmist 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 king sent officials and released him]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT the one ruling the people**
**UST** the ruler of the people
(מֹשֵׁל עַמִּים)

The psalmist 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 one ruling the people sent officials]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The king | The king of Egypt |
| and released him | who went to the prison and set Joseph free |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the one ruling | the ruler |

# Psalms 105:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He appointed him lord of his house and ruler over all of his possessions* | *Then the king chose Joseph as the one to decide about everything in the king's household, that is, to be in charge of everything that the king possessed.* |

**ULT He appointed him**
**UST** Then the king chose Joseph as the one
(שָׂמֵ֣הוּ)

The pronoun **He** refers to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, while the pronoun **him** refers to Joseph. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The king appointed Joseph]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT of his house**
**UST** everything in the king's household
(לְבֵיתֹ֑ו)

Here, **house** represents everything concerning the king's palace. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [of everything concerning his palace]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He appointed him | Then the king chose Joseph as the one |
| lord | to decide about |
| of his house | everything in the king's household |
| and ruler | that is, to be in charge of |
| his possessions | that the king possessed |

# Psalms 105:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to bind his princes according to his soul and he taught his elders wisdom.* | *The king permitted Joseph to command the king's officials to do anything that Joseph wanted them to do, and Joseph taught the king's advisors how to be wise.* |

ULT **his princes**
UST the king's officials
(שָׂרָיו)

The psalmist is speaking of the officials of Egypt as if they were **his princes**. The psalmist means that Pharaoh gave Joseph authority over Egypt's highest-ranking officials. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his chief rulers]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to bind his princes according to his soul**
UST The king permitted Joseph to command the king's officials to do anything that Joseph wanted them to do
(לֶאְסֹר שָׂרָיו בְּנַפְשׁוֹ)

The psalmist is using **according to his soul** as a common expression of his culture to mean "according to his will" or "according to his desire." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to subject his princes to Joseph's desires]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **to bind his princes according to his soul**
UST The king permitted Joseph to command the king's officials to do anything that Joseph wanted them to do
(לֶאְסֹר שָׂרָיו בְּנַפְשׁוֹ)

The psalmist 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 appointed him to bind his princes according to his soul]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to bind | The king permitted Joseph to command |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his princes | the king’s officials |
| according to his soul | to do anything that Joseph wanted them to do |
| and … his elders | the king’s advisors |
| he taught … wisdom | and Joseph taught … how to be wise |

# Psalms 105:23

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Then Israel came into Egypt, and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.* | *{Later, Joseph's father} Jacob, also called Israel, arrived in Egypt. He lived like a foreigner in that land that belonged to the descendants of Ham.* |

ULT **Then Israel came into Egypt, and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham**
UST { … Later, Joseph's father} Jacob, also called Israel, arrived in Egypt. He lived like a foreigner in that land that belonged to the descendants of Ham
(וַיָּבֹא יִשְׂרָאֵל מִצְרָיִם וְיַעֲקֹב גָּר בְּאֶרֶץ־חָם)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Then Israel came into Egypt; yes, Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Then Israel | Joseph's father … also called Israel |
| into Egypt | Egypt |
| and Jacob | Jacob |
| sojourned | He lived like a foreigner |
| in the land | in that land |
| of Ham | that belonged to the descendants of Ham |

# Psalms 105:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He made his people very fruitful, and he made him stronger than his enemies.* | *Over the years, Yahweh caused the descendants of Jacob to become very numerous. As a result, the enemies of the people of Israel considered that the people of Israel were becoming too strong.* |

**ULT He made his people very fruitful**
**UST** Over the years, Yahweh caused the descendants of Jacob to become very numerous
(וַיְפֶ֖ר אֶת־עַמּ֣וֹ מְאֹֽד)

The pronoun **He** refers to Yahweh. The pronoun **his** refers to Jacob. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh made Jacob's people very fruitful]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT He made his people very fruitful**
**UST** Over the years, Yahweh caused the descendants of Jacob to become very numerous
(וַיְפֶ֖ר אֶת־עַמּ֣וֹ מְאֹֽד)

The psalmist is speaking of God causing his people to increase in number as if he were making them **fruitful**. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He made his people multiply greatly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and he made him stronger than his enemies**
**UST** As a result, the enemies of the people of Israel considered that the people of Israel were becoming too strong
(וַיְעַצְּמֵ֖הוּ מִצָּרָֽיו)

The pronouns **him** and **his** refer to **people**, which is singular in form. If it would be helpful, you could use plural pronouns instead. Alternate translation: [and he made them stronger than their enemies]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He made … fruitful | Over the years, Yahweh caused … to become … numerous |
| and he made him stronger | As a result … the people of Israel were becoming too strong |
| than his enemies | |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| | the enemies of the people of Israel considered that |

# Psalms 105:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He turned their hearts to hate his people, to plot against his servants.* | *So Yahweh caused the rulers of Egypt to hate Yahweh's people, and they devised ways to oppress his people.* |

**ULT He turned their hearts**
**UST** So Yahweh caused the rulers of Egypt
(הָפַךְ לִבָּם)

The psalmist is speaking of God changing the Egyptians' attitudes as if he had physically **turned their hearts**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He changed their emotions]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT to plot against his servants**
**UST** and they devised ways to oppress his people
(לְהִתְנַכֵּל בַּעֲבָדָיו)

The psalmist 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 turned their hearts to plot against his servants]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| against his servants | his people |

# Psalms 105:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He sent Moses, his servant, Aaron, whom he had chosen him.* | *But then Yahweh sent his servant Moses along with {Moses' older brother} Aaron, whom Yahweh had also chosen {to serve him}.* |

ULT **Aaron**
UST along with {Moses' older brother} Aaron
(אַהֲרֹן)

The psalmist 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 sent Aaron]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **whom he had chosen him**
UST whom Yahweh had also chosen {to serve him}
(אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר־בּוֹ)

The expression **whom he had chosen him** contains extra information that would not be natural to express in many languages, since the word **whom** already indicates Aaron as the object. If it would be clearer in your language, you could shorten it. Alternate translation: [whom he had chosen]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Moses | Moses |
| his servant | his servant |
| Aaron | along with {Moses' older brother} Aaron |
| he had chosen | Yahweh had also chosen {to serve him} |

# Psalms 105:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They performed among them the matters of his signs, and his wonders in the land of Ham.* | *Those two performed Yahweh's amazing miracles among the people of Egypt in that land where the descendants of Ham lived.* |

**ULT They performed among them the matters of his signs, and his wonders in the land of Ham**

UST Those two performed Yahweh's amazing miracles among the people of Egypt in that land where the descendants of Ham lived

(שָׂ֣מוּ־בָ֭ם דִּבְרֵ֣י אֹתוֹתָ֑יו וּמֹפְתִ֥ים בְּאֶֽרֶץ־חָֽם)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [They performed among them the matters of his signs, yes, his wonders in the land of Ham]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT and his wonders in the land of Ham**

UST amazing … in that land where the descendants of Ham lived

(וּמֹפְתִ֥ים בְּאֶֽרֶץ־חָֽם)

The psalmist 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 they performed his wonders in the land of Ham]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT among them**

UST among the people of Egypt

(בָ֭ם)

The pronoun **them** refers to the Egyptians. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [among the Egyptians]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his signs | Yahweh's … miracles |
| and his wonders | amazing |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the land of<br>Ham | in that land<br>where the descendants of Ham lived |

# Psalms 105:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He sent darkness and made it dark, and they did not rebel against his words.* | *Yahweh sent darkness so that the land of Egypt was dark, and Moses and Aaron obeyed what Yahweh told them to do.* |

> ULT **and they did not rebel against**
> UST and Moses and Aaron obeyed
> (וְלֹא־מָרוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to Moses and Aaron. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and Moses and Aaron did not rebel against]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **and they did not rebel against**
> UST and Moses and Aaron obeyed
> (וְלֹא־מָרוּ)

Here **they did not rebel** is a double negative consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative verb **rebel**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [and they obeyed]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

> ULT **his words**
> UST what Yahweh told them to do
> (אֶת־דבריו)

Here, **his words** represents what God said by using words. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what he said to them]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they did … rebel against | and Moses and Aaron obeyed |

# Psalms 105:29

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He turned their water into blood and killed their fish.* | *Yahweh caused all of the water in Egypt to become blood, which caused all of their fish to die.* |

**ULT and killed their fish**
**UST** which caused all of their fish to die
(וַיָּמֶת אֶת־דְּגָתָם)

The word translated as **and** indicates that what follows is a result of what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a result of what came before. Alternate translation: [which killed their fish]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and killed | which caused … to die |

# Psalms 105:30

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Their land swarmed with frogs— in the rooms of their kings!* | *Then he caused the land to become full of frogs; the royal family even had frogs in their bedrooms!* |

**ULT in the rooms of their kings**
UST the royal family even had frogs in their bedrooms
(בְּחַדְרֵי מַלְכֵיהֶם)

The psalmist 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: [frogs swarmed in the rooms of their kings]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Their land | the land |
| of their kings | the royal family |

# Psalms 105:31

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He spoke, and flies came; gnats in all their territory.* | *Then Yahweh commanded {that flies come}, and {swarms of} flies descended {on the people of Egypt}. Gnats also swarmed across the whole country.* |

**ULT He spoke**
**UST** Then Yahweh commanded {that flies come}
(אָמַר)

The implication is that Yahweh commanded the flies to come. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh commanded the flies]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT gnats in all**
**UST** Gnats also swarmed across the whole
(כִּנִּים בְּכָל)

The psalmist 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: [gnats came into all]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT their territory**
**UST** country
(גְּבוּלָם)

The pronoun **their** refers to the Egyptians. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the Egyptians' territory]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

# Psalms 105:32

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He made their rain hail, fire of flames on their land.* | *Yahweh sent them hail instead of rain, and he started fires that burned throughout their land.* |

**ULT fire of flames**
**UST** and he started fires that burned
(אֵשׁ לֶהָבוֹת)

The psalmist 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 made fire of flames]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT fire of flames**
**UST** and he started fires that burned
(אֵשׁ לֶהָבוֹת)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **fire** that is characterized by **flames**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [flaming fire] or [burning fire]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| hail | hail |
| on their land | throughout their land |

# Psalms 105:33

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He struck their vines and their figs; he shattered the trees of their territory.* | *The hail ruined their grapevines, fig trees, and destroyed all the other trees in their country.* |

**ULT He struck**
**UST** The hail ruined
(וַיַּךְ)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that God struck the vines and fig trees with the hail mentioned in the previous verse. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [He destroyed]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their vines | their grapevines |
| and their figs | fig trees |

# Psalms 105:34

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He spoke, and the locust came, and the young locust, and there was no number.* | *Yahweh commanded locusts to come, and hordes of them came of different kinds; so many came that no one could count them.* |

ULT **He spoke**
UST Yahweh commanded locusts to come
(אָמַר)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **He spoke** means that God gave a command for the locusts to come. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh commanded the locusts]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and the locust came, and the young locust**
UST and hordes of them came of different kinds
(וַיָּבֹא אַרְבֶּה וְיֶלֶק)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **the locust** and **the young locust** refer to different kinds of locusts that came in large swarms, not just one of each. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and locusts came, and young locusts]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **and the young locust**
UST and hordes of them … of different kinds
(וְיֶלֶק)

The psalmist 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 verse if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [and the young locust came]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and there was no number**
UST so many came that no one could count them
(וְאֵין מִסְפָּר)

The psalmist says **there was no number** as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [in swarms that were impossible to count]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the locust | and hordes of them … of different kinds |
| and the young locust | and hordes of them … of different kinds |

# Psalms 105:35

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they ate all of the vegetation in their land; and they ate the fruit of their ground.* | *The locusts ate every green plant in their land, including all of the crops.* |

ULT **And they ate all of the vegetation in their land; and they ate the fruit of their ground**

UST The locusts ate every green plant in their land, including all of the crops

(וַיֹּאכַל כָּל־עֵשֶׂב בְּאַרְצָם וַיֹּאכַל פְּרִי אַדְמָתָם)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [And they ate all of the vegetation in their land; yes, they ate the fruit of their ground]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the fruit of their ground**

UST all of the crops

(פְּרִי אַדְמָתָם)

The psalmist is using **the fruit of their ground** to represent all of the crops that grew in the land. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the crops that grew on their ground]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And they ate | The locusts ate |
| in their land | in their land |
| the fruit of | all of the crops |

# Psalms 105:36

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then he struck every firstborn in their land, the first of all their strength.* | *Then Yahweh killed every firstborn son, the one who first demonstrated that the man was virile, {in every house} of the people of Egypt.* |

**ULT Then he struck**
UST Then Yahweh killed
(וַיַּךְ)

The implication is that God killed all the firstborn people and animals in Egypt. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Then he killed]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| firstborn | firstborn son |
| in their land | {in every house} of the people of Egypt |
| the first of | the one who first demonstrated |

# Psalms 105:37

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He brought them out with silver and gold; and there was no stumbling among his tribes.* | *Then Yahweh brought the Israelite people out {from Egypt}. They were carrying {many heavy things made of} silver and gold {that the people of Egypt had given to them}, and yet none of his people stumbled as they went.* |

**ULT He brought them out with silver and gold**
UST Then Yahweh brought the Israelite people out {from Egypt}. They were carrying {many heavy things made of} silver and gold {that the people of Egypt had given to them … }
(וַיּוֹצִיאֵם בְּכֶסֶף וְזָהָב)

The psalmist assumes that his readers will know that the **silver and gold** refers to items made of silver and gold that the Israelites carried out of Egypt, as described in Exodus. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [He brought them out as they carried silver and gold]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| with silver | They were carrying {many heavy things made of} silver |
| and gold | and gold {that the people of Egypt had given to them} |
| stumbling | stumbled as they went |
| among his tribes | of his people |

# Psalms 105:38

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Egypt was glad when they departed, for the dread of them had fallen upon them.* | *The people of Egypt were glad when the Israelite people left because the people of Egypt had become very afraid of the Israelites.* |

**ULT Egypt was glad**
**UST** The people of Egypt were glad
(שָׂמַח מִצְרַיִם)

Here, **Egypt** represents the people of Egypt. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The Egyptian people were glad]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Egypt | The people of Egypt |
| was glad | were glad |
| the dread of them | very afraid of the Israelites |

# Psalms 105:39

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He spread a cloud for a covering and fire to light up the night.* | *{Then} Yahweh spread a cloud to cover the Israelites; and at night {it became} a {big} fire {in the sky} to give them light.* |

**ULT and fire**
**UST** it became} a {big} fire {in the sky}
(וְאֵשׁ)

The psalmist 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 he spread fire] or [and he provided fire]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for a covering | to cover the Israelites |

# Psalms 105:40

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *He asked, and he brought quail and satisfied them with bread from heaven.* | *{Then} the Israelites asked {for meat to eat}, and Yahweh sent {flocks of} quail to them, and he gave them plenty of {manna} bread from the sky {each morning}.* |

ULT **He asked**
UST Then} the Israelites asked {for meat to eat}
(שָׁאַל)

The pronoun **He** refers to Israel, which is a singular way to refer to all the people. If it would be helpful, you could use a plural pronoun instead. Alternate translation: [They asked]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and he brought quail**
UST and Yahweh sent {flocks of} quail to them
(וַיָּבֵא שְׂלָו)

The pronoun **he** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and Yahweh brought quail]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **quail**
UST {flocks of} quail
(שְׂלָו)

A **quail** is a kind of medium-sized game bird. If your readers would not be familiar with what a quail is, you could use the name of a similar thing that your readers would recognize, or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [medium-size birds]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and … bread | and … {manna} bread |
| from heaven | from the sky {each morning} |

# Psalms 105:41

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He split the rock and waters gushed out; they went forth in the desert a river.* | *{One day} Yahweh split open a rock, and water poured out {from the opening for the people to drink}. The water became a river flowing in the desert.* |

**ULT He split**
**UST** {One day} Yahweh split open
(פָּתַח)

The pronoun **He** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh split]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT they went forth**
**UST** The water became … flowing
(הָלְכוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to the waters. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the waters went forth] or [the water went forth]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT a river**
**UST** a river
(נָהָר)

The psalmist 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 a river] or [as much water as a river]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the desert | in the desert |

# Psalms 105:42

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For he remembered the word of his holiness with Abraham his servant.* | *Yahweh did those things because he continually thought about the sacred promise that he had given to his servant, Abraham.* |

ULT **For**
UST Yahweh did those things because
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [The reason he did those things was that]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **he remembered**
UST he continually thought about
(זָכַר)

The pronoun **he** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh remembered]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **he remembered**
UST he continually thought about
(זָכַר)

The psalmist assumes that his audience will understand that God's remembering is not merely recalling information but actively maintaining and fulfilling his commitments. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [he kept in mind]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the word of his holiness**
UST the sacred promise
(אֶת־דְּבַר קָדְשׁוֹ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **word** that is characterized by **holiness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [his holy word]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the word of his holiness**
UST the sacred promise
(אֶת־דְּבַר קָדְשׁוֹ)

Here, **his holiness** represents his holy promise or covenant. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his holy covenant]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **with Abraham**
UST that he had given to … Abraham
(אֶת־אַבְרָהָם)

The psalmist 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: [through which he made a promise to Abraham]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| his holiness | sacred |
| Abraham | Abraham |
| his servant | his servant |

# Psalms 105:43

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He led his people out with joy, his chosen with shouts of triumph.* | *So his people were joyful as Yahweh brought them out {from Egypt}. These people whom he had chosen were shouting joyfully as they went.* |

ULT **He led his people out with joy, his chosen with shouts of triumph**
UST So his people were joyful as Yahweh brought them out {from Egypt}. These people whom he had chosen were shouting joyfully as they went
(וַיּוֹצֵא עַמּוֹ בָּשָׂשׂוֹן בְּרִנָּה אֶת־בְּחִירָיו)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [He led his people out with joy, yes, his chosen with shouts of triumph]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **He led his people out**
UST So his people … as Yahweh brought them out {from Egypt}
(וַיּוֹצֵא עַמּוֹ)

The pronoun **He** refers to Yahweh. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use Yahweh's name here. Alternate translation: [Yahweh led his people out]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **with joy**
UST were joyful
(בָּשָׂשׂוֹן)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **joy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and they were joyful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **his chosen**
UST These people whom he had chosen
(אֶת־בְּחִירָיו)

The psalmist is using the adjective **chosen** as a noun to mean a certain kind of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [his chosen people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **with shouts of triumph**
UST were shouting joyfully as they went
(בְּרִנָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **triumph**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [shouting triumphantly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **his chosen with shouts of triumph**
UST These people whom he had chosen were shouting joyfully as they went
(בְּרִנָּה אֶת־בְּחִירָיו)

The psalmist 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 verse if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [He led his chosen out with shouts of triumph]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| with joy | were joyful |
| chosen | These people whom he had chosen |
| with shouts of triumph | were shouting joyfully as they went |

# Psalms 105:44

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then he gave to them the lands of the nations, and they took possession of the toil of the peoples* | *Then Yahweh gave to the people of Israel the land that had belonged to the people groups {that lived there in Canaan}. So the Israelites took over the fields that those peoples had planted.* |

**ULT Then he gave to them the lands of the nations, and they took possession of the toil of the peoples**
UST Then Yahweh gave to the people of Israel the land that had belonged to the people groups {that lived there in Canaan}. So the Israelites took over the fields that those peoples had planted
(וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם אַרְצוֹת גּוֹיִם וַעֲמַל לְאֻמִּים יִירָשׁוּ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Then he gave to them the lands of the nations; yes, they took possession of the toil of the peoples]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT Then he gave to them**
UST Then Yahweh gave to the people of Israel
(וַיִּתֵּן לָהֶם)

The pronoun **He** refers to Yahweh. The pronoun **them** refers to the Israelites. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Then Yahweh gave to the Israelites]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and they took possession of the toil of the peoples**
UST So the Israelites took over the fields that those peoples had planted
(וַעֲמַל לְאֻמִּים יִירָשׁוּ)

Here, **toil** represents what the people produced by their work. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and they took possession of what other peoples had worked to produce]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **they took possession of**
UST So the Israelites took over
(יָרָֽשׁוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **possession**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [they took for themselves]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the lands of | the land |
| the nations | that had belonged to the people groups {that lived there in Canaan} |
| they took possession of | So the Israelites took over |

# Psalms 105:45

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *so that they might keep his statutes and comply with his laws. Hallelu Yah!* | *Yahweh did all these things so that his people would do all the things that he had commanded them to do. Praise Yahweh!* |

ULT **they might keep his statutes and comply with his laws**
UST his people would do all the things that he had commanded them to do
(יִשְׁמְרוּ חֻקָּיו וְתוֹרֹתָיו יִנְצֹרוּ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [they might keep his statutes, that is, comply with his laws]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ־יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name “Yahweh,” the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his statutes | all the things that he had commanded them to do |
| and … his laws | all the things that he had commanded them to do |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yah | Yahweh |

# Psalms 106

## Psalm 106 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 106 is the fourth in a series of five “psalms of praise” to God (Psalm 103–107). The book of Psalms is divided into five sections, also called “books,” and Psalm 106 ends book four. Verses 47 and 48 are considered to be a closing petition and praise for book four, rather than belonging specifically to Psalm 106.

1. Praise Yahweh for his goodness and faithfulness (1–3)
2. Plea for pardon and Yahweh’s acceptance (4–6)
3. Recount Israel’s rebellion and Yahweh’s mercy (7–46)
4. Prayer and praise to Yahweh (47–48)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Israel’s sin

Although Israel continually sinned in the desert, God still took them to the Promised Land. (See: sin, sinful, sinner, sinning and Promised Land)

# Psalms 106:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hallelu Yah! Give thanks to Yahweh, for {he is} good, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *Praise Yahweh! Thank Yahweh because he is good and because he faithfully loves us forever!* |

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever**
UST and because he faithfully loves us forever
(כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ)

The psalmist 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: [give thanks to Yahweh for his covenant faithfulness is to forever]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever**
UST and because he faithfully loves us forever
(כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ)

The psalmist is using **to forever** as a common expression of his culture to mean “eternally” or “without end.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for his covenant faithfulness lasts forever]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **his covenant faithfulness**
UST he faithfully loves us
(חַסְדּוֹ)

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 way he is faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yah | Yahweh |
| to Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {he is} good | he is good |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves us |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 106:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Who can utter the mighty acts of Yahweh, proclaim all of his praise?* | *Because Yahweh has done so many great things, no one can tell all the great things that Yahweh has done, and no one can praise him enough.* |

ULT **Who can utter the mighty acts of Yahweh, proclaim all of his praise**
UST Because Yahweh has done so many great things, no one can tell all the great things that Yahweh has done, and no one can praise him enough
(מִֽי יְמַלֵּ֤ל גְּבוּרוֹת֙ יְהוָ֔ה יַ֖שְׁמִיעַ כָּל־תְּהִלָּתֽוֹ)

The psalmist 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 can utter the mighty acts of Yahweh or proclaim all of his praise.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **proclaim all of his praise**
UST and no one can praise him enough
(יַ֖שְׁמִיעַ כָּל־תְּהִלָּתֽוֹ)

The psalmist 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: [who can proclaim all of his praise]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **proclaim all of his praise**
UST and no one can praise him enough
(יַ֖שְׁמִיעַ כָּל־תְּהִלָּתֽוֹ)

Here, **praise** represents praiseworthy deeds. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [proclaim all of his praiseworthy deeds]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the mighty acts | all the great things |
| of Yahweh | that Yahweh has done |
| proclaim | and no one can praise him enough |
| his praise | and no one can praise him enough |

# Psalms 106:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The happinesses of the guardians of justice, the doers of righteousness at all times!* | *How happy are those who act fairly, always doing what is right!* |

ULT **The happinesses of**
UST How happy
(אַשְׁרֵי)

The psalmist is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of joy or blessing. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy are] or [Truly blessed are]

ULT **the guardians of justice, the doers of righteousness**
UST are those who act fairly … doing what is right
(שֹׁמְרֵי מִשְׁפָּט עֹשֵׂה צְדָקָה)

The terms **guardians of justice** and **doers of righteousness** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [those who are careful to do what is right]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **the guardians of justice**
UST are those who act fairly
(שֹׁמְרֵי מִשְׁפָּט)

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: [those who are always just]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the doers of righteousness**
UST doing what is right
(עֹשֵׂה צְדָקָה)

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: [those who do what is right]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the guardians of<br>justice | are those who act<br>fairly |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| righteousness | what is right |
| times | always |

# Psalms 106:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Remember me, Yahweh, in the favor of your people; visit me in your salvation,* | *Yahweh, be kind to me when you help your people! Include me when you rescue them!* |

**ULT Remember me**
**UST** be kind to me
(זָכְרֵנִי)

By **Remember me**, the psalmist is not implying that Yahweh forgot him, but he means for Yahweh to act favorably to him or to show him favor. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Pay attention to me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT in the favor of your people**
**UST** when you help your people
(בִּרְצוֹן עַמֶּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **favor**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [when you are kind to your people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT visit me**
**UST** Include me
(פָּקְדֵנִי)

By **visit me**, the psalmist means "be kind to me" or "show favor to me." You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [be kind to me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT in your salvation**
**UST** when you rescue them
(בִּישׁוּעָתֶךָ)

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: [when you save them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the favor of | when you help |
| in your salvation | when you rescue them |

# Psalms 106:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to look on the good of your chosen, to rejoice in the gladness of your nation, to boast with your inheritance.* | *Allow me to see the people whom you have chosen become prosperous again. Allow me to be happy with the people of your nation when they become happy again. Allow me to praise you along with all those others who belong to you.* |

ULT **to look on the good of**
UST Allow me to see … become prosperous again
(לִרְאוֹת ׀ בְּטוּבַת)

The psalmist is using the adjective **good** as a noun to mean good things or good experiences. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [to look on the good experiences] or [to look on the prosperity]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **your chosen**
UST the people whom you have chosen
(בְּחִירֶיךָ)

The psalmist is using the adjective **chosen** 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: [your chosen people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **in the gladness of your nation**
UST with the people of your nation when they become happy again
(בְּשִׂמְחַת גּוֹיֶךָ)

The psalmist is using the adjective **gladness** as a noun to mean a certain kind of experience or state. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [when your nation becomes glad again]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT to boast with your inheritance**
**UST** Allow me to praise you along with all those others who belong to you
(לְהִתְהַלֵּל עִם־נַחֲלָתֶךָ)

Here the phrase **your inheritance** refers to the Israelites, the people who belong to Yahweh. When Yahweh saves them, they will **boast** about Yahweh. Alternate translation: [to boast of your greatness with your people] or [to boast with your people about you]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| on the good of | become prosperous again |
| your chosen | the people whom you have chosen |
| to rejoice | Allow me to be happy |
| in the gladness of | when they become happy again |
| your nation | with the people of your nation |
| to boast | Allow me to praise you |
| your inheritance | all those others who belong to you |

# Psalms 106:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *We have sinned like our fathers; we have done wrong; we have done evil.* | *We have sinned just as our ancestors did; we have done all kinds of evil.* |

ULT **our fathers**
UST our ancestors did
(אֲבוֹתֵינוּ)

Here the psalmist is using the term **fathers** to mean "ancestors." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [our ancestors]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **we have done wrong; we have done evil**
UST we have done all kinds of evil
(הֶעֱוִינוּ הִרְשָׁעְנוּ)

The terms translated as **we have done wrong** and **we have done evil** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [we have continually done what is wrong]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **we have done wrong; we have done evil**
UST we have done all kinds of evil
(הֶעֱוִינוּ הִרְשָׁעְנוּ)

The psalmist is using the adjectives **wrong** and **evil** as nouns to mean certain kinds of actions or behaviors. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these adjectives with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [we have done what is wrong; we have done what is evil]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| We have sinned | We have sinned |
| we have done wrong | we have done all kinds of evil |
| we have done evil | we have done all kinds of evil |

# Psalms 106:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Our fathers did not consider your marvelous deeds in Egypt; they did not remember the abundance of your covenant faithfulness, and they rebelled at the sea, the Sea of Reeds.* | *Our ancestors did not appreciate the wonderful things that you did when they were in Egypt. They forgot about the many times that you showed that you faithfully loved them. Instead, when they were at the Sea of Reeds, they rebelled against you.* |

ULT **the abundance of your covenant faithfulness**
UST the many times that you showed that you faithfully loved them
(אֶת־רַ֥ב חֲסָדֶ֗יךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **abundance** and **covenant faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in other ways. Alternate translation: [how you were constantly faithful to your covenant with them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the sea, the Sea of Reeds**
UST they were at the Sea of Reeds
(יָ֥ם בְּיַם־סֽוּף)

The terms **the sea** and **the Sea of Reeds** refer to the same place. The psalmist 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 Sea of Reeds]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your marvelous deeds | the wonderful things that you did |
| in Egypt | when they were in Egypt |
| your covenant faithfulness | that you showed that you faithfully loved them |
| and they rebelled | Instead … they rebelled against you |
| the Sea of Reeds | they were at the Sea of Reeds |

# Psalms 106:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But he saved them on account of his name, to make known his power.* | *Even so, he rescued them because of who he is, so that he could show that he is very powerful.* |

ULT **on account of his name**
UST because of who he is
(לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ)

Here, **his name** represents his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for the sake of his reputation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to make known**
UST so that he could show that
(לְהוֹדִיעַ)

Here, **to make known** marks **to make known his power** as the goal or purpose of **he saved them on account of his name**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [in order to make known]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **to make known**
UST so that he could show that
(לְהוֹדִיעַ)

The expression **to make known** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [so that everyone would know]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **his power**
UST he is very powerful
(אֶת־גְּבוּרָתוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **power**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how powerful he is]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| But he saved them | Even so, he rescued them |
| to make known | so that he could show that |

# Psalms 106:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He rebuked the Sea of Reeds, and it dried up. Then he led them through the depths, as {through} a desert.* | *He rebuked the Sea of Reeds and it became dry. Then he led our ancestors through it and even the deepest parts were as dry as a desert.* |

ULT **He rebuked the Sea of Reeds, and it dried up**
UST He rebuked the Sea of Reeds and it became dry
(וַיִּגְעַר בְּיַם־סוּף וַיֶּחֱרָב)

Here, **and it dried up** marks **it dried up** as the goal or purpose of **He rebuked the Sea of Reeds**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [He rebuked the Sea of Reeds so that it dried up]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **as {through} a desert**
UST were as dry as a desert
(כַּמִּדְבָּר)

The psalmist is making a comparison about how God led the Israelites through the dried-up sea. The point of this comparison is that just as **a desert** is dry land that can be walked on, so were **the depths** of the sea after God dried it up. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and it was as dry as a desert]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He rebuked | He rebuked |
| the Sea of Reeds | the Sea of Reeds |
| as {through} a desert | were as dry as a desert |

# Psalms 106:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *So he saved them from the hand of the hater, and he rescued them from the hand of the enemy.* | *In that way he rescued them from their hateful enemies.* |

ULT **So he saved them from the hand of the hater, and he rescued them from the hand of the enemy**

UST In that way he rescued them from their hateful enemies

(וַיּוֹשִׁיעֵם מִיַּד שׂוֹנֵא וַיִּגְאָלֵם מִיַּד אוֹיֵב)

These two phrases **he saved them from the hand of the hater** and **he rescued them from the hand of the enemy** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [So he saved them from the hand of the hater; yes, he rescued them from the hand of the enemy]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **from the hand of … from the hand of**

UST from

(מִיַּד & מִיַּד)

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: [from the power of … from the power of]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the hater**

UST their hateful

(שׂוֹנֵא)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **hater**. He means haters in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [those who hated them]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **the enemy**
UST enemies
(אוֹיֵב)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **enemy**. He means enemies in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [their enemies]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| So he saved them | In that way he rescued them |
| and he rescued them | In that way he rescued them |
| the enemy | enemies |

# Psalms 106:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then the waters covered their adversaries; one of them was not left.* | *Then their enemies drowned under the water {of the Sea of Reeds}; not one of them remained {alive}.* |

ULT **one of them was not left**
UST not one of them remained {alive}
(אֶחָד מֵהֶם לֹא נוֹתָר)

The expression **one of them was not left** contains a passive verbal form. It means that none of them were left alive. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [all of them died]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their adversaries | Then their enemies |

# Psalms 106:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then they believed his words; they sang his praise.* | *When that happened, our ancestors believed that Yahweh had truly done for them what he had promised to do, and they sang to praise him.* |

ULT **his words**
UST what he had promised to do
(בִּדְבָרָיו)

Here, **words** represents what God said by using words. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what he had said to them]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **his praise**
UST to praise him
(תְּהִלָּתוֹ)

Here, **praise** represents songs or words that praised God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [songs that praised him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Then they believed | When that happened, our ancestors believed that Yahweh had truly done for them |
| his praise | to praise him |

# Psalms 106:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But they hurried, they forgot his deeds; they did not wait for his instructions.* | *But they soon forgot what he had done for them; they did things without waiting to find out what Yahweh wanted them to do.* |

**ULT But they hurried, they forgot**
**UST** But they soon forgot
(מָהֲרוּ שָׁכְחוּ)

The phrases **they hurried, they forgot** express a single idea. The word **hurried** tells more about **forgot**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [But they quickly forgot]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for his instructions | to find out what Yahweh wanted them to do |

# Psalms 106:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they craved a craving in the wilderness, and they tested God in the wasteland.* | *They intensely wanted certain foods in the wilderness. They did evil things there that challenged God to punish them.* |

**ULT in the wilderness … in the wasteland**
**UST** in the wilderness … there
(בַּמִּדְבָּר & בִּישִׁימוֹן)

These two phrases **in the wilderness** and **in the wasteland** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could indicate in some way that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [in the wilderness … in that wasteland]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT And they craved a craving**
**UST** They intensely wanted certain foods
(וַיִּתְאַוּוּ תַאֲוָה)

The psalmist 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 another way of saying this. Alternate translation: [And they had strong cravings]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

**ULT and they tested God**
**UST** They did evil things … that challenged God to punish them
(וַיְנַסּוּ־אֵל)

The implication is that they tested God's patience and faithfulness by demanding things from him and complaining against him. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and they pushed the limits of God's patience with them]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the wilderness | in the wilderness |
| and they tested | They did evil things … that challenged … to punish them |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| in the wasteland | there |

# Psalms 106:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *So he gave to them their request, but he sent a wasting disease upon their lives.* | *So he gave them what they requested, but then he made many of them sick so that they died.* |

**ULT but he sent a wasting disease**
**UST** but then he made many of them sick
(וַיְשַׁלַּח רָזוֹן)

The psalmist is speaking as if God literally **sent a wasting disease**. This means that God caused the disease to affect the Israelites. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but he caused a wasting disease]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT upon their lives**
**UST** so that they died
(בְּנַפְשָׁם)

The psalmist is using **upon their lives** as a common expression of his culture to mean "that killed them" or "that took their lives." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that took their lives] or [that killed many of them]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a wasting disease | sick |

# Psalms 106:16

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And they became envious of Moses in the camp, of Aaron, the holy one of Yahweh.* | *Later when some of the men in the camp became resentful of Moses and of {his older brother} Aaron, who was dedicated to serve Yahweh {by being a priest},* |

**ULT And they became envious**
**UST** became resentful
(וַיְקַנְאוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to some of the Israelites. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [And some of the men became envious]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT of Aaron**
**UST** and of {his older brother} Aaron
(לְאַהֲרֹן)

The psalmist 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 they also became envious of Aaron]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT the holy one of Yahweh**
**UST** who was dedicated to serve Yahweh {by being a priest}
(קְדוֹשׁ יְהוָה)

The psalmist is using the adjective **holy one** 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: [the holy priest of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And they became envious | became resentful |
| of Moses | of Moses |
| of Aaron | and of {his older brother} Aaron |
| the holy one of | who was dedicated to serve … by being a priest |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 106:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The earth opened and swallowed Dathan and covered over the congregation of Abiram.* | *the ground opened up and Dathan fell into it and it also buried Abiram and his people.* |

ULT **and swallowed Dathan**
UST and Dathan fell into it
(וַתִּבְלַע דָּתָן)

The psalmist is speaking as if the earth were a person who **swallowed** Dathan. He means that the earth opened up and Dathan fell into it and died. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and Dathan went down in it]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Dathan … Abiram**
UST Dathan … Abiram
(דָּתָן & אֲבִירָם)

The words **Dathan** and **Abiram** are the names of men.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **the congregation of Abiram**
UST Abiram and his people
(עֲדַת אֲבִירָם)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **the congregation of Abiram** refers to Abiram's followers who joined him in rebelling against Moses and Aaron. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the followers of Abiram]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The earth | the ground |
| and swallowed | and … fell into it |
| the congregation of | and his people |

# Psalms 106:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Fire blazed up in their congregation; a flame burned up the wicked.* | *God made a fire start among their people that burned up all the wicked people {who agreed with them}.* |

ULT **Fire blazed up in their congregation; a flame burned up the wicked**
UST God made a fire start among their people that burned up all the wicked people {who agreed with them … }
(וַתִּבְעַר־אֵשׁ בַּעֲדָתָם לֶהָבָה תְּלַהֵט רְשָׁעִים)

These two phrases **Fire blazed up in their congregation** and **a flame burned up the wicked** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Fire blazed up in their congregation; indeed, a flame burned up the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the wicked**
UST all the wicked people {who agreed with them}
(רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist 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: [those wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in their congregation | among their people |
| the wicked | all the wicked people {who agreed with them} |

# Psalms 106:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They made a calf at Horeb and worshiped a cast image.* | *Then the Israelite leaders made a metal statue of a calf at Mount Horeb and they worshiped it.* |

**ULT They made a calf at Horeb and worshiped a cast image**
**UST** Then the Israelite leaders made a metal statue of a calf at Mount Horeb and they worshiped it
(יַעֲשׂוּ־עֵגֶל בְּחֹרֵב וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְמַסֵּכָה)

These two phrases **They made a calf at Horeb** and **worshiped a cast image** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [They made a calf at Horeb; yes, they worshiped that cast image]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT They made a calf**
**UST** Then the Israelite leaders made … a calf
(יַעֲשׂוּ־עֵגֶל)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that this **calf** was not a real calf but was made of gold as an idol to worship. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [They made a model of a calf]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT and worshiped a cast image**
**UST** a metal statue of … and they worshiped it
(וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְמַסֵּכָה)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **a cast image** refers to the golden calf that the Israelites made at Mount Horeb. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and worshiped that calf, which was a cast image]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a calf | a calf |
| at Horeb | at Mount Horeb |
| and worshiped | and they worshiped it |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a cast image | a metal statue of |

# Psalms 106:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Thus they traded their Glory for the likeness of a bull eating grass.* | *So instead of worshiping their glorious God, they worshiped a statue of a bull that eats grass!* |

ULT **their Glory**
UST their glorious God
(אֶת־כְּבוֹדָם)

The implication is that **their Glory** refers to God himself, who is glorious. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [their God, who is glorious,]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Thus they traded their Glory for the likeness of a bull eating grass**
UST So instead of worshiping their glorious God, they worshiped a statue of a bull that eats grass
(וַיָּמִירוּ אֶת־כְּבוֹדָם בְּתַבְנִית שׁוֹר אֹכֵל עֵשֶׂב)

The psalmist is speaking of worshiping an idol rather than God as though they had **traded** God for this idol. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Thus they replaced worshiping their Glory with worshiping the likeness of a bull eating grass]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their Glory | their glorious God |
| for the likeness of | they worshiped a statue of |
| a bull | a bull |
| eating | that eats |

# Psalms 106:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They forgot God their Savior, the doer of great {deeds} in Egypt:* | *They ignored God, who had rescued them by the great miracles that he performed in Egypt.* |

**ULT They forgot God**
**UST** They ignored God
(שָׁכְחוּ אֵל)

The psalmist is speaking as if the Israelites **forgot** God, that is, as if he had slipped from their memory. The psalmist means that they acted as if God did not exist or matter to them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They rejected God]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the doer of great {deeds}**
**UST** by the great miracles that he performed
(עֹשֵׂה גְדֻלּוֹת)

The implication is that God is the one who had done these great deeds to deliver the Israelites from Egypt. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [who had done great deeds]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| their Savior | who had rescued them |
| in Egypt | in Egypt |

# Psalms 106:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *wonders in the land of Ham, awesome {acts} at the Sea of Reeds.* | *They stopped thinking about the wonderful things that he did for them in Egypt and the amazing things that he did for them at the Sea of Reeds.* |

**ULT wonders**
**UST** They stopped thinking about the wonderful things
(נִפְלָאוֹת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wonders**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [wonderful things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT in the land of Ham**
**UST** that he did for them in Egypt
(בְּאֶרֶץ חָם)

The implication is that the land of Ham refers to Egypt, since Ham was the ancestor of the Egyptians according to biblical genealogies. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [in the land where Ham's descendants lived]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| wonders | They stopped thinking about the wonderful things |
| in the land | that he did for them in |
| of Ham | Egypt |
| awesome {acts} | and the amazing things that he did for them |
| the Sea of Reeds | the Sea of Reeds |

# Psalms 106:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *So he said to annihilate them— had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach to his face, to turn away his heat from destroying.* | *Because of that, God said that he would get rid of the Israelites; but Moses, whom God had chosen {to serve him}, confronted God to persuade him not to destroy {them}.* |

**ULT So he said to annihilate them**
**UST** Because of that, God said that he would get rid of the Israelites
(וַיֹּאמֶר לְהַשְׁמִידָם)

The implication is that God was determined to destroy the Israelites because of their sin, but Moses interceded for them. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [So he intended to annihilate them] or [So he would have annihilated them]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach**
**UST** but Moses, whom God had chosen {to serve him}, confronted God
(לוּלֵי מֹשֶׁה בְחִירוֹ עָמַד בַּפֶּרֶץ)

The psalmist says **had not Moses, his chosen one, stood in the breach** to introduce a situation that did not happen in order to help explain what would have happened if Moses had not interceded for the Israelites. Use a natural method in your language for introducing a situation that did not happen. Alternate translation: [if Moses, his chosen one, had not stood in the breach]

**Support Reference:** Hypothetical Situations

**ULT his chosen one**
**UST** whom God had chosen {to serve him}
(בְחִירוֹ)

The expression **his chosen one** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [the one whom God had chosen]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **stood in the breach**
UST confronted God
(עָמַד בַּפֶּרֶץ)

The psalmist is using **stood in the breach** as a common expression of his culture to mean "defended them" or "interceded for them." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [defended them]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **to his face**
UST confronted God
(לְפָנָיו)

Here, **to his face** represents being in God's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [before God]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to turn away his heat from destroying**
UST to persuade him not to destroy {them}
(לְהָשִׁיב חֲמָתוֹ מֵהַשְׁחִית)

The psalmist is using **to turn away his heat** as a common expression of the culture to mean "to turn away his anger." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to keep him from destroying them in his anger]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| to annihilate them | he would get rid of the Israelites |
| Moses | Moses |
| his chosen one | whom God had chosen {to serve him} |
| his heat | to persuade him |
| from destroying | not to destroy {them} |

# Psalms 106:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then they despised the delightful land; they did not believe his word,* | *Then our ancestors refused to enter the beautiful land {of Canaan} because they did not believe that God would fulfill his promise {that he would enable them to take the land from the people who were living there}.* |

ULT **his word**

UST fulfill his promise {that he would enable them to take the land from the people who were living there}

(לִדְבָרוֹ)

Here, **word** represents what God said by using words. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what he had said]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the … land | the … land {of Canaan} |
| they did … believe | believe that God would |

# Psalms 106:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *but grumbled in their tents; they did not listen to the voice of Yahweh.* | *Instead, they stayed in their tents and complained. They did not obey what Yahweh said that they should do.* |

ULT **they did not listen to the voice of**
UST They did not obey what … said that they should do
(לֹא שָׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹל)

By **they did not listen to the voice**, the psalmist means they did not obey or heed what Yahweh said. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [they did not heed the voice of]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **to the voice of Yahweh**
UST what Yahweh said that they should do
(בְּקוֹל יְהוָה)

Here, **the voice of Yahweh** represents what Yahweh said by using words. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to what Yahweh said to them]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in their tents | Instead, they stayed in their tents |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 106:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then he raised his hand to them to make them fall in the desert,* | *So Yahweh solemnly swore to them that he would cause them to die there in the wilderness,* |

**ULT Then he raised his hand to them**
**UST** So Yahweh solemnly swore to them
(וַיִּשָּׂא יָדוֹ לָהֶם)

The phrase **raised his hand** describes a symbolic action by which God showed that he was making a solemn oath or vow to the Israelites. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Then he made an oath to them]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

**ULT to make them fall**
**UST** that he would cause them to die
(לְהַפִּיל אוֹתָם)

The psalmist is using **to make them fall** as a common expression of his culture to mean "to kill them." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to kill them]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the desert | there in the wilderness |

# Psalms 106:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *and to make their seed fall among the nations, and to scatter them among the lands.* | *and that he would spread their descendants among the people of other nations, yes, that he would disperse them in those {foreign} lands.* |

ULT **and to make their seed fall among the nations, and to scatter them among the lands**
UST and that he would spread their descendants among the people of other nations, yes, that he would disperse them in those {foreign} lands
(וּלְהַפִּ֣יל זַרְעָ֣ם בַּגּוֹיִ֑ם וּלְזָרוֹתָ֥ם בָּאֲרָצוֹת)

These two phrases **to make their seed fall among the nations** and **to scatter them among the lands** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [and to scatter their descendants among people of foreign lands]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **and to make their seed fall**
UST and that he would spread their descendants
(וּלְהַפִּ֣יל זַרְעָ֣ם)

The psalmist is speaking of the descendants of the Israelites as if they were **seed** that would fall and be scattered as a farmer scatters seed on a field. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and to spread their descendants]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **among the nations**
UST among the people of other nations
(בַּגּוֹיִ֑ם)

Here, **the nations** represents the people of foreign nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [among people of foreign nations]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their seed | their descendants |
| among the nations | among the people of other nations |
| and to scatter them | yes, that he would disperse them |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| among the lands | in those {foreign} lands |

# Psalms 106:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They joined themselves to the Baal of Peor and ate the sacrifices of the dead.* | *Later the Israelite people began worshiping the statue of Baal at Mount Peor, and they ate meat that had been sacrificed to dead {ancestors}.* |

ULT **They joined themselves**
UST Later the Israelite people began worshiping
(וַיִּצָּמְדוּ)

The psalmist is speaking as if the Israelites had **joined themselves** to the Baal of Peor, that is, as if they were attaching themselves physically to the idol. The psalmist means that they gave their loyalty and devotion to this false god. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They gave their loyalty]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the sacrifices of the dead**
UST meat that had been sacrificed to dead {ancestors}
(זִבְחֵי מֵתִים)

This could mean: (1) the people worshiped their dead ancestors and treated them as gods. Alternate translation: [the sacrifices given to dead ancestors] or (2) the psalmist is describing Baal and the people's other idols as dead. Alternate translation: [sacrifices given to lifeless idols]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the sacrifices of the dead**
UST meat that had been sacrificed to dead {ancestors}
(זִבְחֵי מֵתִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **dead** 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: [the sacrifices for dead people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the sacrifices of the dead**
UST meat that had been sacrificed to dead {ancestors}
(זִבְחֵי מֵתִים)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean sacrifices offered to idols, which were considered to be dead gods. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the sacrifices given to those who had died]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| to the Baal of | the statue of Baal |
| Peor | at Mount Peor |
| and ate | and they ate |
| the sacrifices of | meat that had been sacrificed |

# Psalms 106:29

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they angered with their actions, and a plague broke out among them.* | *When the people did these things, that made Yahweh angry, so {again} he caused many of them to get a terrible disease.* |

**ULT And they angered**
**UST** that made Yahweh angry
(וַיַּכְעִיסוּ)

Some ancient manuscripts read **And they angered**. The ULT follows that reading. Other ancient manuscripts read "And they angered him." 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 they angered him]

**Support Reference:** Textual Variants

**ULT and a plague broke out among them**
**UST** so {again} he caused many of them to get a terrible disease
(וַתִּפְרָץ־בָּם מַגֵּפָה)

The psalmist is using **a plague broke out among them** as a common expression of his culture to mean "many of them became sick with a plague." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and many of them became sick with a plague]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT and a plague broke out among them**
**UST** so {again} he caused many of them to get a terrible disease
(וַתִּפְרָץ־בָּם מַגֵּפָה)

The implication is that God sent the plague as judgment for their sinful actions. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and Yahweh afflicted them with a plague]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a plague | a terrible disease |

# Psalms 106:30

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then Phinehas stood and intervened, and the plague was restrained.* | *But Phinehas stood up and punished {the ones who had sinned}, and as a result the plague ended.* |

**ULT Then Phinehas stood**
**UST** But Phinehas stood up
(וַיַּעֲמֹד פִּינְחָס)

The psalmist is speaking of Phinehas as if he had **stood** up from a sitting position. The psalmist means that Phinehas took action courageously to intervene in the situation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Then Phinehas showed his courage]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and intervened**
**UST** and punished {the ones who had sinned}
(וַיְפַלֵּל)

The implication is that Phinehas acted on behalf of Yahweh to stop the plague by executing judgment on those who were sinning. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and acted on behalf of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT and the plague was restrained**
**UST** and as a result the plague ended
(וַתֵּעָצַר הַמַּגֵּפָה)

The expression **the plague was restrained** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [and the plague stopped]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Phinehas | But Phinehas |
| the plague | and as a result the plague |

# Psalms 106:31

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *It was counted to him as righteousness to generation and generation until forever.* | *Because of what Phinehas did, people have considered him to be a righteous man, and people in all future years will continue to remember him as righteous.* |

**ULT It was counted to him**
**UST** Because of what Phinehas did, people have considered him to be a … man
(וַתֵּחָשֶׁב לֹו)

The expression **It was counted to him** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [People credited it to him]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT as righteousness**
**UST** righteous
(לִצְדָקָה)

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: [as a righteous deed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT to generation and generation**
**UST** and people … will continue to remember him as righteous
(לְדֹר וָדֹר)

The psalmist is using **to generation and generation** as a common expression of his culture to mean “throughout all generations” or “forever.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and will be so throughout all generations]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| as righteousness | righteous |
| to generation | and people … will continue to remember him as righteous |
| and generation | and people … will continue to remember him as righteous |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| forever | in all future years |

# Psalms 106:32

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they angered at the waters of Meribah, and it was bad for Moses on account of them.* | *Then at Meribah, where the water came out {of the rock}, our ancestors caused Yahweh to become angry {again}, and Moses suffered because of what they did.* |

**ULT And they angered**
**UST** Then … our ancestors caused Yahweh to become angry {again}
(וַיַּקְצִיפוּ)

The psalmist 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 they angered Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT Meribah**
**UST** at Meribah
(מְרִיבָה)

The word **Meribah** is the name of a place. Alternate translation: [the place called Meribah]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

**ULT and it was bad for Moses**
**UST** and Moses suffered
(וַיֵּרַע לְמֹשֶׁה)

The pronoun **it** refers to what happened at the waters of Meribah. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and what happened there was bad for Moses]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for Moses | Moses |

# Psalms 106:33

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For they rebelled against his spirit, and he spoke rashly with his lips.* | *Moses suffered because they caused him to become very angry, and he said things that were foolish.* |

ULT **For**
UST Moses suffered because
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation of what happened to Moses at the waters of Meribah. You may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [What happened was that]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **they rebelled against his spirit**
UST they caused him to become very angry
(הִמְרֻ֥ אֶת־רוּח֑וֹ)

Here, **his** could refer to: (1) Moses. Alternate translation: [they rebelled against Moses' spirit] or (2) Yahweh. Alternate translation: [they rebelled against Yahweh's Spirit]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **they rebelled against his spirit**
UST they caused him to become very angry
(הִמְרֻ֥ אֶת־רוּח֑וֹ)

Some ancient manuscripts read **they rebelled against his spirit**. The ULT follows that reading. Other ancient manuscripts read "they embittered his spirit." 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: [they embittered his spirit]

**Support Reference:** Textual Variants

ULT **they rebelled against his spirit**
UST they caused him to become very angry
(הִמְרֻ֥ אֶת־רוּח֑וֹ)

Here, **his spirit** represents him as a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they rebelled against him]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and he spoke rashly with his lips**
UST and he said things that were foolish
(וַיְבַטֵּ֖א בִּשְׂפָתָֽיו)

It might seem that the expression **with his lips** contains extra information that would not be natural to express in your language. If so, you could shorten it. Alternate translation: [and he spoke rashly]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

ULT **and he spoke rashly with his lips**
UST and he said things that were foolish
(וַיְבַטֵּ֖א בִּשְׂפָתָֽיו)

Here the pronouns **he** and **his** refer to Moses. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and Moses spoke rashly with his lips]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| they rebelled against | they caused … to become very angry |
| his spirit | him |

# Psalms 106:34

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They did not destroy the peoples, which Yahweh had said to them,* | *Our ancestors did not destroy the other people groups as Yahweh had told them to do.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| They did … destroy | Our ancestors did … destroy |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 106:35

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *but they mingled with the nations and learned their ways* | *Instead, the men married women from those people groups, and they started doing the {evil} things that those people did.* |

**ULT but they mingled with the nations**
**UST** Instead, the men married women from those people groups
(וַיִּתְעָרְבוּ בַגּוֹיִם)

The psalmist is speaking as if the Israelites had **mingled** or mixed themselves physically with the nations. He means that they intermarried with people from other nations and adopted their religious and cultural practices. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but they intermarried with people of the nations]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT but they mingled with the nations**
**UST** Instead, the men married women from those people groups
(וַיִּתְעָרְבוּ בַגּוֹיִם)

Here, **the nations** represents the people of those nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [but they intermarried with the people of the other nations]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| with the nations | people groups |

# Psalms 106:36

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *and served their idols, and they became a snare to them.* | *Our ancestors worshiped the idols of those people, and that is how they began to reject Yahweh and his ways.* |

**ULT and they became a snare to them**
**UST** and that is how they began to reject Yahweh and his ways
(וַיִּהְיוּ לָהֶם לְמוֹקֵשׁ)

The pronoun **they** refers to the idols, while the pronoun **them** refers to the Israelites. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and the idols became a snare to the people]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and they became a snare to them**
**UST** and that is how they began to reject Yahweh and his ways
(וַיִּהְיוּ לָהֶם לְמוֹקֵשׁ)

The psalmist is speaking of the idols as if they were **a snare** that could trap the Israelites and destroy them. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this in plain language. Alternate translation: [and that was the beginning of their destruction]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and served | Our ancestors worshiped |
| their idols | the idols of those people |
| a snare | and that is how they began to reject Yahweh and his ways |

# Psalms 106:37

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons.* | *{Many of} the Israelites sacrificed their sons and daughters to the demons {that those idols represented}.* |

**ULT And they sacrificed**
**UST** {Many of} the Israelites sacrificed
(וַיִּזְבְּחוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to the Israelites. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers.
Alternate translation: [Our ancestors sacrificed]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And they sacrificed | {Many of} the Israelites sacrificed |
| to demons | to the demons {that those idols represented} |

# Psalms 106:38

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and their daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan, and the land was desecrated by bloodshed.* | *They killed their own sons and daughters, who had done nothing wrong, by offering them as sacrifices to the idols of the Canaanites. Because of those murders, the land of Canaan became defiled.* |

ULT **And they shed innocent blood**
UST They killed … who had done nothing wrong
(וַיִּשְׁפְּכוּ דָם נָקִי)

Here, **blood** represents the lives of people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They killed innocent people]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan**
UST by offering them as sacrifices to the idols of the Canaanites
(אֲשֶׁר זָבְחוּ לַעֲצַבֵּי כְנָעַן)

Here, **idols** represents the spiritual beings that the people believed the idols represented. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [whom they sacrificed to the spirits that the people of Canaan worshiped]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and the land was desecrated by bloodshed**
UST Because of those murders, the land of Canaan became defiled
(וַתֶּחֱנַף הָאָרֶץ בַּדָּמִים)

By **the land was desecrated by bloodshed**, the psalmist means that the land became unfit for God's people to live in because of the murders committed there. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and the land became unfit for the people of God to live in because they murdered people there]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| innocent | who had done nothing wrong |
| and … was desecrated | became defiled |
| they sacrificed | by offering them as sacrifices |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to the idols of | to the idols of |
| Canaan | the Canaanites |
| by bloodshed | Because of those murders |

# Psalms 106:39

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they became unclean by their deeds; and they prostituted themselves by their actions.* | *Because of what they did they made it impossible for Yahweh to accept them. By worshiping idols instead of faithfully worshiping only Yahweh, they became like prostitutes.* |

ULT **And they became unclean by their deeds; and they prostituted themselves by their actions**

UST Because of what they did they made it impossible for Yahweh to accept them. By worshiping idols instead of faithfully worshiping only Yahweh, they became like prostitutes
(וַיִּטְמְאוּ בְמַעֲשֵׂיהֶם וַיִּזְנוּ בְּמַעַלְלֵיהֶם)

These two phrases **And they became unclean by their deeds** and **and they prostituted themselves by their actions** mean basically the same thing. The second phrase emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [And they became unclean by their deeds; indeed, they prostituted themselves by their actions]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **And they became unclean**

UST they made it impossible for Yahweh to accept them
(וַיִּטְמְאוּ)

The psalmist is speaking as if the Israelites had **become unclean** physically through their sinful actions. He means that they became spiritually defiled or morally corrupted by their idolatrous practices. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And they became very sinful]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and they prostituted themselves**
UST they became like prostitutes
(וַיִּזְנוּ)

The psalmist is speaking as if the Israelites were unfaithful wives who **prostituted themselves**. He means that they violated their covenant relationship with Yahweh by worshiping idols. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and they violated their relationship with Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and they prostituted themselves | they became like prostitutes |

# Psalms 106:40

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *So Yahweh's nose burned with his people, and he despised his inheritance.* | *So Yahweh became very angry with his people; he was completely disgusted with them.* |

**ULT So Yahweh's nose burned**
**UST** So Yahweh became very angry
(וַיִּֽחַר־אַף יְהוָה)

The psalmist is using the phrase **Yahweh's nose burned** as a common expression of the culture to mean that Yahweh was angry. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [So Yahweh was very angry]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT his inheritance**
**UST** them
(אֶת־נַחֲלָתוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of the people of Israel as if they were Yahweh's **inheritance**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the people who belonged to him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh's | Yahweh |
| his inheritance | them |

# Psalms 106:41

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he gave them into the hand of the nations, and the haters of them ruled over them.* | *As a result, he allowed other people groups to conquer our ancestors, so that those who hated our ancestors were their rulers.* |

ULT **And he gave them into the hand of the nations**
UST As a result, he allowed other people groups to conquer our ancestors
(וַיִּתְּנֵם בְּיַד־גּוֹיִם)

Here, **hand** represents the power and control 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 he gave them into the control of people of other nations]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and the haters of them ruled**
UST so that those who hated our ancestors were … rulers
(וַיִּמְשְׁלוּ & שֹׂנְאֵיהֶם)

The psalmist is using the verb **haters** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use verbs in the same way. If not, you can translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [and people who hated them]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and … ruled | so that … were … rulers |
| the nations | other people groups |

# Psalms 106:42

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And their enemies oppressed them, and they were humbled under their hand.* | *Their enemies oppressed our ancestors and completely controlled them.* |

ULT **And their enemies oppressed them, and they were humbled under their hand**
UST Their enemies oppressed our ancestors and completely controlled them
(וַיִּלְחָצֻום אוֹיְבֵיהֶם וַיִּכָּנְעוּ תַּחַת יָדָם)

These two phrases **And their enemies oppressed them** and **and they were humbled under their hand** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [And their enemies oppressed them; yes, they were humbled under their hand]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **and they were humbled under their hand**
UST and completely controlled them
(וַיִּכָּנְעוּ תַּחַת יָדָם)

The expression **they were humbled** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and the hand of their enemies humbled them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and they were humbled under their hand**
UST and completely controlled them
(וַיִּכָּנְעוּ תַּחַת יָדָם)

Here, **hand** represents the power and control 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 they were humbled under their control]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their enemies | Their enemies |
| and they were humbled | and completely controlled them |

# Psalms 106:43

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Many times he rescued them, but they, they were rebellious in their counsel and sank in their sin.* | *Many times Yahweh saved his people, but they insisted on rebelling against him, and they destroyed themselves by being more and more sinful.* |

ULT **but they, they were rebellious**
UST but they … rebelling against him
(וְהֵמָּה יַמְרוּ)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **they** separately, even though the verb translated as **they were rebellious** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize the contrast between God's repeated rescue and the people's persistent rebellion. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [but those people, they were rebellious]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **in their counsel**
UST insisted on
(בַּעֲצָתָם)

The implication is that the Israelites were rebellious in their plans and decisions against God. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [in their thinking]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and sank in their sin**
UST and they destroyed themselves by being more and more sinful
(וַיִּמַּכּוּ בַּעֲוֹנָם)

The psalmist is speaking as if the Israelites were objects that **sank** down into something. He means that they became more and more deeply involved in sinful behavior. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and their sinfulness became progressively worse]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he rescued them | Yahweh saved his people |
| they were rebellious | rebelling against him |
| in their counsel | insisted on |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in their sin | by being more and more sinful |

# Psalms 106:44

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yet he saw in the narrow to them, when he was hearing their cry.* | *However, Yahweh saw everything that was distressing to them, and he listened to them when they cried out to him for help.* |

**ULT in the narrow to them**
**UST** everything that was distressing to them
(בְּצַר לָהֶם)

The psalmist is using **in the narrow to them** as a common expression of his culture to mean “when they were in distress” or “when they were in trouble.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that these things were very hard for them]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT when he was hearing their cry**
**UST** and he listened to them when they cried out to him for help
(בְּשָׁמְעוֹ אֶת־רִנָּתָם)

The implication is that the Israelites were crying out to God for help during their distress. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [when he was hearing them cry out to him in distress]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their cry | when they cried out to him for help |

# Psalms 106:45

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he remembered his covenant with them and relented because of the abundance of his covenant faithfulness.* | *He thought about the covenant that he had made with them, and because he was completely committed to faithfully loving them, he decided that he would stop {punishing them}.* |

ULT **And he remembered**
UST He thought about
(וַיִּזְכֹּר)

By **he remembered**, the psalmist means that God was mindful of his covenant, that he acted because of his covenant, not that he had forgotten about it and then remembered. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [And he called to mind]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and relented**
UST he decided that he would stop {punishing them}
(וַיִּנָּחֵם)

By **relented**, the psalmist means that God turned away from his anger and chose not to continue punishing his people. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and held back from punishing them further]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **because of the abundance of his covenant faithfulness**
UST and because he was completely committed to faithfully loving them
(כְּרֹב חסדו)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **abundance** and **covenant faithfulness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [because he is so abundantly faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his covenant | the covenant that he had made |
| his covenant faithfulness | and because he was completely committed to faithfully loving them |

# Psalms 106:46

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He gave them for compassion to the face of all of their captors.* | *He caused all those who had captured the Israelites to feel sorry for them.* |

**ULT He gave them for compassion**
**UST** He caused … to feel sorry for them
(וַיִּתֵּן אוֹתָם לְרַחֲמִים)

The psalmist is using **gave them for compassion** as a common expression of his culture to mean "caused them to be treated with compassion" or "made them objects of compassion." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He made them objects of compassion]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT He gave them for compassion to the face of all of their captors**
**UST** He caused all those who had captured the Israelites to feel sorry for them
(וַיִּתֵּן אוֹתָם לְרַחֲמִים לִפְנֵי כָּל־שׁוֹבֵיהֶם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **compassion**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [He made all of their captors compassionate toward them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT to the face of all of their captors**
**UST** all those who had captured the Israelites to feel sorry
(לִפְנֵי כָּל־שׁוֹבֵיהֶם)

Here, **to the face of** represents being in the thinking or consideration of their captors. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in the thinking of all of their captors]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for compassion | to feel sorry |
| their captors | those who had captured the Israelites |

# Psalms 106:47

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Save us, Yahweh, our God! Gather us from the nations to give thanks to the name of your holiness, to glory in your praises.* | *Yahweh our God, rescue us and bring us back to Israel from among those other people groups so that we may thank you who are holy and joyfully praise you!* |

ULT **to give thanks**
UST so that we may thank
(לְהֹדוֹת)

Here, **to give thanks** marks giving thanks to God's holy name as the goal or purpose of **Gather us from the nations**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [in order that we may give thanks]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **to give thanks to the name of your holiness**
UST so that we may thank you who are holy
(לְהֹדוֹת לְשֵׁם קָדְשֶׁךָ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **name** that is characterized by **holiness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to give thanks to your holy name]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **to give thanks to the name of your holiness**
UST so that we may thank you who are holy
(לְהֹדוֹת לְשֵׁם קָדְשֶׁךָ)

The psalmist is using the term **name** to represent who God is or to refer to God's reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to give thanks to you, the one who is known to be holy]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to glory in your praises**
UST and joyfully praise you
(לְהִשְׁתַּבֵּחַ בִּתְהִלָּתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praises**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to be proud about praising you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Save us | rescue us |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| our God | our God |
| Gather us | and bring us back to Israel |
| the nations | those other people groups |
| your holiness | who are holy |
| to glory | and joyfully |
| in your praises | praise you |

# Psalms 106:48

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May Yahweh, the God of Israel, be blessed from everlasting and to everlasting, and all the people say, "Amen. Hallelu Yah!"* | *Praise Yahweh, the God whom we Israelites worship! Praise him now and forever! Let all the people say, "We agree! Praise Yahweh!"* |

ULT **May Yahweh, the God of Israel, be blessed**
UST Praise Yahweh, the God whom we Israelites worship
(בָּרוּךְ־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The expression **be blessed** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [May people bless Yahweh, the God of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **the God of Israel**
UST the God whom we Israelites worship
(אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist is not using this possessive form **the God of Israel** to indicate that the Israelites possess or control God. Rather the psalmist is using these words to indicate that God is the one whom Israel worships. Alternate translation: [who is the God whom Israel worships]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **from everlasting and to everlasting**
UST Praise him now and forever
(מִן־הָעוֹלָם ו וְעַד הָעוֹלָם)

The psalmist is using **from everlasting and to everlasting** as a common expression of his culture to mean "for all eternity." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for all eternity]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Amen. Hallelu Yah**
UST We agree! Praise Yahweh
(אָמֵן הַלְלוּ־יָהּ)

The words **Amen. Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Amen. Halleluia] or [May it be so. Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| May … be blessed | Praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Yah | Yahweh |
| the God | the God |
| of Israel | whom we Israelites worship |
| everlasting | Praise him now |
| Amen | We agree |

# Psalms 107

## Psalm 107 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 107 is the last in a series of five “psalms of praise” to God (Psalm 103–107).

1. A call to thanksgiving (1–3)
2. Stories of Yahweh’s deliverance (4–32)
3. Yahweh’s transformative power (33–41)
4. A final exhortation (42–43)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Praise

The psalmist praises Yahweh for saving people lost in the desert, in prison, sick, in a storm at sea, homeless and oppressed. (See: save, saved, safe, salvation, rescue)

# Psalms 107:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Give thanks to Yahweh, for {he is} good, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *Thank Yahweh because he is good and because he faithfully loves us forever!* |

ULT **his covenant faithfulness {is}**
UST he faithfully loves us
(חַסְדּוֹ)

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: [he remains faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to forever**
UST forever
(לְעוֹלָם)

The psalmist is using **to forever** as a common expression of his culture to mean "eternally" or "for all time." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [everlasting]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {he is} good | he is good |
| his covenant faithfulness {is} | he faithfully loves us |
| to forever | forever |

# Psalms 107:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let the redeemed of Yahweh say {it}, who he rescued them from the hand of the opponent.* | *Those whom Yahweh has saved should tell others that he has rescued them from their enemies.* |

**ULT the redeemed of Yahweh**
**UST** Those whom Yahweh has saved
(גְּאוּלֵי יְהוָה)

The expression **the redeemed of Yahweh** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [those whom Yahweh has redeemed]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT Let the redeemed of Yahweh say {it}**
**UST** Those whom Yahweh has saved should tell others
(יֹאמְרוּ גְּאוּלֵי יְהוָה)

By using **Let**, the psalmist is expressing what he desires or prays will happen. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [I desire that the redeemed of Yahweh say that they have been redeemed]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

**ULT who he rescued them**
**UST** that he has rescued them
(אֲשֶׁר גְּאָלָם)

It might seem that the expression **who he rescued them** contains extra information that would not be natural to express in your language. If so, you could shorten it. Alternate translation: [whom he rescued]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

ULT **from the hand of the opponent**
UST from their enemies
(מִיַּד־צָר)

Here, **hand** represents the power or control 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 control of the opponent]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the opponent**
UST their enemies
(צָר)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **opponent**. He means opponents in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [every opponent]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the redeemed of | Those whom … has saved |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| he rescued them | he has rescued them |
| the opponent | their enemies |

# Psalms 107:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he has gathered them from lands, from the sunrise and from the evening, from the north and from the sea.* | *He has gathered them together from {many foreign} lands; he has gathered them from the east and the west, from the north and from the {southern} sea.* |

ULT **from the sunrise and from the evening, from the north and from the sea**
UST he has gathered them from the east and the west, from the north and from the {southern} sea
(מִמִּזְרָח וּמִמַּעֲרָב מִצָּפוֹן וּמִיָּם)

The psalmist is referring to all of the earth by naming two extremes, **the sunrise** (the east) and **the evening** (the west), **the north** and **the sea** (the south). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from all directions and from everywhere in between]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **from the sunrise and from the evening, from the north and from the sea**
UST he has gathered them from the east and the west, from the north and from the {southern} sea
(מִמִּזְרָח וּמִמַּעֲרָב מִצָּפוֹן וּמִיָּם)

The psalmist 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 has gathered them from the sunrise and from the evening, from the north and from the sea]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **from the sunrise and from the evening**
UST he has gathered them from the east and the west
(מִמִּזְרָח וּמִמַּעֲרָב)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **the sunrise and the evening** refer to the east and the west. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [from the east and from the west]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **from the north and from the sea**
UST from the north and from the {southern} sea
(מִצָּפוֹן וּמִיָּם)

The implication is that **the sea** refers to the southern sea, since the psalmist has already mentioned the other three directions (east, west, and north). You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [from the north and from the south]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And he has gathered them<br>from lands | He has gathered them together<br>from {many foreign} lands |

# Psalms 107:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They wandered in the desert with wilderness for a road; a city for a home they did not find.* | *Some of those who returned from those countries wandered in the trackless desert; they could find no town to live in.* |

**ULT They wandered**
**UST** Some of those who returned from those countries wandered
(תָּעוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to the redeemed people whom Yahweh has gathered from foreign lands, as mentioned in the previous verses. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Some of them wandered]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT with wilderness for a road**
**UST** trackless
(בִּישִׁימ֥וֹן דֶּ֝רֶךְ)

By **with wilderness for a road**, the psalmist means that they had no proper road to travel on, only the trackless wilderness. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [with no road to walk on, only wilderness]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the desert | in the … desert |
| with wilderness for | trackless |

# Psalms 107:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them.* | *They were hungry and thirsty, and they became weak and discouraged.* |

**ULT Hungry and thirsty**
**UST** They were hungry and thirsty
(רְעֵבִים גַּם־צְמֵאִים)

The psalmist 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 as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT their soul fainted within them**
**UST** and they became weak and discouraged
(נַפְשָׁם בָּהֶם תִּתְעַטָּף)

David is using **their soul fainted within them** as a common expression of his culture to mean “they felt like they were dying” or “they became weak and discouraged.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they felt like they were dying]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their soul | and they became weak and discouraged |

# Psalms 107:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then they called out to Yahweh in the distressing to them; he rescued them from their distresses.* | *Then because they were distressed, they called out to Yahweh, and he rescued them from what was distressing them.* |

ULT **in the distressing to them**
UST Then because they were distressed
(בַּצַּר לָהֶם)

The psalmist is using the adjective **distressing** as a noun to mean a certain kind of situation. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [in their distress]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **from their distresses**
UST from what was distressing them
(מִמְּצוּקוֹתֵיהֶם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distresses**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from the distressing things that were happening to them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Then they called out | they called out |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| in the distressing | Then because … were distressed |
| he rescued them | and he rescued them |
| from their distresses | from what was distressing them |

# Psalms 107:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He led them by a direct path to go to a city of dwelling.* | *He led them along a straight road where they walked {safely} to cities where they could live.* |

ULT **a city of dwelling**
UST cities where they could live
(עִיר מוֹשָׁב)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **a city** that is characterized by **dwelling**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a city to dwell in]

**Support Reference:** Possession

# Psalms 107:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May they thank Yahweh {for} his covenant faithfulness and his amazing deeds for the sons of man!* | *They should praise Yahweh for how he has loved them faithfully and for the wonderful things that he does for all people!* |

**ULT May they thank Yahweh**
UST They should praise Yahweh
(יוֹדוּ לַיהוָה)

Here and repeatedly throughout this psalm, the psalmist is using **May** to express his wish or desire that the people would praise Yahweh. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about "let" and "may" and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [I desire that they thank Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

**ULT {for} his covenant faithfulness**
UST for how he has loved them faithfully
(חַסְדּוֹ)

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: [for being faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT for the sons of man**
UST for all people
(לִבְנֵי אָדָם)

The psalmist is using **sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "people" or "humanity." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for mankind]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {for} his covenant faithfulness | for how he has loved them faithfully |

# Psalms 107:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For he satisfies the thirsty soul, and the hungry soul he fills with good.* | *They should thank him because he satisfies people who are thirsty, and he gives hungry people plenty of good food to eat.* |

ULT **the thirsty soul**
UST people who are thirsty
(נֶ֥פֶשׁ שֹׁקֵקָ֑ה)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **thirsty soul**. He means thirsty people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [every thirsty soul]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **the thirsty soul**
UST people who are thirsty
(נֶ֥פֶשׁ שֹׁקֵקָ֑ה)

The psalmist is using the term **soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [any thirsty person]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and the hungry soul**
UST and … hungry people
(וְנֶ֖פֶשׁ רְעֵבָ֣ה)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **hungry soul**. He means hungry souls in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and every hungry soul]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **and the hungry soul**
UST and … hungry people
(וְנֶ֖פֶשׁ רְעֵבָ֣ה)

Here, **soul** represents the entire person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and any hungry person]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **he fills with good**
> UST he gives … plenty of good food to eat
> (מִלָּא־טֽוֹב)

The psalmist is using the adjective **good** as a noun to mean good things. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [he fills with good things]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the … soul | people |
| and the … soul | and … people |
| good | good food to eat |

# Psalms 107:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sitting in darkness and gloom, prisoners of affliction and iron* | *Some of them sat in deep darkness; they were prisoners, suffering in iron {chains fastened to their hands and feet}.* |

ULT **Sitting in**
UST Some of them sat in
(יֹשְׁבֵי)

The word **Sitting** starts a new section of the psalm and refers to another thing that happened to some of Yahweh's people. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Some of Yahweh's people had to sit in]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **darkness and gloom**
UST deep darkness
(חֹשֶׁךְ וְצַלְמָוֶת)

The terms **darkness** and **gloom** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [depressing darkness]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **prisoners of affliction and iron**
UST they were prisoners, suffering in iron {chains fastened to their hands and feet}
(אֲסִירֵי עֳנִי וּבַרְזֶל)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **prisoners** that are characterized by **affliction and iron**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [prisoners afflicted by iron fetters]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **prisoners of affliction and iron**
UST they were prisoners, suffering in iron {chains fastened to their hands and feet}
(אֲסִירֵי עֳנִי וּבַרְזֶל)

The phrase **affliction and iron** expresses a single idea. The word **affliction** tells more about **iron**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [prisoners held by painful iron chains]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| of affliction | suffering |
| and iron | in iron {chains fastened to their hands and feet} |

# Psalms 107:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *because they had rebelled against the words of God and despised the counsel of the Most High,* | *They were suffering in prison because they had rebelled against God; they actually rejected the instructions that the Most High God gave to them.* |

ULT **they had rebelled against the words of God and despised the counsel of the Most High**
UST they had rebelled against God; they actually rejected the instructions that the Most High God gave to them
(הִמְרוּ אִמְרֵי־אֵל וַעֲצַת עֶלְיוֹן נָאָצוּ)

These two phrases **had rebelled against the words of God** and **despised the counsel of the Most High** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [they had rebelled against the words of God, indeed, they had despised the counsel of the Most High]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **they had rebelled against the words of God**
UST they had rebelled against God
(הִמְרוּ אִמְרֵי־אֵל)

Here, **words** represents what God said by using words. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they had rebelled against God when he instructed them]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they had rebelled against | they had rebelled against |
| God | God |
| and … the counsel of | the instructions that … gave to them |
| the Most High | the Most High God |

# Psalms 107:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *he humbled their hearts through hardship; they stumbled and there was no helper.* | *God made them experience difficult things so that they would no longer be proud. When bad things happened to them, there was no one who would help them.* |

ULT **their hearts**
UST they
(לִבָּם)

Here, **their hearts** represents their inner selves or their pride. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [them]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **through hardship**
UST God made them experience difficult things
(בֶּעָמָל)

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: [by making them suffer]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **they stumbled**
UST When bad things happened to them
(כָּשְׁלוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the prisoners experiencing difficulties and hardships as if they **stumbled** while walking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they experienced troubles]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he humbled | so that … would no longer be proud |
| through hardship | God made them experience difficult things |
| they stumbled | When bad things happened to them |

# Psalms 107:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then they cried out to Yahweh in the distressing to them; he saved them from their distresses.* | *Then because they were so distressed, they called out to Yahweh, and he rescued them from what was distressing them.* |

**ULT Then they cried out to Yahweh in the distressing to them; he saved them from their distresses**

UST Then because they were so distressed, they called out to Yahweh, and he rescued them from what was distressing them
(וַיִּזְעֲקוּ אֶל־יְהוָה בַּצַּר לָהֶם מִמְּצוּקוֹתֵיהֶם יוֹשִׁיעֵם)

See how you translated the similar phrases in Psalms 107:6. Alternate translation: [Then they prayed to Yahweh to help them in their trouble and he saved them from it]

**ULT in the distressing to them**

UST Then because they were so distressed
(בַּצַּר לָהֶם)

The psalmist is using the adjective **distressing** as a noun to mean a certain kind of situation. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [in their distress]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT from their distresses**

UST from what was distressing them
(מִמְּצוּקוֹתֵיהֶם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distresses**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from the distressing things that were happening to them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Then they cried out | they called out |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| in the distressing | Then because … were so distressed |
| he saved them | and he rescued them |
| from their distresses | from what was distressing them |

# Psalms 107:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He brought them out of darkness and gloom and broke apart their bonds.* | *He broke the chains that were on their hands and feet and brought them out of those very dark prisons.* |

ULT **of darkness and gloom**
UST of those very dark prisons
(מֵחֹשֶׁךְ וְצַלְמָוֶת)

The terms **darkness** and **gloom** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [of deep darkness]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **He brought them out of darkness and gloom and broke apart their bonds**
UST He broke the chains that were on their hands and feet and brought them out of those very dark prisons
(יְוֹצִיאֵם מֵחֹשֶׁךְ וְצַלְמָוֶת וּמוֹסְרוֹתֵיהֶם יְנַתֵּק)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put the part about breaking **their bonds** before the part about bringing **them out of the darkness**, as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their bonds | the chains that were on their hands and feet |

# Psalms 107:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May they thank Yahweh {for} his covenant faithfulness and his amazing deeds for the sons of man!* | *Yahweh broke down the bronze gates and he cut through the iron bars of their prison. Therefore they should praise Yahweh for how he has loved them faithfully and for the wonderful things that he does for all people! (vv15-16)* |

**ULT {for} his covenant faithfulness**
(חַסְדּוֹ)

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: [for being faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT for the sons of man**
(לִבְנֵי אָדָם)

The psalmist is using **the sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "people" or "human beings." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for mankind]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | לַיהוָה (ORIG QUOTE) |
| {for} his covenant faithfulness | חַסְדּוֹ (ORIG QUOTE) |

# Psalms 107:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For he has broken the gates of bronze and cut through the bars of iron.* | *Yahweh broke down the bronze gates and he cut through the iron bars of their prison. Therefore they should praise Yahweh for how he has loved them faithfully and for the wonderful things that he does for all people! (vv15-16)* |

**ULT For he has broken the gates of bronze and cut through the bars of iron**
(כִּי־שִׁבַּר דַּלְתוֹת נְחֻשָּׁת וּבְרִיחֵי בַרְזֶל גִּדֵּעַ)

If it is more natural in your language to state the reason before the result, you could do so by moving this sentence to the previous verse. You would then present the combined verses as 15–16 as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Verse Bridges

**ULT For he has broken the gates of bronze and cut through the bars of iron**
(כִּי־שִׁבַּר דַּלְתוֹת נְחֻשָּׁת וּבְרִיחֵי בַרְזֶל גִּדֵּעַ)

The implication is that God freed the prisoners by breaking down the prison **gates** and **bars**. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [For he has freed them from prison by breaking down the gates of bronze and cutting through the bars of iron]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT For**
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [They should do this because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT the gates of bronze**
(דַּלְתוֹת נְחֻשָּׁת)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **gates** that are characterized by being made of **bronze**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the gates made of bronze]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT the bars of iron**
(וּבְרִיחֵי בַרְזֶל)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **bars** that are characterized by being made of **iron**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the bars made of iron]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the gates | דַּלְתוֹת (ORIG QUOTE) |
| of bronze | נְחֹשֶׁת (ORIG QUOTE) |
| of iron | בַּרְזֶל (ORIG QUOTE) |

# Psalms 107:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Foolish from their rebellious way and afflicted from their sins,* | *Some of them foolishly rebelled {against God}, and they suffered because of their sins.* |

ULT **Foolish**
UST Some of them foolishly
(אֱוִלִים)

The word **Foolish** starts a new section of the psalm and refers to another thing that happened to some of Yahweh's people. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Some of Yahweh's people became foolish]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **from their rebellious way**
UST rebelled {against God}
(מִדֶּרֶךְ פִּשְׁעָם)

The implication is that they were rebelling against Yahweh. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [because of rebelling against Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Foolish | Some of them foolishly |
| their rebellious | rebelled {against God} |
| and … from their sins | and … because of their sins |
| afflicted | they suffered |

# Psalms 107:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *their soul detested all food, and they touched the gates of death.* | *They did not want to eat any food, and they almost died.* |

**ULT their soul**
**UST** They
(נַפְשָׁם)

The psalmist is using the term **their soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual/emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [they]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT and they touched the gates of death**
**UST** and they almost died
(וַיַּגִּיעוּ עַד־שַׁעֲרֵי מָוֶת)

The psalmist is using **touched the gates of death** as a common expression of his culture to mean “came very close to dying.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and they came close to dying]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their soul | They |
| detested | did not want |
| the gates of | and they almost died |

# Psalms 107:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then they cried out to Yahweh in the distressing to them; he saved them from their distresses.* | *Then because they were so distressed, they called out to Yahweh, and he rescued them from what was distressing them.* |

ULT **Then they cried out to Yahweh in the distressing to them; he saved them from their distresses**

UST Then because they were so distressed, they called out to Yahweh, and he rescued them from what was distressing them

(וַיִּזְעֲקוּ אֶל־יְהוָה בַּצַּר לָהֶם מִמְּצוּקוֹתֵיהֶם יוֹשִׁיעֵם)

See how you translated the similar phrases in Psalm 107:6 and Psalm 107:13. Alternate translation: [Then they prayed to Yahweh to help them in their trouble and he saved them from it]

ULT **in the distressing to them**

UST because they were so distressed

(בַּצַּר לָהֶם)

The psalmist is using the adjective **distressing** as a noun to mean a certain kind of situation. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [in their distress]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **from their distresses**

UST from what was distressing them

(מִמְּצוּקוֹתֵיהֶם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distresses**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from the distressing things that were happening to them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Then they cried out | Then … they called out |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| in the distressing | because … were so distressed |
| he saved them | and he rescued them |
| from their distresses | from what was distressing them |

# Psalms 107:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He sent his word and healed them, and he delivered them from their destruction.* | *Then Yahweh healed them by speaking a message of healing; in this way he saved them from dying.* |

ULT **He sent his word**
UST by speaking a message of healing
(יִשְׁלַ֣ח דְּבָר֑וֹ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's healing power as if it were **his word** that he could send like a messenger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he commanded that they be healed]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **from their destruction**
UST from dying
(מִשְּׁחִיתוֹתָֽם)

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: [from destroying themselves]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and he delivered them | in this way he saved them |
| from their destruction | from dying |

# Psalms 107:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May they thank Yahweh {for} his covenant faithfulness and his amazing deeds for the sons of man!* | *They should praise Yahweh for how he has loved them faithfully and for the wonderful things that he does for all people!* |

**ULT {for} his covenant faithfulness**
**UST** for how he has loved them faithfully
(חַסְדּוֹ)

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: [for being faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT for the sons of man**
**UST** that he does for all people
(לִבְנֵי אָדָם)

The psalmist is using **the sons of man** as a common expression of the culture to mean "mankind" or "all people." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for mankind]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {for} his covenant faithfulness | for how he has loved them faithfully |

# Psalms 107:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May they sacrifice sacrifices of thanksgiving and recount his deeds with a shout!* | *They should give offerings to him to show that they are thankful, and they should tell about the miracles that he has performed by singing joyfully!* |

ULT **May they sacrifice sacrifices of thanksgiving**
UST They should give offerings to him to show that they are thankful
(וְיִזְבְּחוּ זִבְחֵי תוֹדָה)

The psalmist 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 another way of saying this. Alternate translation: [May they offer sacrifices of thanksgiving]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **May they sacrifice sacrifices of thanksgiving**
UST They should give offerings to him to show that they are thankful
(וְיִזְבְּחוּ זִבְחֵי תוֹדָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **thanksgiving**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [May they sacrifice sacrifices in order to thank him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **with a shout**
UST by singing joyfully
(בְּרִנָּה)

By **with a shout**, the psalmist means with a joyful shout or loud, celebratory exclamation. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [by shouting joyfully]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May they sacrifice | They should give offerings to him |
| sacrifices | They should give offerings to him |
| and recount | and they should tell about |
| with a shout | by singing joyfully |

# Psalms 107:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Going down to the sea in ships, doing business on abundant waters,* | *Some of them sailed in ships; they bought and sold things far away across the sea.* |

ULT **Going down**
UST Some of them sailed
(יוֹרְדֵי)

The words **Going down** start a new section of the psalm and refer to another thing that some of Yahweh's people did. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Some of Yahweh's people went down]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **on abundant waters**
UST far away across the sea
(בְּמַ֥יִם רַבִּֽים)

The implication is that the **abundant waters** are the open seas where merchants would travel for international trade. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [by crossing large amounts of water]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

# Psalms 107:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *they, they saw the deeds of Yahweh and his wonders in the deep.* | *These people saw the creatures that Yahweh created; they saw the amazing things that he had made {as they traveled} across the very deep seas.* |

ULT **they, they saw**
UST These people saw
(הֵ֭מָּה רָ֣אוּ)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **they** separately, even though the verb translated as **they saw** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that they are the only ones who saw the wonders that Yahweh created in the sea. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [they are the ones who saw]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and his wonders**
UST they saw the amazing things that he had made
(וְנִפְלְאוֹתָ֗יו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wonders**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and the wonderful things he did]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in the deep**
UST {as they traveled} across the very deep seas
(בִּמְצוּלָֽה)

By **in the deep**, the psalmist means in the deep parts of the ocean. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [in the deep parts of the ocean]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and his wonders | they saw the amazing things that he had made |

# Psalms 107:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then he spoke and aroused the wind of a hurricane and raised up his waves.* | *Then he commanded the winds to become strong. They became a storm and stirred up very high waves.* |

**ULT Then he spoke and aroused the wind of a hurricane**
**UST** Then he commanded the winds to become strong. They became a storm
(וַיֹּאמֶר וַיַּעֲמֵד רוּחַ סְעָרָה)

Here, **Then he spoke and aroused** marks **the wind of a hurricane** as the goal or purpose of **he spoke**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [Then he spoke to the wind so that it become as strong as a hurricane]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

# Psalms 107:26

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *They went up {to} the sky; they went down {to} the depths. Their souls melted in the disaster.* | *The ships in which they were sailing went up on the high waves, then they went down into the troughs between the waves. This dangerous action terrified the sailors.* |

ULT **They went up {to} the sky; they went down {to} the depths**
UST The ships in which they were sailing went up on the high waves, then they went down into the troughs between the waves
(יַעֲלוּ שָׁמַיִם יֵרְדוּ תְהוֹמוֹת)

The psalmist says **They went up to the sky; they went down to the depths** as an extreme statement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [They went up very high; they went down very low]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **They went up {to} the sky; they went down {to} the depths**
UST The ships in which they were sailing went up on the high waves, then they went down into the troughs between the waves
(יַעֲלוּ שָׁמַיִם יֵרְדוּ תְהוֹמוֹת)

By **They went up to the sky; they went down to the depths**, the psalmist means that the ships were lifted high on the waves and then dropped low into the troughs between the waves. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [The waves would carry their ships up to the sky; then the ships would fall to the depths between the waves]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Their souls melted in the disaster**
UST This dangerous action terrified the sailors
(נַפְשָׁם בְּרָעָה תִתְמוֹגָג)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if the sailors' **souls melted** from fear and terror during the storm. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They lost all courage in the disaster]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {to} the sky | |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| | The ships in which they were sailing went up on the high waves |
| Their souls | the sailors |
| in the disaster | This dangerous action |

# Psalms 107:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They swayed and staggered as intoxicated and all their wisdom became confounded.* | *They stumbled about and staggered as drunken men do, and everything that they tried to do was useless.* |

**ULT as intoxicated**
UST as drunken men do
(כַּשִּׁכּוֹר)

The psalmist is using the adjective **intoxicated** 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: [as though they were intoxicated]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT and all their wisdom became confounded**
UST and everything that they tried to do was useless
(וְכָל־חָכְמָתָם תִּתְבַּלָּע)

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 even though they were wise about sailing, they did not know what to do]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and staggered | and staggered |
| their wisdom | that they tried to do |

# Psalms 107:28

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Then they cried out to Yahweh in the distressing to them and he rescued them from their distresses.* | *Then because they were distressed, they called out to Yahweh, and he rescued them from what was distressing them.* |

**ULT Then they cried out to Yahweh in the distressing to them and he rescued them from their distresses**

UST Then because they were distressed, they called out to Yahweh, and he rescued them from what was distressing them

(וַיִּצְעֲקוּ אֶל־יְהוָה בַּצַּר לָהֶם מִמְּצוּקֹתֵיהֶם יוֹצִיאֵם)

See how you translated the similar phrases in Psalm 107:6, 107:13, and 107:19. Alternate translation: [Then they prayed to Yahweh to help them in their trouble and he saved them from it]

**ULT in the distressing to them**

UST because they were distressed

(בַּצַּר לָהֶם)

The psalmist is using the adjective **distressing** as a noun to mean a certain kind of situation. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [in their distress]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT and he rescued them from their distresses**

UST and he rescued them from what was distressing them

(מִמְּצוּקֹתֵיהֶם יוֹצִיאֵם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distresses**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and he rescued them from the distressing things that were happening to them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Then they cried out | Then … they called out |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| in the distressing | because … were distressed |
| and … from their distresses | from what was distressing them |
| he rescued them | and he rescued them |

# Psalms 107:29

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He raised the storm to calmness and he quieted the waves.* | *He calmed the storm and he stilled the waves.* |

**ULT** **He raised the storm to calmness**
**UST** He calmed the storm
(יָקֵם סְעָרָה לִדְמָמָה)

The psalmist is using **raised the storm to calmness** as a common expression of the culture to mean “calmed the storm” or “made the storm stop.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He made the wind stop blowing]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

# Psalms 107:30

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then they rejoiced because they subsided, and he guided them to the harbor of their desire.* | *Then they were very glad that the storm had become calm and Yahweh brought them {safely} into the harbor where they had wanted to go.* |

**ULT Then they rejoiced**
**UST** Then they were very glad
(וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ)

The words **they rejoiced** refer to the sailors mentioned in the previous verses who were in distress during the storm. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could clarify this referent. Alternate translation: [Then the people rejoiced]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT because they subsided**
**UST** that the storm had become calm
(כִּי־יִשְׁתֹּקוּ)

The words **they subsided** refer to the waves mentioned in the previous verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could repeat the word “waves” here for clarity. Alternate translation: [because the waves subsided]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT the harbor of their desire**
**UST** the harbor where they had wanted to go
(מָחֹוז חֶפְצָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **desire**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the harbor where they had desired to arrive]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Then they rejoiced | Then they were very glad |

# Psalms 107:31

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May they thank Yahweh {for} his covenant faithfulness and his amazing deeds for the sons of man!* | *They should praise Yahweh for how he has loved them faithfully and for the wonderful things that he does for all people!* |

**ULT {for} his covenant faithfulness**
**UST** for how he has loved them faithfully
(חַסְדּוֹ)

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: [for being faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT for the sons of man**
**UST** for all people
(לִבְנֵי אָדָם)

The psalmist is using **the sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "people" or "human beings." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for mankind]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {for} his covenant faithfulness | for how he has loved them faithfully |

# Psalms 107:32

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May they exalt him in the assembly of the people and praise him at the seat of the elders.* | *They should praise him among the Israelite people when they have gathered together, and they should praise him in front of the leaders of the community.* |

**ULT May they exalt him**
**UST** They should praise him
(וְיָרֹמְמוּהוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if the people could physically **exalt** or lift up Yahweh. He means that they should honor and praise him highly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May they extol him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and praise him at the seat of the elders**
**UST** and they should praise him in front of the leaders of the community
(וּבְמוֹשַׁב זְקֵנִים יְהַלְלוּהוּ)

The **seat of the elders** is where the elders gather in a formal setting to make decisions and provide leadership for the community. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and praise him where the elders of the community sit to discuss important issues]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May they exalt him | They should praise him |
| in the assembly of | when they have gathered together |
| praise him | they should praise him |
| the elders | the leaders of the community |

# Psalms 107:33

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He turns rivers into a desert and springs of water into thirsty land,* | *Yahweh causes rivers to become dry so that the land becomes barren, and he makes springs of water to become dusty ground.* |

**ULT into thirsty land**
**UST** to become dusty ground
(לְצִמָּאוֹן)

Here the psalmist is speaking of **land** as if it were a person who could be **thirsty**. He means that the land becomes dry and without water. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [into land that is without water]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| into a desert | to become dry so that the land becomes barren |
| and springs | and he makes springs |
| into thirsty land | to become dusty ground |

# Psalms 107:34

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *fruitful ground into salt land, from the wickedness of the dwellers in it.* | *Yahweh causes land that normally produces a lot of crops to become salty wastelands. He does that because the people who live there are very wicked.* |

ULT **fruitful ground**
UST Yahweh causes land that normally produces a lot of crops
(אֶרֶץ פְּרִי)

The psalmist 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 turns fruitful ground]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **fruitful ground**
UST Yahweh causes land that normally produces a lot of crops
(אֶרֶץ פְּרִי)

Here the psalmist is speaking of **land** as if it were **fruitful ground**. He means land that produces abundant crops. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [productive ground]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **into salt land**
UST to become salty wastelands
(לִמְלֵחָה)

Here, **salt land** represents land that cannot produce crops. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [into land that cannot produce crops]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **from the wickedness of the dwellers in it**
UST He does that because the people who live there are very wicked
(מֵרָעַת יֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ)

The implication is that God turns fruitful land into salt land because the people living there are wicked. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [because of the wickedness of the dwellers in it]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **from the wickedness of the dwellers in it**
UST He does that because the people who live there are very wicked
(מֵרָעַ֥ת יֹשְׁבֵי־בָֽהּ)

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: [because the dwellers in it are so wicked]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **from the wickedness of the dwellers in it**
UST He does that because the people who live there are very wicked
(מֵרָעַ֥ת יֹשְׁבֵי־בָֽהּ)

The pronoun **it** refers to the fruitful ground that God turns into salt land. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [because of the wickedness of the people who dwell in that land]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| fruitful | that normally produces a lot of crops |
| into salt land | to become salty wastelands |
| from the wickedness of | He does that because … are very wicked |

# Psalms 107:35

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He turns the wilderness into a pool of water and dry land into springs of water.* | *But Yahweh also creates pools of water in deserts, that is, he causes springs to flow where the ground had been dry.* |

ULT **He turns the wilderness into a pool of water and dry land into springs of water**
UST But Yahweh also creates pools of water in deserts, that is, he causes springs to flow where the ground had been dry
(יָשֵׂם מִדְבָּר לַאֲגַם־מַיִם וְאֶרֶץ צִיָּה לְמֹצָאֵי מָיִם)

The psalmist 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 turns the wilderness into a pool of water and he turns dry land into springs of water]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **He turns the wilderness into a pool of water and dry land into springs of water**
UST But Yahweh also creates pools of water in deserts, that is, he causes springs to flow where the ground had been dry
(יָשֵׂם מִדְבָּר לַאֲגַם־מַיִם וְאֶרֶץ צִיָּה לְמֹצָאֵי מָיִם)

These two phrases **He turns the wilderness into a pool of water** and **dry land into springs of water** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [He turns the wilderness into a pool of water, yes, dry land into springs of water]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **He turns the wilderness into a pool of water and dry land into springs of water**
UST But Yahweh also creates pools of water in deserts, that is, he causes springs to flow where the ground had been dry
(יָשֵׂם מִדְבָּר לַאֲגַם־מַיִם וְאֶרֶץ צִיָּה לְמֹצָאֵי מָיִם)

The psalmist says this as an overstatement for emphasis. He assumes that readers will know that only parts of the **wilderness** and **dry land** become **water**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [He turns many areas of the wilderness into pools of water and places springs of water throughout the dry land]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the wilderness | in deserts |
| and … land | that is … where the ground |
| dry | had been dry |
| into springs | he causes … to flow |

# Psalms 107:36

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He settles the hungry there, and they build a city of dwelling.* | *Then he brings people who are hungry into that land, to live there and to build cities there.* |

ULT **the hungry**
UST people who are hungry
(רְעֵבִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **hungry** 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: [hungry people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **there**
UST into that land
(שָׁם)

The pronoun **there** refers to the land that Yahweh has transformed from wilderness into a place with pools of water and springs. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [in that land that was dry]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **a city of dwelling**
UST to live there … cities
(עִיר מוֹשָׁב)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **a city** that is characterized by **dwelling**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a city to dwell in]

**Support Reference:** Possession

# Psalms 107:37

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then they sow fields and plant vineyards, and they produce the fruit of the harvest.* | *Then they sow {some of} the fields with seeds and {in other fields} they plant grapevines and it all produces {a large amount of} crops.* |

ULT **Then they sow fields and plant vineyards**
UST Then they sow {some of} the fields with seeds and {in other fields} they plant grapevines
(וַיִּזְרְעוּ שָׂדוֹת וַיִּטְּעוּ כְרָמִים)

The implication is that the people are able to settle and farm in the land that God has provided for them. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Then that land is able to produce crops, so they sow fields and plant vineyards there]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the fruit of the harvest**
UST {a large amount of} crops
(פְּרִי תְבוּאָה)

The psalmist is using the possessive form **the fruit of the harvest** to describe fruit that is characterized by being harvested. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the crops that grew on the land]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Then they sow | Then they sow … with seeds |
| and plant | and {in other fields} they plant |
| vineyards | grapevines |
| and they produce | and it all produces |
| the fruit of | a large amount of |
| the harvest | crops |

# Psalms 107:38

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He blesses them and they become very many and their cattle do not become few.* | *He blesses those people so that they have very many children, and so that their herds of cattle become very large.* |

ULT **and they become very many**
UST so that they have very many children
(וַיִּרְבּוּ מְאֹד)

Here, **and** marks **they become very many** as the goal or purpose of **He blesses them**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so they become very many]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **and their cattle do not become few**
UST and so that their herds of cattle become very large
(וּבְהֶמְתָּם לֹא יַמְעִיט)

The psalmist is emphasizing a positive meaning by using a negative word, **not**, together with a mild expression that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If it would be helpful in your language, you could emphasize the positive meaning in a strong way. Alternate translation: [and their cattle become very many]

**Support Reference:** Litotes

ULT **and their cattle do not become few**
UST and so that their herds of cattle become very large
(וּבְהֶמְתָּם לֹא יַמְעִיט)

Here, **and** marks **their cattle do not become few** as the goal or purpose of **He blesses them**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [and so their cattle do not become few]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He blesses them | He blesses those people |
| and they become very many | so that they have very many children |
| and their cattle | and so that their herds of cattle |
| do not become few | become very large |

# Psalms 107:39

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then they become few and become low from distress of evil and sorrow.* | *Then the people become fewer because the leaders oppress them and cause them to become distressed and to suffer.* |

**ULT Then they become few and become low**
**UST** Then the people become fewer because the leaders oppress them
(וַיִּמְעֲטוּ וַיָּשֹׁחוּ)

Here, **they** could refer to: (1) Yahweh's people, whom the psalmist describes in verses 36–38. Alternate translation: [Then those people become few and become low] or (2) The enemies of Yahweh's people. Alternate translation: [Then their enemies become few and become low]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and become low**
**UST** because the leaders oppress them
(וַיָּשֹׁחוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of people as if they could physically **become low**. He means that they become humbled or brought down in status and circumstances. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and become humbled]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT from distress of evil and sorrow**
**UST** and cause them to become distressed and to suffer
(מֵעֹצֶר רָעָה וְיָגוֹן)

The word **from** indicates that what follows is a reason for the result that came before. The people became few and low because of the distress, evil, and sorrow they experienced. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because of distress of evil and sorrow]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **from distress of evil and sorrow**
UST and cause them to become distressed and to suffer
(מֵעֹ֣צֶר רָ֭עָה וְיָגֽוֹן)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **distress** that is characterized by **evil and sorrow**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from distressing evil and sorrow]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **from distress of evil and sorrow**
UST and cause them to become distressed and to suffer
(מֵעֹ֣צֶר רָ֭עָה וְיָגֽוֹן)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **distress**, **evil**, and **sorrow**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [from the evil things that make them distressed and sorrowful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| from distress | and cause them to become distressed |
| of evil | and cause them to become distressed |
| and sorrow | and to suffer |

# Psalms 107:40

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He pours contempt on the leaders and causes them to wander in an empty place of no road.* | *Then Yahweh shows that he despises the leaders {who oppress them}, and makes those leaders wander in a wilderness where there are no roads.* |

**ULT He pours contempt on the leaders**
**UST** Then Yahweh shows that he despises the leaders {who oppress them}
(שֹׁפֵךְ בּוּז עַל־נְדִיבִים)

Here the psalmist is speaking of **contempt** as if it were a liquid that Yahweh could pour **on the leaders**. The psalmist means that God shows his contempt for these leaders. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He shows contempt for the leaders]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT He pours contempt on the leaders**
**UST** Then Yahweh shows that he despises the leaders {who oppress them}
(שֹׁפֵךְ בּוּז עַל־נְדִיבִים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **contempt**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [He humbles the leaders]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT in an empty place of no road**
**UST** in a wilderness where there are no roads
(בְּתֹהוּ לֹא־דָרֶךְ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe an **empty place** that is characterized by having **no road**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in a land so empty that there is not even a road]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| contempt | that he despises |
| the leaders | the leaders {who oppress them} |

# Psalms 107:41

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But he raises up the needy from affliction and establishes families like a flock.* | *But he rescues poor people from those who oppress them and causes {their} families to increase in number as flocks of sheep do.* |

ULT **But he raises up the needy from affliction**
UST But he rescues poor people from those who oppress them
(וַיְשַׂגֵּב אֶבְיוֹן מֵעֹנִי)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if affliction were a physical location from which God **raises up** the needy. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this in a different way. Alternate translation: [But he removes the needy from their affliction]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the needy**
UST poor people
(אֶבְיוֹן)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [any needy people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **from affliction**
UST from those who oppress them
(מֵעֹנִי)

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: [from what is afflicting them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and establishes families like a flock**
UST and causes {their} families to increase in number as flocks of sheep do
(וַיָּשֶׂם כַּצֹּאן מִשְׁפָּחוֹת)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a flock** grows and multiplies, so God causes families to increase in number. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and establishes families so that they grow as a healthy flock of sheep grows]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from affliction | from those who oppress them |
| and establishes | and causes … to increase in number |
| families | {their} families |
| like a flock | as flocks of sheep do |

# Psalms 107:42

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The upright see and rejoice, and all wickedness shuts its mouth.* | *People who live rightly see {Yahweh do these things}, and they rejoice; wicked people {know about these things, too,} {but they} have nothing to say in reply.* |

ULT **The upright**
UST People who live rightly
(יְשָׁרִים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [People who do what is right]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **see**
UST see {Yahweh do these things}
(יִרְאוּ)

The psalmist 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: [see all of these things]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and all wickedness**
UST wicked people {know about these things, too … }
(וְכָל־עַוְלָה)

Here, **wickedness** represents "wicked people." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and every wicked person]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **shuts its mouth**
UST {but they} have nothing to say in reply
(קָפְצָה פִּיהָ)

The psalmist is using **shuts its mouth** as a common expression of his culture to mean "can say nothing" or "is silenced." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [can say nothing]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The upright | People who live rightly |
| and rejoice | and they rejoice |
| and all wickedness | wicked people {know about these things, too … } |
| wickedness | wicked people {know about these things, too … } |

# Psalms 107:43

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Who is wise? Then may he keep these things and may they ponder the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh.* | *Those who are wise should think carefully about these things; they should thoughtfully consider all the things that Yahweh has done to show that he faithfully loves them.* |

ULT **Who is wise? Then may he keep these things**
UST Those who are wise should think carefully about these things
(מִי־חָכָם וְיִשְׁמָר־אֵלֶּה)

The psalmist 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: [May whoever is wise keep these things]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Then may he keep these things**
UST should think carefully about these things
(וְיִשְׁמָר־אֵלֶּה)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if Yahweh's actions that he has been describing were objects that a wise person can **keep**. He means for every wise person to think about these things. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Then may he keep thinking about these things] or [Then may he remember these things]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Then may he keep**
UST should think carefully about
(וְיִשְׁמָר)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **wise** person by saying **may he keep**. He means wise people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Then may they keep]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **and may they ponder**
UST they should thoughtfully consider
(וְיִתְבּוֹנָנוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to people who are **wise**. These are the same people who are referred to as **he** in the first part of this sentence. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate that this refers to the same wise people. Alternate translation: [and may all wise people ponder]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the covenant faithfulness of Yahweh**
UST all the things that Yahweh has done to show that he faithfully loves them
(חַסְדֵי יְהוָה)

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 ways that Yahweh is faithful to his covenant with his people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| is wise | are wise |
| and may they ponder | they should thoughtfully consider |
| the covenant faithfulness of | all the things that … has done to show that he faithfully loves them |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 108

## Psalm 108 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 108 is a psalm of praise and petition.

1. Praise for Yahweh's covenant faithfulness (1–5)
2. Yahweh's sovereign dominion and promised kingdom (6–9)
3. Prayer for deliverance and victory (10–13)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Victory

God affirms that he is in control of all nations, but the psalmist has not had success against his enemies. He admits that only God can give him victory, and so he asks God to give him victory over Edom.

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

Verses 1–5 are very similar to Psalm 57:7–11, and verses 6–13 are very similar to Psalm 60:5–12. If you have already translated those psalms, look at them to see how to translate this psalm.

# Psalms 108:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My heart is made steadfast, God; I will sing and I will make music, indeed, {with} my glory!* | *God, I am completely committed to {worshiping} you. I will sing and I will play music {to praise you}. I will do this with my whole being!* |

ULT **My heart is made steadfast**
UST I am completely committed to {worshiping} you
(נָכוֹן לִבִּי)

Here David is speaking as if his **heart** were something that could be **made steadfast**. He means that he has become determined and committed to praising God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I have made myself steadfast]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **My heart is made steadfast**
UST I am completely committed to {worshiping} you
(נָכוֹן לִבִּי)

The expression **My heart is made steadfast** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I have made my heart steadfast]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **indeed, {with} my glory**
UST I will do this with my whole being
(אַף־כְּבוֹדִי)

The word translated as **glory** could be: (1) a reference to all of David's strength. Alternate translation: [indeed, with all that I am] or (2) translated as the very similar word for "liver." In this case, it would be understood as functioning very much like **heart** in the first part of the verse, and also stand for the place in the body where a person's will and emotions are. Either way you translate it, the meaning is very similar. Alternate translation: [indeed, with my liver] or [indeed, with my entire will]

**Support Reference:** Alternative Readings

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {with} my glory | I will do this with my whole being |

# Psalms 108:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Awaken, lyre and harp; I will awaken the dawn.* | *I will arise before the sun rises, and I will praise you while I play my lyre and my harp.* |

**ULT Awaken, lyre and harp; I will awaken the dawn**
**UST** I will arise before the sun rises, and I will praise you while I play my lyre and my harp
(עִוְרָה הַנֵּבֶל וְכִנּוֹר אָעִירָה שָׁחַר)

See how you translated the similar phrases in Psalm 57:8.

**ULT Awaken, lyre and harp**
**UST** and I will praise you while I play my lyre and my harp
(עִוְרָה הַנֵּבֶל וְכִנּוֹר)

David is speaking of his **lyre and harp** as if they were living things that could wake up from sleep. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will start making music with my lyre and harp]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT I will awaken the dawn**
**UST** I will arise before the sun rises
(אָעִירָה שָׁחַר)

David is speaking of **the dawn** as if it were a living thing that could be awakened. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will play them before the sun comes up]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| lyre | while I play my lyre |
| and harp | and my harp |

# Psalms 108:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will thank you, Yahweh, among the peoples; I will make music to you among the nations.* | *Yahweh, I will thank you as foreign people listen; yes, I will play music to praise you before other people groups.* |

ULT **I will thank you, Yahweh, among the peoples; I will make music to you among the nations**

UST Yahweh, I will thank you as foreign people listen; yes, I will play music to praise you before other people groups

(אוֹדְךָ בָעַמִּים ו יְהוָה אֲזַמֶּרְךָ בַּל־אֻמִּים)

These two phrases **I will thank you, Yahweh, among the peoples** and **I will make music to you among the nations** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way.
Alternate translation: [I will thank you and make music to you, Yahweh, among the peoples of other nations]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the nations | other people groups |

# Psalms 108:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For your covenant faithfulness {is} great from above the heavens, and your trustworthiness, above the clouds.* | *I will do that because the way that you faithfully love us is so great that it is like the distance between the heavens and the earth, and the way that you faithfully keep your promises is so great that it is like the distance between the earth and the clouds.* |

ULT **For your covenant faithfulness {is} great from above the heavens, and your trustworthiness, above the clouds**
UST I will do that because the way that you faithfully love us is so great that it is like the distance between the heavens and the earth, and the way that you faithfully keep your promises is so great that it is like the distance between the earth and the clouds
(כִּי־גָדוֹל מֵעַל־שָׁמַיִם חַסְדֶּךָ וְעַד־שְׁחָקִים אֲמִתֶּךָ)

These two phrases **your covenant faithfulness is great from above the heavens** and **your trustworthiness above the clouds** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [For your covenant faithfulness and your trustworthiness are higher than the heavens]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **For your covenant faithfulness {is} great from above the heavens, and your trustworthiness, above the clouds**
UST I will do that because the way that you faithfully love us is so great that it is like the distance between the heavens and the earth, and the way that you faithfully keep your promises is so great that it is like the distance between the earth and the clouds
(כִּי־גָדוֹל מֵעַל־שָׁמַיִם חַסְדֶּךָ וְעַד־שְׁחָקִים אֲמִתֶּךָ)

Here David is speaking of God's covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness as if they were physical things that could extend **above the heavens** and **above the clouds**. He means that God's faithfulness and trustworthiness are immeasurably great. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [For your covenant faithfulness is better than any human covenant faithfulness, and your trustworthiness is better than any human trustworthiness]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **For your covenant faithfulness {is} great from above the heavens**
UST I will do that because the way that you faithfully love us is so great that it is like the distance between the heavens and the earth
(כִּי־גָדוֹל מֵעַל־שָׁמַיִם חַסְדֶּךָ)

David is using **great from above the heavens** as a common expression of his culture to mean "higher than the heavens" or "greater than the heavens." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [For your covenant faithfulness is higher than the heavens]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **your covenant faithfulness**
UST the way that you faithfully love us
(חַסְדֶּךָ)

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 way that you faithfully love us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and your trustworthiness, above the clouds**
UST and the way that you faithfully keep your promises is so great that it is like the distance between the earth and the clouds
(וְעַד־שְׁחָקִים אֲמִתֶּךָ)

David 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 your trustworthiness is great from above the clouds]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **your trustworthiness**
UST the way that you faithfully keep your promises
(אֲמִתֶּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **trustworthiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the amount that we can trust you is]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your covenant faithfulness | the way that you faithfully love us |
| the heavens | the heavens |
| your trustworthiness | the way that you faithfully keep your promises |

# Psalms 108:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Be exalted, God, above the heavens, and your glory, over all the earth.* | *God, show {all creatures} that you are greater than anything in the heavens! Show how wonderful you are {to people} all over the earth!* |

ULT **Be exalted, God, above the heavens, and your glory, over all the earth**
UST God, show {all creatures} that you are greater than anything in the heavens! Show how wonderful you are {to people} all over the earth
(רוּמָה עַל־שָׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים וְעַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדֶךָ)

See how you translated the similar phrases in Psalm 57:5

ULT **Be exalted, God, above the heavens, and your glory, over all the earth**
UST God, show {all creatures} that you are greater than anything in the heavens! Show how wonderful you are {to people} all over the earth
(רוּמָה עַל־שָׁמַיִם אֱלֹהִים וְעַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדֶךָ)

Here David is speaking of God as if he were a person who could be **exalted**, or lifted, above the heavens. David means that God should be recognized and praised as being greater than anything in the heavens. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [Show how great you are, God, greater than the heavens, and show your glory to everyone on earth]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and your glory, over all the earth**
UST Show how wonderful you are {to people} all over the earth
(וְעַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדֶךָ)

David 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 your glory be exalted over all the earth]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and your glory, over all the earth**
UST Show how wonderful you are {to people} all over the earth
(וְעַל כָּל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and how glorious you are over all the earth]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Be exalted | show {all creatures} that you are greater |
| God | God |
| the heavens | anything in the heavens |
| your glory | Show how wonderful you are |

# Psalms 108:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *So that your beloved ones may be rescued, save {with} your right hand and answer me.* | *Please answer our prayers and rescue us from our enemies by your power so that we, the people whom you love, may be safe.* |

ULT **So that your beloved ones may be rescued, save {with} your right hand and answer me**

UST Please answer our prayers and rescue us from our enemies by your power so that we, the people whom you love, may be safe
(לְמַעַן יֵחָלְצוּן יְדִידֶיךָ הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינְךָ וַעֲנֵנִי)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put the information about the purpose, **So that your beloved ones may be rescued**, after the request, **save with your right hand and answer me**. Alternate translation: [Save with your right hand and answer me so that your beloved ones may be rescued]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **So that your beloved ones may be rescued**

UST so that we, the people whom you love, may be safe
(לְמַעַן יֵחָלְצוּן יְדִידֶיךָ)

The expression **may be rescued** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [So that you rescue your beloved ones]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **save {with} your right hand and answer me**

UST Please answer our prayers and rescue us from our enemies by your power
(הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינְךָ וַעֲנֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please save with your right hand and answer me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **{with} your right hand**
UST by your power
(יְמִינְךָ)

Here David is using **hand** to represent Yahweh's power or strength. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [by your ability] or [by your strength]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and answer me**
UST Please answer our prayers
(וַעֲנֵנִי)

Here, **answer me** represents "do what I have been requesting." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and do what I have been requesting]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your beloved ones | we, the people whom you love |
| may be rescued | may be safe |
| save | and rescue us from our enemies |

# Psalms 108:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God has spoken in his holiness: "I shall rejoice; I shall divide Shechem and measure out the Valley of Succoth.* | *Because God is holy, he answered, "I will joyfully divide the area of Shechem {for you} and I will distribute {among my people} the land in the Valley of Succoth.* |

ULT **God has spoken in his holiness: "I shall rejoice; I shall divide Shechem and measure out the Valley of Succoth**
UST Because God is holy, he answered, "I will joyfully divide the area of Shechem {for you} and I will distribute {among my people} the land in the Valley of Succoth
(אֱלֹהִים ׀ דִּבֶּר בְּקָדְשׁוֹ אָעֱלֹזָה אֲחַלְּקָה שְׁכֶם וְעֵמֶק סֻכּוֹת אֲמַדֵּד)

See how you translated this in Psalm 60:6

ULT **in his holiness**
UST Because … is holy
(בְּקָדְשׁוֹ)

Here, **in his holiness** could either represent (1) the basis or source of God's authority when he speaks. Alternate translation: [by his holy authority] or [from his holy nature] or (2) the holy place where God was thought to dwell. Alternate translation: [from his holy place] or [from his sanctuary]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **I shall divide Shechem**
UST divide the area of Shechem {for you}
(אֲחַלְּקָה שְׁכֶם)

By **I shall divide Shechem**, God means that he will divide the land where Shechem is located. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I shall divide the land surrounding Shechem]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and measure out the Valley of Succoth**
UST and I will distribute {among my people} the land in the Valley of Succoth
(וְעֵמֶק סֻכּוֹת אֲמַדֵּד)

By **the Valley of Succoth**, God means the territory or region around the Valley of Succoth. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and measure out the territory of the Valley of Succoth]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **measure out**
UST I will distribute {among my people}
(אַמֵּדָה)

By **measure out**, God means “measure out for my people to possess.” You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [for my people make portions of]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| God | God |
| in his holiness | Because … is holy |
| I shall rejoice | I will joyfully |
| Shechem | the area of Shechem |
| of Succoth | Succoth |

# Psalms 108:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To me {is} Gilead; to me {is} Manasseh, and Ephraim {is} the protection of my head, Judah, my scepter.* | *{The region of} Gilead is mine; {the area of the tribe of} Manasseh is mine; {the tribe of} Ephraim is {like} my war helmet; and {the tribe of} Judah is {like} my royal scepter.* |

**ULT To me {is} Gilead; to me {is} Manasseh, and Ephraim {is} the protection of my head, Judah, my scepter**

UST { … The region of} Gilead is mine; the area of the tribe of} Manasseh is mine; the tribe of} Ephraim is {like} my war helmet; and {the tribe of} Judah is {like} my royal scepter

(לִי גִלְעָד ו לִי מְנַשֶּׁה וְאֶפְרַיִם מָעוֹז רֹאשִׁי יְהוּדָה מְחֹקְקִי)

See how you translated this in Psalm 60:7

**ULT To me {is} Gilead; to me {is} Manasseh**

UST { … The region of} Gilead is mine; the area of the tribe of} Manasseh is mine

(לִי גִלְעָד ו לִי מְנַשֶּׁה)

God is using **To me is** as a common expression of his culture to mean “belongs to me” or “is mine.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Gilead belongs to me; Manasseh belongs to me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT and Ephraim {is} the protection of my head**

UST {the tribe of} Ephraim is {like} my war helmet

(וְאֶפְרַיִם מָעוֹז רֹאשִׁי)

Here God is speaking of **Ephraim** as if it were **the protection of my head**, meaning a helmet that protects a warrior in battle. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the people of Ephraim are my warriors]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Judah, my scepter**
UST and {the tribe of} Judah is {like} my royal scepter
(יְהוּדָה מְחֹקְקִי)

Here God is speaking of **Judah** as if it were a **scepter**. He means that God rules through the kings of the tribe of Judah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I rule through the kings of the tribe of Judah]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Judah, my scepter**
UST and {the tribe of} Judah is {like} my royal scepter
(יְהוּדָה מְחֹקְקִי)

God 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: [Judah is my scepter]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Gilead | {The region of} Gilead |
| Manasseh | {the area of the tribe of} Manasseh |
| and Ephraim | {the tribe of} Ephraim |
| {is} the protection of | is {like} my war helmet |
| Judah | and {the tribe of} Judah |
| my scepter | is {like} my royal scepter |

# Psalms 108:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Moab {is} a tub for my washing; over Edom I throw my sandal; over Philistia I shout triumphantly."* | *The people of Moab serve me as those who wash my feet; the people of Edom also belong to me as menial servants; I have defeated the people of Philistia."* |

**ULT Moab {is} a tub for my washing; over Edom I throw my sandal; over Philistia I shout triumphantly**

UST The people of Moab serve me as those who wash my feet; the people of Edom also belong to me as menial servants; I have defeated the people of Philistia

(מוֹאָב ׀ סִ֥יר רַחְצִ֑י עַל־אֱד֥וֹם אַשְׁלִ֗יךְ נַעֲלִ֫י עָלַ֥י פְּלֶ֥שֶׁת אֲתְרוֹעָֽע)

See how you translated this in Psalm 60:8.

**ULT Moab {is} a tub for my washing**

UST The people of Moab serve me as those who wash my feet

(מוֹאָב ׀ סִ֥יר רַחְצִֽי)

Here God is speaking of **Moab** as if it were **a tub for my washing**. He means that the people of Moab will serve him in a menial way, like servants who bring a basin for washing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The people of Moab are like servants who wash my feet]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT over Edom I throw my sandal**

UST the people of Edom also belong to me as menial servants

(עַל־אֱד֥וֹם אַשְׁלִ֗יךְ נַעֲלִֽי)

Here God is speaking of **Edom** as if it were a servant who removes his sandals. This image shows that Edom will be completely defeated and will serve Israel in the most menial ways. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the people of Edom are like servants who remove my sandals]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Moab | The people of Moab |
| Edom | the people of Edom also belong to me |
| my sandal | as menial servants |
| Philistia | the people of Philistia |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I shout triumphantly | I have defeated |

# Psalms 108:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Who will bring me {into} the strong city? Who will lead me to Edom?* | *I wait for God to lead us to {fight against the people of} Edom; I wait for God to lead my army to {attack} their {capital} city that has strong walls around it.* |

ULT **Who will bring me {into} the strong city? Who will lead me to Edom**
UST I wait for God to lead us to {fight against the people of} Edom; I wait for God to lead my army to {attack} their {capital} city that has strong walls around it
(מִי יְבַלֵּנִי עִיר מְבֻצָר מִי נָחָנִי עַד־אֱדוֹם)

See how you translated this in Psalm 60:9.

ULT **Who will bring me {into} the strong city? Who will lead me to Edom**
UST I wait for God to lead us to {fight against the people of} Edom; I wait for God to lead my army to {attack} their {capital} city that has strong walls around it
(מִי יְבַלֵּנִי עִיר מְבֻצָר מִי נָחָנִי עַד־אֱדוֹם)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put the information about **Who will lead me to Edom** before the information about **Who will bring me into the strong city**. Alternate translation: [Who will lead me to Edom? Who will bring me into the strong city?]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **Who will bring me {into} the strong city**
UST I wait for God to lead my army to {attack} their {capital} city that has strong walls around it
(מִי יְבַלֵּנִי עִיר מְבֻצָר)

David assumes that readers will know that **the strong city** refers to a fortified city in Edom, likely its capital. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Who will bring me into the strong capital city of Edom?]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Who will bring me {into} the strong city**
UST I wait for God to lead my army to {attack} their {capital} city that has strong walls around it
(מִי יְבַלָּנִי עִיר מְבֻצָר)

David 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: [Only God can bring me into the strong city.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Who will lead me to Edom**
UST I wait for God to lead us to {fight against the people of} Edom
(מִי נָחָנִי עַד־אֱדֹום)

David 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: [Only God can lead me to Edom.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Edom | { … the people of} Edom |

# Psalms 108:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God, have you not rejected us? And you do not go out with our army, God.* | *God, we hope that you have not abandoned us; {we are distressed that} you have not been going with us when our army marches out {to fight our enemies}.* |

ULT **God, have you not rejected us? And you do not go out with our army, God**
UST God, we hope that you have not abandoned us; we are distressed that} you have not been going with us when our army marches out {to fight our enemies … }
(הֲלֹא־אֱלֹהִים זְנַחְתָּנוּ וְלֹא־תֵצֵא אֱלֹהִים בְּצִבְאֹתֵינוּ)

See how you translated this in Psalm 60:10.

ULT **God, have you not rejected us**
UST God, we hope that you have not abandoned us
(הֲלֹא־אֱלֹהִים זְנַחְתָּנוּ)

David 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: [God, it seems that you have rejected us!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God, we hope that you have not abandoned us |
| you … rejected us | God, we hope that you have not abandoned us |

# Psalms 108:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Give to us help against the enemy, and futility {is} the deliverance of man.* | *Please help us when we fight against our enemies because the help that humans can give {to us} is worthless.* |

**ULT Give to us help against the enemy, and futility {is} the deliverance of man**
**UST** Please help us when we fight against our enemies because the help that humans can give {to us} is worthless
(הָבָה־לָּנוּ עֶזְרַת מִצָּר וְשָׁוְא תְּשׁוּעַת אָדָם)

See how you translated this in Psalm 60:11.

**ULT against the enemy**
**UST** when we fight against our enemies
(מִצָּר)

David is not referring to a specific **enemy**. He means enemies in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [against all of our enemies]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**ULT and futility {is} the deliverance of man**
**UST** because the help that humans can give {to us} is worthless
(וְשָׁוְא תְּשׁוּעַת אָדָם)

Here the word **and** introduces not an additional action but an explanation. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [since futility is the deliverance of man]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

**ULT and futility {is} the deliverance of man**
**UST** because the help that humans can give {to us} is worthless
(וְשָׁוְא תְּשׁוּעַת אָדָם)

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: [since expecting humans to save us is futile]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the deliverance of man**
UST the help that humans can give {to us}
(תְּשׁוּעַת אָדָם)

David is using this possessive form **the deliverance of man** to mean deliverance that comes from human beings. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [any deliverance by human beings]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| against the enemy | when we fight against our enemies |
| the deliverance of | the help that |

# Psalms 108:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *With God we will accomplish valor; and he, he will trample our adversaries.* | *{But} with you {helping us}, we will win; you are the one who will {enable us to} defeat our enemies.* |

ULT **With God we will accomplish valor; and he, he will trample our adversaries**
UST { … But} with you {helping us}, we will win; you are the one who will {enable us to} defeat our enemies
(בֵּאלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה־חָיִל וְהוּא יָבוּס צָרֵינוּ)

See how you translated this in Psalm 60:12.

ULT **we will accomplish valor**
UST we will win
(נַעֲשֶׂה־חָיִל)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **valor**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [we will succeed valiantly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and he, he will trample our adversaries**
UST you are the one who will {enable us to} defeat our enemies
(וְהוּא יָבוּס צָרֵינוּ)

David is stating the pronoun **he** separately, even though the verb translated as **will trample** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that it is God who will defeat the enemies. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [and it is he who will trample our adversaries]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **and he, he will trample our adversaries**
> UST you are the one who will {enable us to} defeat our enemies
> (וְהוּא יָבוּס צָרֵינוּ)

Here David is speaking of God in the third person as **he** even though he has been addressing God directly in the previous verses. This may be to give encouragement to the Israelites who are listening. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the second person to maintain the direct address. Alternate translation: [and you, you will trample our adversaries]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

> ULT **and he, he will trample our adversaries**
> UST you are the one who will {enable us to} defeat our enemies
> (וְהוּא יָבוּס צָרֵינוּ)

Here David is speaking of God as if he were a warrior who would **trample** the enemies underfoot. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this plainly. Alternate translation: [and he, he will completely defeat our adversaries]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| With God | But} with you {helping us} |
| valor | we will win |
| he will trample | who will {enable us to} defeat |
| our adversaries | our enemies |

# Psalms 109

## Psalm 109 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 109 is a “psalm of petition,” asking Yahweh to give David relief from his enemies who are falsely accusing him and persecuting him. He also asks Yahweh to curse these people who are enemies of both Yahweh and David.

1. Complaint and accusation (1–5)
2. Curses against enemies (6–20)
3. David’s plea for himself (21–29)
4. Praise and confidence (30–31)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Cursing of Enemies

In this psalm, David takes evil very seriously and calls on Yahweh to punish those who are doing evil to himself and others so that the evil will stop. It is important to note that David does not take vengeance personally, but only calls on Yahweh to combat evil and to perform justice, as Yahweh has promised to do.

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Singular and Plural

David refers to his enemies in the singular in verses 6–19 and in the plural in the rest of the psalm. You may want to use the plural throughout the psalm, or you may want to add a footnote at verse 6 that explains that in the section of verses 6–19 David may be speaking of the leader of his enemies or he may be speaking of each one individually.

# Psalms 109:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the chief musician: a psalm of David. God of my praise, do not be silent!* | *A note to the worship leader: David wrote this psalm. God, you are the one whom I praise, so please answer my prayer* |

**ULT To the chief musician**
**UST** A note to the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**ULT God of my praise**
**UST** God, you are the one whom I praise
(אֱלֹהֵי תְהִלָּתִי)

Here David is using the possessive form **God of my praise** to describe God as the one whom he praises. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [God whom I praise]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT do not be silent**
**UST** so please answer my prayer
(אַל־תֶּחֱרַשׁ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please do not be silent]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a psalm | wrote this psalm |
| of David | David |
| God of | God |
| my praise | you are the one whom I praise |

# Psalms 109:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For a wicked mouth and a mouth of deceit open against me; they speak a tongue of untruth with me,* | *because evil and dishonest people slander me and tell lies about me.* |

**ULT a wicked mouth and a mouth of deceit open against me**
**UST** evil and dishonest people slander me
(פִּי רָשָׁע וּפִי־מִרְמָה עָלַי פָּתָחוּ)

Here, **mouth** represents people who are speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [wicked and deceitful people speak against me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT they speak a tongue of untruth with me**
**UST** and tell lies about me
(דִּבְּרוּ אִתִּי לְשׁוֹן שָׁקֶר)

Here, **tongue** represents the words that people speak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [they speak untrue things concerning me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| wicked | evil |
| deceit | dishonest |
| a tongue of | lies |

# Psalms 109:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *and words of hatred surround me, and they attack me without cause.* | *On all sides of me they say things that show that they hate me, and they harm me for no reason.* |

**ULT and words of hatred surround me**

**UST** On all sides of me they say things that show that they hate me

(וְדִבְרֵי שִׂנְאָה סְבָבוּנִי)

Here, **words of hatred** represents people speaking hateful things. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and people surround me saying hateful things]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

# Psalms 109:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In return for my love they accuse me, but I—prayer.* | *I show them that I love them but instead of being kind to me, they say that I have done evil things. So I pray to God {about it}.* |

**ULT In return for my love**
**UST** I show them that I love them but instead of being kind to me
(תַּחַת־אַהֲבָתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **love**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Instead of loving me as I love them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT they accuse me**
**UST** they say that I have done evil things
(יְשִׂטְנוּנִי)

David 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: [they accuse me of doing bad things]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT but I—prayer**
**UST** So I pray to God {about it}
(וַאֲנִי תְפִלָּה)

David 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 I turn to prayer] or [but I continue to pray]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my love | I show them that I love them |
| prayer | pray to God {about it} |

# Psalms 109:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They put upon me evil in return for good, and hatred in return for my love.* | *I do good things for them and they respond by doing evil things to me. I love them and they respond by hating me.* |

**ULT They put upon me evil in return for good**
**UST** I do good things for them and they respond by doing evil things to me
(וַיָּשִׂימוּ עָלַי רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **evil** and **good**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [They do evil things to me although I did good things to them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and hatred in return for my love**
**UST** I love them and they respond by hating me
(וְשִׂנְאָה תַּחַת אַהֲבָתִי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **hatred** and **love**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [and they hate me although I was loving to them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and hatred in return for my love**
**UST** I love them and they respond by hating me
(וְשִׂנְאָה תַּחַת אַהֲבָתִי)

David 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 they put hatred upon me in return for my love]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| evil | evil things |
| good | I do good things for them |
| my love | I love them |

# Psalms 109:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Appoint a wicked one over him; and may an accuser stand at his right hand.* | *So appoint a wicked judge who will judge my enemy, and bring one {of his enemies} who will stand next to him and accuse him {of doing evil things}.* |

> ULT **Appoint a wicked one over him**
> UST So appoint a wicked judge who will judge my enemy
> (הַפְקֹד עָלָיו רָשָׁע)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please appoint a wicked one over him]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

> ULT **Appoint a wicked one over him**
> UST So appoint a wicked judge who will judge my enemy
> (הַפְקֹד עָלָיו רָשָׁע)

Here David is speaking as if God would **appoint** a human judge to preside over his enemy. He means that he wants God to bring judgment upon his enemy. If this image does not communicate well in your language, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Appoint a wicked one to judge him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **a wicked one**
> UST a wicked judge
> (רָשָׁע)

David 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: [a wicked man]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and may an accuser stand at his right hand**
UST and bring one {of his enemies} who will stand next to him and accuse him {of doing evil things}
(וְשָׂטָן יַעֲמֹד עַל־יְמִינוֹ)

By **an accuser**, David means someone who will bring formal charges against his enemy in court. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and may someone accuse him before that wicked judge of doing evil things]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Appoint | So appoint |
| a wicked one | a wicked judge |

# Psalms 109:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *When he is judged, may he come out guilty; and may his prayer be as sin.* | *Let that judge declare that my enemy is guilty, and may you judge that even his prayer {to you} is a sin.* |

ULT **When he is judged**
UST Let that judge
(בְּהִשָּׁפְטוֹ)

The expression **is judged** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [When the wicked one judges him]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **may he come out guilty**
UST declare that my enemy is guilty
(יֵצֵא רָשָׁע)

David is using **may he come out guilty** as a common expression of his culture to mean "may the verdict be that he is guilty." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [may the verdict be that he is guilty]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **and may his prayer be as sin**
UST and may you judge that even his prayer {to you} is a sin
(וּתְפִלָּתוֹ תִּהְיֶה לַחַטָּאָה)

This could mean: (1) The enemy is praying to Yahweh and since his prayer is insincere, Yahweh should count it as sinful. Alternate translation: [and may his prayer be considered as another sin] or (2) The enemy is pleading with the judge, and the judge should count his plea as a further offense. Alternate translation: [and may his plea be considered as an offense]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| When he is judged | Let that judge |
| guilty | that my enemy is guilty |
| and … his prayer | |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| | and may you judge that even his prayer {to you} |
| as sin | a sin |

# Psalms 109:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May his days be few; may another take his position.* | *Then cause him to die soon; let people honor someone else rather than him.* |

ULT **May his days be few**
UST Then cause him to die soon
(יִהְיוּ־יָמָיו מְעַטִּים)

David is using **May his days be few** as a common expression of his culture to mean "May he die soon" or "May he live only a short time." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May he live only a short time]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **may another take his position**
UST let people honor someone else rather than him
(פְּקֻדָּתוֹ יִקַּח אַחֵר)

Here David is speaking of a person's role or authority as if it were a **position** that someone could physically occupy. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [may another take his authority] or [may another replace him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 109:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.* | *Cause his children not to have a father anymore, and cause his wife to become a widow.* |

**ULT and his wife a widow**
**UST** and cause his wife to become a widow
(וְאִשְׁתּוֹ אַלְמָנָה)

David 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 his wife be a widow]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

# Psalms 109:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And wandering, may his children wander and beg and seek from their desolations.* | *Cause his children to wander far from their ruined homes, begging and looking for food.* |

ULT **And wandering, may his children wander**
UST Cause his children to wander far
(וְנָוֹעַ יָנִועוּ בָּנָיו)

David is repeating forms of the verb **wander** in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [And may his children wander far away]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

ULT **and beg and seek**
UST begging and looking for food
(וְשִׁאֲלוּ וְדָרָשׁוּ)

David 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 beg and seek for food]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **from their desolations**
UST from their ruined homes
(מֵֽחָרְבוֹתֵיהֶֽם)

By **their desolations**, David means their ruined homes or destroyed dwellings. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [from their destroyed houses]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and beg | begging |
| and seek | and looking for food |
| from their desolations | from their ruined homes |

# Psalms 109:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May a creditor snare all that {is} to him; may strangers plunder his work.* | *Let the people to whom he owed money seize all of his property; let strangers take away everything that he worked to acquire.* |

**ULT May a creditor snare**
**UST** Let the people to whom he owed money seize
(יְנַקֵּשׁ נוֹשֶׁה)

Here David is speaking as if a creditor were a hunter or trapper who could **snare** the enemy's possessions. He means that the creditor should seize or take control of everything the enemy owns. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May a creditor take]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT all that {is} to him**
**UST** all of his property
(לְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ)

David is using **all that is to him** as a common expression of his culture to mean "everything that belongs to him." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [everything that belongs to him]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT his work**
**UST** everything that he worked to acquire
(יְגִיעוֹ)

The implication is that **his work** refers to the things that he worked for or the results of his labor. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the things that he worked for]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May … snare | Let … seize |
| may … plunder | let … take away |

# Psalms 109:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May there not be to him {one} extending covenant faithfulness; and may there not be {one} pitying his orphans.* | *Make sure that no one is faithfully loving to him; make sure that no one pities his fatherless children.* |

ULT **May there not be to him**
UST Make sure that no one … to him
(אַל־יְהִי־לוֹ)

David is using **May there not be to him** as a common expression of his culture to mean "May he not have." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May he not have]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **{one} extending covenant faithfulness**
UST is faithfully loving
(מַשֵּׁךְ חָסֶד)

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: [someone who is kindly loyal to him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{one} pitying his orphans**
UST pities his fatherless children
(חוֹנֵן לִיתוֹמָיו)

The implication is that these would be children who have lost their father due to the curse pronounced against him in the previous verses. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [someone who pities his orphaned children]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| covenant faithfulness | faithfully loving |

# Psalms 109:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May his posterity be to cut off; may their name be blotted out in the next generation.* | *Cause all his children to die, so that there will not be another generation to continue his name.* |

ULT **May his posterity be to cut off**
UST Cause all his children to die
(יְהִי־אַחֲרִיתוֹ לְהַכְרִית)

David is using **be to cut off** as a common expression of his culture to mean "die" or "be destroyed." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May his posterity be destroyed]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **may their name be blotted out**
UST there will not be … to continue his name
(יִמַּח שְׁמָם)

The expression **may their name be blotted out** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [may you blot out their name]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **may their name be blotted out**
UST there will not be … to continue his name
(יִמַּח שְׁמָם)

Here David is speaking of making people be forgotten as if their names were written words that could be erased or **blotted out**. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [may there be no one bearing their name] or [may no one remember their name]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| may … be blotted out | there will not be … to continue |
| in the … generation | so that … generation |

# Psalms 109:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May the sin of his fathers be remembered to Yahweh; and the offense of his mother not be blotted out.* | *Yahweh, consider all of the evil things that his ancestors did and do not forgive the sins that his mother committed.* |

ULT **May the sin of his fathers be remembered to Yahweh**
UST Yahweh, consider all of the evil things that his ancestors did
(יִזָּכֵר ׀ עֲוֹן אֲבֹתָיו אֶל־יְהוָה)

The expression **be remembered** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [May Yahweh keep in mind the sin of his fathers] or [May you remember the sin of his fathers]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **his fathers**
UST that his ancestors did
(אֲבֹתָיו)

David is using the term **fathers** to mean "ancestors." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his ancestors]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the offense of his mother not be blotted out**
UST and do not forgive the sins that his mother committed
(וְחַטַּאת אִמּוֹ אַל־תִּמָּח)

David 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 offense of his mother not be blotted out]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and the offense of his mother not be blotted out**
UST and do not forgive the sins that his mother committed
(וְחַטַּאת אִמּוֹ אַל־תִּמָּח)

The expression **not be blotted out** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [and do not blot out the offense of his mother]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and the offense of his mother not be blotted out**
UST and do not forgive the sins that his mother committed
(וְחַטַּאת אִמּוֹ אַל־תִּמָּח)

David is using **not be blotted out** as a common expression of his culture to mean "not be forgiven." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the offense of his mother not be forgiven]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **and the offense of his mother not be blotted out**
UST and do not forgive the sins that his mother committed
(וְחַטַּאת אִמּוֹ אַל־תִּמָּח)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **offense**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and the things that his mother did that offended Yahweh not be blotted out]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the sin of | all of the evil things |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and the offense of | and … the sins that |
| be blotted out | do … forgive |

# Psalms 109:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May they be before Yahweh continually and may he cut off their remembrance from the earth,* | *Please think about their sins always, but cause everyone on earth to completely forget who they were.* |

ULT **May they be before Yahweh continually**
UST Please think about their sins always
(יִהְיוּ נֶגֶד־יְהוָה תָּמִיד)

The pronoun **they** refers to the sins of the enemy's father and mother mentioned in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [May those sins be before Yahweh continually]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **May they be before Yahweh continually**
UST Please think about their sins always
(יִהְיוּ נֶגֶד־יְהוָה תָּמִיד)

Here David is speaking of the sins as if they were objects that could be continually placed **before Yahweh** for him to see. He means he wants Yahweh to notice those sins. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May Yahweh continually consider them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and may he cut off their remembrance**
UST but cause … to completely forget who they were
(וַיִּכָּרֵת & זִכְרָם)

David is using **cut off their remembrance** as a common expression of his culture to mean "destroy anything that would cause people to remember them." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and may he destroy anything that would cause people to remember them]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **and may he cut off their remembrance**
UST but cause … to completely forget who they were
(וְיִכָּרֵת & זִכְרָם)

The pronoun **he** refers to Yahweh, while the pronoun **their** refers to David's enemies. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and may he cut off any remembrance of those people]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **from the earth**
UST everyone on earth
(מֵאֶרֶץ)

Here, **the earth** represents any people living on earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from any people living on earth]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Please think about their sins |
| from the earth | everyone on earth |

# Psalms 109:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *because he never remembered to do covenant faithfulness, but pursued the humble man and the needy and the dejected in heart to death.* | *I pray these things because that man{, my enemy,} was never faithful toward anyone as your covenant says we must be; instead, he persecuted poor, needy, and grieving people until they were dead.* |

**ULT he never remembered**
**UST** that man{, my enemy,} was never faithful toward anyone as your covenant says we must be
(לֹא זָכַר)

The pronoun **he** refers to David's enemy. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [that man never remembered]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT to do covenant faithfulness**
**UST** that man{, my enemy,} was … faithful toward anyone as your covenant says we must be
(עֲשׂוֹת חָסֶד)

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: [to be kind to others]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT but pursued**
**UST** instead, he persecuted
(וַיִּרְדְּפֵהוּ)

Here David is speaking of the man's treatment of vulnerable people as if he **pursued** them like a hunter chasing prey. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but harassed]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the humble man and the needy and the dejected in heart**
UST poor, needy, and grieving people
(אִישׁ־עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן וְנִכְאֵה לֵבָב)

David is not referring to specific **humble** and **needy** and **dejected** people. He means people who were humble and needy and dejected in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use expressions that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [people who were humble and needy and dejected in heart]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **and the needy and the dejected in heart**
UST needy, and grieving
(וְאֶבְיוֹן וְנִכְאֵה לֵבָב)

David is using the adjectives **needy** and **dejected** as nouns to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these adjectives with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [and needy people and people dejected in their hearts]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and the dejected in heart**
UST and grieving
(וְנִכְאֵה לֵבָב)

Here David is speaking of people as if their emotions were located in their **heart**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and those who felt very sad]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to death**
UST until they were dead
(לְמוֹתֵת)

The implication is that he pursued these people until they died. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [until they died]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| covenant faithfulness | that man{, my enemy,} was … faithful toward anyone as your covenant says we must be |
| humble | poor |

# Psalms 109:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he loved cursing, and it came to him, and he did not delight in blessing, and it was far from him.* | *He enjoyed cursing {other people}, so now people are cursing him. He did not want to bless {other people}, so there will be no one who blesses him.* |

**ULT and it came to him**
**UST** so now people are cursing him
(וַתְּבוֹאֵֽהוּ)

Here David is speaking as if cursing were an object that physically **came to** someone. He means that the person experienced the effects or consequences of cursing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and now those curses have fallen on him] or [and now I wish those bad things to happen to him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and he did not delight in blessing**
**UST** He did not want to bless {other people}
(וְלֹא־חָפֵ֥ץ בְּבְרָכָ֑ה)

David is emphasizing a negative meaning by using a negative word, **not**, together with a mild expression that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If it would be helpful in your language, you could emphasize the negative meaning in a strong way. Alternate translation: [and he hated blessing]

**Support Reference:** Litotes

**ULT and it was far from him**
**UST** so there will be no one who blesses him
(וַתִּרְחַ֥ק מִמֶּֽנּוּ)

Here David is speaking as if blessing were an object that could be physically **far from** his enemy. He means that his enemy will not receive any blessing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he will not receive any]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And he loved | He enjoyed |
| cursing | cursing {other people} |
| he did … delight | He did … want |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in blessing | to bless {other people} |

# Psalms 109:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he put on cursing as his garment, and it entered into his inner being like water, and like oil into his bones.* | *Cursing {other people} is as natural for him as wearing clothes. Cursing {other people} is so much a part of who he is that it is like the water that he drinks; it is so much a part of who he is that it is like olive oil that has soaked into his bones.* |

ULT **And he put on cursing as his garment**
UST Cursing {other people} is as natural for him as wearing clothes
(וַיִּלְבַּשׁ קְלָלָה כְּמַדּוֹ)

Here David is speaking of his enemy as if **cursing** were **his garment** that he put on. He means that cursing other people was habitual for this person, like clothing that someone wears regularly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And he cursed other people continually]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and it entered into his inner being like water**
UST Cursing {other people} is so much a part of who he is that it is like the water that he drinks
(וַתָּבֹא כַמַּיִם בְּקִרְבּוֹ)

David is making a comparison between **it entered into his inner being like water** and how deeply cursing has become part of his enemy's character. The point of this comparison is that just as **water** penetrates thoroughly into a person when they drink, so **cursing** has penetrated deeply into this man's inner being. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and it became a part of him like water does when we drink it]

**Support Reference:** Simile

> ULT **and like oil into his bones**
> UST it is so much a part of who he is that it is like olive oil that has soaked into his bones
> (וְכַשֶּׁמֶן בְּעַצְמוֹתָיו)

David is making a comparison between how oil soaks into bones and how cursing has become part of his enemy's inner being. The point of this comparison is that just as **oil** penetrates deeply and becomes absorbed, so cursing has become deeply absorbed into the enemy's very nature. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and it became a part of him like oil would after it had entered into his bones]

**Support Reference:** Simile

> ULT **and like oil into his bones**
> UST it is so much a part of who he is that it is like olive oil that has soaked into his bones
> (וְכַשֶּׁמֶן בְּעַצְמוֹתָיו)

David 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 it entered into his inner being like oil penetrating his bones]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| cursing | Cursing {other people} |
| and like oil | it is so much a part of who he is that it is like olive oil |

# Psalms 109:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May it be to him like the clothing he wears, and for the belt he always girds himself with it.* | *Cause those terrible curses to continually afflict him like clothes that cling to him and like the belt that he wears every day.* |

**ULT May it be to him like the clothing he wears**
**UST** Cause those terrible curses to continually afflict him like clothes that cling to him
(תְּהִי־לֹ֤ו כְּבֶגֶד יַעְטֶ֗ה)

David is making a comparison between curses and **clothing** that someone wears. The point of this comparison is that just as **clothing** clings closely to a person's body, so the curses should cling closely to his enemy. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [May it wrap itself tightly to him like the clothing that he wears]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT May it be to him like the clothing he wears**
**UST** Cause those terrible curses to continually afflict him like clothes that cling to him
(תְּהִי־לֹ֤ו כְּבֶגֶד יַעְטֶ֗ה)

The pronoun **it** refers to the cursing mentioned in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [May that cursing be to him like the clothing that he wears]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and for the belt**
**UST** and like the belt
(וּלְמַזַּח)

David 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 it be for him like the belt]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and for the belt**
UST and like the belt
(וּלְמֵזַח)

David is making a comparison. The point of this comparison is that just as **the belt** is something that a person wears constantly, so the curse should cling to his enemy constantly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and may it always be around him as the belt]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **he always girds himself with it**
UST that he wears every day
(תָּמִיד יַחְגֹּרָהּ)

It might seem that the expression **he always girds himself with it** contains extra information that would not be natural to express in your language. If so, you could shorten it. Alternate translation: [he always girds himself with] or [with which he always girds himself]

**Support Reference:** Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| he … girds himself with it | that he wears |
| and for the belt | and like the belt |

# Psalms 109:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *This, the payment of my accusers from Yahweh, and those speaking evil against my soul.* | *Yahweh, let this {curse} be the way that you punish all of those who accuse me {of doing bad things} and all of those who say evil things about me.* |

ULT **This**
UST let this {curse} be
(זֹאת)

The pronoun **This** refers to the curse that David has been describing in the previous verses. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [May the effects of this curse be]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **This**
UST let this {curse} be
(זֹאת)

David 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 the effects of this curse be]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **This, the payment**
UST let this {curse} be the way that you punish
(זֹאת פְּעָלָֽת)

Here, **This, the payment** could mean: (1) David is asking Yahweh that this be the payment to his accusers. Alternate translation: [May this be the payment] or (2) David is stating that this is the payment to his accusers. Alternate translation: [This will be the payment]

ULT **This, the payment of my accusers from Yahweh**
UST Yahweh, let this {curse} be the way that you punish all of those who accuse me {of doing bad things}
(זֹאת פְּעֻלַּת שָׂטָנַי מֵאֵת יְהוָה)

Here David is speaking of God's punishment as if it were **payment** that God gives to David's accusers. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [This, the punishment of my accusers from Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and those speaking evil against my soul**
UST and all of those who say evil things about me
(וְהַדֹּבְרִים רָ֝ע עַל־נַפְשִׁי)

David 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 this be the payment from Yahweh to those speaking evil against my soul]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and those speaking evil against my soul**
UST and all of those who say evil things about me
(וְהַדֹּבְרִים רָ֝ע עַל־נַפְשִׁי)

Here, **soul** represents the entire person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and those speaking evil against me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| evil | evil things |
| my soul | me |

# Psalms 109:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But you, Yahweh, my Lord, do with me on account of your name. Because your covenant faithfulness {is} good, rescue me!* | *But you, Yahweh, my God, please be kind to me because of who you are! Rescue me {from my enemies} because you faithfully love me as you promised.* |

ULT **do with me**
UST please be kind to me
(עֲשֵׂה־אִתִּי)

By **do with me**, David means “treat me kindly” or “act favorably toward me.” You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [do good to me] or [do what I ask]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **on account of your name**
UST because of who you are
(לְמַעַן שְׁמֶךָ)

Here, **name** represents who God is or God’s reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [on account of your character]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Because your covenant faithfulness {is} good**
UST because you faithfully love me as you promised
(כִּי־טוֹב חַסְדְּךָ)

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: [Because you are good and faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my Lord | my God |
| your covenant faithfulness | you faithfully love me as you promised |
| {is} good | you faithfully love me as you promised |
| rescue me | Rescue me {from my enemies} |

# Psalms 109:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For I am poor and needy, and my heart breaks within me.* | *I ask you to do this because I am destitute and I am intensely sorrowful.* |

**ULT I am poor and needy**
**UST** I am destitute
(עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן אָנֹכִי)

The terms **poor** and **needy** mean similar things. David 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: [I am very poor]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT and my heart breaks within me**
**UST** and I am intensely sorrowful
(וְלִבִּי חָלַל בְּקִרְבִּי)

Here David is speaking of his emotional distress as if his **heart breaks** physically. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am in great despair]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 109:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Like a shadow when it lengthens I am made to go; I am shaken off like a locust.* | *I think that my time to remain alive will end as quickly as an evening shadow disappears. I will be gone as quickly as a man shakes off a locust.* |

> ULT **Like a shadow when it lengthens**
> UST as quickly as an evening shadow disappears
> (כְּצַל־כְּנָטוֹתוֹ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a shadow when it lengthens** quickly disappears, so David's life is quickly passing away. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [Like how quickly a shadow disappears as it lengthens]

**Support Reference:** Simile

> ULT **I am made to go**
> UST I think that my time to remain alive will end
> (נֶהֱלָכְתִּי)

The expression **I am made to go** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I will leave]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

> ULT **I am shaken off like a locust**
> UST I will be gone as quickly as a man shakes off a locust
> (נְנֹעַרְתִּי כָּאַרְבֶּה)

The expression **I am shaken off** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I will fall off like a locust]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **I am shaken off like a locust**
UST I will be gone as quickly as a man shakes off a locust
(נְנֹעַ֥רְתִּי כָּאַרְבֶּֽה)

David is making a comparison. The point of this comparison is that just as **a locust** is easily shaken off, so David is easily dismissed or removed from his position. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [I will disappear as quickly as someone shakes off a locust]

**Support Reference:** Simile

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| like a locust | as quickly as a man shakes off a locust |

# Psalms 109:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My knees are weak from fasting and my flesh is gaunt from fatness.* | *My knees are weak because I have fasted very often, and my body has become very thin; any fat is gone.* |

**ULT My knees are weak**
**UST** My knees are weak
(בִּרְכַּי כָּשְׁלוּ)

Here, **knees** represents the strength of the whole body. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [My body is weak]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT from fasting**
**UST** because I have fasted very often
(מִצּוֹם)

The word **from** indicates that **fasting** is the reason for the weakness described in the first part of the verse. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that the fasting is the cause of the weakness. Alternate translation: [because of fasting very much]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT and my flesh is gaunt from fatness**
**UST** and my body has become very thin; any fat is gone
(וּבְשָׂרִי כָּחַשׁ מִשָּׁמֶן)

By **my flesh is gaunt from fatness**, David means that his flesh is gaunt from the complete absence of fat. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and my flesh is gaunt, very far from being fat]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from fasting | because I have fasted very often |

# Psalms 109:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I, I am a disgrace to them; they see me; they shake their head.* | *The people who accuse me despise me; when they see me, they insult me by shaking their heads at me.* |

**ULT And I, I am**
**UST** me
(וַאֲנִי ׀ הָיֵיתִי)

The pronoun **I** is stated twice here for emphasis. David is emphasizing his own condition or state in contrast to his enemies. If a speaker of your language would use explicit pronouns for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing that meaning here. Alternate translation: [As for me, I am]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT I am a disgrace to them**
**UST** The people who accuse me despise me
(הָיֵיתִי חֶרְפָּה לָהֶם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **disgrace**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [I am disgusting to them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT they see me**
**UST** when they see me
(יִרְאוּנִי)

Here the word that is translated **they see me** does not clearly indicate when the action of seeing occurs. It could mean “whenever they see me” or refer to a specific instance. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [whenever they see me]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **they shake their head**
UST they insult me by shaking their heads at me
(יָנִיעוּן רֹאשָׁם)

The expression **shake their head** describes a symbolic action by which people showed contempt or mockery. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [they show that they despise me by shaking their heads]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a disgrace | despise |
| they shake | they insult me by shaking |

# Psalms 109:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Help me, Yahweh my God; save me according to your covenant faithfulness,* | *Yahweh, the God whom I worship, please help me! Rescue me because you faithfully love me!* |

**ULT Help me**
**UST** please help me
(עָזְרֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please help me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT my God**
**UST** the God whom I worship
(אֱלֹהָי)

The psalmist is not using the phrase **my God** to mean that he possesses or controls Yahweh, but rather to emphasize that Yahweh is the God he worships as modeled in the UST. See the introduction to Psalms for further discussion.

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT according to your covenant faithfulness**
**UST** because you faithfully love me
(כְּחַסְדֶּךָ)

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: [according to your covenant to be faithful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **according to your covenant faithfulness**
UST because you faithfully love me
(כְּחַסְדֶּךָ)

By **according to your covenant faithfulness**, David means according to God's promise to be faithful to his people. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [since you have promised to be faithful to me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my God | the God whom I worship |
| save me | Rescue me |
| according to your covenant faithfulness | because you faithfully love me |

# Psalms 109:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *so that they know that this {is} your hand; you, Yahweh, you have done it.* | *Then my enemies will know that you, Yahweh, are the one who has done it!* |

ULT **so that they know**
UST Then my enemies will know
(וְיֵדְעוּ)

Here, **so that** marks **they know that this is your hand; you, Yahweh, you have done it** as the goal or purpose of "Help me, Yahweh my God; save me according to your covenant faithfulness" in the previous verse. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [because I want them to know]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **so that they know**
UST Then my enemies will know
(וְיֵדְעוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to David's accusers. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [so that the people who accuse me know]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **that this {is} your hand**
UST that … are the one
(כִּי־יָדְךָ זֹּאת)

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: [that this is your doing]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **you, Yahweh, you have done it**
> UST you, Yahweh … who has done it
> (אַתָּה יְהוָה עָשִׂיתָה)

David is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you have done it** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that Yahweh is the one who has acted. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [it is you, Yahweh, who have done it]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **you, Yahweh, you have done it**
> UST you, Yahweh … who has done it
> (אַתָּה יְהוָה עָשִׂיתָה)

The pronoun **it** refers to Yahweh saving David, as he asked Yahweh to do in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [you, Yahweh, are the one who saved me]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| so that they know | Then my enemies will know |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 109:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They, they will curse, but you, you will bless; they arise, but then become ashamed, and your servant will rejoice.* | *As for them, they will curse {me}, but you, in contrast, will bless {me}. When they persecute {me}, {the result will be that} you make them ashamed, but you cause {me,} your servant, to be glad!* |

**ULT They, they will curse**
**UST** As for them, they will curse {me}
(יְקַלְלוּ־הֵמָּה)

The pronoun **They** refers to David's accusers. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The people who accuse me, they will curse]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT They, they will curse, but you, you will bless**
**UST** As for them, they will curse {me}, but you, in contrast, will bless {me}
(יְקַלְלוּ־הֵמָּה וְאַתָּה תְּבָרֵךְ)

David is stating the pronouns **they** and **you** separately for emphasis, even though the verbs translated as **they will curse** and **you will bless** already include their meanings. He is doing that to create a strong contrast between what his enemies will do (curse) and what God will do (bless). If a speaker of your language would use explicit pronouns for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing that meaning here. Alternate translation: [They are the ones who will curse, but you are the one who will bless]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT they arise**
**UST** When they persecute {me}
(קָמוּ)

By **they arise**, David means they arise to attack him. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [they arise to attack me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and your servant**
UST but … {me,} your servant
(וְעַבְדְּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person. Alternate translation: [and I, your servant]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| they will curse | they will curse {me} |
| you will bless | will bless {me} |
| but then become ashamed | {the result will be that} you make them ashamed |
| and your servant | but … {me,} your servant |
| will rejoice | you cause … to be glad |

# Psalms 109:29

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May my accusers be clothed with disgrace; may they wear their shame like a robe.* | *Please let everyone see that those who accuse me are completely disgraceful! Yes, cause other people to see that they are shameful as easily as someone sees the clothes that they wear!* |

ULT **May my accusers be clothed with disgrace; may they wear their shame like a robe**
UST Please let everyone see that those who accuse me are completely disgraceful! Yes, cause other people to see that they are shameful as easily as someone sees the clothes that they wear
(יִלְבְּשׁוּ שׂוֹטְנַי כְּלִמָּה וְיַעֲטוּ כַמְּעִיל בָּשְׁתָּם)

These two phrases **May my accusers be clothed with disgrace** and **may they wear their shame like a robe** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [May my accusers be clothed with shameful disgrace as though it were a robe]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **May my accusers be clothed with disgrace**
UST Please let everyone see that those who accuse me are completely disgraceful
(יִלְבְּשׁוּ שׂוֹטְנַי כְּלִמָּה)

Here David is speaking of his accusers as if they were people who could be **clothed with disgrace**. He means that their disgrace should be clearly seen and obvious to everyone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May it be obvious how disgraceful my accusers are]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **may they wear their shame like a robe**
UST Yes, cause other people to see that they are shameful as easily as someone sees the clothes that they wear
(וְיַעֲטוּ כַמְעִיל בָּשְׁתָּם)

David is making a comparison between **their shame** and **a robe**. The point of this comparison is that just as a robe is visible to everyone who sees the person wearing it, so David wants his accusers' shame to be visible and obvious to everyone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [may their shame be so obvious to everyone that it is like a robe that they are wearing]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| disgrace | are completely disgraceful |
| their shame | that they are shameful |
| like a robe | as easily as someone sees the clothes that they wear |

# Psalms 109:30

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *With my mouth I greatly thank Yahweh; and in the midst of many I will praise him.* | *I will thank Yahweh very much out loud; I will praise him when I am among the crowd of people who are worshiping him.* |

ULT **With my mouth I greatly thank Yahweh**
UST I will thank Yahweh very much out loud
(אוֹדֶה יְהוָה מְאֹד בְּפִי)

Here, **mouth** represents speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will speak to greatly thank Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and in the midst of many**
UST when I am among the crowd of people who are worshiping him
(וּבְתוֹךְ רַבִּים)

David is using the adjective **many** 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: [and in the midst of many people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I will praise him | I will praise him |

# Psalms 109:31

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For he stands at the right hand of the needy, to save {him} from the judges of his soul.* | *I will do that because he defends poor people {like me} in order to save {us} from those who would condemn us to die.* |

**ULT he stands at the right hand of the needy**
**UST** he defends poor people {like me}
(יַעֲמֹד לִימִין אֶבְיוֹן)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a person who could physically **stand at the right hand of the needy**. The image of standing at someone's right hand means to be ready to help and defend them. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [he advocates for the needy] or [he helps the needy]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the needy**
**UST** poor people {like me}
(אֶבְיוֹן)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [needy people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT from the judges of his soul**
**UST** those who would condemn us to die
(מִשֹּׁפְטֵי נַפְשׁוֹ)

By **the judges of his soul**, David means those who seek to condemn him to death. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [from officials who want to take his life]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to save {him} | in order to save {us} from |
| from the judges of | those who would condemn |
| his soul | us to die |

# Psalms 110

## Psalm 110 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 110 is a psalm honoring the king as he becomes king and was also recognized as a prophecy about the coming messiah. (See: prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess and Christ, Messiah)

1. The divine proclamation (1–2)
2. The people's response (3)
3. The eternal priesthood (4)
4. The king's judgment & victory (5–7)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### King

Yahweh will enable the king to conquer his enemies. Christ is seen as both high priest and king. (See: high priest, chief priest)

# Psalms 110:1

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Of David, a psalm. The declaration of Yahweh to my lord {the king}: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."* | *David wrote this psalm. Yahweh said to my lord, "Sit {here,} close to me, in the place of highest honor until I completely defeat your enemies and make them {like} a stool for your feet!"* |

**ULT Sit at my right hand**
**UST** Sit {here,} close to me, in … place of highest honor
(שֵׁב לִימִינִי)

Yahweh is using **Sit at my right hand** as a common expression of the culture to mean "Take the place of highest honor and authority beside me." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Sit with me in the honored place]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet**
**UST** until I completely defeat your enemies and make them {like} a stool for your feet
(עַד־אָשִׁית אֹיְבֶיךָ הֲדֹם לְרַגְלֶיךָ)

Here Yahweh is speaking of defeating enemies as if he were making them into **a footstool for your feet**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [until I give you victory over your enemies]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Of David | David |
| a psalm | wrote this psalm |
| The declaration of | said to |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| to my lord {the king} | my lord … the |
| to my lord {the king} | my lord … the |
| your enemies | your enemies … them |
| a footstool | {like} a stool for |

# Psalms 110:2

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Yahweh will stretch out the scepter of your strength from Zion; rule in the midst of your enemies!* | *Yahweh will extend your powerful kingdom from Zion {to other lands}; you are to rule over all your enemies.* |

ULT **Yahweh will stretch out the scepter of your strength**
UST Yahweh will extend your powerful kingdom … to other lands
(מַטֵּה־עֻזְּךָ יִשְׁלַח יְהוָה)

Here, **scepter** represents royal authority and power. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will expand the area where you strongly rule]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the scepter of your strength**
UST your powerful kingdom
(מַטֵּה־עֻזְּךָ)

David is using the possessive form to describe a **scepter** that is characterized by **strength**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [your strong scepter]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **rule**
UST you are to rule
(רְדֵה)

The word translated as **rule** is an imperative, but it communicates an invitation to rule rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate an invitation for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates an invitation. Alternate translation: [I want you to rule]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the scepter of | kingdom |
| your strength | your powerful |
| from Zion | from Zion |
| rule | you are to rule |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your enemies | all your enemies |

# Psalms 110:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your people, freewill offerings on the day of your strength, in the beauty of holiness; from the womb of the dawn, the dew of your youth {is} to you.* | *When you lead your army into battle, your people will offer themselves freely {to join your army}. The way that they are completely devoted to you will be beautiful. You will be as strong as you were as a young man every day, as surely as the dew comes that waters the earth every morning.* |

ULT **Your people, freewill offerings**
UST your people will offer themselves freely {to join your army}
(עַמְּךָ נְדָבֹת)

David is speaking of **Your people** as if they were **freewill offerings**. He means that the people will willingly offer themselves to serve the king, just as people willingly bring offerings to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Your people are like freewill offerings]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **on the day of your strength**
UST When you lead your army into battle
(בְּיוֹם חֵילֶךָ)

David is using this possessive form **the day of your strength** to mean when you show how strong you are. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [when you show how strong you are]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **in the beauty of holiness**
UST The way that they are completely devoted to you will be beautiful
(בְּהַדְרֵי־קֹדֶשׁ)

David is using the possessive form to describe a **beauty** that is characterized by **holiness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in holy beauty]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **in the beauty of holiness**
UST The way that they are completely devoted to you will be beautiful
(בְּהַדְרֵי־קֹדֶשׁ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the ideas of **beauty** and **holiness**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [they will be beautiful and holy] or [because they are holy, they will be beautiful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **from the womb of the dawn, the dew of your youth {is} to you**
UST You will be as strong as you were as a young man every day, as surely as the dew comes that waters the earth every morning
(מֵרֶחֶם מִשְׁחָר לְךָ טַל יַלְדֻתֶיךָ)

Here David is speaking of the king's youthful vigor as if it were **the dew of your youth** that comes **from the womb of the dawn**. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [you will be as fresh as the dew that comes early every morning]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| freewill offerings | will offer themselves freely {to join your army} |
| your strength | you lead your army into battle |
| holiness | The way that they are completely devoted to you |
| from the womb of | every day … every morning |

# Psalms 110:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh has sworn, and will not revoke {it}: "You {are} a priest forever, after the manner of Melchizedek."* | *Yahweh has made a solemn promise and he will never change his mind {about it}; {he said to the king,} "You are an eternal priest in the way that Melchizedek was a priest."* |

**ULT and will not revoke {it}**
**UST** and he will never change his mind {about it}
(וְלֹא יִנָּחֵם)

The pronoun **it** refers to the oath or solemn promise that Yahweh has made and that David is about to repeat. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and will not revoke this oath]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| has sworn | has made a solemn promise |
| a priest | an … priest |
| forever | eternal |
| Melchizedek | Melchizedek |

# Psalms 110:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The Lord {is} at your right hand. He crushes kings on the day of his nose.* | *The Lord fights for you; when he becomes angry, he defeats many kings.* |

ULT **The Lord {is} at your right hand**
UST The Lord fights for you
(אֲדֹנָי עַל־יְמִינֶךָ)

David is using **at your right hand** as a common expression of his culture to mean "near you to help you" or "fighting for you." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The Lord is near you to help you]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **The Lord {is}**
UST The Lord
(אֲדֹנָי)

David assumes that readers will know that **The Lord** refers to Yahweh. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **He crushes kings**
UST he defeats many kings
(מָחַץ & מְלָכִים)

Here David is speaking as if the Lord were a person who physically **crushes kings**. He means that the Lord defeats enemy kings. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He defeats enemy kings]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **on the day of his nose**
UST when he becomes angry
(בְּיוֹם־אַפּוֹ)

David is using the phrase **the day of his nose** as a common expression of the culture to mean that the Lord is angry. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [on the day of his anger] or [when he displays his anger]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The Lord {is} | The Lord |
| kings | many kings |

# Psalms 110:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He will judge the nations; he fills {with} bodies, he crushes the head, upon abundant land.* | *He will punish the people of many nations; he will cause many {enemy soldiers} to fall dead, with crushed heads, all over a broad land.* |

**ULT He will judge the nations**
**UST** He will punish the people of many nations
(יָדִין בַּגּוֹיִם)

By **He will judge the nations**, David means that Yahweh will punish the nations for their wickedness. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [He will punish the nations]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT the nations**
**UST** the people of many nations
(בַּגּוֹיִם)

Here, **the nations** represents the people who live in the nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people living in many nations]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT he fills {with} bodies**
**UST** he will cause many {enemy soldiers} to fall dead
(מָלֵא גְוִיּוֹת)

By **he fills with bodies**, David means he fills the battlefield with dead bodies. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [he fills the battlefield with dead bodies]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **he crushes the head**
UST with crushed heads
(מָחַץ רֹאשׁ)

David is not referring to a specific **head**. He means the heads of the king's enemies in general. The word translated as **head** could refer to: (1) the heads of the enemy soldiers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh crushes the heads of the enemy soldiers] or (2) the leaders of the enemy armies. Alternate translation: [Yahweh defeats the leaders of the enemy armies]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **upon abundant land**
UST all over a broad land
(עַל־אֶרֶץ רַבָּה)

The word translated as **land** could refer to: (1) a battlefield. Alternate translation: [on a large battlefield] or (2) the earth. Alternate translation: [over the whole earth]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| He will judge | He will punish |
| the nations | the people of many nations |
| land | a … land |

# Psalms 110:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He will drink from the stream along the path, Therefore, he will lift up the head.* | *But the king will drink from the stream alongside the road; because of {all} this, he will be victorious.* |

ULT **He will drink**
UST But the king will drink
(יִשְׁתֶּה)

Here, **He** could refer to: (1) the king. Alternate translation: [The king will drink] or (2) Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will drink]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Therefore**
UST because of {all} this
(עַל־כֵּן)

**Therefore** introduces the result of Yahweh fighting for and strengthening the king, as the previous verses of this psalm describe. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Because Yahweh has fought for him]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **he will lift up the head**
UST he will be victorious
(יָרִים רֹאשׁ)

David is using **he will lift up the head** as a common expression of his culture to mean “he will triumph over his enemies.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he will triumph over his enemies]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

# Psalms 111

## Psalm 111 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 111 is a psalm of praise to God for his miracles and care. (See: miracle, wonder, sign)

1. Call to praise (1–2)
2. Yahweh's majestic works (3–6)
3. Yahweh's trustworthy and enduring nature (7–9)
4. Wisdom and praise (10)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh's character

God is great. He has given his people food, land, and always keeps his promises to his people. (See: promise, promised and people of God)

# Psalms 111:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hallelu Yah! I will thank Yahweh with the whole heart in the assembly of the upright and congregation.* | *Praise Yahweh! I will thank Yahweh with my entire inner being every time that those who do what is right meet together.* |

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **with the whole heart**
UST with my entire inner being
(בְּכָל־לֵבָב)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the place where his emotions and will reside as his **heart**. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with my whole heart] or [with all that I am]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the upright and congregation**
UST those who do what is right meet together
(יְשָׁרִים וְעֵדָה)

The phrase **upright and congregation** expresses a single idea. The word **upright** tells more about **congregation**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [the congregation of upright people]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

ULT **the upright**
UST those who do what is right
(יְשָׁרִים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the upright people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yah | Yahweh |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| in the assembly of | every time that |
| the upright | those who do what is right |
| and congregation | meet together |

# Psalms 111:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The works of Yahweh {are} great, searched by everyone desirous of them.* | *The things that Yahweh does are wonderful! All those who delight in those things study them carefully.* |

ULT **searched by everyone desirous of them**
UST All those who delight in those things study them carefully
(דְּרוּשִׁים לְכָל־חֲפָצֵיהֶם)

The expression **searched by everyone desirous of them** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [everyone desirous of them searches them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **searched by everyone desirous of them**
UST All those who delight in those things study them carefully
(דְּרוּשִׁים לְכָל־חֲפָצֵיהֶם)

The psalmist is using the adjective **desirous** 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: [searched by everyone who desires them]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **searched by everyone desirous of them**
UST All those who delight in those things study them carefully
(דְּרוּשִׁים לְכָל־חֲפָצֵיהֶם)

The pronoun **them** refers to the works of Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [they are searched by everyone desirous of his works]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **searched**
UST study them carefully
(דְּרוּשִׁים)

This could mean: (1) people examine and study Yahweh's works. Alternate translation: [studied] or (2) people are looking for Yahweh to do his works. Alternate translation: [eagerly awaited]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of Yahweh | Yahweh |
| searched | study them carefully |

# Psalms 111:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *His work {is} splendor and majesty, and his righteousness stands forever.* | *The things that he does show how wonderful and glorious he is, and that he is eternally righteous.* |

**ULT His work {is} splendor and majesty**
**UST** The things that he does show how wonderful and glorious he is
(הוֹד־וְהָדָר פָּעֳלֹו)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **splendor** and **majesty**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [His work is splendid and majestic]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and his righteousness stands forever**
**UST** and that he is eternally righteous
(וְצִדְקָתֹו עֹמֶדֶת לָעַד)

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 he is righteous forever]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and his righteousness stands forever**
**UST** and that he is eternally righteous
(וְצִדְקָתֹו עֹמֶדֶת לָעַד)

Here the psalmist is speaking of God's righteousness as if it were a structure that **stands forever**. He means that God's righteousness is permanent and will never change or fail. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and his righteousness endures forever]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| splendor | show how wonderful |
| and majesty | and glorious he is |
| and his righteousness | and that … righteous |
| forever | eternally |

# Psalms 111:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He makes a remembrance for his wonders; Yahweh {is} gracious and merciful.* | *He has done wonderful things that people will always remember; Yahweh always acts kindly and mercifully.* |

**ULT He makes a remembrance for his wonders**
UST He has done wonderful things that people will always remember
(זֵכֶר עָשָׂה לְנִפְלְאֹתָיו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **remembrance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [He makes sure that people will always remember the wonderful things that he does]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for his wonders | wonderful things |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} gracious | always acts kindly |
| and merciful | and mercifully |

# Psalms 111:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He gives food to those fearing him. He remembers his covenant forever.* | *He provides food for those who profoundly respect him; he never forgets the covenant that he made {with our ancestors}.* |

**ULT to those fearing him**
**UST** for those who profoundly respect him
(לִירֵאָיו)

The psalmist is using the adjective **fearing** 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: [to the people who fear him]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT He remembers his covenant forever**
**UST** he never forgets the covenant that he made {with our ancestors}
(יִזְכֹּר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ)

This means that Yahweh will always act according to his covenant. See how you translated this in Psalm 105:8. Alternate translation: [He will honor his covenant forever]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to those fearing him | for those who profoundly respect him |
| his covenant | the covenant that he made {with our ancestors} |
| forever | he never forgets |

# Psalms 111:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He showed the power of his works to his people, to give to them the inheritance of the nations.* | *By enabling his people to capture the lands that had belonged to other people groups, he showed to {us,} his people, that he is very powerful.* |

ULT **the power of his works**
UST that he is very powerful
(כֹּ֣חַ מַעֲשָׂ֑יו)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **works** that are characterized by **power**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [his powerful works]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **to give to them**
UST By enabling his people to capture
(לָתֵ֣ת לָהֶ֑ם)

The implication is that Yahweh showed his power by means of giving his people the lands that had belonged to other nations as their inheritance. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [by giving to them]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the inheritance of the nations**
UST the lands that had belonged to other people groups
(נַחֲלַ֖ת גּוֹיִֽם)

The implication is that this refers to the land that belonged to other nations. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [land that belonged to other nations]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the power of | that he is very powerful |
| the inheritance of | the lands that had belonged to |
| the nations | other people groups |

# Psalms 111:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The works of his hands {are} truth and justice; all of his precepts are reliable.* | *He does everything fairly and in the right way, and we can trust that everything that he tells us to do is for our good.* |

ULT **The works of his hands**
UST He does everything
(מַעֲשֵׂי יָדָיו)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the things that God does as if they were **the works of his hands**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [All the things that he does]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{are} truth and justice**
UST fairly and in the right way
(אֱמֶת וּמִשְׁפָּט)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **truth** and **justice**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [are true and just]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **all of his precepts are reliable**
UST and we can trust that everything that he tells us to do is for our good
(נֶאֱמָנִים כָּל־פִּקּוּדָיו)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know that **precepts** refers to God's commands and instructions. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [We can rely on all of his instructions]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and justice | fairly |
| are reliable | and we can trust that … is for our good |

# Psalms 111:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They are established forever, for eternity, done in faithfulness, and upright.* | *We must obey his instructions forever; he created them in order to do what is best for us, and they are completely right.* |

ULT **They are established forever**
UST We must obey his instructions forever
(סְמוּכִים לָעַד)

The expression **They are established** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [He established them to last forever]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **forever, for eternity**
UST forever
(לָעַד לְעוֹלָם)

The terms **forever** and **for eternity** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [for all eternity]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **done in faithfulness, and upright**
UST he created them in order to do what is best for us, and they are completely right
(עֲשׂוּיִם בֶּאֱמֶת וְיָשָׁר)

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. This could mean: (1) Yahweh has given his instructions in a faithful and proper manner. Alternate translation: [made faithfully and uprightly] or (2) his people are to observe Yahweh's instructions in a faithful and proper manner. Alternate translation: [for his people to observe faithfully and properly]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **done in faithfulness**
UST he created them in order to do what is best for us
(עֲשׂוּיִם בֶּאֱמֶת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [done faithfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and upright**
UST and they are completely right
(וְיָשָׁר)

The psalmist is using the adjective **upright** as a noun to mean upright things or upright instructions. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [and they are instructions that are upright]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| They are established | We must obey his instructions |
| forever | forever |
| for eternity | forever |
| in faithfulness | in order to do what is best for us |
| and upright | and they are completely right |

# Psalms 111:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He has sent redemption to his people; he ordained his covenant forever; holy and awesome {is} his name.* | *He rescued us, his people, {from being slaves in Egypt,} and he made a covenant {with us} that will last forever. He is holy and awesome!* |

**ULT He has sent redemption to his people**
**UST** He rescued us, his people, {from being slaves in Egypt … }
(פְּדוּת ו שָׁלַח לְעַמּוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **redemption**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [He has redeemed his people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT holy and awesome {is} his name**
**UST** He is holy and awesome
(קָדוֹשׁ וְנוֹרָא שְׁמוֹ)

The psalmist is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is or to refer to Yahweh's reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is holy and awesome]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| redemption | He rescued us … from being slaves in Egypt |
| he ordained | and he made |
| his covenant | a covenant {with us} |
| forever | that will last forever |
| holy | is holy |
| and awesome | and awesome |

# Psalms 111:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The fear of Yahweh {is} the beginning of wisdom; good understanding to all those doing them. His praise stands forever!* | *Having a profound respect for Yahweh is the way to become wise. All those who obey his instructions will come to understand why it is good to do them. We should praise him forever!* |

**ULT The fear of Yahweh**
UST Having a profound respect for Yahweh
(יִרְאַ֣ת יְהוָ֑ה)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean a deep reverence for Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. See how you translated this in Psalm 19:9. Alternate translation: [Revering Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT {is} the beginning of wisdom**
UST is the way to become wise
(רֵ֣אשִׁ֣ית חָכְמָ֑ה)

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: [is how a person begins to become wise]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT good understanding to all those doing them**
UST All those who obey his instructions will come to understand why it is good to do them
(שֵׂ֤כֶל ט֨וֹב ׀ לְכָל־עֹשֵׂיהֶ֗ם)

The psalmist 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: [all those doing them will gain a good understanding of how to live well]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT to all those doing them**
UST All those who obey his instructions
(לְכָל־עֹשֵׂיהֶ֗ם)

The pronoun **them** refers to Yahweh's precepts, mentioned in verse 7. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [to all those doing his precepts]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **His praise stands forever**
UST We should praise him forever
(תְּהִלָּתוֹ עֹמֶדֶת לָעַד)

Here the psalmist is speaking of **praise** as if it were something that could **stand** in the sense of remaining upright and stable. He means that God will be praised forever. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [His praise endures forever] or [He is to be praised forever]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The fear of | Having a profound respect for |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| of wisdom | wise |
| good | why it is good to do them |
| understanding | will come to understand |
| His praise | We should praise him |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 112

## Psalm 112 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 112 is a “wisdom psalm” teaching the value of a righteous life. (See: wise, wisdom and righteous, righteousness, unrighteous, unrighteousness, upright, uprightness)

1. The blessings of the Yahweh-fearing (1–3)
2. The character and security of the upright (4–9)
3. The contrast with the wicked (10)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Righteous people

The righteous people will be well-known for their generosity and they will not have to worry about bad news because God is taking care of them.

# Psalms 112:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hallelu Yah! The happinesses of the man fearing Yahweh, greatly delighting in his commandments!* | *Praise Yahweh! How fortunate are those who have a profound respect for Yahweh; How fortunate are those who happily obey his commands!* |

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name “Yahweh,” the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **The happinesses of**
UST How fortunate
(אַשְׁרֵי)

The psalmist is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of joy or blessing. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy is] or [Truly blessed is]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **the man**
UST are those
(אִישׁ)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means any man who fears Yahweh. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [anyone]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **greatly delighting in his commandments**
UST How fortunate are those who happily obey his commands
(בְּמִצְוֹתָ֖יו חָפֵ֣ץ מְאֹֽד)

The psalmist 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 happy is the one who greatly delights in his commandments]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yah | Yahweh |
| fearing | who have a profound respect for |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| delighting | How fortunate are those who happily obey |

# Psalms 112:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *His seed will be powerful on the earth; a generation of upright ones will be blessed.* | *Their descendants will prosper in their land; Yahweh will bless all who do what is right.* |

ULT **His seed**
UST Their descendants
(זַרְעֽוֹ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the man's children as if they were **seed** that he had planted. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [His offspring]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **a generation of upright ones will be blessed**
UST Yahweh will bless all who do what is right
(דּוֹר יְשָׁרִים יְבֹרָךְ)

The expression **will be blessed** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will bless a generation of upright ones]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **a generation of upright ones**
UST all who do what is right
(דּוֹר יְשָׁרִים)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **a generation** that is characterized by being **upright**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [everyone who is upright]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| His seed | Their descendants |
| powerful | prosper |
| on the earth | in their land |
| a generation of | all |
| upright ones | who do what is right |
| will be blessed | Yahweh will bless |

# Psalms 112:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Wealth and riches {are} in his house, and his righteousness stands forever.* | *Their families will be wealthy, and their righteous deeds will endure forever.* |

**ULT** **Wealth and riches**
**UST** will be wealthy
(הוֹן־וָעֹשֶׁר)

The terms **Wealth** and **riches** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [Abundant riches]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT** **{are} in his house**
**UST** Their families
(בְּבֵיתוֹ)

The psalmist is using the term **house** to mean an entire household living together. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [belong to his household]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT** **{are} in his house**
**UST** Their families
(בְּבֵיתוֹ)

The pronoun **his** refers to the man who fears Yahweh mentioned in verse 1. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [belong to such a person]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT** **and his righteousness**
**UST** and their righteous deeds
(וְצִדְקָתוֹ)

The pronoun **his** refers to the man who fears Yahweh from verse 1. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [and the righteousness of such a person]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and his righteousness**
UST and their righteous deeds
(וְצִדְקָתוֹ)

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 each righteous thing that he does]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **stands forever**
UST will endure forever
(עֹמֶדֶת לָעַד)

This could mean: (1) Yahweh and/or people will always remember the righteous things that such a person does. Alternate translation: [continues to be remembered forever] or (2) Such people never stop doing righteous deeds. Alternate translation: [keeps going continually]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {are} in his house | Their families |
| and his righteousness | and their righteous deeds |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 112:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Light shines in the darkness for the upright ones; gracious and compassionate and just.* | *For those who honor God, it is as if a light were shining on them in the darkness, on those who are kind, merciful, and righteous.* |

ULT **Light shines in the darkness for the upright ones**
UST For those who honor God, it is as if a light were shining on them in the darkness
(זָרַח בַּחֹשֶׁךְ אוֹר לַיְשָׁרִים)

Here, **Light** could be: (1) the subject of the verb **shines** as in the ULT, or (2) the object of the verb **shines**, and then the subject of the verb would be "he," continuing the subject of the previous verse. Alternate translation: [He shines light in the darkness for the upright]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Light shines in the darkness for the upright ones**
UST For those who honor God, it is as if a light were shining on them in the darkness
(זָרַח בַּחֹשֶׁךְ אוֹר לַיְשָׁרִים)

The psalmist speaks of God blessing the upright person in difficult times as if his blessings were a **light** shining in darkness. Alternate translation: [The blessings that an upright person receives from God are like a light that shines in the darkness]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **gracious and compassionate and just**
UST on those who are kind, merciful, and righteous
(חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם וְצַדִּיק)

The psalmist 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: [such a person is gracious and compassionate and just]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for the upright ones | For those who honor God |
| gracious | on those who are kind |
| and compassionate | merciful |
| and just | and righteous |

# Psalms 112:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *a gracious and lending man {is} good; he conducts his affairs with justice.* | *It is good to be kind to others and to generously lend money to them. A person like that does everything honestly.* |

**ULT a gracious and lending man {is} good**
**UST** It is good to be kind to others and to generously lend money to them
(טוֹב־אִישׁ חוֹנֵן וּמַלֶוֶה)

This could mean: (1) it is good to be person who is gracious and lends freely. Alternate translation: [It is good to be a gracious and lending man] or (2) good things will happen to a man who is gracious and lending. Alternate translation: [Life goes well for a gracious and lending man]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT a gracious and lending man**
**UST** It is good to be kind to others and to generously lend money to them
(אִישׁ חוֹנֵן וּמַלֶוֶה)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [a gracious and lending person]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**ULT he conducts his affairs with justice**
**UST** A person like that does everything honestly
(יְכַלְכֵּל דְּבָרָיו בְּמִשְׁפָּט)

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: [he is just in all his dealings]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| gracious | to be kind to others |
| {is} good | It is good |
| with justice | honestly |

# Psalms 112:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For he will not be moved for forever; the righteous will be for an eternal remembrance.* | *Righteous people do this because they know that bad things will never overwhelm them; other people will always {joyfully} remember them.* |

ULT **For he will not be moved for forever**
UST Righteous people do this because they know that bad things will never overwhelm them
(כִּי־לְעוֹלָם לֹא־יִמּוֹט)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [He does this because he will not be moved for forever]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **For he will not be moved for forever**
UST Righteous people do this because they know that bad things will never overwhelm them
(כִּי־לְעוֹלָם לֹא־יִמּוֹט)

The expression **he will not be moved** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [For nothing will move him for forever]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **For he will not be moved for forever**
UST Righteous people do this because they know that bad things will never overwhelm them
(כִּי־לְעוֹלָם לֹא־יִמּוֹט)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the righteous person as if he were an object that could be **moved** from its place. He means that nothing will cause the righteous person to fail or be overcome by difficulties. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [For nothing will ever cause him to fail]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the righteous**
UST them
(צַדִּיק)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **will be for an eternal remembrance**
UST other people will always {joyfully} remember
(לְזֵכֶר עוֹלָם יִהְיֶה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **remembrance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [will always be remembered]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| for forever | never |
| the righteous | them |
| eternal | always |

# Psalms 112:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He does not fear bad news; his heart is sure, trusting in Yahweh.* | *Righteous people are not afraid when they receive bad news; they confidently trust in Yahweh.* |

**ULT his heart is sure**
**UST** when they receive … confidently
(נָכוֹן לִבּוֹ)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts and motives exist. The psalmist is speaking of a person's inner confidence as if it were **sure**, meaning firmly established or steadfast. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he is confident]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He does … fear | Righteous people are … afraid |
| bad | bad |
| trusting | they … trust |
| in Yahweh | in Yahweh |

# Psalms 112:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *His heart is upheld, he does not fear, until he looks over his adversaries.* | *They are confident and not afraid because they know that they will see God defeat their enemies.* |

**ULT His heart is upheld**
**UST** They are confident and … they know
(סָמוּךְ לִבּוֹ)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts and motives exist. The psalmist is speaking of the righteous person's emotional state as if his **heart** were **upheld** or supported, meaning that he is calm. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He is tranquil]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT until he looks over his adversaries**
**UST** because … that they will see God defeat their enemies
(עַד אֲשֶׁר־יִרְאֶה בְצָרָיו)

The implication is that the righteous person will remain confident and unafraid while God vindicates him by defeating his enemies. This does not mean that he will begin to fear when he sees his enemies. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [all the way to the time that he looks triumphantly over his adversaries]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he does … fear | afraid |
| over his adversaries | their enemies |

# Psalms 112:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He scatters, he gives to the poor; his righteousness stands forever; his horn is high with honor.* | *They give things generously to poor people; their kind deeds will endure forever; people will greatly honor them.* |

**ULT He scatters, he gives**
**UST** They give things generously
(פִּזַּר ׀ נָתַן)

The terms **scatters** and **gives** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [He gives generously]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT to the poor**
**UST** to poor people
(לָאֶבְיוֹנִים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [to anyone who is poor]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT his righteousness stands forever**
**UST** their kind deeds will endure forever
(צִדְקָתוֹ עֹמֶדֶת לָעַד)

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: [his righteous works stand forever]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT his righteousness stands forever**
**UST** their kind deeds will endure forever
(צִדְקָתוֹ עֹמֶדֶת לָעַד)

This could mean: (1) Yahweh and/or people will always remember the righteous things that such a person does. Alternate translation: [his righteousness continues to be remembered forever] or (2) Such people never stop doing righteous deeds. Alternate translation: [his righteousness keeps going continually]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **his horn is high with honor**
UST people will greatly honor them
(קַרְנוֹ תָּרוּם בְּכָבוֹד)

The psalmist is using **his horn is high** as a common expression of the culture to mean "he is honored and respected by others." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [people respect and honor him]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| He scatters | They … generously |
| his righteousness | their kind deeds |
| forever | forever |
| his horn | people will greatly honor them |
| with honor | people will greatly honor them |

# Psalms 112:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The wicked will see and be angry; he will grind his teeth and he will melt away; the desire of the wicked will perish.* | *Wicked people will see {those things} and become angry; they will gnash their teeth {angrily}, then people will stop hearing from them and they will die. The wicked things that they want to do will never happen.* |

**ULT The wicked will see**
UST Wicked people will see {those things}
(רָשָׁע יִרְאֶה)

The implication is that the wicked will see the prosperity and honor of the righteous person described in the previous verses. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [The wicked will see these things happen]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT The wicked will see**
UST Wicked people will see {those things}
(רָשָׁע יִרְאֶה)

The psalmist 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 will see]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT he will grind his teeth**
UST they will gnash their teeth {angrily}
(שִׁנָּיו יַחֲרֹק)

The grinding of teeth is an expression of extreme anger. See how you translated a similar phrase in Psalms 35:16. Alternate translation: [he will grind his teeth in rage]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

**ULT and he will melt away**
UST then people will stop hearing from them and they will die
(וְנָמָס)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the wicked person as if he were something that could **melt away** like ice or wax. He means that the wicked person will become unimportant and die. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he will become unimportant and die]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the desire of the wicked will perish**
UST The wicked things that they want to do will never happen
(תַּאֲוַת רְשָׁעִים תֹּאבֵד)

Here, **desire** could mean: (1) the emotional desire that wicked people have to do wicked things. Alternate translation: [the things that wicked people want to do will never happen] or (2) it represents the things that wicked people have desired. Alternate translation: [wicked people will lose the things that they desired to have]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The wicked | Wicked people |
| wicked | they |
| will perish | will never happen |

# Psalms 113

## Psalm 113 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 113 is a “psalm of praise” to God for his goodness. (See: good, right, pleasant, better, best, goodness)

1. The call to universal and eternal praise (1–3)
2. The greatness of Yahweh’s majesty (4–6)
3. The grace of Yahweh’s compassion (7–9)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh’s help

God helps the poor and gives children to the wife who cannot conceive children.

# Psalms 113:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hallelu Yah! Praise him, servants of Yahweh; praise the name of Yahweh!* | *Praise Yahweh! You people who serve Yahweh, praise him! Praise Yahweh for who he is!* |

**ULT Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

**ULT Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

**ULT praise the name of Yahweh**
UST Praise Yahweh for who he is
(הַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה)

Here, **name** represents who Yahweh is or to refer to Yahweh himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [praise everything about Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yah | Yahweh |
| Praise him | praise |
| servants of | You people who serve |
| Yahweh | Yahweh … him |

# Psalms 113:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Blessed be the name of Yahweh, from now and to forever.* | *Everyone should praise Yahweh for who he is, both now and forevermore!* |

ULT **Blessed be the name of Yahweh**
UST Everyone should praise Yahweh for who he is
(יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוָה מְבֹרָךְ)

The expression **Blessed be** is a passive verbal form. The psalmist is expressing his desire to praise Yahweh. If it would be unnatural to use that form for this purpose, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [We bless Yahweh] or [Let us all praise Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **Blessed be the name of Yahweh**
UST Everyone should praise Yahweh for who he is
(יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוָה מְבֹרָךְ)

The expression **Blessed be** is a passive verbal form. The psalmist is expressing his desire to praise Yahweh. If it would be unnatural to use that form for this purpose, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Let us bless the name of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **Blessed be the name of Yahweh**
UST Everyone should praise Yahweh for who he is
(יְהִי שֵׁם יְהוָה מְבֹרָךְ)

The psalmist is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is or to refer to Yahweh himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Blessed be Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **from now and to forever**
UST both now and forevermore
(מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם)

The psalmist is referring to all of time by naming two extremes, **now** and **to forever**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [for all eternity]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Blessed | Everyone should praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| forever | forevermore |

# Psalms 113:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *From the rising of the sun to its setting, may the name of Yahweh be praised.* | *From the people who live in the far east to the people who live in the far west, everyone should praise Yahweh for who he is!* |

ULT **From the rising of the sun to its setting**
UST From the people who live in the far east to the people who live in the far west
(מִמִּזְרַח־שֶׁמֶשׁ עַד־מְבוֹאוֹ)

The psalmist is referring to all of the earth by naming two extremes, **the rising of the sun** and **its setting**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [All over the earth]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **may the name of Yahweh be praised**
UST everyone should praise Yahweh for who he is
(מְהֻלָּל שֵׁם יְהוָה)

The expression **may the name of Yahweh be praised** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [may people praise the name of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **may the name of Yahweh be praised**
UST everyone should praise Yahweh for who he is
(מְהֻלָּל שֵׁם יְהוָה)

Here, **name** represents who Yahweh is or to refer to Yahweh himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [may Yahweh be praised] or [may everything about Yahweh be praised]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| may … be praised | everyone should praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 113:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh is high above all nations; his glory above the skies.* | *Yahweh rules over all the nations, he is more glorious than anything under the heavens.* |

**ULT Yahweh is high above all nations**
UST Yahweh rules over all the nations
(רָם עַל־כָּל־גּוֹיִם ׀ יְהוָה)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were physically **high above** the nations, like someone standing on a mountain looking down. This image emphasizes Yahweh's supreme authority and power over all earthly kingdoms. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is supreme over all nations]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT his glory above the skies**
UST he is more glorious than anything under the heavens
(עַל הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ)

The psalmist 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: [his glory is high above the skies]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT his glory above the skies**
UST he is more glorious than anything under the heavens
(עַל הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's **glory** as if it were positioned **above the skies**. The psalmist means that Yahweh's glory is greater than anything that can be seen in the heavens. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his glory exceeds anything visible from earth]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **his glory above the skies**
UST he is more glorious than anything under the heavens
(עַל הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּבוֹדוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [he is more glorious than anything visible from earth]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| nations | the nations |
| his glory | he is … glorious |
| the skies | than anything under the heavens |

# Psalms 113:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Who is like Yahweh our God, the one making high to sit,* | *There is no one who is like Yahweh, the God whom we worship, who sits on his throne in the highest heaven* |

**ULT Who is like Yahweh our God**
UST There is no one who is like Yahweh, the God whom we worship
(מִי כַּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

The psalmist is using the question form for emphasis, which begins here and continues through verse 6. 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: [There is no one like Yahweh our God]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT the one making high to sit**
UST who sits on his throne in the highest heaven
(הַמַּגְבִּיהִי לָשָׁבֶת)

The psalmist is using **the one making high to sit** as a common expression of the culture to mean “the one who sits on high” or “the one who rules in the highest position.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one sitting on high] or [the one who rules in the highest position]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| our God | the God whom we worship |

# Psalms 113:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the one making low to look on the sky and on the earth?* | *and who stoops down to look at the sky and at the earth.* |

> ULT **the one making low to look on the sky and on the earth**
> UST and who stoops down to look at the sky and at the earth
> (הַמַּשְׁפִּילִי לִרְאוֹת בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ)

This is the second part of the question form that began in verse 5. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for the purpose of creating emphasis as this does, you could translate these two verses as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: [the one making low to look on the sky and on the earth.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

> ULT **the one making low to look on the sky and on the earth**
> UST and who stoops down to look at the sky and at the earth
> (הַמַּשְׁפִּילִי לִרְאוֹת בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ)

The psalmist is using **the one making low to look** as a common expression of the culture to mean “the one who humbles himself to look” or “the one who condescends to look.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one who lowers himself to look down on the sky and on the earth]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and on the earth | and at the earth |

# Psalms 113:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *raising up the poor from the dust, he lifts the needy from the garbage,* | *He rescues very poor people from the very poor way that they live* |

ULT **raising up the poor from the dust, he lifts the needy from the garbage**
UST He rescues very poor people from the very poor way that they live
(מְקִימִי מֵעָפָר דָּל מֵאַשְׁפֹּת יָרִים אֶבְיוֹן)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [raising up the poor from the dust, yes, he lifts the needy from the garbage]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **raising up the poor from the dust, he lifts the needy from the garbage**
UST He rescues very poor people from the very poor way that they live
(מְקִימִי מֵעָפָר דָּל מֵאַשְׁפֹּת יָרִים אֶבְיוֹן)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the extremely poor condition of needy people as if they were sitting in **dust** and **garbage**. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he takes the poor out of their dirty and poor condition]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **raising up the poor from the dust, he lifts the needy from the garbage**
UST He rescues very poor people from the very poor way that they live
(מְקִימִי מֵעָפָר דָּל מֵאַשְׁפֹּת יָרִים אֶבְיוֹן)

The psalmist 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 adjectives with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [raising up poor people from the dust, he lifts needy people from the garbage]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

# Psalms 113:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to seat him with princes, with the princes of his people.* | *and causes people to honor them by making them leaders among those who rule his people.* |

ULT **to seat him with princes**
UST and causes people to honor them by making them leaders
(לְהוֹשִׁיבִי עִם־נְדִיבִֽים)

The psalmist is using **to seat him with princes** as a common expression of the culture to mean "to give him a position of honor and authority." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to cause him to rule with princes]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **to seat him with princes**
UST and causes people to honor them by making them leaders
(לְהוֹשִׁיבִי עִם־נְדִיבִֽים)

The pronoun **him** refers to the poor person mentioned in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [to seat the poor person with princes]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **with the princes of his people**
UST among those who rule his people
(עִֽם נְדִיבֵי עַמּֽוֹ)

The phrase **with the princes of his people** clarifies who the princes are from the previous phrase. You may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [that is, to seat him with the princes of his people]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **with the princes of his people**
UST among those who rule his people
(עִֽם נְדִיבֵ֖י עַמּֽוֹ)

Here, **his** could refer to: (1) Yahweh. Alternate translation: [with the princes of Yahweh's people] or (2) the poor person. Alternate translation: [with the princes of the man's people]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| princes | leaders |
| the princes | who rule |

# Psalms 113:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He causes the barren woman of the house to dwell, the joyful mother of children! Hallelu Yah!* | *He also enables women who have had no children to live in their houses as happy mothers with children. Praise Yahweh!* |

ULT **He causes the barren woman of the house to dwell, the joyful mother of children**
UST He also enables women who have had no children to live in their houses as happy mothers with children
(מְוֹשִׁיבִי ׀ עֲקֶרֶת הַבַּיִת אֵם־הַבָּנִים שְׂמֵחָה)

The implication is that God transforms a barren woman into a mother by giving her children. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [He causes a woman who is barren to become the joyful mother of children]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **He causes the barren woman of the house to dwell**
UST He also enables women who have had no children to live in their houses
(מְוֹשִׁיבִי ׀ עֲקֶרֶת הַבַּיִת)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **barren woman**. He means barren women in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [He causes barren women of their houses to dwell]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ־יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name “Yahweh,” the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the barren woman of | women who have had no children |
| the house | to live in their houses |
| joyful | happy |
| Yah | Yahweh |

# Psalms 114

## Psalm 114 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 114 is a “psalm of praise” to God for his miracles in bringing the people of Israel to the promised land. (See: miracle, wonder, sign and Promised Land)

1. God claims his people (1–2)
2. Creation’s astonished response (3–6)
3. Earth’s reverent awe (7–8)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Praise

The psalmist praises God for all the ways he helped his people in the past. This psalm references many miraculous events the Israelites experienced like the parting of the Sea of Reeds (Red Sea), the reversal of the Jordan River, bringing water from a rock, and the awe-inspiring presence of God at Mount Sinai, with creation itself responding, as the earth trembled with, God’s power as he delivered his people from Egypt and led them to the land he had promised them.

# Psalms 114:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *When Israel went out from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people speaking a foreign language,* | *When the Israelite people left Egypt, yes, when the descendants of Jacob left those people who spoke a foreign language,* |

ULT **When Israel went out from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people speaking a foreign language**
UST When the Israelite people left Egypt, yes, when the descendants of Jacob left those people who spoke a foreign language
(בְּצֵאת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם בֵּית יַעֲקֹב מֵעַם לֹעֵז)

These two phrases **When Israel went out from Egypt** and **the house of Jacob from a people speaking a foreign language** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [When Israel went out from Egypt, that is, the house of Jacob from a people speaking a foreign language]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Israel**
UST the Israelite people
(יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **Israel** represents the Israelite people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the Israelites]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the house of Jacob from a people speaking a foreign language**
UST yes, when the descendants of Jacob left those people who spoke a foreign language
(בֵּית יַעֲקֹב מֵעַם לֹעֵז)

The psalmist 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 the house of Jacob went out from a people speaking a foreign language]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **the house of Jacob**
UST yes, when the descendants of Jacob left
(בֵּ֣ית יַעֲקֹ֑ב)

Here, **the house of Jacob** represents the descendants of Jacob. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Jacob's descendants]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Israel | the Israelite people |
| from Egypt | Egypt |
| the house | yes, when the descendants |
| of Jacob | of Jacob left |
| speaking a foreign language | who spoke a foreign language |

# Psalms 114:2

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Judah became his sanctuary, Israel his realm.* | *the land of Judah became the place where people worshiped God; and the land of Israel became the area that he ruled over.* |

**ULT Judah became his sanctuary, Israel his realm**
**UST** the land of Judah became the place where people worshiped God; and the land of Israel became the area that he ruled over
(הָיְתָה יְהוּדָה לְקָדְשׁוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל מַמְשְׁלוֹתָיו)

Here, **Judah** and **Israel** could refer to: (1) the territories of Judah and Israel, since the previous verse talks about leaving the territory of Egypt, as modeled in the UST, or (2) the people of Judah and Israel. Alternate translation: [The people of Judah became those among whom Yahweh lived, the people of Israel became those over whom he ruled]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT Judah became his sanctuary, Israel his realm**
**UST** the land of Judah became the place where people worshiped God; and the land of Israel became the area that he ruled over
(הָיְתָה יְהוּדָה לְקָדְשׁוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל מַמְשְׁלוֹתָיו)

The pronoun **his** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Judah became Yahweh's sanctuary, Israel Yahweh's realm]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT Israel his realm**
**UST** and the land of Israel became the area that he ruled over
(יִשְׂרָאֵל מַמְשְׁלוֹתָיו)

The psalmist 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 Israel became his realm]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Judah | the land of Judah |
| his sanctuary | the place where people worshiped God |
| Israel | and the land of Israel became |

# Psalms 114:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The sea looked and fled; the Jordan turned backward.* | *{When they came to} the Sea {of Reeds}, {it was as though the water} saw {them} and ran away! {When they came to} the Jordan River, {the water in the river} stopped flowing {so that the Israelites could cross it}.* |

**ULT The sea looked and fled**
UST { … When they came to} the Sea {of Reeds}, it was as though the water} saw {them} and ran away
(הַיָּם רָאָה וַיָּנֹס)

The psalmist is speaking of **the sea** as if it were a living thing that could look and flee. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The sea parted as they approached]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT the Jordan turned backward**
UST When they came to} the Jordan River, the water in the river} stopped flowing {so that the Israelites could cross it … }
(הַיַּרְדֵּן יִסֹּב לְאָחוֹר)

The psalmist is speaking of **the Jordan** as if it were a living thing that could turn around and go in the opposite direction. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the water of the Jordan flowed away]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the Jordan | { … When they came to} the Jordan River, the water in the river |

# Psalms 114:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like sons of the flock.* | *{When Mount Sinai shook,} {it was as though} the mountains skipped like rams and the hills jumped like lambs.* |

**ULT The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like sons of the flock**
UST { … When Mount Sinai shook,} it was as though} the mountains skipped like rams and the hills jumped like lambs
(הֶהָרִים רָקְדוּ כְאֵילִים גְּבָעוֹת כִּבְנֵי־צֹאן)

The psalmist is speaking of **mountains** and **hills** as if they were living things that could skip and jump. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The mountains seemed to skip like rams, the hills like sons of the flock]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT the hills like sons of the flock**
UST and the hills jumped like lambs
(גְּבָעוֹת כִּבְנֵי־צֹאן)

The psalmist 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 hills skipped like sons of the flock]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT like sons of the flock**
UST like lambs
(כִּבְנֵי־צֹאן)

The psalmist is using **sons of the flock** as a common expression of the culture to mean "lambs." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [as if they were lambs]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| like rams | like rams |
| the flock | like lambs |

# Psalms 114:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *What {is} to you, sea, that you flee? Jordan, you turn backwards?* | *{If someone asks,} "What happened at the Sea {of Reeds} that made it seem to run away? What happened that caused {the water in} the Jordan {River} to stop flowing?* |

ULT **What {is} to you, sea, that you flee**
UST {If someone asks,} "What happened at the Sea {of Reeds} that made it seem to run away
(מַה־לְּךָ הַיָּם כִּי תָנוּס)

The psalmist 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: [It is amazing that the sea would flee away!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **What {is} to you, sea, that you flee**
UST {If someone asks,} "What happened at the Sea {of Reeds} that made it seem to run away
(מַה־לְּךָ הַיָּם כִּי תָנוּס)

The psalmist is speaking to the **sea** that he knows cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about God's mighty power over creation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about the sea. Alternate translation: [What happened to the sea, that it flees]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

ULT **What {is} to you**
UST {If someone asks,} "What happened at the
(מַה־לְּךָ)

The psalmist is using **What is to you** as a common expression of the culture to mean "What is the matter with you?" or "What is wrong with you?" If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [What is the matter with you] or [What is wrong with you]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Jordan, you turn backwards**
UST What happened that caused {the water in} the Jordan {River} to stop flowing
(הַיַּרְדֵּן תִּסֹּב לְאָחוֹר)

The psalmist 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: [What is to you, Jordan, that you turn backwards]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **Jordan, you turn backwards**
UST What happened that caused {the water in} the Jordan {River} to stop flowing
(הַיַּרְדֵּן תִּסֹּב לְאָחוֹר)

The psalmist 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: [It is amazing that the Jordan would turn backwards!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **Jordan, you turn backwards**
UST What happened that caused {the water in} the Jordan {River} to stop flowing
(הַיַּרְדֵּן תִּסֹּב לְאָחוֹר)

The psalmist is speaking to **Jordan** that he knows cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about God's power over creation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about the Jordan. Alternate translation: [What happened to the Jordan, that it turns backwards]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Jordan | What happened that caused {the water in} the Jordan {River} |

# Psalms 114:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Mountains, you skip like rams, hills, like sons of the flock?* | *{What happened at Mount Sinai that made the} mountains {seem to} skip like rams and made the hills {seem to} jump like lambs?"* |

**ULT Mountains, you skip like rams, hills, like sons of the flock**
**UST** { … What happened at Mount Sinai that made the} mountains {seem to} skip like rams and made the hills {seem to} jump like lambs
(הֶהָרִים תִּרְקְדוּ כְאֵילִים גְּבָעוֹת כִּבְנֵי־צֹאן)

See how you translated these similar phrases in verse 4.

**ULT Mountains, you skip like rams**
**UST** {What happened at Mount Sinai that made the} mountains {seem to} skip like rams
(הֶהָרִים תִּרְקְדוּ כְאֵילִים)

The psalmist 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 of the previous verse if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [What is to you, mountains, that you skip like rams]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT Mountains, you skip like rams**
**UST** {What happened at Mount Sinai that made the} mountains {seem to} skip like rams
(הֶהָרִים תִּרְקְדוּ כְאֵילִים)

The psalmist 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: [It is amazing that the mountains would skip like rams!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT Mountains, you skip like rams**
**UST** {What happened at Mount Sinai that made the} mountains {seem to} skip like rams
(הֶהָרִים תִּרְקְדוּ כְאֵילִים)

The psalmist is speaking of **Mountains** as if they were living things that could **skip**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Why did the mountains seem to skip like rams]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **Mountains, you skip like rams**
UST {What happened at Mount Sinai that made the} mountains {seem to} skip like rams
(הֶהָרִים תִּרְקְדוּ כְאֵילִים)

The psalmist is speaking to **Mountains** that he knows cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about God's power displayed in creation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about the mountains. Alternate translation: [What happened to the mountains, that they skip like rams]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

ULT **hills, like sons of the flock**
UST and made the hills {seem to} jump like lambs
(גְּבָעוֹת כִּבְנֵי־צֹאן)

The psalmist 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 of the previous verse if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [what is to you, hills, that you skip like sons of the flock]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **hills, like sons of the flock**
UST and made the hills {seem to} jump like lambs
(גְּבָעוֹת כִּבְנֵי־צֹאן)

The psalmist 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: [it is amazing that the hills would skip like sons of the flock!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **hills, like sons of the flock**
UST and made the hills {seem to} jump like lambs
(גְּבָעוֹת כִּבְנֵי־צֹאן)

The psalmist is speaking of **hills** as if they were living things that could skip. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [why did the hills seem to skip like sons of the flock]

**Support Reference:** Personification

> ULT **hills, like sons of the flock**
> UST and made the hills {seem to} jump like lambs
> (גְּבָעוֹת כִּבְנֵי־צֹאן)

The psalmist is speaking to **hills** that he knows cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about God's power displayed in creation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about the hills. Alternate translation: [what happened to the hills, that they skip like sons of the flock]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

> ULT **like sons of the flock**
> UST like lambs
> (כִּבְנֵי־צֹאן)

The psalmist is using **sons of the flock** as a common expression of the culture to mean "lambs." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [as if they were lambs]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| like rams | like rams |
| the flock | like lambs |

# Psalms 114:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Tremble, earth, from to the face of the Lord, from to the face of the God of Jacob,* | *{I would reply,} "The earth trembles because the Lord is there! Everyone should tremble because of the presence of the God whom Jacob worshiped!"* |

ULT **Tremble, earth, from to the face of the Lord, from to the face of the God of Jacob**
UST { … I would reply,} "The earth trembles because the Lord is there! Everyone should tremble because of the presence of the God whom Jacob worshiped
(מִלִּפְנֵי אָדוֹן חוּלִי אָרֶץ מִלִּפְנֵי אֱלוֹהַּ יַעֲקֹב)

The psalmist has asked in the previous verse why the mountains and hills moved, so this verse provides the answer: it is because of the presence of the Lord. But this verse also is an exhortation to the people who live on the earth to tremble with respect before the powerful God of Jacob. So **earth** here probably refers both to the physical earth and to the people who live on it. You may want to use the parallel structure to bring out both meanings. Alternate translation: [Tremble, earth, from to the face of the Lord, you people of earth, from to the face of the God of Jacob]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Tremble, earth, from to the face of the Lord, from to the face of the God of Jacob**
UST { … I would reply,} "The earth trembles because the Lord is there! Everyone should tremble because of the presence of the God whom Jacob worshiped
(מִלִּפְנֵי אָדוֹן חוּלִי אָרֶץ מִלִּפְנֵי אֱלוֹהַּ יַעֲקֹב)

These two phrases **from to the face of the Lord** and **from to the face of the God of Jacob** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation as modeled in the UST. If, however, it would be more clear in your language, you could combine the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Tremble, earth, from to the face of the Lord, the mighty God of Jacob]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Tremble, earth**
UST The earth trembles
(חוּלִי אָרֶץ)

The psalmist is speaking to the **earth** that he knows cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about God's awesome power and presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about the earth. Alternate translation: [The earth must tremble]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

ULT **from to the face of the Lord**
UST I would reply … because the Lord is there
(מִלִּפְנֵי אָדוֹן)

The psalmist is using **from to the face of** as a common expression of the culture to mean "because of the presence of" or "on account of the presence of." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [because of the presence of the Lord] or [on account of the Lord's presence]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **from to the face of the God of Jacob**
UST Everyone should tremble because of the presence of the God whom Jacob worshiped
(מִלִּפְנֵי אֱלוֹהַּ יַעֲקֹב)

The psalmist 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: [tremble, earth, from to the face of the God of Jacob]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Tremble | trembles |
| earth | The earth |
| the Lord | the Lord |
| the God of | the God |
| Jacob | whom Jacob worshiped |

# Psalms 114:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the one turning the rock into a pool of water, flint into a spring of water!* | *He is the one who caused pools of water to flow from a rock {for the Israelite people to drink}; indeed, he caused a spring to flow from a solid rock!* |

ULT **the one turning the rock into a pool of water, flint into a spring of water**
UST He is the one who caused pools of water to flow from a rock {for the Israelite people to drink}; indeed, he caused a spring to flow from a solid rock
(הַהֹפְכִי הַצּוּר אֲגַם־מָיִם חַלָּמִישׁ לְמַעְיְנוֹ־מָיִם)

These two phrases **turning the rock into a pool of water** and **flint into a spring of water** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [the one turning the rock into a pool of water, even flint into a spring of water]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the one turning the rock into a pool of water, flint into a spring of water**
UST He is the one who caused pools of water to flow from a rock {for the Israelite people to drink}; indeed, he caused a spring to flow from a solid rock
(הַהֹפְכִי הַצּוּר אֲגַם־מָיִם חַלָּמִישׁ לְמַעְיְנוֹ־מָיִם)

Here the psalmist is speaking as though God turned **rock** into **water**. He means that God miraculously made water come out from solid rock for the Israelites in the wilderness. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one making a pool of water come out of the rock, a spring of water come out of flint]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **flint into a spring of water**
UST indeed, he caused a spring to flow from a solid rock
(חַלָּמִישׁ לְמַעְיְנוֹ־מָיִם)

The psalmist 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 one turning flint into a spring of water]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| into a spring | indeed, he caused a spring to flow |

# Psalms 115

## Psalm 115 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 115 is a “psalm of praise.”

1. Glory belongs to Yahweh alone (1–3)
2. Futility of idols (4–8)
3. Call for God’s people to trust Yahweh (9–11)
4. Yahweh’s Faithfulness and Blessing (12–15)
5. Life, praise, and hope in the living God (16–18)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh’s power

Yahweh is in heaven and is able to do whatever he wants. Idols can not do anything. Therefore, people and priests should trust Yahweh for their protection.

# Psalms 115:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Not to us, Yahweh, not to us, but to your name give honor, upon your covenant faithfulness, upon your trustworthiness.* | *Yahweh, {we ask} not so people will honor us, no, not that at all; rather, we want people to honor you alone because of seeing how you faithfully love us and by seeing you do what you have promised to do.* |

ULT **Not to us, Yahweh, not to us**
UST Yahweh, {we ask} not so people will honor us, no, not that at all
(לֹ֤א לָ֙נוּ יְהוָ֔ה לֹ֥א לָ֖נוּ)

The psalmist is using the repetition for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [Not at all to us, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **but to your name give honor**
UST rather, we want people to honor you alone
(כִּֽי־לְשִׁמְךָ֥ תֵ֗ן כָּב֫וֹד)

The phrase **but to your name give honor** is an imperative, but rather than commanding, it is expressing a desire that something happen or that someone do something. If the imperative does not communicate this for your readers, then use a form in your language to indicate the speaker is expressing what he wants someone to do or what he wishes someone would do. Alternate translation: [but people should instead honor your name]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **but to your name give honor**
UST rather, we want people to honor you alone
(כִּֽי־לְשִׁמְךָ֥ תֵ֗ן כָּב֫וֹד)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **honor**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [but let people honor your name]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **but to your name give honor**
UST rather, we want people to honor you alone
(כִּי־לְשִׁמְךָ תֵּן כָּבוֹד)

The psalmist is using the term **name** to represent who God is or to refer to God's reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but let people honor you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **upon your covenant faithfulness, upon your trustworthiness**
UST because of seeing how you faithfully love us and by seeing you do what you have promised to do
(עַל־חַסְדְּךָ עַל־אֲמִתֶּךָ)

The word translated as **upon** could mean: (1) the psalmist wants Yahweh to be honored for demonstrating his covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness, as in the UST, or (2) Yahweh deserves honor because of his covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness. Alternate translation: [because of your covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness]

ULT **upon your covenant faithfulness, upon your trustworthiness**
UST because of seeing how you faithfully love us and by seeing you do what you have promised to do
(עַל־חַסְדְּךָ עַל־אֲמִתֶּךָ)

If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [by seeing your covenant faithfulness and by seeing your trustworthiness]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **upon your covenant faithfulness, upon your trustworthiness**
UST because of seeing how you faithfully love us and by seeing you do what you have promised to do
(עַל־חַסְדְּךָ עַל־אֲמִתֶּךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant faithfulness** and **trustworthiness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [because they see that you are faithful to your covenant and that you are trustworthy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| honor | to honor |
| your covenant faithfulness | how you faithfully love us |
| your trustworthiness | you do what you have promised to do |

# Psalms 115:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Why should the nations say, “Where, then, {is} their God?”* | *It is not right that other people groups should say {about us}, “We do not see their God doing anything {to help them}.”* |

**ULT Why should the nations say**
**UST** It is not right that other people groups should say {about us}
(לָמָּה יֹאמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם)

The psalmist 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: [The nations should not say]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT Where, then, {is} their God**
**UST** We do not see their God doing anything {to help them}
(אַיֵּה־נָּא אֱלֹהֵיהֶם)

The psalmist 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: [Their God is doing nothing.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the nations | other people groups |
| their God | their God |

# Psalms 115:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And our God {is} in heaven; everything that he desires, he does.* | *Well, the God whom we worship lives in heaven; he does whatever he wants!* |

**ULT And our God {is} in heaven**
UST Well, the God whom we worship lives in heaven
(וֵאלֹהֵינוּ בַּשָּׁמָיִם)

Here the word **And** is not introducing something additional, but an explanation. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [To that I say, our God is in heaven]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And our God | Well, the God whom we worship |
| {is} in heaven | lives in heaven |

# Psalms 115:4

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Their idols {are} silver and gold, the work of the hands of man.* | *But the idols of those people groups are only silver and gold {statues}; humans made them.* |

**ULT Their idols**
**UST** But the idols of those people groups are only … statues
(עֲצַבֵּיהֶם)

The pronoun **Their** refers to the nations mentioned in verse 2. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The idols of the nations]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT the work of the hands of man**
**UST** humans made them
(מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי אָדָם)

Here, **hands of man** represents the craftsmanship and ability of people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [the work of men] or [made by men]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Their idols | But the idols of those people groups are only … statues |
| {are} silver | silver |
| and gold | and gold |

# Psalms 115:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A mouth {is} to them, but they do not speak; eyes {are} to them, but they do not see;* | *Their idols have mouths, but they cannot say anything; they have eyes, but they cannot see anything.* |

ULT **A mouth {is} to them**
UST Their idols have mouths
(פֶּה־לָהֶם)

The pronoun **them** refers to the idols mentioned in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [A mouth is to those idols]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **A mouth {is} to them**
UST Their idols have mouths
(פֶּה־לָהֶם)

The psalmist is using **A mouth is to them** as a common expression of the culture to mean "They have mouths." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They have mouths]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **eyes {are} to them**
UST they have eyes
(עֵינַיִם לָהֶם)

The psalmist is using **eyes are to them** as a common expression of the culture to mean "they have eyes." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those idols have eyes]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

# Psalms 115:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *ears {are} to them, but they do not hear; a nose {is} to them, but they do not smell.* | *They have ears, but they cannot hear anything; they have noses, but they cannot smell anything.* |

**ULT ears {are} to them**
**UST** They have ears
(אָזְנַיִם לָהֶם)

The psalmist is using **ears are to them** as a common expression of the culture to mean "they have ears." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those idols have ears]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT a nose {is} to them**
**UST** they have noses
(אַף לָהֶם)

The psalmist is using **a nose is to them** as a common expression of the culture to mean "they have a nose." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they have a nose]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

# Psalms 115:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Their hands, but they do not feel; their feet, but they cannot walk; they do not murmur in their throats.* | *They have hands, but they cannot feel anything; they have feet, but they cannot walk; they cannot even make any sounds in their throats!* |

ULT **Their hands**
UST They have hands
(יְדֵיהֶם)

The psalmist 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 idols have their hands]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **their feet**
UST they have feet
(רַגְלֵיהֶם)

The psalmist 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: [they have their feet]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

# Psalms 115:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Their makers are like them— everyone who is trusting in them.* | *The people who make those idols are {as powerless} as those idols, Everyone who trusts in those idols {to do anything} is also {powerless}!* |

**ULT Their makers**
**UST** The people who make those idols
(עֹשֵׂיהֶם)

The pronoun **Their** refers to the idols mentioned in verse 4. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The makers of those idols]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT are like them**
**UST** are {as powerless} as those idols
(כָּמוֹהֶם יִהְיוּ)

By **are like them**, the psalmist means that the people who make idols become as powerless and lifeless as the idols they create. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [are like them, lacking life and power]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT everyone who is trusting in them**
**UST** Everyone who trusts in those idols {to do anything} is also {powerless}
(כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־בֹּטֵחַ בָּהֶם)

The psalmist 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: [everyone who trusts in them is like them]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Their makers | The people who make those idols |
| is trusting | trusts … to do anything |

# Psalms 115:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Israel, trust in Yahweh; he {is} their help and their shield.* | *You, my fellow Israelite people, trust in Yahweh! He is the one who helps you and protects you like a shield.* |

**ULT Israel**
**UST** You, my fellow Israelite people
(יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **Israel** represents the Israelite people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Israelite people]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT their help and their shield**
**UST** the one who helps you and protects you like a shield
(עֶזְרָם וּמָגִנָּם)

The psalmist switches here from the second person exhortation **trust in Yahweh** to the third person **their help and their shield**. It is probable that when this psalm was sung, a leader would sing the second person exhortation parts and a chorus would sing the third-person parts of verses 9–11. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the third person parts as second person. Alternate translation: [your help and your shield]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

**ULT their help**
**UST** the one who helps you
(עֶזְרָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **help**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the one who helps them] or [the one who helps you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and their shield**
UST and protects you like a shield
(וּמָגִנָּם)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **shield** that protects people in battle. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the one who protects them] or [and the one who protects you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Israel | You, my fellow Israelite people |
| trust | trust |
| in Yahweh | in Yahweh |
| and their shield | and protects you like a shield |

# Psalms 115:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *House of Aaron, trust in Yahweh; he {is} their help and their shield.* | *You {priests, the} descendants of Aaron, trust in Yahweh! He is the one who helps you and protects you like a shield.* |

**ULT House of Aaron**
**UST** You {priests, the} descendants of Aaron
(בֵּית אַהֲרֹן)

Here, **House** means all the people descended from a particular person. This image envisions them as if they were one household living together. So **House of Aaron** figuratively means all the people descended from Aaron, the first high priest. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Descendants of Aaron]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT their help and their shield**
**UST** the one who helps you and protects you like a shield
(עֶזְרָם וּמָגִנָּם)

The psalmist switches here from the second person exhortation **trust in Yahweh** to the third person **their help and their shield**. It is probable that when this psalm was sung, a leader would sing the second person exhortation parts and a chorus would sing the third-person parts of verses 9–11. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the third person parts as second person. Alternate translation: [your help and your shield]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

**ULT their help**
**UST** the one who helps you
(עֶזְרָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **help**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the one who helps them] or [the one who helps you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and their shield**
UST and protects you like a shield
(וּמָגִנָּם)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **shield** that protects people from attack. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [and the one who protects them] or [and the one who protects you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| House | You {priests, the} descendants of |
| of Aaron | Aaron |
| trust | trust |
| in Yahweh | in Yahweh |
| and their shield | and protects you like a shield |

# Psalms 115:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Fearers of Yahweh, trust in Yahweh; he {is} their help and their shield.* | *All you who deeply respect Yahweh, trust in Yahweh! He is the one who helps you and protects you like a shield.* |

ULT **their help and their shield**
UST the one who helps you and protects you like a shield
(עֶזְרָם וּמָגִנָּם)

The psalmist switches here from the second person exhortation **trust in Yahweh** to the third person **their help and their shield**. It is probable that when this psalm was sung, a leader would sing the second person exhortation parts and a chorus would sing the third-person parts of verses 9–11. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the third person parts as second person. Alternate translation: [your help and your shield]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

ULT **their help**
UST the one who helps you
(עֶזְרָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **help**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the one who helps them] or [the one who helps you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and their shield**
UST and protects you like a shield
(וּמָגִנָּם)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **shield** that protects people in battle. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [and the one who protects them] or [and the one who protects you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Fearers of | All you who deeply respect |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| trust | trust |
| in Yahweh | in Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and their shield | and protects you like a shield |

# Psalms 115:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh remembers us; he will bless; he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron.* | *Yahweh has not forgotten us; he will bless {us}. he will bless us Israelite people! He will bless the priests!* |

**ULT Yahweh remembers us**
**UST** Yahweh has not forgotten us
(יְהוָה זְכָרָנוּ)

The psalmist is using **Yahweh remembers us** as a common expression of the culture to mean "Yahweh thinks about us" or "Yahweh is mindful of us." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh thinks about us]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT he will bless**
**UST** he will bless {us}
(יְבָרֵךְ)

The psalmist 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 as is modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT the house of Israel**
**UST** us Israelite people
(אֶת־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **house** means all the people descended from a particular person. It envisions them as if they were one household living together. So **the house of Israel** figuratively means all the people descended from the patriarch Jacob, who was also known as Israel. Alternate translation: [the descendants of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the house of Aaron**
UST the priests
(אֶת־בֵּ֣ית אַהֲרֹ֑ן)

Here, **house** means all the people descended from a particular person. It envisions them as if they were one household living together. So **the house of Aaron** figuratively means all the people descended from Aaron, the first high priest. Alternate translation: [the descendants of Aaron]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| he will bless | he will bless {us} |
| the house of Israel | us Israelite people |
| the house of | us Israelite people |
| Aaron | the priests |

# Psalms 115:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He will bless those fearing Yahweh, the small with the great.* | *Yahweh will bless all those who deeply respect him— those who are less important as well as the important people, that is, each one!* |

ULT **those fearing**
UST all those who deeply respect
(יִרְאֵי)

The psalmist is using the adjective **fearing** 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: [the people who fear]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the small with the great**
UST those who are less important as well as the important people, that is, each one
(הַקְּטַנִּים עִם־הַגְּדֹלִים)

The psalmist 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 adjectives with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [the small people as well as with the great people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the small with the great**
UST those who are less important as well as the important people, that is, each one
(הַקְּטַנִּים עִם־הַגְּדֹלִים)

The psalmist is speaking of insignificant people and prominent people as if they were physically **small** and **great**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the insignificant people along with the prominent people]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the small with the great**
UST those who are less important as well as the important people, that is, each one
(הַקְּטַנִּים עִם־הַגְּדֹלִים)

The psalmist is referring to all people by naming two extremes, **the small** and **the great**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from the insignificant ones to the important ones]

**Support Reference:** Merism

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| He will bless | Yahweh will bless |
| those fearing | all those who deeply respect |
| Yahweh | him |

# Psalms 115:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May Yahweh add to you, to you and to your sons.* | *I pray that Yahweh may give {many children} {both} to you, {my fellow Israelite people,} and to your children {after you}.* |

ULT **May Yahweh add to you**
UST I pray that Yahweh may give {many children} both} to you, {my fellow Israelite people … }
(יֹסֵף יְהוָה עֲלֵיכֶם)

The psalmist assumes that readers will know what Yahweh should **add to you**. The context of blessing families suggests that this refers to adding children or descendants. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [May Yahweh add children to your families]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **May Yahweh add to you**
UST I pray that Yahweh may give {many children} both} to you, {my fellow Israelite people … }
(יֹסֵף יְהוָה עֲלֵיכֶם)

The word **you** is plural here because the psalmist is addressing the Israelites, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. Alternate translation: [May Yahweh add to all of you]

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

ULT **to you, to you**
UST both} to you, {my fellow Israelite people … }
(עֲלֵיכֶם עֲלֵיכֶֽם)

The psalmist repeats **to you** for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [to you, yes, to you]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **and to your sons**
UST and to your children {after you}
(וְעַל־בְּנֵיכֶם)

The psalmist is speaking as if future generations were actually **sons**. He means descendants in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and to your descendants]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May … add | I pray that … may give {many children} |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 115:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May you be blessed by Yahweh, the maker of heaven and earth.* | *I pray that Yahweh, the one who made heaven and the earth, may bless all of you!* |

> ULT **May you be blessed by Yahweh**
> UST I pray that Yahweh … may bless all of you
> (בְּרוּכִ֥ים אַתֶּ֗ם לַיהוָ֑ה)

The expression **May you be blessed by Yahweh** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [May Yahweh bless you]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

> ULT **May you be blessed by Yahweh**
> UST I pray that Yahweh … may bless all of you
> (בְּרוּכִ֥ים אַתֶּ֗ם לַיהוָ֑ה)

The word **you** is plural here because the psalmist is addressing all the people of Israel, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. Alternate translation: [May all of you be blessed by Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May … be blessed | I pray that … may bless |
| by Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the maker of | the one who made |
| heaven | heaven |
| and earth | and the earth |

# Psalms 115:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The heavens of heavens {are} to Yahweh; but the earth he has given to the sons of man.* | *The highest heavens belong to Yahweh, but he gave everything that is on the earth to humankind.* |

**ULT The heavens of heavens**
**UST** The highest heavens
(הַשָּׁמַיִם שָׁמַיִם)

The psalmist is using **The heavens of heavens** as a common expression of the culture to mean "the highest heavens" or "the most exalted heavens." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The most heavenly heavens]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT {are} to Yahweh**
**UST** belong to Yahweh
(לַיהוָה)

The psalmist is using **are to Yahweh** as a common expression of the culture to mean "belong to Yahweh." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [are Yahweh's]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT to the sons of man**
**UST** to humankind
(לִבְנֵי־אָדָם)

The psalmist is using **sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "human beings." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to human beings]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The heavens of | The highest |
| heavens | heavens |
| {are} to Yahweh | belong to Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| but the earth | but … everything that is on the earth |

# Psalms 115:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The dead do not praise Yah, and not any descending {to} silence;* | *People who are dead are not able to praise Yahweh; when they go to the place where dead people are, they become silent and cannot praise him.* |

ULT **The dead**
UST People who are dead
(הַמֵּתִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **dead** 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: [Dead people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

The word **Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh" as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **descending {to} silence**
UST when they go to the place where dead people are, they become silent
(יֹרְדֵי דוּמָה)

Here the psalmist is speaking of death as if it were **descending to silence**. This image portrays death as going down to a place where there is no speech or praise. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [going to the grave, where they are silent]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and not any descending {to} silence**
UST when they go to the place where dead people are, they become silent and cannot praise him
(וְלֹא כָל־יֹרְדֵי דוּמָה)

The psalmist 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 not any people descending to silence praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| do … praise | are … able to praise |
| Yah | Yahweh |
| descending | when they go to the place where dead people are |

# Psalms 115:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *But we, we will bless Yah from now and to forever! Hallelu Yah!* | *But we who are alive will praise Yahweh, both now and forevermore. Praise Yahweh!* |

ULT **But we, we will bless**
UST But we who are alive will praise
(וַאֲנַחְנוּ ׀ נְבָרֵךְ)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **we** separately, even though the verb translated as **we will bless** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize the contrast between the living and the dead. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing that meaning here. Alternate translation: [But as for us, we will bless]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **we will bless Yah**
UST will praise Yahweh
(נְבָרֵךְ יָהּ)

The word **Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh." Alternate translation: [we will bless Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ־יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| we will bless | will praise |
| Yah | Yahweh |
| forever | forevermore |

# Psalms 116

## Psalm 116 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 116 is a “psalm of praise” for saving the psalmist’s life. (See: save, saved, safe, salvation, rescue)

1. Declaration of love and prayer (1–2)
2. Recounting deliverance and finding rest (3–9)
3. Vows, sacrifice, and public praise (10–19)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Healing

The psalmist was very sick and expected to die but God healed him. So he will pay his vow and sacrifice an offering of thanks. (See: promise, promised)

# Psalms 116:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I love {him} because Yahweh hears my voice, my pleas,* | *I love Yahweh because he hears me when I cry out for him to help me.* |

**ULT Yahweh hears my voice**
UST Yahweh … he hears me when I cry out for him
(יִשְׁמַע ׀ יְהוָה אֶת־קוֹלִי)

Here, **my voice** represents the psalmist's prayers and requests. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh hears me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT my pleas**
UST to help me
(תַּחֲנוּנָי)

The psalmist 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: [because Yahweh hears my pleas]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I love {him} | I love |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my pleas | to help me |

# Psalms 116:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *because he extends his ear to me; and throughout my days I will call out.* | *I love him because he listens to me, so I will call out to him all during my life.* |

ULT **he extends his ear to me**
UST he listens to me
(הִטָּה אָזְנוֹ לִי)

The psalmist is using **he extends his ear to me** as a common expression of the culture to mean "he listens to me" or "he pays attention to what I say." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he pays attention to what I say]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **and throughout my days**
UST all during my life
(וּבְיָמַי)

The psalmist is using the term **days** to refer to his lifetime. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and throughout my lifetime]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **I will call out**
UST so I will call out to him
(אֶקְרָא)

The psalmist assumes that readers will understand that **I will call out** means he will call out to Yahweh. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I will call out to Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will call out | so I will call out to him |

# Psalms 116:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The cords of death surrounded me, and the constrictions of Sheol found me; I found anguish and sorrow.* | *Everything around me caused me to think that I was about to die; it seemed to me that I was already dying. I was distressed and very sad.* |

ULT **The cords of death surrounded me, and the constrictions of Sheol found me**
UST Everything around me caused me to think that I was about to die; it seemed to me that I was already dying
(אֲפָפ֥וּנִי ׀ חֶבְלֵי־מָ֗וֶת וּמְצָרֵ֥י שְׁא֗וֹל מְצָא֥וּנִי)

These two phrases **The cords of death surrounded me** and **the constrictions of Sheol found me** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [The cords of death surrounded me, indeed, the constrictions of Sheol found me]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **The cords of death surrounded me**
UST Everything around me caused me to think that I was about to die
(אֲפָפ֥וּנִי ׀ חֶבְלֵי־מָ֗וֶת)

Here the psalmist is picturing death as if it were **cords** that could wrap around and bind someone. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [It seemed that I would die soon]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the constrictions of Sheol found me**
UST it seemed to me that I was already dying
(וּמְצָרֵ֥י שְׁא֗וֹל מְצָא֥וּנִי)

Here David is speaking of **the constrictions of Sheol** as if they were ropes or chains that could physically grip and restrain him. He means that he felt as though he was very close to dying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I felt as though I were dying]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **I found anguish and sorrow**
UST I was distressed and very sad
(צָרָה וְיָגוֹן אֶמְצָא)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **anguish** and **sorrow**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [I was anguished and sorrowful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| of Sheol | I was already dying |
| anguish | distressed |
| and sorrow | and very sad |

# Psalms 116:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then I called on the name of Yahweh:*<br>*“Please Yahweh, rescue my life.”* | *But then I called out to Yahweh. I said,*<br>*“Yahweh, I plead with you to save me!”* |

**ULT Then I called on the name of Yahweh**
**UST** But then I called out to Yahweh
(וּבְשֵׁם־יְהוָה אֶקְרָא)

The psalmist is using the term **name** to refer to Yahweh himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Then I called on Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT rescue my life**
**UST** to save me
(מַלְּטָה נַפְשִׁי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates a polite request. Alternate translation: [I beg you to rescue my life]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT rescue my life**
**UST** to save me
(מַלְּטָה נַפְשִׁי)

Here, **life** represents the person himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [rescue me] or [keep me from dying]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I called | I called out to |
| Yahweh | But then … Yahweh |
| Please | I said … I plead with you |
| rescue | to save |

# Psalms 116:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh {is} merciful and righteous, and our God {is} compassionate.* | *Yahweh is kind and does what is right. He is the God whom we worship, and he loves us.* |

**ULT and our God {is} compassionate**
**UST** He is the God whom we worship, and he loves us
(וֵאלֹהֵינוּ מְרַחֵם)

Here **and** introduces not an addition but an explanation. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, our God, is also compassionate]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} merciful | is kind |
| and righteous | and does what is right |
| and our God | He is the God whom we worship |
| {is} compassionate | and he loves us |

# Psalms 116:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh guards the naive; I was low, and he saved me.* | *Yahweh protects those who are helpless; when I was experiencing bad things, he saved me.* |

**ULT the naive**
**UST** those who are helpless
(פְּתָאיִם)

The psalmist is using the adjective **naive** as a noun to refer to people who are inexperienced or who cannot care for themselves. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [those who cannot care for themselves]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT I was low**
**UST** when I was experiencing bad things … me
(דַּלּוֹתִי וְלִי)

Here the psalmist is speaking of his difficult circumstances as if he were physically **low**. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I was in a bad way] or [I was in trouble]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| guards | protects |
| and he saved me | he saved |

# Psalms 116:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Return to your rest, my soul, for Yahweh has repaid you.* | *I encourage myself to relax once again because Yahweh has restored me.* |

**ULT** **Return to your rest, my soul, for Yahweh has repaid you**
**UST** I encourage myself to relax once again because Yahweh has restored me
(שׁוּבִי נַפְשִׁי לִמְנוּחָיְכִי כִּי־יְהוָה גָּמַל עָלָיְכִי)

The psalmist is speaking to himself in the second person as **your** and **you**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in first person as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

**ULT** **Return to your rest, my soul**
**UST** I encourage myself to relax once again
(שׁוּבִי נַפְשִׁי לִמְנוּחָיְכִי)

The psalmist is using the term **soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual/emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I must return myself to calmness]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT** **Return to your rest**
**UST** to relax once again
(שׁוּבִי & לִמְנוּחָיְכִי)

By **rest**, the psalmist means “a state of restfulness.” You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Return to your state of restfulness]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT** **for Yahweh has repaid you**
**UST** because Yahweh has restored me
(כִּי־יְהוָה גָּמַל עָלָיְכִי)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh’s good deeds as if they were **repaid** like a debt or wages. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for Yahweh has done good things for you] or [for Yahweh has done good things for me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Return | once again |
| my soul | I encourage myself |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 116:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you rescued my soul from death, my eye from weeping, my foot from stumbling.* | *Indeed, Yahweh has saved me from dying, he has delivered me from being sorrowful, and he has kept me from making bad mistakes.* |

ULT **For**
UST Indeed
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation. You may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [After all,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **For you rescued my soul from death**
UST Indeed, Yahweh has saved me from dying
(כִּי חִלַּצְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִמָּוֶת)

Here, **my soul** represents the psalmist himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [For you rescued me from death]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **For you rescued my soul from death**
UST Indeed, Yahweh has saved me from dying
(כִּי חִלַּצְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִמָּוֶת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **death**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [For you rescued my soul from dying]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **my eye from weeping**
UST he has delivered me from being sorrowful
(אֶת־עֵינִי מִן־דִּמְעָה)

The psalmist is using one part of a person, 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: [me from weeping]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **my foot from stumbling**
UST and he has kept me from making bad mistakes
(אֶת־רַגְלִי מִדֶּחִי)

The psalmist is using one part of a person, his **foot**, to mean all of him in the act of stumbling or falling. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [me from stumbling]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| you rescued | Yahweh has saved |
| my soul | me |
| weeping | being sorrowful |
| from stumbling | from making bad mistakes |

# Psalms 116:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will walk to the face of Yahweh in the lands of the living.* | *So while I am still alive, I will live as Yahweh directs me.* |

ULT **I will walk to the face of Yahweh**
UST I will live as Yahweh directs me
(אֶתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if he were literally walking **to the face of Yahweh**. He means that he will live in a way that acknowledges Yahweh in all that he does. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will acknowledge Yahweh in all that I do]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **to the face of Yahweh**
UST as Yahweh directs me
(לִפְנֵי יְהוָה)

The psalmist is using **to the face of** as a common expression of the culture to mean "in the presence of" or "before." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [before Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **in the lands of the living**
UST So while I am still alive
(בְּאַרְצוֹת הַחַיִּים)

The psalmist is using **in the lands of the living** as a common expression of the culture to mean "as long as I am alive" or "during my lifetime." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [as long as I live]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | as Yahweh directs me |
| in the lands of | So while I am |

# Psalms 116:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I trusted, though I spoke, "I, I am very wretched."* | *I continued to trust {in Yahweh}, even when I said, "As for me, I am greatly suffering."* |

**ULT I trusted**
**UST** I continued to trust {in Yahweh}
(הֶאֱמַנְתִּי)

The psalmist 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 trusted Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT though I spoke**
**UST** even when I said
(כִּי אֲדַבֵּר)

The implication is that the psalmist was speaking to himself or to God about his distress. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [though I said to myself]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT I, I am very wretched**
**UST** As for me, I am greatly suffering
(אֲנִי עָנִיתִי מְאֹד)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **I** twice, even though it is not necessary for understanding. He is doing that to emphasize his personal distress and suffering. If a speaker of your language would use repeated pronouns for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing that meaning here. Alternate translation: [woe is me; I am very wretched]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I trusted | I continued to trust {in Yahweh} |

# Psalms 116:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I, I said in my panic, "All mankind lies."* | *For my part, I was so distressed that I thought, "I cannot trust anyone."* |

ULT **I, I said**
UST For my part … that I thought
(אֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי)

The pronoun **I** is stated twice for emphasis. The psalmist is emphasizing that he himself was the one who made this statement. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the emphasis here. Alternate translation: [As for me, I said]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **I, I said**
UST For my part … that I thought
(אֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי)

By **I, I said**, the psalmist means that he said this to himself or thought this to himself. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I, I said to myself]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **in my panic**
UST I was so distressed
(בְּחָפְזִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **panic**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [because I was panicking]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in my panic | I was so distressed |
| lies | I cannot trust |

# Psalms 116:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *How can I return to Yahweh all of his bestowments to me?* | *I can never repay Yahweh for all the good things that he has done for me.* |

**ULT How can I return to Yahweh all of his bestowments to me**
**UST** I can never repay Yahweh for all the good things that he has done for me
(מָֽה־אָשִׁ֥יב לַיהוָ֗ה כָּל־תַּגְמוּלוֹהִ֥י עָלָֽי)

The psalmist 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: [It is not possible for me to return to Yahweh all of his bestowments to me.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT How can I return to Yahweh**
**UST** I can never repay Yahweh
(מָֽה־אָשִׁ֥יב לַיהוָ֗ה)

The implication is that the psalmist cannot fully repay Yahweh for all his goodness. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [How can I pay back to Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT all of his bestowments to me**
**UST** for all the good things that he has done for me
(כָּל־תַּגְמוּלוֹהִ֥י עָלָֽי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **bestowments**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [everything that he has done to be kind to me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| can I return<br>to Yahweh | I can never repay<br>Yahweh |

# Psalms 116:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will raise the cup of salvation, and call on the name of Yahweh.* | *{But I can do this:} I will present a cup {of wine as a thank offering} as I call out to thank him for saving me.* |

**ULT I will raise the cup of salvation**
**UST** But I can do this:} I will present a cup {of wine as a thank offering} … to thank … for saving me
(כּוֹס־יְשׁוּעוֹת אֶשָּׂא)

This is probably a reference to a drink offering, which was a sacrifice that involved pouring wine on the altar, and which the psalmist will offer as a grateful response to Yahweh for saving him. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: [I will present a drink offering to Yahweh because he saved me]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT and call on the name of Yahweh**
**UST** as I call out … him
(וּבְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא)

The psalmist is using the term **name** to refer to Yahweh himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and call on Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of salvation | to thank … for saving me |
| and call on | as I call out |
| of Yahweh | him |

# Psalms 116:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will fulfill my vows to Yahweh right in front of all of his people.* | *Also, as the people who belong to Yahweh watch, I will give to him the offerings that I solemnly promised to give to him.* |

**ULT his people**
**UST** the people who belong to Yahweh
(עַמּוֹ)

The implication is that these are people who have gathered to worship Yahweh. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the people who have gathered to worship him]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will fulfill | I will give |
| my vows | the offerings that I solemnly promised to give to him |
| to Yahweh | to him |

# Psalms 116:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Precious in the eyes of Yahweh {is} the death of his faithful.* | *Yahweh is very grieved when one of his people dies.* |

ULT **{ … Precious in the eyes of Yahweh is} the death of his faithful**
UST Yahweh is very grieved when one of his people dies
(יָקָר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה הַמָּוְתָה לַחֲסִידָיו)

The word **Precious** here does not imply that Yahweh desires the death of his faithful ones, but that the death of his saints is costly to him and grieves him. See how you translated a similar expression in Psalm 72:14. Alternate translation: [Yahweh considers the death of his faithful ones to be a costly thing]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **{ … Precious in the eyes of Yahweh is} the death of his faithful**
UST Yahweh is very grieved when one of his people dies
(יָקָר בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה הַמָּוְתָה לַחֲסִידָיו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **death**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [When one of his faithful people dies, that grieves Yahweh very much]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in the eyes of Yahweh**
UST Yahweh is very grieved
(בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה)

The psalmist is using **in the eyes of** as a common expression of the culture to mean “in the judgment of” or “in the opinion of.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in Yahweh’s judgment]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **{is} the death of his faithful**
UST when one of his people dies
(הַמָּוְתָה לַחֲסִידָיו)

The psalmist is using the adjective **faithful** 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: [is the death of any of his faithful people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| of his faithful | when one of his people |

# Psalms 116:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Indeed, Yahweh, for I {am} your servant; I {am} your servant, the son of your servant woman; you have undone my bonds.* | *Certainly I am one of Yahweh's people; I am his servant; I have belonged to him since my mother bore me. So he saved me from what was going to kill me.* |

ULT **Indeed, Yahweh, for I {am} your servant; I {am} your servant, the son of your servant woman; you have undone my bonds**
UST Certainly I am one of Yahweh's people; I am his servant; I have belonged to him since my mother bore me. So he saved me from what was going to kill me
(אָנָּה יְהוָה כִּי־אֲנִי עַבְדֶּךָ אֲנִי־עַבְדְּךָ בֶּן־אֲמָתֶךָ פִּתַּחְתָּ לְמוֹסֵרָי)

The psalmist here switches to second person by saying **your servant**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could continue using third person as in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [Indeed, for I am Yahweh's servant; I am his servant, the son of his servant woman; he has undone my bonds]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

ULT **for I {am} your servant**
UST I am one of Yahweh's people
(כִּי־אֲנִי עַבְדֶּךָ)

Here the word **for** introduces not a reason but an explanation. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [definitely I am your servant]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **I {am} your servant, the son of your servant woman**
UST I am his servant; I have belonged to him since my mother bore me
(אֲנִי־עַבְדְּךָ בֶּן־אֲמָתֶךָ)

The phrase **the son of your servant woman** adds to the meaning of **I am your servant**. In the culture of the time, the son of a servant woman was a permanent servant, without the right to go free after six years. See Exodus 21:2–4. You could include this information if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I am your permanent servant, the son of your servant woman]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **you have undone my bonds**
UST So he saved me from what was going to kill me
(פִּתַּחְתָּ לְמוֹסֵרָי)

Here the psalmist is speaking of his troubles as if they were **bonds** that tied him up and prevented him from moving freely. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [you have freed me from my troubles]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Indeed | Certainly |
| Yahweh | יְהוָה (ORIG QUOTE) |
| your servant | one of Yahweh's people |
| your servant woman | I have belonged to him since my mother bore me |
| my bonds | from what was going to kill me |

# Psalms 116:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will sacrifice to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and I will call on the name of Yahweh.* | *So I will offer to him a sacrifice to thank him, and I will pray to Yahweh.* |

ULT **I will sacrifice to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving**
UST So I will offer to him a sacrifice to thank him
(לְךָ־אֶזְבַּח זֶבַח תּוֹדָה)

The psalmist 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 another way of saying this. Alternate translation: [I will make a sacrifice to you to thank you]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **I will sacrifice to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving**
UST So I will offer to him a sacrifice to thank him
(לְךָ־אֶזְבַּח זֶבַח תּוֹדָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **thanksgiving**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [I will make a sacrifice to you to thank you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and I will call on the name of Yahweh**
UST and I will pray to Yahweh
(וּבְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא)

Here, **name** represents the person of Yahweh himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I will call out to Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will sacrifice | So I will offer |
| the sacrifice of | a sacrifice |
| I will call | I will pray |
| Yahweh | and … to Yahweh |

# Psalms 116:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will fulfill my vows to Yahweh right in front of all of his people,* | *As the people who belong to Yahweh watch, in the courtyard outside his temple, in the middle of Jerusalem, I will give to him the offerings that I solemnly promised to give to him. Praise Yahweh! (vv18-19)* |

**ULT I will fulfill my vows to Yahweh right in front of all of his people**
(נְדָרַי לַיהוָה אֲשַׁלֵּם נֶגְדָּה־נָּא לְכָל־עַמּוֹ)

See how you translated this in verse 14.

**ULT right in front of all of his people**
(נֶגְדָּה־נָּא לְכָל־עַמּוֹ)

The psalmist says **right in front of all of his people** as an extreme statement for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [right in front of a gathering of his people]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will fulfill | אֲשַׁלֵּם (ORIG QUOTE) |
| my vows | נְדָרַי (ORIG QUOTE) |
| to Yahweh | לַיהוָה (ORIG QUOTE) |

# Psalms 116:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *in the courts of the house of Yahweh, in your midst, Jerusalem. Hallelu Yah!* | *As the people who belong to Yahweh watch, in the courtyard outside his temple, in the middle of Jerusalem, I will give to him the offerings that I solemnly promised to give to him. Praise Yahweh! (vv18-19)* |

**ULT the house of Yahweh**
(בֵּית יְהוָה)

The psalmist is speaking of the temple of Yahweh as if it were a **house** in which he lived. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the temple of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT in your midst, Jerusalem**
(בְּתוֹכֵכִי יְרוּשָׁלָ͏ִם)

The psalmist is speaking to **Jerusalem** that he knows cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about his commitment to worship and praise God in the holy city. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [in the midst of Jerusalem]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

**ULT Hallelu Yah**
(הַלְלוּ־יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

**ULT Yah**
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name “Yahweh,” the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the courts of | בְּחַצְרוֹת (ORIG QUOTE) |
| the house of Yahweh | בֵּית יְהוָֹה (ORIG QUOTE) |
| Yah | יָהּ (ORIG QUOTE) |
| Jerusalem | יְרוּשָׁלָֽם (ORIG QUOTE) |

# Psalms 117

## Psalm 117 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 117 is a “psalm of praise.”

1. Call to praise
2. Reasons to praise

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Praise

Everyone should praise God for his love and unending faithfulness. (See: love, beloved and faithful, faithfulness, trustworthy)

# Psalms 117:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Praise Yahweh, all nations; extol him, all peoples!* | *You people of all nations, praise Yahweh! All you people groups, greatly praise him!* |

**ULT Praise Yahweh, all nations; extol him, all peoples**
**UST** You people of all nations, praise Yahweh! All you people groups, greatly praise him
(הַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה כָּל־גּוֹיִם שַׁבְּחוּהוּ כָּל־הָאֻמִּים)

These two phrases **Praise Yahweh, all nations** and **extol him, all peoples** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Praise Yahweh, all nations; yes, extol him, all peoples]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT all nations**
**UST** You people of all nations
(כָּל־גּוֹיִם)

Here, **all nations** represents the people in all nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [you people in all nations]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Praise | praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| nations | You people of … nations |

# Psalms 117:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For his covenant faithfulness is strong toward us, and the trustworthiness of Yahweh {is} to forever. Hallelu Yah!* | *Do this, because he is fully committed to love us faithfully, just as he promised to do, and we can trust that Yahweh will be faithful forever. Praise Yahweh!* |

ULT **For his covenant faithfulness is strong toward us**
UST Do this, because he is fully committed to love us faithfully, just as he promised to do
(כִּי גָבַר עָלֵינוּ חַסְדּוֹ)

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: [For he will never stop being faithful to his covenant to love us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and the trustworthiness of Yahweh {is} to forever**
UST and we can trust that Yahweh will be faithful forever
(וֶאֱמֶת־יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **trustworthiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and Yahweh will be trustworthy to do this forever]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ־יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name “Yahweh,” the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| his covenant faithfulness | to love … faithfully, just as he promised to do |
| is strong | he is fully committed |
| and the trustworthiness of | and we can trust that … will be faithful |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Yah | Yahweh |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 118

## Psalm 118 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 118 is a “psalm of thanksgiving” written on the occasion of a military victory. At the same time, it is a messianic psalm that looks forward to the triumph of Jesus Christ. Jesus applied Psalm 118:22 to himself (Matthew 21:42, Mark 12:10, Luke 20:17), and the apostle Peter applied it to Jesus both in a speech recorded in Acts (Acts 4:11), and in his first letter (1 Peter 2:7). See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Call to Thanksgiving (1–4)
2. Testimony of deliverance (5–18)
3. Messianic celebration (9–29)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Rejected stone

The psalmist praised Yahweh for rescuing him. God enabled him to overpower his enemies. The new Testament, and even Jesus himself, saw the rejected stone as a reference to the Messiah’s rejection by the Jewish leaders. (See: Christ, Messiah)

# Psalms 118:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Give thanks to Yahweh, for {he is} good, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever!* | *Thank Yahweh because he is good and because he faithfully loves us forever!* |

**ULT Give thanks to Yahweh, for {he is} good, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever**
UST Thank Yahweh because he is good and because he faithfully loves us forever
(הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ)

See how you translated this in Psalm 106:1.

**ULT for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever**
UST and because he faithfully loves us forever
(כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ)

The psalmist 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: [thank Yahweh for his covenant faithfulness is to forever]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT his covenant faithfulness**
UST he faithfully loves us
(חַסְדּוֹ)

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: [he remains faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT {is} to forever**
UST forever
(לְעוֹלָם)

The psalmist is using **to forever** as a common expression of his culture to mean “eternally” or “without end.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [lasts throughout eternity]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {he is} good | he is good |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves us |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 118:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let Israel indeed say, "For his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever."* | *All Israelite people should repeatedly shout, "because he faithfully loves us forever!"* |

ULT **Let Israel indeed say**
UST All Israelite people should repeatedly shout
(יֹאמַר־נָ֣א יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל)

Here, **Israel** represents the people of Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Let the people of Israel indeed say]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Let Israel indeed say**
UST All Israelite people should repeatedly shout
(יֹאמַר־נָ֣א יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל)

The psalmist is saying what he wants **Israel** to do. See the discussion in the introduction to Psalms about "let" and "may" and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [May Israel indeed say]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **For his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever**
UST because he faithfully loves us forever
(כִּ֥י לְעוֹלָ֖ם חַסְדּֽוֹ)

See how you translated this in the previous verse.

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **For his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever**
UST because he faithfully loves us forever
(כִּ֥י לְעוֹלָ֖ם חַסְדּֽוֹ)

The psalmist 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: [We praise Yahweh for his covenant faithfulness is to forever]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Israel | All Israelite people |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves us |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 118:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let the house of Aaron indeed say, "For his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever."* | *You {priests} who are descendants of Aaron should repeatedly shout, "because he faithfully loves us forever!"* |

**ULT Let the house of Aaron indeed say**
**UST** You {priests} who are descendants of Aaron should repeatedly shout
(יֹאמְרוּ־נָא בֵית־אַהֲרֹן)

Here, **house** means all the people descended from a particular person. It envisions them as if they were one household living together. So **the house of Aaron** figuratively means all the people descended from Aaron, who was the first high priest. Alternate translation: [Let the descendants of Aaron indeed say]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT For his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever**
**UST** because he faithfully loves us forever
(כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ)

See how you translated this in the previous verse.

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the house of | You {priests} who are descendants of |
| Aaron | Aaron |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves us |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 118:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let the fearers of Yahweh indeed say, "For his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever."* | *All you who deeply revere Yahweh should repeatedly shout, "because he faithfully loves us forever!"* |

**ULT For his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever**

UST because he faithfully loves us forever

(כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ)

See how you translated this in the previous verse.

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves us |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 118:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *From the constriction I called out to Yah; Yah answered me with wideness.* | *When I was distressed, I called out to Yahweh, and Yahweh answered me and set me free.* |

**ULT From the constriction**
**UST** When I was distressed
(מִן־הַמֵּצַר)

The psalmist is using **From the constriction** as a common expression of the culture to mean “from a distressing situation” or “from a time of trouble.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [From between a rock and a hard place] or [From a distressing situation]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT I called out to Yah; Yah answered me**
**UST** I called out to Yahweh, and Yahweh answered me
(קָרָאתִי יָהּ עָנָנִי & יָהּ)

The word **Yah** is a shortened form of the name “Yahweh.” Alternate translation: [I called out to Yahweh and he answered me]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

**ULT Yah answered me with wideness**
**UST** and Yahweh answered me and set me free
(עָנָנִי בַמֶּרְחָב יָהּ)

The psalmist is using **with wideness** as a common expression of the culture to mean “by setting me free” or “by relieving my distressing situation.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yah set me in a wide place] or [Yah answered me by relieving my distressing situation]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I called out to | I called out |
| Yah | to Yahweh |

# Psalms 118:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh {is} for me; I will not be afraid; what can man do to me?* | *Yahweh is on my side, so I will not be afraid of anything. I know that humans cannot really harm me!* |

ULT **Yahweh {is} for me**
UST Yahweh is on my side
(יְהוָה לִי)

The psalmist is using **Yahweh is for me** as a common expression of the culture to mean "Yahweh supports me" or "Yahweh is on my side." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh wants me to succeed]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **what can man do to me**
UST I know that humans cannot really harm me
(מַה־יַּעֲשֶׂה לִי אָדָם)

The psalmist 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: [man do nothing to harm me]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I will … be afraid | so I will … be afraid of anything |

# Psalms 118:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh {is} for me as my helper, and I, I will gaze on the haters of me.* | *Yes, Yahweh is on my side. He helps me defeat my enemies, so I know that I will look {triumphantly} on them.* |

**ULT Yahweh {is} for me as my helper**
**UST** Yes, Yahweh is on my side. He helps me defeat my enemies
(יְהוָה לִי בְּעֹזָרָי)

The psalmist is using **Yahweh is for me as my helper** as a common expression of the culture to mean "Yahweh wants me to succeed and so he helps me." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh wants me to succeed and so he helps me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT and I, I will gaze**
**UST** so I know that I will look {triumphantly}
(וַאֲנִי אֶרְאֶה)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **I will gaze** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize his personal commitment to triumph over his enemies. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [and so for my part, I will gaze]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT on the haters of me**
**UST** on them
(בְּשֹׂנְאָי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **haters**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [on those who hate me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yes, Yahweh |

# Psalms 118:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Better to take shelter in Yahweh than to trust in man.* | *It is better to rely on Yahweh than to depend on people.* |

**ULT to take shelter in Yahweh**
**UST** to rely on Yahweh
(לַחֲסוֹת בַּיהוָה)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **shelter** that people could go into for protection from danger. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to let Yahweh protect us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT than to trust in man**
**UST** than to depend on people
(מִבְטֹחַ בָּאָדָם)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [than to trust in people]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Better | It is better |
| to take shelter | to rely |
| in Yahweh | on Yahweh |
| than to trust | than to depend |

# Psalms 118:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Better to take shelter in Yahweh than to trust in princes.* | *It is better to rely on Yahweh than to trust that influential people will protect us.* |

**ULT to take shelter in Yahweh**
UST to rely on Yahweh
(לַחֲסוֹת בַּיהוָה)

See how you translated this phrase in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [to let Yahweh protect us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Better | It is better |
| to take shelter | to rely on |
| in Yahweh | Yahweh |
| than to trust | than to trust |
| in princes | that influential people will protect us |

# Psalms 118:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *All the nations surrounded me; in the name of Yahweh, indeed I fended them off.* | *Armies of many nations surrounded me, but Yahweh powerfully enabled me to make them retreat.* |

ULT **All the nations**
UST Armies of many nations
(כָּל־גּוֹיִם)

The psalmist says **All the nations** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [It seemed as though all the nations] or [So many nations]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **in the name of Yahweh**
UST but Yahweh powerfully enabled me
(בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה)

Here, **name** represents the power and authority of Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [by Yahweh's power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **I fended them off**
UST to make them retreat
(אֲמִילַם)

The word translated as **I fended them off** could mean: (1) the psalmist's army pushed back the other armies. Alternate translation: [I defeated them] or it could be a different word that is spelled the same way that means: (2) the psalmist's army circumcised the enemy armies. Alternate translation: [I circumcised them] or [I cut them off]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the nations | nations |
| Yahweh | but Yahweh powerfully enabled me |

# Psalms 118:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They surrounded me; yes, they surrounded me; in the name of Yahweh, indeed I fended them off.* | *They completely surrounded me, but Yahweh powerfully enabled me to make them retreat.* |

**ULT They surrounded me; yes, they surrounded me**
UST They completely surrounded me
(סַבּוּנִי גַם־סְבָבוּנִי)

The expressions **They surrounded me** and **yes, they surrounded me** mean the same thing. The psalmist is using repetition for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [They had me completely surrounded]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT in the name of Yahweh, indeed I fended them off**
UST but Yahweh powerfully enabled me to make them retreat
(בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִילַם)

See how you translated this in the previous verse.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 118:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They surrounded me like bees; they were extinguished like a fire of thorns; in the name of Yahweh, indeed I fended them off.* | *They swarmed around me like {angry} bees, but they diminished as quickly as a fire that is burning only thorns; Yahweh powerfully enabled me to make them retreat.* |

ULT **They surrounded me like bees**
UST They swarmed around me like {angry} bees
(סַבּוּנִי כִדְבוֹרִים)

The psalmist is making a comparison between his enemies and **bees**. The point of this comparison is that just as **bees** swarm around aggressively when attacking, so his enemies surrounded him aggressively. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [They surrounded me like bees do when they are attacking someone]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **they were extinguished like a fire of thorns**
UST but they diminished as quickly as a fire that is burning only thorns
(דֹּעֲכוּ כְּאֵשׁ קוֹצִים)

The expression **they were extinguished** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [they died away quickly like a fire burning thorns]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **they were extinguished like a fire of thorns**
UST but they diminished as quickly as a fire that is burning only thorns
(דֹּעֲכוּ כְּאֵשׁ קוֹצִים)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a fire of thorns** burns out quickly, so the psalmist's enemies **were extinguished** quickly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [they were extinguished as quickly as is a fire among thorns]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **in the name of Yahweh, indeed I fended them off**
UST Yahweh powerfully enabled me to make them retreat
(בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי אֲמִילַם)

See how you translated this in verse 10.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| thorns | is burning only thorns |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 118:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To push down, you pushed me down to fall, but Yahweh helped me.* | *My enemies attacked me fiercely and thought that they would defeat me, but Yahweh helped me.* |

ULT **To push down, you pushed me down**
UST My enemies attacked me fiercely
(דַּחֹה דְּחִיתַנִי)

The psalmist 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 another way of saying this. Alternate translation: [You pushed me down hard]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **to fall**
UST and thought that they would defeat me
(לִנְפֹּל)

Here, **to fall** marks this clause as the goal or purpose of **To push down, you pushed me down**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that I would fall]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **To push down, you pushed me down to fall**
UST My enemies attacked me fiercely and thought that they would defeat me
(דַּחֹה דְּחִיתַנִי לִנְפֹּל)

Here the psalmist is speaking of his enemies' attack as if the enemies were able to **push** him **down** physically to make him **fall**. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [You attacked me violently in order to defeat me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **To push down, you pushed me down to fall**
UST My enemies attacked me fiercely and thought that they would defeat me
(דַּחֹה דְּחִיתַנִי לִנְפֹּל)

The psalmist is speaking to his enemies that he knows cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about how violently they attacked him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about **his enemies**. Alternate translation: [My enemies attacked me violently in order to defeat me]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| but Yahweh | but Yahweh |

# Psalms 118:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yah {is} my strength and song, and he is to me for salvation.* | *Yahweh is the one who makes me strong, and who gives me a reason to sing; and he saves me from my enemies.* |

**ULT Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

**ULT Yah {is} my strength and song**
UST Yahweh is the one who makes me strong, and who gives me a reason to sing
(עָזִּי וְזִמְרָת יָהּ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **strength** and **song**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Yah makes me strong and joyful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Yah {is} my strength and song**
UST Yahweh is the one who makes me strong, and who gives me a reason to sing
(עָזִּי וְזִמְרָת יָהּ)

Here, **song** represents "a reason to sing" or "joy." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Yah gives me strength and the joy to sing]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT and he is to me for salvation**
UST and he saves me from my enemies
(וַיְהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה)

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: [and he saves me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yah | Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for salvation | and he saves me |

# Psalms 118:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The voice of a shout and salvation {is} in the tents of the righteous; the right hand of Yahweh does valor!* | *Listen to the joyful songs of how Yahweh saves people! They come from the tents of the people who honor God! They sing, "Yahweh has powerfully defeated our enemies;* |

ULT **The voice of a shout and salvation**
UST Listen to the joyful songs of how Yahweh saves people
(קוֹל ו רִנָּה וִישׁוּעָה)

The phrase **a shout and salvation** expresses a single idea. The word **shout** tells more about **salvation**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [The voice of a victorious shout]

**Support Reference:** Hendiadys

ULT **the righteous**
UST of the people who honor God
(צַדִּיקִים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the right hand of Yahweh does valor**
UST They sing, "Yahweh has powerfully defeated our enemies
(יְמִין יְהוָה עֹשָׂה חָיִל)

The psalmist may be quoting a song of victory, starting here and going through verse 16. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could mark this as the beginning of a song, as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **the right hand of Yahweh does valor**
UST They sing, "Yahweh has powerfully defeated our enemies
(יְמִין יְהוָה עֹשָׂה חָיִל)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **valor**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the right hand of Yahweh does valiant things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the right hand of Yahweh**
UST They sing, “Yahweh
(יְמִין יְהוָה)

Here, **right hand** represents the power of Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the power of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **valor**
UST has powerfully defeated our enemies
(חָיִל)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **valor**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [valiant things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| a shout | Listen to the joyful songs of |
| and salvation | how Yahweh saves people |
| {is} in the tents of | They come from the tents |
| the righteous | of the people who honor God |
| Yahweh | They sing, “Yahweh |
| valor | has powerfully defeated our enemies |

# Psalms 118:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The right hand of Yahweh is high; the right hand of Yahweh does valor!* | *Yahweh has shown himself to be victorious! Yahweh has powerfully defeated our enemies!”* |

**ULT The right hand of Yahweh is high**
**UST** Yahweh has shown himself to be victorious
(יְמִין יְהוָה רוֹמֵמָה)

The psalmist is using **The right hand of Yahweh is high** as a common expression of the culture to mean that Yahweh is superior to all others or that Yahweh is victorious. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is superior to all others]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT the right hand of Yahweh does valor**
**UST** Yahweh has powerfully defeated our enemies
(יְמִין יְהוָה עֹשָׂה חָיִל)

See how you translated this phrase in the previous verse.

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| valor | has powerfully defeated our enemies |

# Psalms 118:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will not die, but live and I will declare the deeds of Yah.* | *My enemies will not kill me; no, I will live to proclaim the great things that Yahweh has done.* |

**ULT I will not die, but live**
**UST** My enemies will not kill me; no, I will live
(לֹא אָמוּת כִּי־אֶחְיֶה)

The psalmist uses the word **but** here to indicate a contrast between dying and living. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I will not die; instead, I will live]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

**ULT of Yah**
**UST** Yahweh
(יָהּ)

The word **Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh." Alternate translation: [of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and I will declare | to proclaim |
| of Yah | Yahweh |

# Psalms 118:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To chastise, Yah has chastised me; but to death he has not given me.* | *Yahweh has punished me severely, but he has not allowed me to die.* |

ULT **To chastise, Yah has chastised me**
UST Yahweh has punished me severely
(יַסֹּר יִסְּרַנִּי יָהּ)

The psalmist is repeating forms of the verb **chastise** in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [Yah has certainly chastised me]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **but to death he has not given me**
UST but he has not allowed me to die
(וְלַמָּוֶת לֹא נְתָנָנִי)

Here the psalmist is speaking of **death** as if it were a place or person that Yahweh could give him **to**. He means that Yahweh has not allowed him to die. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but he has kept me alive]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yah | Yahweh |

# Psalms 118:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them; I will thank Yah.* | *{You gatekeepers,} open for me the gates through which those who obey Yahweh may enter, so that I may enter through them and thank Yahweh.* |

**ULT Open to me**
**UST** {You gatekeepers,} open for me
(פְּתַח־לִ֥י)

The word translated as **Open** is a plural command form, addressed to the keepers of the gates, which could refer to (1) the gates of the temple, or (2) the gates of Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could include the addressees, as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT the gates of righteousness**
**UST** the gates through which those who obey Yahweh may enter
(שַׁעֲרֵי־צֶ֝֗דֶק)

Here, **righteousness** could refer to (1) the people who are allowed to enter through the gates (as indicated in the next verse), which could be either the gates of the temple or the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the gates where the righteous may enter] or (2) Yahweh, who is righteous and who dwells in the temple. Alternate translation: [the gates of the temple of the righteous God]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Yah**
**UST** Yahweh
(יָ֝הּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the gates | the gates |
| of righteousness | through which those who obey Yahweh may enter |
| Yah | Yahweh |

# Psalms 118:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *This {is} the gate of Yahweh; the righteous may enter through it.* | *{The gatekeeper says,} "This is Yahweh's gate; all who obey him may enter through it."* |

**ULT This {is} the gate of Yahweh; the righteous may enter through it**
**UST** { … The gatekeeper says,} "This is Yahweh's gate; all who obey him may enter through it
(זֶה־הַשַּׁעַר לַיהוָה צַדִּיקִים יָבֹאוּ בוֹ)

The psalmist may be quoting the response of the gatekeeper in this verse. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could mark this as a quotation, as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

**ULT the gate of Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh's gate
(הַשַּׁעַר לַיהוָה)

Here, **the gate of Yahweh** probably does refer to the gate of the temple, and could mean (1) the gate belonging to Yahweh. Alternate translation: [the gate that belongs to Yahweh] or (2) the gate that leads to Yahweh. Alternate translation: [the gate to where Yahweh dwells]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT the righteous**
**UST** all who obey him
(צַדִּיקִים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the gate | gate |
| of Yahweh | Yahweh's |
| the righteous | all who obey him |

# Psalms 118:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will thank you, for you answered me, and you have become salvation for me.* | *{Yahweh,} I thank you that you answered my prayer and saved me {from my enemies}.* |

**ULT I will thank you, for you answered me, and you have become salvation for me**
UST Yahweh,} I thank you that you answered my prayer and saved me {from my enemies … }
(אוֹדְךָ כִּי עֲנִיתָנִי וַתְּהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה)

The psalmist switches to addressing Yahweh directly using **you** in this verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could continue using the third person here. Alternate translation: [I will thank Yahweh, for he answered me, and he has become salvation for me]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

**ULT for you answered me**
UST that you answered my prayer
(כִּי עֲנִיתָנִי)

The psalmist is using **answered me** as a common expression of the culture to mean "acted on my behalf" in response to a request. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for you acted on my behalf]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT and you have become salvation for me**
UST and saved me {from my enemies}
(וַתְּהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה)

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: [and you have saved me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| salvation | saved … from my enemies |

# Psalms 118:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The stone that the builders rejected has become the head of the corner.* | *{People considered me worthless, like} a stone that builders rejected, {but then Yahweh showed that he highly values me, as if} that stone then became the most important stone in the building.* |

ULT **The stone that the builders rejected has become the head of the corner**
UST { … People considered me worthless, like} a stone that builders rejected, but then Yahweh showed that he highly values me, as if} that stone then became the most important stone in the building
(אֶבֶן מָאֲסוּ הַבּוֹנִים הָיְתָה לְרֹאשׁ פִּנָּה)

This is likely a proverb that the psalmist has used to describe either himself or the nation of Israel. If possible, translate this proverb in a way that will be recognized as a proverb and be meaningful in your language and culture. Otherwise, you could give the plain meaning. Alternate translation: [That which others have considered worthless, Yahweh has made to be the most important]

**Support Reference:** Proverbs

ULT **the head of the corner**
UST { … but then Yahweh showed that he highly values me, as if} that stone then became the most important stone in the building
(לְרֹאשׁ פִּנָּה)

By **the head of the corner**, the psalmist means the cornerstone, which is the most important stone that holds a building together. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the cornerstone]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The stone that | {People considered me worthless, like} a stone that … rejected |
| rejected | {People considered me worthless, like} a stone that … rejected |

# Psalms 118:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *This is from Yahweh; it is marvelous in our eyes.* | *The people said, "Yahweh made that happen, and for us, it is a wonderful thing.* |

**ULT This is from Yahweh; it is marvelous in our eyes**
**UST** The people said, "Yahweh made that happen, and for us, it is a wonderful thing
(מֵאֵת יְהוָה הָיְתָה זֹּאת הִיא נִפְלָאת בְּעֵינֵינוּ)

The psalmist may be quoting the response of the congregation to the psalmist in verses 23–27. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could mark this as a quotation, as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

**ULT This is from Yahweh**
**UST** The people said, "Yahweh made that happen
(מֵאֵת יְהוָה הָיְתָה זֹּאת)

The pronoun **This** refers to the rejected stone becoming the most important stone, as described in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [This reversal from rejection to victory is from Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT it is marvelous in our eyes**
**UST** and for us, it is a wonderful thing
(הִיא נִפְלָאת בְּעֵינֵינוּ)

The psalmist is using **it is marvelous in our eyes** as a common expression of the culture to mean "we consider it to be a marvelous thing." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [we consider it to be a marvelous thing]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| is marvelous | wonderful thing |

# Psalms 118:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *This {is} the day Yahweh made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it.* | *Yahweh made possible everything that we are celebrating today; we should be extremely happy about all of it!* |

**ULT This {is} the day Yahweh made**
**UST** Yahweh made possible everything that we are celebrating today
(זֶה־הַיּוֹם עָשָׂה יְהוָה)

The psalmist is using the term **day** to refer to a specific time when God acted to bring about the events being celebrated. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh caused the events we are celebrating today to happen]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT Let us rejoice and be glad**
**UST** we should be extremely happy
(נָגִילָה וְנִשְׂמְחָה)

The terms **rejoice** and **be glad** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [Let us rejoice greatly]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Let us rejoice | we should be extremely happy |
| and be glad | we should be extremely happy |

# Psalms 118:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Please, Yahweh, save please! Please, Yahweh, give success please!* | *Yahweh, we plead with you to keep rescuing us {from our enemies}. Yahweh, please continue to help us to succeed {against our enemies}.* |

**ULT save please**
**UST** we plead with you to keep rescuing us {from our enemies}
(הוֹשִׁיעָה נָּא)

The psalmist 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: [save us please]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT give success please**
**UST** please continue to help us to succeed {against our enemies}
(הַצְלִיחָה נָּא)

The psalmist 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: [give us success please]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT give success please**
**UST** please continue to help us to succeed {against our enemies}
(הַצְלִיחָה נָּא)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **success**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [enable us to succeed please]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Please | we plead with you |
| please | we plead with you |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| save | to keep rescuing us {from our enemies} |
| give success | continue to help us to succeed {against our enemies} |

# Psalms 118:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Blessed is the one coming in the name of Yahweh; we bless you from the house of Yahweh.* | *Yahweh, bless the one who will come with your power. From the temple we bless all of you.* |

**ULT Blessed is the one coming**
**UST** bless the one who will come
(בָּרוּךְ הַבָּא)

The expression **Blessed is** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh blesses the one coming]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT in the name of Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh … with your power
(בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה)

Here, **name** represents the power and authority of Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with the authority of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT we bless you**
**UST** we bless all of you
(בֵּרַכְנוּכֶם)

The word **you** is plural here because the psalmist is addressing all the people who have come to the temple. So use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. Alternate translation: [we bless you all]

**Support Reference:** Forms of 'You' — Singular

**ULT from the house of Yahweh**
**UST** From the temple
(מִבֵּית יְהוָה)

The psalmist is speaking of the temple of Yahweh as if it were a **house** in which he lived. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the temple of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Blessed is | bless |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| we bless you | we bless all of you |
| from the house of Yahweh | From the temple |

# Psalms 118:27

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Yahweh {is} God, and he has given light to us; bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.* | *Yahweh is God, and he has made us victorious. Bring an animal sacrifice {for him} and tie it to the horns of the altar."* |

**ULT and he has given light to us**
**UST** and he has made us victorious
(וַיֵּאֶר לָנוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of God's favor and blessing as if it were **light** that God had given to them. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and he has given us success]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar**
**UST** Bring an animal sacrifice {for him} and tie it to the horns of the altar
(אִסְרוּ־חַג בַּעֲבֹתִים עַד־קַרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ)

Here the psalmist ends his quotation of the people. You may want to indicate this with closing quote marks, as in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh {is} | Yahweh is |
| God | God |
| bind | and tie it |
| the sacrifice | Bring an animal sacrifice {for him} |
| the horns of | the horns |
| the altar | of the altar |

# Psalms 118:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You {are} my God, and I will thank you; my God, I will exalt you.* | *Yahweh, you are the God whom I worship, and I will praise you! You are the only God whom I worship, and I will tell everyone that you are great!* |

**ULT I will exalt you**
**UST** and I will tell everyone that you are great
(אֲרוֹמְמֶךָּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of praising God as if it were **exalting** him or lifting him up to a high position. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will publicly praise you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my God | Yahweh … the God whom I worship |
| my God | You are the only God whom I worship |
| I will exalt you | and I will tell everyone that you are great |

# Psalms 118:29

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Give thanks to Yahweh; for {he is} good; for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever!* | *Thank Yahweh because he is good and because he faithfully loves us forever!* |

ULT **Give thanks to Yahweh; for {he is} good; for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever**
UST Thank Yahweh because he is good and because he faithfully loves us forever
(הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ)

See how you translated this in Psalm 106:1 and 118:1.

ULT **for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever**
UST and because he faithfully loves us forever
(כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ)

The psalmist 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: [give thanks to Yahweh for his covenant faithfulness is to forever]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever**
UST and because he faithfully loves us forever
(כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ)

The psalmist is using **to forever** as a common expression of his culture to mean “eternally” or “without end.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for his covenant faithfulness lasts forever]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever**
UST he faithfully loves us forever
(לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ)

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: [he remains faithful to his covenant forever]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {he is} good | he is good |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves us |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 119

## Psalm 119 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 119 is a “wisdom psalm” about the law of Yahweh. This psalm is an “acrostic” (see discussion in the Introduction to Psalms), an alphabetic poem with twenty-two groups of eight verses each. Each group begins with a letter of the alphabet in the order of the Hebrew alphabet.

The psalmist uses many different words to refer to Yahweh’s message to us. You could attempt to use a different word for each term (ULT uses words such as “precepts,” “commandments,” and “law”), but most languages will not have that many, so just use the words that your language has.

1. Blessing for those who walk in Yahweh’s law (1–32)
2. Prayer for understanding and guidance from Yahweh’s word (33–72)
3. Comfort and hope in Yahweh’s word during affliction (73–112)
4. Devotion to Yahweh’s law despite opposition (113–144)
5. Cry for deliverance and life through Yahweh’s word (145–176)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### The law

The psalmist loved the law of Yahweh and was blessed by obeying it. (See: love, beloved and bless, blessed, blessing)

## Translation Issues in This Psalm

### “your word”

Throughout this psalm, the psalmist uses the phrase “your word” to refer more generally to Yahweh’s commandments, instructions, promises, and messages to us.

## Request form

Throughout this psalm, the psalmist is requesting things from Yahweh by using an imperative which may sound like a command in your language. If this would be impolite in your language, then use a form that would be more appropriate for addressing Yahweh with a request.

# Psalms 119:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The happinesses of the blameless of way, the ones walking in the teaching of Yahweh!* | *How fortunate are those about whom no one can say truthfully that they have done things that are wrong! Those are the people who always obey Yahweh's instructions.* |

ULT **The happinesses of**
UST How fortunate are
(אַשְׁרֵי)

The psalmist is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of joy or blessing. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy are] or [How blessed are]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **the blameless of way**
UST those about whom no one can say truthfully that they have done things that are wrong
(תְּמִימֵי־דָ֑רֶךְ)

The psalmist is using the adjective **blameless** 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: [people who are blameless in their conduct]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the blameless of way**
UST those about whom no one can say truthfully that they have done things that are wrong
(תְּמִימֵי־דָ֑רֶךְ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **way** that is characterized by being **blameless**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [people whose way is blameless]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **way**
UST those about whom no one can say truthfully that they have done things that are wrong
(דֶּרֶךְ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of behavior as if it were a **way** that a person walks along. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [conduct]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the ones walking in the teaching of Yahweh**
UST Those are the people who always obey Yahweh's instructions
(הַהֹלְכִים בְּתוֹרַת יְהוָה)

Here the psalmist is speaking of living according to Yahweh's instructions as if it were **walking** along a path. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those who live by the teaching of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the blameless of | those about whom no one can say truthfully that they have done things that are wrong |
| in the teaching of | instructions |
| Yahweh | Yahweh's |

# Psalms 119:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The happinesses of the keepers of his testimonies! They seek him with a whole heart.* | *How fortunate are those who do what he tells them to do! Those are the people who sincerely want to know him.* |

**ULT The happinesses of**
**UST** How fortunate are
(אַשְׁרֵי)

See how you translated the exclamation starting with "The happinesses of" in the previous verse.

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

**ULT his testimonies**
**UST** what he tells them to do
(עֵדֹתָיו)

The pronoun **his** refers to Yahweh, mentioned in verse 1. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the testimonies of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT They seek him**
**UST** Those are the people who … want to know him
(יִדְרְשׁוּהוּ)

The pronoun **They** refers to the keepers of Yahweh's testimonies, while the pronoun **him** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Those who keep his testimonies seek Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT They seek him**
**UST** Those are the people who … want to know him
(יִדְרְשׁוּהוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of wanting to know Yahweh as if people were looking for or seeking him. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They live to know him]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **with a whole heart**
UST sincerely
(בְּכָל־לֵבָב)

Here, **heart** represents where a person's thoughts, feelings, and emotions exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with all that I am]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the keepers of | those who do |
| his testimonies | what he tells them to do |
| They seek him | Those are the people who … want to know him |

# Psalms 119:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Surely they do not practice injustice; they walk in his ways.* | *They certainly do not want to cheat other people; they live in a way that pleases Yahweh.* |

ULT **injustice**
UST to cheat other people
(עַוְלָה)

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: [unjust actions]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **they walk in his ways**
UST they live in a way that pleases Yahweh
(בִּדְרָכָיו הָלָכוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of living in obedience to Yahweh's commands as if it were to **walk** along his paths or **ways**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they live according to his commands]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| injustice | to cheat other people |

# Psalms 119:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You, you have commanded your precepts to keep diligently.* | *Yahweh, you have given us your instructions so that we would carefully obey them.* |

ULT **You, you have commanded**
UST Yahweh, you have given us
(אַתָּה צִוִּיתָה)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you have commanded** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that he is now addressing Yahweh instead of the people. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [You yourself have commanded]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **to keep diligently**
UST so that we would carefully obey them
(לִשְׁמֹר מְאֹד)

Here, **to keep diligently** marks careful obedience as the goal or purpose of giving the precepts. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that we would keep them diligently]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

# Psalms 119:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Oh, that my paths would be established to keep your statutes!* | *I want very much to continually obey everything that you command!* |

**ULT Oh, that my paths would be established**
**UST** I want very much … continually … everything
(אַחֲלַי יִכֹּנוּ דְרָכָי)

The psalmist is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of desire and longing. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [I earnestly desire that my paths would be established]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

**ULT Oh, that my paths would be established**
**UST** I want very much … continually … everything
(אַחֲלַי יִכֹּנוּ דְרָכָי)

The expression **would be established** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Oh, how I want to firmly set my paths]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT my paths**
**UST** everything
(דְרָכָי)

Here the psalmist is speaking of his behavior and conduct as if they were **paths** that he travels. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my conduct]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| would be established | continually |
| your statutes | that you command |

# Psalms 119:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then I would not have shame when I look to all of your commandments.* | *If I did that, then I would not be ashamed when I think about everything that you command.* |

**ULT Then I would not have shame**
**UST** If I did that, then I would not be ashamed
(אָז לֹא־אֵבוֹשׁ)

The psalmist is making a conditional statement that sounds hypothetical, but he knows that the condition from the previous verse is not yet true. He is stating it as a condition to show that if always kept Yahweh's statues, shame would not follow. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not yet true. Alternate translation: [If that were so, then I would not be feeling this shame]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| not have shame | not |
| your commandments | that you command |

# Psalms 119:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will thank you with uprightness of heart when I learn the judgments of your righteousness.* | *As I learn all of your just regulations, I thank you sincerely.* |

ULT **with uprightness of heart**
UST sincerely
(בְּיֹשֶׁר לֵבָב)

Here, **heart** represents where a person's intentions and motives exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with integrity]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **with uprightness of heart**
UST sincerely
(בְּיֹשֶׁר לֵבָב)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **heart** that is characterized by **uprightness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with an upright heart]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **with uprightness of heart**
UST sincerely
(בְּיֹשֶׁר לֵבָב)

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: [with a right and sincere attitude]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **when I learn**
UST As I learn
(בְּלָמְדִי)

The word **when** indicates that the psalmist's thanking and his learning happen at the same time. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could describe the time relationship more explicitly. Alternate translation: [as I come to know]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

ULT **the judgments of your righteousness**
UST all of your just regulations
(מִשְׁפְּטֵי צִדְקֶךָ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **judgments** that are characterized by **righteousness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [your righteous judgments]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **your righteousness**
UST your just
(צִדְקֶךָ)

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: [your righteous character]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| with uprightness of | sincerely |
| the judgments of | all of … regulations |
| your righteousness | your just |

# Psalms 119:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will keep your statutes; do not utterly leave me. BETH* | *I will obey your regulations; do not desert me! BETH* |

**ULT do not utterly leave me**
**UST** do not desert me
(אַל־תַּעַזְבֵנִי עַד־מְאֹד)

Here and throughout this psalm, the psalmist uses an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please do not utterly leave me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will keep | I will obey |
| your statutes | your regulations |
| do … leave me | desert me |

# Psalms 119:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *How can a young man keep his path pure? By keeping according to your word.* | *I know how a young person can live in the right way; it is by obeying your commands.* |

ULT **How can a young man keep his path pure**
UST I know how a young person can live in the right way
(בַּמֶּה יְזַכֶּה־נַּעַר אֶת־אָרְחֹו)

The psalmist is using the question form to emphasize how difficult this would be without the word of Yahweh as a guide. 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: [A young man can keep his path pure!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **his path**
UST can live in
(אֶת־אָרְחֹו)

Here the psalmist is speaking of a person's conduct and behavior as if it were a **path** that the person travels. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his conduct]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| can … keep … pure | the right way |

# Psalms 119:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *With all of my heart I seek you. Do not let me stray from your commandments.* | *I eagerly want to please you. Do not allow me to disobey what you have commanded.* |

ULT **With all of my heart**
UST eagerly
(בְּכָל־לִבִּי)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts, feelings, and desires exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [With everything that I am]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **I seek you**
UST I … want to please you
(דְּרַשְׁתִּיךָ)

In this verse, the speaker shifts from third person to first person. The pronoun **I** refers to the psalmist, and **you** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [I seek you, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Do not let me stray**
UST Do not allow me to disobey
(אַל־תַּשְׁגֵּנִי)

Here the psalmist is speaking of disobeying Yahweh as if it were to **stray** from a path. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Do not let me turn away]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I seek you | I … want to please you |

# Psalms 119:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have hidden your word in my heart so that I might not sin against you.* | *I have memorized your commands in order to not sin against you.* |

ULT **I have hidden your word in my heart**
UST I have memorized your commands
(בְּלִבִּי צָפַנְתִּי אִמְרָתֶךָ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of memorizing Yahweh's commands as if he had **hidden** them inside his **heart**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I have stored up your word in my mind] or [I have memorized your words]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **so that I might not sin**
UST in order to not sin against
(לְמַעַן לֹא אֶחֱטָא)

Here, **so that I might not sin** marks avoiding sin as the goal or purpose of memorizing Yahweh's word. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [with the purpose of avoiding sin]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I might … sin | sin against |

# Psalms 119:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Blessed {are} you, Yahweh; teach me your statutes.* | *Yahweh, I praise you; teach me your rules.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Blessed | I praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| your statutes | your rules |

# Psalms 119:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *With my lips I have recounted all of the judgments of your mouth.* | *I have proclaimed to the people all of the things that you have commanded us to do.* |

ULT **With my lips**
UST I have proclaimed to the people
(בִּשְׂפָתַי)

The psalmist is using **lips** to mean speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [With my words]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **all of the judgments of your mouth**
UST all of the things that you have commanded us to do
(כֹּל מִשְׁפְּטֵי־פִיךָ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **judgments** that come from Yahweh's **mouth**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [every judgment that you have pronounced]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **all of the judgments of your mouth**
UST all of the things that you have commanded us to do
(כֹּל מִשְׁפְּטֵי־פִיךָ)

The psalmist is using **mouth** to mean what Yahweh has spoken. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [every judgment that you have spoken]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the judgments of | the things that … have commanded us to do |

# Psalms 119:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I rejoice in the way of your testimonies as upon all riches.* | *I delight in obeying your instructions; I enjoy that more than being very rich.* |

**ULT in the way of your testimonies**
**UST** in obeying your instructions
(בְּדֶרֶךְ עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of following Yahweh's **testimonies** as if it were walking along a **way** or path. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in following your testimonies]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT as upon all riches**
**UST** I enjoy that more than being very rich
(כְּעַל כָּל־הוֹן)

The point of this comparison is that just as a person would rejoice over possessing great **riches**, so the psalmist rejoices in following Yahweh's testimonies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [as much as I would in having riches]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I rejoice | I delight |
| your testimonies | your instructions |

# Psalms 119:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will meditate on your precepts and I will study your paths.* | *I will carefully think about everything that you have commanded me, yes, I will pay attention to the way of living that you have taught me.* |

ULT **I will meditate on your precepts and I will study your paths**
UST I will carefully think about everything that you have commanded me, yes, I will pay attention to the way of living that you have taught me
(בְּפִקֻּדֶיךָ אָשִׂיחָה וְאַבִּיטָה אׇרְחֹתֶיךָ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [I will ponder everything that you have taught me about how to live]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **and I will study your paths**
UST yes, I will pay attention to the way of living that you have taught me
(וְאַבִּיטָה אׇרְחֹתֶיךָ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's instructions as if they were **paths** to examine and follow. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I will think carefully about your instructions]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will meditate | I will carefully think about |

# Psalms 119:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word. GIMEL* | *I am happy to obey your decrees; I will not forget what you have said. GIMEL* |

ULT **I will not forget**
UST I will not forget
(לֹא אֶשְׁכָּֽח)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word **forget** to emphasize that he will carefully remember Yahweh's precepts. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [I will continually keep in mind everything in]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I delight | I am happy to obey |
| in your statutes | your decrees |

# Psalms 119:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Deal kindly with your servant so that I may live and keep your word.* | *Do good things for me, the one who serves you, in order that I may continue to live and obey you.* |

ULT **with your servant**
UST for me, the one who serves you
(עַל־עַבְדֶּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person. Alternate translation: [with me, your servant]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your servant | me, the one who serves you |

# Psalms 119:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Uncover my eyes so that I may gaze on the marvelous things from your teaching.* | *Help me to understand how wonderful your instructions are.* |

**ULT Uncover my eyes**
**UST** Help me to understand
(גַּל־עֵינַי)

Here the psalmist is speaking of gaining spiritual understanding as if Yahweh would **Uncover** someone's **eyes** so they could see. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Help me to my understand]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT so that I may gaze on the marvelous things**
**UST** Help me to understand how wonderful
(וְאַבֵּיטָה נִפְלָאוֹת)

Here the psalmist is speaking of understanding Yahweh's teaching as if it were an object that someone could **gaze** at with his eyes. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [so that I may understand the marvelous things]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from your teaching | your instructions are |

# Psalms 119:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I am a sojourner in the land; do not hide your commandments from me.* | *I am living here on the earth for only a short time; please let me know your instructions.* |

**ULT I am a sojourner in the land**
**UST** I am living here on the earth for only a short time
(גֵּר אָנֹכִי בָּאָרֶץ)

This could mean: (1) the psalmist speaks of his short life on earth as a **sojourner** as if he were a foreigner who is living a temporary life on earth, Alternate translation: [I am like a foreigner living a brief time in the land] or (2) the psalmist's ignorance of Yahweh's law as if he were a foreigner who did not know the laws of the land. Alternate translation: [I am ignorant like a foreigner in the land]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT do not hide your commandments from me**
**UST** please let me know your instructions
(אַל־תַּסְתֵּר מִמֶּנִּי מִצְוֹתֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of the difficulty of understanding Yahweh's **commandments** as if they were an object that Yahweh could **hide** from him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [do not keep me from understanding your commandments]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the land | here on the earth |
| your commandments | your instructions |

# Psalms 119:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My soul languishes with longing for your judgments at all times.* | *I am weak from constantly desiring to know your instructions.* |

**ULT My soul languishes**
**UST** I am weak
(נָֽרְסָה נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist 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 languish]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT with longing**
**UST** from … desiring
(לְתַאֲבָֽה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **longing**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [longingly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT for your judgments**
**UST** to know your instructions
(אֶל־מִשְׁפָּטֶֽיךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **judgments**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [for the things you have decided]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My soul | I |
| your judgments | to know your instructions |

# Psalms 119:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You rebuke the proud, the cursed, those wandering from your commandments.* | *You rebuke people who are proud; you curse people who disobey your commands.* |

**ULT the proud, the cursed**
**UST** people who are proud; you curse
(זֵדִים אֲרוּרִים)

The psalmist is using the adjectives **proud** and **cursed** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these adjectives with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: [proud people, who are cursed]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT those wandering from your commandments**
**UST** people who disobey your commands
(הַשֹּׁגִים מִמִּצְוֹתֶיךָ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's **commandments** as if they were a path and disobedience to them as if it were **wandering** away from that path. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those disobeying your commandments]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You rebuke | You rebuke |
| the proud | people who are proud |
| the cursed | you curse |
| from your commandments | your commands |

# Psalms 119:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Roll from upon me disgrace and humiliation, for I have guarded your testimonies.* | *Do not allow them to continue to insult and scorn me; {I request this} because I have obeyed what you have required.* |

**ULT Roll from upon me**
**UST** Do not allow them to continue to … me
(גַּל מֵעָלַי)

The psalmist is speaking of **disgrace** and **humiliation** being removed from him as if these were objects that were placed on him that he needs Yahweh to **Roll** off of him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Rescue me from] or [Keep me from]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT disgrace and humiliation**
**UST** insult and scorn
(חֶרְפָּה וָבוּז)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **disgrace** and **humiliation**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [anything that will disgrace and humiliate me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT disgrace and humiliation**
**UST** insult and scorn
(חֶרְפָּה וָבוּז)

The terms **disgrace** and **humiliation** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [utter shame]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT for I have guarded your testimonies**
**UST** {I request this} because I have obeyed what you have required
(כִּי עֵדֹתֶיךָ נָצָרְתִּי)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because I have guarded your testimonies]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| disgrace | insult |
| and humiliation | and scorn |
| I have guarded | what you have required |
| your testimonies | I have obeyed |

# Psalms 119:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Though rulers sit and discuss against me, your servant meditates on your statutes.* | *Rulers gather together and plan ways to harm me, but I, your servant, will meditate on what you have commanded me.* |

ULT **your servant**
UST I, your servant
(עַבְדֶּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| rulers | Rulers |
| your servant | I, your servant |
| meditates | will meditate |
| on your statutes | on what you have commanded me |

# Psalms 119:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Indeed, your testimonies are my pleasure, my men of counsel. DALETH* | *Yes, I am delighted with your requirements; they are like {good} advisors for me. DALETH* |

ULT **are my pleasure**
UST I am delighted with
(שַֽׁעֲשֻׁעָ֥י)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **pleasure**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [are what please me greatly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **my men of counsel**
UST they are like {good} advisors for me
(אַנְשֵׁ֖י עֲצָתִֽי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **counsel**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [my counselors]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **my men of counsel**
UST they are like {good} advisors for me
(אַנְשֵׁ֖י עֲצָתִֽי)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's **testimonies** as if they were people who could give advice. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they advise me]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your testimonies | your requirements |
| are my pleasure | I am delighted with |
| my … counsel | they are like {good} advisors for me |

# Psalms 119:25

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My soul clings to the dust! Revive me according to your word.* | *{Sometimes} I feel like I will soon die; allow me to live as you have told me that you would do.* |

**ULT My soul clings to the dust**
**UST** {Sometimes} I feel like I will soon die
(דָּבְקָה לֶעָפָר נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist 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 cling to the dust]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT My soul clings to the dust**
**UST** {Sometimes} I feel like I will soon die
(דָּבְקָה לֶעָפָר נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is speaking as if his **soul** were pressed down and clinging to the **dust** of the ground which could mean (1) being near death and being buried in the ground, Alternate translation: [I am close to death] or (2) being in deep despair. It was part of the culture to sit or lay in the dust to express deep sorrow or mourning. Alternate translation: [I am in deep despair]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Revive me**
**UST** allow me to live
(חַיֵּנִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if he were dead and is asking Yahweh to **revive** or make him alive again. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Restore me to a full life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My soul | {Sometimes} I feel like I will soon die |

# Psalms 119:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I recounted my ways, and you answered me. Teach me your statutes.* | *When I told you about what was happening with me, you responded to me; teach me the things that you want me to do.* |

**ULT I recounted my ways**
**UST** When I told you about what was happening with me
(דְּרָכַי סִפַּרְתִּי)

The psalmist is speaking of his experiences as if they were **ways** or paths that he had walked along. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I recounted what I have done]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Teach me your statutes**
**UST** teach me the things that you want me to do
(לַמְּדֵנִי חֻקֶּיךָ)

The word **Teach** is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please teach me your statutes]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I recounted | When I told you about |
| Teach me | teach me |
| your statutes | the things that you want me to do |

# Psalms 119:27

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Make me understand the way of your precepts, so that I can meditate on your wonders.* | *Help me to understand how you want me to behave, and then I can think about how amazing your instructions are.* |

ULT **the way of your precepts**
UST how you want me to behave
(דֶּרֶךְ־פִּקּוּדֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's precepts or rules as if they were a **way** or path to follow. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [how to follow your precepts]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the way of your precepts**
UST how you want me to behave
(דֶּרֶךְ־פִּקּוּדֶיךָ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe the **way** that is characterized by following Yahweh's **precepts**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the way that your precepts prescribe]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **so that I can meditate**
UST and then I can think about
(וְאָשִׂיחָה)

The phrase **so that I can meditate** indicates the purpose for which the psalmist wants understanding. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: [in order for me to meditate]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Make me understand | Help me to understand |
| so that I can meditate | and then I can think about |
| on your wonders | how amazing your instructions are |

# Psalms 119:28

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My soul melts from grief. Lift me up by your word.* | *I am very sad, with the result that I am becoming weak; enable me to be strong again through a message from you.* |

**ULT My soul melts from grief**
**UST** I am very sad, with the result that I am becoming weak
(דָּלְפָה נַפְשִׁי מִתּוּגָה)

The psalmist 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 melt from grief]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT My soul melts from grief**
**UST** I am very sad, with the result that I am becoming weak
(דָּלְפָה נַפְשִׁי מִתּוּגָה)

The psalmist is speaking of becoming weak and tired from sadness or **grief** as if his **soul** were a solid object that **melts** and dissolves. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am weary from sadness]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT from grief**
**UST** am very sad
(מִתּוּגָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **grief**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [because I am so sad]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Lift me up**
**UST** enable me to be strong again
(קַיְּמֵנִי)

The psalmist is speaking of being strengthened as if Yahweh would **lift** him up physically from the ground. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Strengthen me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My soul | I … I |
| from grief | am very sad |

# Psalms 119:29

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Turn from me the path of deceit, and favor me with your teaching.* | *Prevent me from telling lies, and be kind to me by teaching me your instructions.* |

> ULT **Turn from me the path of deceit**
> UST Prevent me from telling lies
> (דֶּרֶךְ־שֶׁקֶר הָסֵר מִמֶּנִּי)

The word **Turn** is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please turn from me the path of deceit]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

> ULT **the path of deceit**
> UST from telling lies
> (דֶּרֶךְ־שֶׁקֶר)

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: [the practice of deceiving]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

> ULT **the path of deceit**
> UST from telling lies
> (דֶּרֶךְ־שֶׁקֶר)

The psalmist is speaking of deceptive behavior as if it were a **path** or road that a person walks along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [behaving in deceptive ways]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **the path of deceit**
> UST from telling lies
> (דֶּרֶךְ־שֶׁקֶר)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe the **path** that is characterized by **deceit**. If your language would not use this form, you could express the idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the deceitful path]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| deceit | lies |
| and … your teaching | and … teaching me your instructions |
| favor me with | be kind to me by |

# Psalms 119:30

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I agree with your judgments.* | *I have decided that I will faithfully obey you; I know that what you say is right.* |

ULT **the way of faithfulness**
UST that I will faithfully obey you
(דֶּרֶךְ־אֱמוּנָה)

The psalmist is speaking of faithful behavior as if it were a **way** or path that he has **chosen** to walk along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to behave faithfully]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the way of faithfulness**
UST that I will faithfully obey you
(דֶּרֶךְ־אֱמוּנָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to obey you faithfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the way of faithfulness**
UST that I will faithfully obey you
(דֶּרֶךְ־אֱמוּנָה)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe the **way** that is characterized by **faithfulness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the faithful way]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **I agree with**
UST I know that … is right
(שִׁוִּיתִי)

The word translated as **I agree with** could be: (1) a word meaning that the psalmist conforms himself with Yahweh's judgments. Alternate translation: [I conform myself to] or (2) a different word that is spelled the same way that means to set or place something. But in this case, there is no indication of where the psalmist would place Yahweh's judgments. Alternate translation: [I place]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I have chosen | I have decided |
| faithfulness | that I will faithfully obey you |
| your judgments | what you say |

# Psalms 119:31

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I cling to your testimonies; Yahweh, do not let me be shamed.* | *Yahweh, I try to carefully obey what you say; please do not allow me to do anything shameful.* |

**ULT do not let me be shamed**
**UST** please do not allow me to do anything shameful
(אַל־תְּבִישֵׁנִי)

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [do not let anyone put me to shame]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT I cling to your testimonies**
**UST** I try to carefully obey what you say
(דָּבַקְתִּי בְעֵדוֹתֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of being committed to obeying Yahweh's **testimonies** as if they were an object he could hold tightly to or **cling to**. Alternate translation: [I hold tightly to your testimonies] or [I am committed to obeying your testimonies]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT do not let me be shamed**
**UST** please do not allow me to do anything shameful
(אַל־תְּבִישֵׁנִי)

The expression **be shamed** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [please do not shame me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to your testimonies | what you say |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| do … let me be shamed | do … allow me to do anything shameful |

# Psalms 119:32

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I run in the way of your commandments, for you enlarge my heart. HE* | *I eagerly obey your instructions because you help me increasingly to understand {how they benefit me}. HE* |

**ULT I run in the way of your commandments**
**UST** I eagerly obey your instructions
(דֶּרֶךְ־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ אָרוּץ)

The psalmist is speaking of being committed to obeying Yahweh's commandments as if he would **run** along a **way** or path. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will be committed to obey your commandments]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT you enlarge my heart**
**UST** you help me increasingly to understand {how they benefit me}
(תַּרְחִיב לִבִּי)

The psalmist uses the phrase **you enlarge my heart** as if Yahweh were making his **heart** physically larger which could mean (1) that Yahweh is increasing the psalmist's understanding his commandments, Alternate translation: [you give me greater understanding of your commandments] or (2) that Yahweh is giving the psalmist a greater desire to obey his commandments. Alternate translation: [you give me greater desire to obey your commandments]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 119:33

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Teach me, Yahweh, the way of your statutes, and I will keep it {to} the end.* | *Yahweh, teach me what your regulations mean, and then I will always obey them.* |

ULT **Teach me, Yahweh, the way of your statutes**
UST Yahweh, teach me what your regulations mean
(הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה דֶּרֶךְ חֻקֶּיךָ)

The word **Teach** is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please teach me, Yahweh, the way of your statutes]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **the way of your statutes**
UST what your regulations mean
(דֶּרֶךְ חֻקֶּיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh’s statutes as if they were a **way** or path to follow. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [how to follow your statutes]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the way of your statutes**
UST what your regulations mean
(דֶּרֶךְ חֻקֶּיךָ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **way** that is characterized by following Yahweh’s **statutes**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the way that your statutes prescribe]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **and I will keep it**
UST and then I will … obey them
(וְאֶצְּרֶנָּה)

The phrase **and I will keep it** communicates a result of being taught. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a result clause. Alternate translation: [so that I will keep it]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Teach me | teach me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| your statutes | your regulations |

# Psalms 119:34

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Give me understanding, and I will guard your teaching, and I will keep it with a whole heart.* | *Help me to understand your instructions so that I may eagerly obey them.* |

**ULT and I will guard your teaching, and I will keep it**
**UST** your instructions so that I may … obey them
(וְאֶצְּרָה תּוֹרָתְךָ וְאֶשְׁמְרֶנָּה)

The phrases **and I will guard your teaching, and I will keep it** communicate results of receiving understanding. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a result clause. Alternate translation: [so that I will guard your teaching, and so that I will keep it]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT and I will guard your teaching**
**UST** your instructions so that I may … obey them
(וְאֶצְּרָה תּוֹרָתְךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of his commitment to obeying Yahweh's teaching as if he were physically standing **guard** over something. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I will surely observe your law] or [and I am completely committed to doing what it says]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT with a whole heart**
**UST** eagerly
(בְּכָל־לֵבָב)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's devotion and commitments exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with complete devotion]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Give me understanding | Help me to understand |
| and I will guard | so that I may … obey them |
| your teaching | your instructions |

# Psalms 119:35

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Guide me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it.* | *I am happy to do the things that you command, so teach me the best way to obey them.* |

> ULT **in the path of your commandments**
> UST the things that you command, so teach me the best way to obey
> (בְּנְתֵ֖יב מִצְוֹתֶ֣יךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's commandments as if they were a **path** to walk along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in obeying your commandments]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **in the path of your commandments**
> UST the things that you command, so teach me the best way to obey
> (בְּנְתֵ֖יב מִצְוֹתֶ֣יךָ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe the **path** that is characterized by following Yahweh's **commandments**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in the path your commandments have set out]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I delight | I am happy |

# Psalms 119:36

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Incline my heart toward your testimonies and not toward unrighteous gain.* | *Cause me to want to do what you say rather than to want to get things {that belong to other people}.* |

ULT **Incline my heart toward your testimonies and not toward unrighteous gain**
UST Cause me to want to do what you say rather than to want to get things {that belong to other people … }
(הַט־לִבִּי אֶל־עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ וְאַל אֶל־בָּצַע)

Here the psalmist is speaking of desiring to do Yahweh's will as if his **heart** were able to **incline** or lean toward Yahweh's teachings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Cause me to desire your testimonies and not unrighteous gain]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **unrighteous gain**
UST to get things {that belong to other people}
(בָּצַע)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **gain**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [getting things wrongfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your testimonies | what you say |
| unrighteous gain | to get things {that belong to other people} |

# Psalms 119:37

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things; in your ways, revive me.* | *Do not allow me to desire things that are not good for me; make me able to live as you want me to live.* |

ULT **Turn away my eyes**
UST Do not allow me to desire
(הַעֲבֵר עֵינַי)

Here, **eyes** represent the psalmist's attention and desire. By asking Yahweh to **turn away** his eyes, he means he wants to keep his attention away. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Keep my attention away]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in your ways**
UST as you want me to live
(בִּדְרָכֶךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's instructions as if they were **ways** or paths to walk along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [according to your instructions]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **revive me**
UST make me able to live
(חַיֵּנִי)

The word **revive** is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please revive me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **revive me**
UST make me able to live
(חַיֵּנִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if he were dead and is asking Yahweh to **revive** or make him alive again. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [restore me to a full life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 119:38

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Fulfill for your servant your word, which {is} for the fear of you.* | *Please do what you promised to do for me, your servant. Your promises are what cause people to deeply revere you.* |

**ULT for your servant**
**UST** for me, your servant
(לְעַבְדֶּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

**ULT {is} for the fear of you**
**UST** what cause people to deeply revere you
(לְיִרְאָתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **fear**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [is for those who reverently honor you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Fulfill | Please do |
| for your servant | for me, your servant |
| {is} for the fear of you | what cause people to deeply revere you |

# Psalms 119:39

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Turn away my reproach, which I dread, for your judgments are good.* | *I become afraid when my enemies insult me {for obeying you}; so please stop them, because it is good to do what you tell us to do.* |

ULT **Turn away my reproach**
UST my enemies insult me {for obeying you}; so please stop them
(הַעֲבֵר חֶרְפָּתִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if **reproach** were a physical object that a person could **Turn away** from. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Stop my enemies from reproaching me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my reproach**
UST my enemies insult me {for obeying you}
(חֶרְפָּתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **reproach**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the insults against me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **for your judgments are good**
UST because it is good to do what you tell us to do
(כִּי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ טוֹבִים)

The phrase **for your judgments are good** introduces the reason or grounds for the request. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a reason clause. Alternate translation: [because your judgments are good]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **for your judgments are good**
UST because it is good to do what you tell us to do
(כִּי מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ טוֹבִים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **judgments**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [for you judge rightly and your decisions are good]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my reproach | my enemies insult me {for obeying you} |
| I dread | I become afraid |
| your judgments | to do what you tell us to do |
| are good | it is good |

# Psalms 119:40

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Behold, I long for your precepts! In your righteousness, revive me! WAW* | *Indeed, I very much desire to obey what you have declared that we should do! Because you are righteous, please make me joyful again in living {for you}. WAW* |

ULT **Behold**
UST Indeed
(הִנֵּה)

The psalmist is using the term **Behold** to focus attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Listen to me when I say that]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **In your righteousness**
UST Because you are righteous
(בְּצִדְקָתְךָ)

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: [Because you do what is right]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **revive me**
UST please make me joyful again in living {for you}
(חַיֵּנִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if he were dead and is asking Yahweh to **revive** or make him alive again. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [restore me to a full life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for your precepts | what you have declared that we should do |
| In your righteousness | Because you are righteous |

# Psalms 119:41

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And let your covenant faithfulness come to me, Yahweh; your salvation, according to your word;* | *Then I will know that you faithfully love me, Yahweh; and that you will save me as you promised that you would do.* |

ULT **And let your covenant faithfulness come to me**
UST Then I will know that you faithfully love me
(וְיִבֹאֲנִי חֲסָדֶךָ)

The psalmist speaks of **covenant faithfulness** as if it were a person who could **come** to him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And show me your faithful love]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **your salvation**
UST and that you will save me
(תְּשׁוּעָתְךָ)

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: [rescue me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your salvation**
UST and that you will save me
(תְּשׁוּעָתְךָ)

The psalmist 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 let your salvation come to me]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your covenant faithfulness | you faithfully love me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| your salvation | and that you will save me |

# Psalms 119:42

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *then I will answer the one reproaching me {with} a word, for I trust in your word.* | *After you do that, I will be able to reply to those who insult me because I trust what you have said.* |

**ULT the one reproaching me**
**UST** to those who insult me
(חֹרְפִ֑י)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **one** of his enemies that is **reproaching** him. He means all his enemies who are insulting him in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [all my enemies who are insulting me]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

**ULT then I will answer the one reproaching me {with} a word, for I trust in your word**
**UST** After you do that, I will be able to reply to those who insult me because I trust what you have said
(וְאֶֽעֱנֶ֥ה חֹרְפִ֗י דָּ֫בָ֥ר כִּֽי־בָטַ֥חְתִּי בִדְבָרֶֽךָ׃)

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: [Since I I trust in your word, I will answer the one reproaching me with a word]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the one reproaching me | to those who insult me |
| I trust | I trust |

# Psalms 119:43

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *So do not utterly snatch the word of truth from my mouth, for I wait for your judgments.* | *Please do allow me to truthfully tell {them how you saved me}; you see, I am patiently waiting for you to act justly.* |

ULT **So do not utterly snatch the word of truth from my mouth**
UST Please do allow me to truthfully tell {them how you saved me}
(וְאַל־תַּצֵּל מִפִּי דְבַר־אֱמֶת עַד־מְאֹד)

Here the psalmist is speaking about telling the **word of truth** about Yahweh saving him as if they were something that someone could **snatch** out of his **mouth**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [So do not keep me from being able to tell others the word of truth]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the word of truth**
UST to truthfully tell {them … }
(דְבַר־אֱמֶת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **truth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the word that is true]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the word of truth | to truthfully tell {them … } |
| for your judgments | for you to act justly |

# Psalms 119:44

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then I will observe your teaching continually, forever and ever.* | *I will consistently obey your instructions, for as long as I live.* |

> ULT **forever and ever**
> UST for as long as I live
> (לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד)

The terms **forever** and **ever** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [always without end]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your teaching | your instructions |
| forever | for as long as I live |

# Psalms 119:45

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I will walk about in the broad, for I seek your precepts.* | *I will live freely and safely because I {always} try to obey your regulations.* |

ULT **And I will walk about in the broad**
UST I will live freely and safely
(וְאֶתְהַלְּכָה בָרְחָבָה)

The psalmist is speaking of living his life in freedom as if he could **walk about in the broad** open spaces. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And I will live in freedom]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the broad**
UST freely and safely
(בָרְחָבָה)

The psalmist is leaving out some of the words that the reader that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply it from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [in the broad open places]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **for I seek your precepts**
UST because I {always} try to obey your regulations
(כִּי פִקֻּדֶיךָ דָרָשְׁתִּי)

The phrase **for I seek your precepts** introduces the reason for the previous statement. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a reason clause. Alternate translation: [because I seek your precepts]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **for I seek your precepts**
UST because I {always} try to obey your regulations
(כִּי פִקֻּדֶיךָ דָרָשְׁתִּי)

Here the psalmist is speaking of trying to understand and follow Yahweh's rules as if they were an object someone would actually go search for or **seek**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for I will try to follow your precepts]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I seek | I {always} try to obey |
| your precepts | your regulations |

# Psalms 119:46

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I will speak of your testimonies before kings, and I will not have shame.* | *I will tell kings the things that you have said; I will not be ashamed {to do so}.* |

**ULT and I will not have shame**

UST I will not be ashamed {to do so}

(וְלֹא אֵבוֹשׁ)

The psalmist is expressing a positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I will speak boldly]

**Support Reference:** Litotes

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of your testimonies | the things that you have said |
| kings | kings |
| I will … have shame | I will … be ashamed {to do so} |

# Psalms 119:47

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I delight in your commandments, which I love.* | *I am very happy to obey the things that you command me to do; I love to do them.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And I delight | I am very happy to obey |
| I love | I love to do |

# Psalms 119:48

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I will lift up my palms to your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes. ZAYIN* | *I eagerly ask to receive more of your commandments. I love them, and I will think deeply about everything that you require us to do. ZAYIN* |

**ULT And I will lift up my palms to your commandments**
**UST** I eagerly ask to receive more of your commandments
(וְאֶשָּׂא־כַפַּי אֶל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ)

The phrase **And I will lift up my palms** usually refers to prayer, but here it could mean: (1) that the psalmist is reaching out to receive Yahweh's commandments. Alternate translation: [And I want more of your commandments] or (2) that the psalmist highly respects Yahweh's commandments. Alternate translation: [And I honor your commandments]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I love | I love |
| and I will meditate | and I will think deeply about |
| on your statutes | everything that you require us to do |

# Psalms 119:49

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Remember the word to your servant by which you have given me hope.* | *Please do what you said you would do for me, the one who serves you, because what you have said has caused me to confidently expect good things from you.* |

ULT **to your servant**
UST for me, the one who serves you
(לְעַבְדֶּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person. Alternate translation: [to me, your servant]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

ULT **you have given me hope**
UST has caused me to confidently expect good things from you
(יִחַלְתָּנִי)

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: [you have caused me to hope]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to your servant | for me, the one who serves you |
| you have given me hope | has caused me to confidently expect good things from you |

# Psalms 119:50

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *This {is} my comfort in my affliction because your promise revives me.* | *When I am suffering, your promise to me comforts me; knowing that you will do what you have said makes me joyful again in living {for you}.* |

**ULT This {is} my comfort**
**UST** your promise to me comforts me
(זֹאת נֶחָמָתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **comfort**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [This is what makes me feel better]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT in my affliction**
**UST** When I am suffering
(בְעָנְיִי)

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: [in what afflicts me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT your promise revives me**
**UST** you will do what you have said makes me joyful again in living {for you}
(אִמָּרָתְךָ חִיָּתְנִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if he were dead and Yahweh's **promise revives** or makes him alive again. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you restore my life through your promise]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in my affliction | When I am suffering |
| your promise | you will do what you have said |

# Psalms 119:51

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The proud utterly scoff at me; from your teaching I do not turn aside.* | *Proud people are always making fun of me, but I do not stop obeying your instructions.* |

ULT **The proud**
UST Proud people
(זֵדִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **proud** as a noun to refer to a group of people. 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 proud]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **from your teaching I do not turn aside**
UST but I do not stop obeying your instructions
(מִתּוֹרָתְךָ לֹא נָטִיתִי)

The psalmist is speaking of obedience to Yahweh's **teaching** as if it were staying on a physical path, and disobedience as if it were to **turn aside** from that path. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your teaching I do not disobey]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The proud | Proud people |
| scoff at me | are … making fun of me |
| from your teaching | obeying your instructions |

# Psalms 119:52

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I remember your judgments from ancient times, Yahweh, and I comfort myself.* | *Yahweh, I think about your regulations that you gave to us long ago. Doing that comforts me.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your judgments | your regulations |
| from ancient times | that you gave to us long ago |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 119:53

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Rage has seized me from the wicked rejecting your teaching.* | *When I see wicked people disregard your instructions, I become very angry.* |

**ULT Rage has seized me from the wicked rejecting your teaching**
**UST** When I see wicked people disregard your instructions, I become very angry
(זַלְעָפָה אֲחָזַתְנִי מֵרְשָׁעִים עֹזְבֵי תּוֹרָתֶךָ)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases as modeled in the UST, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes.

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT Rage has seized me**
**UST** I become very angry
(זַלְעָפָה אֲחָזַתְנִי)

The psalmist is speaking of **Rage** as if it were a person who could **seize** or grab someone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am overcome with rage]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT Rage has seized me**
**UST** I become very angry
(זַלְעָפָה אֲחָזַתְנִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **Rage**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [I become extremely angry]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT from the wicked**
**UST** When I see wicked people
(מֵרְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to refer to a group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could add a word such as "people." Alternate translation: [from wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Rage | very angry |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| has seized me | I become |
| from the wicked | When I see wicked people |
| rejecting | disregard |
| your teaching | your instructions |

# Psalms 119:54

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your statutes are music to me in the house of my sojourning.* | *During this short time that I am living here on the earth, the regulations that you have given to us are like music to me.* |

**ULT Your statutes are music to me**
**UST** the regulations that you have given to us are like music to me
(זְמִרוֹת הָיוּ־לִי חֻקֶּיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of **your statutes** as if they were **music** that brings delight. If your language has a comparable expression, you could use it here, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Your statutes are a delight to me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT in the house of my sojourning**
**UST** During this short time that I am living here on the earth
(בְּבֵית מְגוּרָי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **sojourning**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [where I temporarily dwell]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT in the house of my sojourning**
**UST** During this short time that I am living here on the earth
(בְּבֵית מְגוּרָי)

The psalmist is speaking of his life on earth as if it were a temporary dwelling place, calling it **the house of my sojourning**. If your language has a comparable expression, you could use it here, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [during my temporary stay on earth]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Your statutes | the regulations that you have given to us |
| my sojourning | During this short time that I am living here on the earth |

# Psalms 119:55

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I remember your name during the night, Yahweh, and I shall observe your teaching.* | *Yahweh, {even} during the night I think about you, so that I {always} obey your instructions.* |

**ULT I remember your name**
**UST** I think about you
(זָכַרְתִּי & שִׁמְךָ)

Here, **your name** represents Yahweh himself, including his character and reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I think about who you are]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| your teaching | your instructions |

# Psalms 119:56

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *This is for me, that I keep your precepts. HETH* | *This is what I do; I obey your regulations. HETH* |

ULT **This**
UST This
(זֹאת)

Here, **This** refers to what the psalmist has described in the preceding verse, his practice of remembering Yahweh and obeying his teaching. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [What I have described]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

# Psalms 119:57

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh {is} my portion; I promise to observe your words.* | *Yahweh, you have granted to me that I would belong to you, and I promise to obey what you tell me to do.* |

**ULT Yahweh {is} my portion**
**UST** Yahweh, you have granted to me that I would belong to you
(חֶלְקִי יְהוָה)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as the most valuable thing the psalmist possesses as if **Yahweh** were his **portion**, an allotment of land, or inheritance. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is my treasure]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Yahweh {is} my portion**
**UST** Yahweh, you have granted to me that I would belong to you
(חֶלְקִי יְהוָה)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh in the third person even though he has been addressing him directly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the second person. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, you are my portion]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I promise | and I promise to |

# Psalms 119:58

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I entreat your face with a whole heart; be merciful to me according to your word.* | *I earnestly plead with you {to be good to me}; act kindly to me as you promised that you would do.* |

**ULT I entreat your face**
**UST** I … plead with you {to be good to me}
(חִלִּיתִי פָנֶיךָ)

Here, **your face** represents Yahweh's presence and attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I earnestly seek your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT with a whole heart**
**UST** earnestly
(בְּכָל־לֵבָב)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's intentions and motives exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with complete sincerity] or [with sincere devotion]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| be merciful to me | act kindly to me |

# Psalms 119:59

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I examine my ways and turn my feet to your testimonies.* | *I think about my behavior, and {when it is wrong,} I once again obey what you tell me to do.* |

**ULT I examine my ways and turn my feet**
**UST** I think about my behavior, and {when it is wrong,} I once again obey
(חִשַּׁבְתִּי דְרָכָי וָאָשִׁיבָה רַגְלַי)

The word **and** here indicates a sequence of events. First the psalmist examines his conduct, and then he redirects himself toward Yahweh's instructions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this sequence more explicit. Alternate translation: [I examine my ways and then turn my feet]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

**ULT I examine my ways**
**UST** I think about my behavior, and {when it is wrong … }
(חִשַּׁבְתִּי דְרָכָי)

The psalmist is speaking of his behavior or conduct as if it were physical paths or **ways** that he could study or **examine**. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I consider my conduct]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and turn my feet to your testimonies**
**UST** I once again obey what you tell me to do
(וָאָשִׁיבָה רַגְלַי אֶל־עֵדֹתֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of obedience to Yahweh's **testimonies** as if it were on a physical path, and he would **turn** his **feet** to follow that path. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and redirect myself to obey your testimonies]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your testimonies | what you tell me to do |

# Psalms 119:60

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I hurry and do not delay to observe your commandments.* | *{When I understand} your instructions, I do them immediately.* |

> **ULT I hurry and do not delay**
> **UST** immediately
> (חַשְׁתִּי וְלֹא הִתְמַהְמָהְתִּי)

The phrases **I hurry** and **do not delay** mean similar things. The psalmist is saying it first positively and then negatively in order to emphasize the urgency with which he obeys Yahweh's commands. If a speaker of your language would not use repetition like this, in your translation you can convey the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [I quickly determine]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

# Psalms 119:61

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The cords of the wicked ensnare me; I do not forget your teaching.* | *Wicked people try to make me do bad things, but I continue to obey your instructions.* |

**ULT The cords of the wicked ensnare me**
**UST** Wicked people try to make me do bad things
(חֲבָלֵי רְשָׁעִים עִוְּדֵנִי)

The psalmist is speaking of the schemes of **wicked** people as if they were physical **cords** that are intended to **ensnare** him. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Those who are wicked try to trap me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the wicked**
**UST** Wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to refer to a group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could add a word such as "people." Alternate translation: [people who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT I do not forget**
**UST** but I continue to obey
(לֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word **forget** to emphasize that he will carefully remember Yahweh's precepts. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [I will continually keep in mind everything in]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the wicked | Wicked people |
| ensnare me | try to make me do bad things |
| your teaching | your instructions |

# Psalms 119:62

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *In the middle of the night I rise to praise you because of the judgments of your righteousness.* | *In the middle of the night I get up, in order to praise you because everything that you say is completely right.* |

ULT **because of the judgments of your righteousness**
UST because everything that you say is completely right
(עַ֣ל מִשְׁפְּטֵ֣י צִדְקֶ֑ךָ)

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 of the judgments of your righteousness, I rise in the middle of the night to praise you]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **the judgments of your righteousness**
UST everything that you say is completely right
(מִשְׁפְּטֵ֣י צִדְקֶ֑ךָ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **judgments** that is characterized by **righteousness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the judgments that reflect your righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **your righteousness**
UST is completely right
(צִדְקֶ֑ךָ)

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: [your just character]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to praise | in order to praise |
| the judgments of | everything that you say |
| your righteousness | is completely right |

# Psalms 119:63

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I {am} a companion to all who fear you and to observers of your precepts.* | *I am a friend of all those who deeply revere you, yes, to all those who obey what you tell us to do.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a companion | a friend |
| fear you | deeply revere you |
| your precepts | what you tell us to do |

# Psalms 119:64

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your covenant faithfulness fills the earth, Yahweh; teach me your statutes. TETH* | *Yahweh, you faithfully love people all over the earth; please {continue to} teach me how you want people to live. TETH* |

**ULT Your covenant faithfulness fills the earth**
**UST** you faithfully love people all over the earth
(מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ & חַסְדְּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of **covenant faithfulness** as if it were a substance that could **fill** a physical space. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Your covenant faithfulness includes everyone throughout the earth]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT Your covenant faithfulness**
**UST** you faithfully love
(חַסְדְּךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [The way you faithfully love]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Your covenant faithfulness | you faithfully love |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| your statutes | how you want people to live |

# Psalms 119:65

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You do good to your servant, Yahweh, according to your word.* | *Yahweh, you have done good things for me, your servant, just as you promised that you would do.* |

**ULT your servant**
**UST** me, your servant
(עַבְדֶּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| good | good things |
| your servant | me, your servant |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 119:66

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Teach me good discernment and understanding, for I trust in your commandments.* | *Teach me to understand {what is happening around me} and to think carefully {before I decide what to do}, because I believe that the best way to live is to obey what you tell us to do.* |

ULT **good discernment and understanding**
UST to understand {what is happening around me} and to think carefully {before I decide what to do}
(טָוּב טַ֥עַם וָדָ֗עַת)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **discernment** and **understanding**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [to discern well and to understand]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **good discernment and understanding**
UST to understand {what is happening around me} and to think carefully {before I decide what to do}
(טָוּב טַ֥עַם וָדָ֗עַת)

The terms **discernment** and **understanding** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [wise understanding]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| good | carefully |
| discernment | and to think … before I decide what to do |
| and understanding | to understand {what is happening around me} |
| I trust | I believe that the best way to live |

# Psalms 119:67

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Before I was afflicted, I was going astray, but now I observe your word.* | *Before you afflicted me, I did things that were wrong, but now I obey what you say to do.* |

> ULT **Before I was afflicted, I was going astray**
> UST Before you afflicted me, I did things that were wrong
> (טֶרֶם אֶעֱנֶה אֲנִי שֹׁגֵג)

The word **Before** here indicates a sequence of events. First there was a time of going astray, and then affliction came. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this sequence more explicit. Alternate translation: [I was going astray, and then I was afflicted]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

> ULT **I was afflicted**
> UST you afflicted me
> (אֶעֱנֶה)

The expression **was afflicted** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [you caused me to suffer]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

> ULT **I was going astray**
> UST I did things that were wrong
> (אֲנִי שֹׁגֵג)

The psalmist is speaking of disobedience as if it were physically **going astray** from a path. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I was disobeying your instructions]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I was afflicted | you afflicted me |
| I observe | I obey |

# Psalms 119:68

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You {are} good, and you do good. Teach me your statutes.* | *You are good, and what you do is good; teach me the {good} things that you have told us to do.* |

**ULT and you do good**
**UST** and what you do is good
(וּמֵטִיב)

The psalmist is leaving out information that the reader needs in order to understand the sentence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could supply this information from the context. Alternate translation: [and everything you do is good]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| good | are good |
| and you do good | and what you do is good |
| your statutes | the {good} things that you have told us to do |

# Psalms 119:69

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The arrogant smear lies on me; I, with a whole heart, I keep your precepts.* | *Proud people tell many lies about me, but as for me, I enthusiastically obey what you have told us to do.* |

**ULT The arrogant**
**UST** Proud people
(זֵדִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **arrogant** as a noun to refer to a group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could add a word such as "people." Alternate translation: [Arrogant people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT smear lies on me**
**UST** tell many lies about me
(טָפְלוּ עָלַי שֶׁקֶר)

The psalmist is using **smear lies on me** as a common expression of his culture to mean to slander someone by spreading false accusations about them. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [spread false accusations about me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT I, with a whole heart, I keep your precepts**
**UST** but as for me, I enthusiastically obey what you have told us to do
(אֲנִי בְכָל־לֵב ׀ אֶצֹּר פִּקּוּדֶיךָ)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **I keep** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that he is making a commitment to obey Yahweh. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [but as for me, I wholeheartedly promise to keep your precepts]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **with a whole heart**
UST enthusiastically
(בְּכָל־לֵ֫ב)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's intentions and motives exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with complete devotion] or [with full intentionality]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| The arrogant | Proud people |
| lies | many lies |
| your precepts | what you have told us to do |

# Psalms 119:70

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Their hearts {are} unfeeling like fat, I, {in} your teaching, I delight.* | *Those people are stupid, but as for me, I happily obey your instructions.* |

**ULT Their hearts {are} unfeeling**
**UST** Those people are stupid
(טָפַשׁ & לִבָּם)

Here, **hearts are unfeeling** represents that the enemies' **hearts** which represent their inner thoughts are **unfeeling** which means their emotions do not work and they lack feelings. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They are insensitive]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Their hearts {are} unfeeling like fat**
**UST** Those people are stupid
(טָפַשׁ כַּחֵלֶב לִבָּם)

The point of this comparison is that just as **fat** is insensitive, so his enemies' **hearts** are unable to feel or understand. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [Their hearts are dull]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT I, {in} your teaching, I delight**
**UST** but as for me, I happily obey your instructions
(אֲנִי תוֹרָתְךָ שִׁעֲשָׁעְתִּי)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **I delight** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize his enjoyment of obeying Yahweh's teaching. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [but as for me, I find joy in obeying your teaching]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {in} your teaching | your instructions |
| I delight | I happily obey |

# Psalms 119:71

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{It is} good for me that I have suffered so that I would learn your statutes.* | *It was good for me that you afflicted me because the result was that I learned {how good} your regulations {are}.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {It is} good | It was good |
| I have suffered | you afflicted me |
| your statutes | how good} your regulations {are} |

# Psalms 119:72

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The teaching of your mouth {is} good for me, more than thousands of gold and silver. YODH* | *The instructions that you give {to us} are beneficial to me. They are more beneficial than thousands of pieces of gold and silver. YODH* |

ULT **The teaching of your mouth**
UST The instructions that you give {to us}
(תּוֹרַת־פִּיךָ)

Here, **your mouth** represents Yahweh speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The teaching that you speak]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **The teaching of your mouth**
UST The instructions that you give {to us}
(תּוֹרַת־פִּיךָ)

The psalmist uses the possessive form **teaching of your mouth** to indicate that the **teaching** comes from Yahweh's **mouth**, meaning he is the source of the teaching. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this relationship in another way. Alternate translation: [The teaching that you have spoken]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **more than thousands of gold and silver**
UST They are more beneficial than thousands of pieces of gold and silver
(מֵאַלְפֵי זָהָב וָכָסֶף)

The psalmist says the teaching is **more than thousands of gold and silver**. This is a generalization for emphasis, meaning he considers Yahweh's teaching to be incomparably better and more valuable than any amount of wealth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [better than any amount of gold and silver]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The teaching of | The instructions that you give {to us} |
| {is} good | are beneficial |
| gold | gold |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and silver | and silver |

# Psalms 119:73

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your hands have made me and established me; give me understanding so that I may learn your commandments.* | *You created me and made me who I am; please help me to be wise so that I may learn {to obey} what you tell me to do.* |

**ULT Your hands have made me**
**UST** You created me
(יָדֶיךָ עָשׂוּנִי)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh creating him as if he **made** him by using his **hands** to shape him as an object might be formed out of clay. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You are the one who created me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and established me**
**UST** and made me who I am
(וַיְכוֹנְנֻנִי)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh has made him who he is as if he were a structure being **established** or firmly built. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and established me | and made me who I am |
| give me understanding | please help me to be wise |

# Psalms 119:74

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May the fearful of you see me and rejoice because I hope in your word.* | *I want everyone who deeply reveres you to see {what you have done for} me. Then they will be glad, because they will see {how good it is} that I have trusted you to do what you said.* |

ULT **May the fearful of you see me and rejoice because I hope in your word**
UST I want everyone who deeply reveres you to see {what you have done for} me. Then they will be glad, because they will see {how good it is} that I have trusted you to do what you said
(יְרֵאֶיךָ יִרְאוּנִי וְיִשְׂמָחוּ כִּי לִדְבָרְךָ יִחָלְתִּי)

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 hope in your word, may those who fear you see me and rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **the fearful of you**
UST everyone who deeply reveres you
(יְרֵאֶיךָ)

The psalmist is using the adjective **fearful** 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: [those who fear you]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the fearful of you | everyone who deeply reveres you |
| and rejoice | Then they will be glad |
| I hope | they will see {how good it is} that I have trusted you |

# Psalms 119:75

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, I know that your judgments {are} just, and {in} faithfulness you humble me.* | *Yahweh, I know that when you judge people, you are always right. I know that you have made me suffer only because you faithfully love me.* |

**ULT your judgments**
**UST** when you judge people
(מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **judgments**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the things you have judged]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and {in} faithfulness**
**UST** you faithfully love me
(וֶאֱמוּנָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and in being faithful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I know | I know |
| your judgments | when you judge people |
| {are} just | you are always right |
| and {in} faithfulness | you faithfully love me |
| you humble me | I know that you have made me suffer only because |

# Psalms 119:76

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Please may your covenant faithfulness be to comfort me, according to your word to your servant.* | *Please comfort me by showing that you faithfully love me as you said to me, your servant, that you would do.* |

ULT **your covenant faithfulness be to comfort me**
UST comfort me … you faithfully love me
(חַסְדְּךָ לְנַחֲמֵנִי)

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 way you faithfully love me comforts me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to your servant**
UST to me, your servant
(לְעַבְדֶּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Please | Please |
| your covenant faithfulness be | you faithfully love me |
| to your servant | to me, your servant |

# Psalms 119:77

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May your compassion come to me so that I may live, for your teaching {is} my delight.* | *I want you to act mercifully to me in order that I may continue to live, because I am delighted with your instruction.* |

ULT **May your compassion come to me**
UST I want you to act mercifully to me
(יְבֹאֻנִי רַחֲמֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of **compassion** as if it were a person who could travel or **come** to him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May you show compassion to me]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **your compassion**
UST act mercifully
(רַחֲמֶיךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **compassion**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [your merciful care]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{is} my delight**
UST I am delighted with
(שַׁעֲשֻׁעָי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **delight**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what delights me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your compassion | act mercifully |
| your teaching | your instruction |
| {is} my delight | I am delighted with |

# Psalms 119:78

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Let the proud have shame, for they have slandered me {with} a lie; I, I will meditate on your precepts.* | *Cause the proud people who falsely accuse me to be ashamed; but as for me, I will continue meditating on what you have commanded that I should do.* |

**ULT the proud**
**UST** the proud people
(זֵדִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **proud** 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: [those who are proud]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT I, I will meditate**
**UST** but as for me, I will continue meditating
(אֲנִי אָשִׂיחַ)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **I will meditate** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to mark a contrast between himself and the proud who slander him. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [as for me, I will meditate]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let … have shame | Cause … to be ashamed |
| the proud | the proud people |
| they have slandered me | accuse me |
| {with} a lie | falsely |
| I will meditate | I will continue meditating |
| on your precepts | on what you have commanded that I should do |

# Psalms 119:79

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May the fearful of you turn to me, so that they may know your testimonies.* | *Cause those who deeply revere you to come to me in order that they may learn what you say to us.* |

ULT **the fearful of you**
UST those who deeply revere you
(יְרֵאֶיךָ)

The psalmist is using the adjective **fearful** 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: [those who fear you]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **May the fearful of you turn to me**
UST Cause those who deeply revere you to come to me
(יָשֻׁובוּ לִי יְרֵאֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking as if the people were not paying attention to him but he wants them to **turn** back to him and pay attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May the fearful of me pay attention to me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **so that they may know**
UST in order that they may learn
(וְיֹדְעֵי)

Some ancient manuscripts read “so that they may know.” The ULT follows that reading. Other ancient manuscripts read “also those knowing.” 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.

**Support Reference:** Textual Variants

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the fearful of you | those who deeply revere you |
| so that they may know | in order that they may learn |
| your testimonies | what you say to us |

# Psalms 119:80

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May my heart be blameless in your statutes, so that I may not have shame. KAPH* | *Enable me to want to perfectly obey your regulations in order that I may not be ashamed {because of not doing that}. KAPH* |

**ULT May my heart be**
**UST** Enable me to want to … obey
(יְהִי־לִבִּי)

Here, **my heart** represents where the psalmist's inner life and devotion exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May my inner being be]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| blameless | perfectly |
| in your statutes | your regulations |
| not have shame | because of not doing that |

# Psalms 119:81

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My soul faints for your salvation! I wait for your word.* | *I desperately long for you to save me {from my enemies}, but I will wait, knowing that you will answer {my prayer}.* |

**ULT My soul faints**
**UST** I desperately long
(כָּלְתָה & נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using one part of himself, **My soul**, to represent his whole person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I faint]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT for your salvation**
**UST** for you to save me {from my enemies}
(לִתְשׁוּעָתֶךָ)

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: [for you to deliver me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My soul | I |
| for your salvation | for you to save me {from my enemies} |

# Psalms 119:82

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My eyes faint for your promise; saying, “When will you comfort me?”* | *My eyes are tired from watching for you to do what you promised that you would do, and I ask, “When will you help me?”* |

**ULT My eyes faint**
**UST** My eyes are tired
(כָּלוּ עֵינַי)

The psalmist is using one part of himself, his **eyes**, to represent his whole person in the act of watching expectantly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I grow weary with looking]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT When will you comfort me**
**UST** When will you help me
(מָתַי תְּנַחֲמֵנִי)

The psalmist is using the question form to express urgent longing rather than to seek information. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement or a request. Alternate translation: [Please comfort me soon!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for your promise | from watching for you to do what you promised that you would do |

# Psalms 119:83

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For I have become like a wineskin in the smoke; I do not forget your statutes.* | *Indeed, I feel as {weak and useless as} a wineskin that is {shriveled up from} hanging {a long time} in the smoke, but I have not forgotten your regulations.* |

ULT **For**
UST Indeed
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation. You may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [In fact,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **like a wineskin in the smoke**
UST as {weak and useless as} a wineskin that is {shriveled up from} hanging {a long time} in the smoke
(כְּנֹאד בְּקִיטֹור)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a wineskin** left **in the smoke** becomes shriveled and no longer useful, so the psalmist feels dried out and useless. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [just as useless as a wineskin that is ruined by smoke]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **I do not forget**
UST I have not forgotten
(לֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word **forget** to emphasize that he will carefully remember Yahweh's precepts. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [I will continually keep in mind everything in]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| like a wineskin | as {weak and useless as} a wineskin |
| your statutes | but … your regulations |

# Psalms 119:84

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *How many {are} the days of your servant? When will you act in pursuing justice for me?* | *I, your servant, cannot wait any longer! I want you to punish those who persecute me soon!* |

ULT **How many {are} the days of your servant**
UST I, your servant, cannot wait any longer
(כַּמָּה יְמֵי־עַבְדֶּךָ)

The psalmist is using the question form to express his frustration with waiting so long. 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: [My life is too short to wait any longer.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **your servant**
UST I, your servant
(עַבְדֶּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person. Alternate translation: [me, your servant]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

ULT **When will you act in pursuing justice for me**
UST I want you to punish those who persecute me soon
(מָתַי תַּעֲשֶׂה בְרֹדְפַי מִשְׁפָּט)

The psalmist is using the question form to urge Yahweh to act, not to seek information about timing. 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: [Please act soon in pursuing justice for me!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **in pursuing justice for me**
UST I want you to punish those who persecute me soon
(בְרֹדְפַי מִשְׁפָּט)

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: [in judging justly for me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your servant | I, your servant |
| justice | I want you to punish those who persecute me soon |

# Psalms 119:85

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The proud have dug pits for me, which is not according to your teaching.* | *It is as though my proud enemies have dug deep pits for me {to fall into}. These people disobey your instructions {to us}.* |

ULT **The proud**
UST my proud enemies
(זֵדִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **proud** 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: [Proud people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **have dug pits for me**
UST It is as though … have dug deep pits for me {to fall into}
(כָּרוּ־לִי & שִׁיחוֹת)

The psalmist is speaking of his enemies plotting harm as if they had **dug pits** to trap him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [have plotted to harm me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The proud | my proud enemies |
| pits | deep pits |
| according to your teaching | your instructions {to us} |

# Psalms 119:86

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *All of your commandments are truth. They pursue me {in} deceit; help me!* | *Everything that you tell us to do is truly good {for us}; but people are persecuting me by telling lies {about me}, so please help me!* |

ULT **are truth**
UST is truly good {for us}
(אֱמוּנָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **truth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [are trustworthy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{in} deceit**
UST by telling lies {about me}
(שֶׁקֶר)

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: [deceitfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

# Psalms 119:87

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *As a little they have made an end of me in the land, but I, I have not rejected your precepts.* | *Those people have come very close to killing me, but as for me, I have not stopped obeying what you have told us to do.* |

**ULT As a little they have made an end of me**
**UST** Those people have come very close to killing me
(כִּמְעַט כִּלּוּנִי)

The psalmist is using **As a little they have made an end of me** as a common expression of his culture to mean that the psalmist's enemies have nearly destroyed him. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They have almost destroyed me]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT but I, I have not rejected**
**UST** but as for me, I have not stopped obeying
(וַאֲנִי לֹא־עָזַבְתִּי)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **have not rejected** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize a contrast between the psalmist and his enemies. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [but I myself have not rejected]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the land | Those people … to killing me |
| I have … rejected | I have … stopped obeying |

# Psalms 119:88

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *According to your covenant faithfulness, keep me alive, so that I may observe the testimony of your mouth. LAMEDH* | *Because you faithfully love {me}, allow me to {continue to} live so that I may {continue to} obey what you have instructed {us to do}. LAMEDH* |

ULT **According to your covenant faithfulness**
UST Because you faithfully love {me}
(כְּחַסְדֶּךָ)

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: [According to how you love me so faithfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the testimony of your mouth**
UST what you have instructed {us to do}
(עֵדוּת פִּיךָ)

The psalmist uses the possessive form **the testimony of your mouth** to indicate that **the testimony** comes from Yahweh's **mouth**, the source of the testimony. Alternate translation: [the testimony that you have spoken]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the testimony of your mouth**
UST what you have instructed {us to do}
(עֵדוּת פִּיךָ)

The psalmist is using the term **mouth** to mean what Yahweh has spoken. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all that you have told us to do]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| According to your covenant faithfulness | Because you faithfully love {me} |
| the testimony of | what … have instructed {us to do} |

# Psalms 119:89

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Forever, Yahweh, your word is established in the heavens.* | *Yahweh, what you have proclaimed is eternal; it exists forever in heaven.* |

**ULT your word is established in the heavens**
**UST** what you have proclaimed … it exists forever in heaven
(לְדָבָרְךָ נִצָּב בַּשָּׁמָיִם)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's **word** as if it were a physical structure that is permanently **established in the heavens**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what you have said will be true in heaven forever]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT your word is established**
**UST** what you have proclaimed … it exists forever
(לְדָבָרְךָ נִצָּב)

The expression **is established** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [you have established your word]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Forever | is eternal |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| is established | it exists forever |
| in the heavens | in heaven |

# Psalms 119:90

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Your faithfulness {is} to generation and generation; you have established the earth, and it stands.* | *You will continue to act faithfully for people of every generation; you have put the earth in its place, and it remains firmly {there}.* |

**ULT Your faithfulness {is}**
**UST** You will continue to act faithfully
(אֱמוּנָתֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [You are faithful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT to generation and generation**
**UST** for people of every generation
(לְדֹר וָדֹר)

The psalmist is using to **to generation and generation** as a common expression of his culture to mean "throughout all generations" or "forever." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [throughout all generations]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT you have established the earth, and it stands**
**UST** you have put the earth in its place, and it remains firmly {there}
(כּוֹנַנְתָּ אֶרֶץ וַתַּעֲמֹד)

The phrase **and it stands** describes the result of Yahweh's having established the earth. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a result. Alternate translation: [you have established the earth, and that is why it remains firm]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Your faithfulness {is} | You will continue to act faithfully |
| to generation | for people of every generation |
| and generation | for people of every generation |
| you have established | you have put … in its place |
| the earth | the earth |

# Psalms 119:91

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *By your judgments, they stand today, for all things are your servants.* | *To this day, all things on the earth remain because you decided that they should remain; that is because everything on the earth serves you.* |

ULT **By your judgments, they stand today**
UST To this day, all things on the earth remain because you decided that they should remain
(לְמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ עָמְדוּ הַיּוֹם)

The pronoun **they** refers to heaven and earth, which the psalmist described in the previous two verses. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state that plainly. Alternate translation: [By your judgments, heaven and earth stand today]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **By your judgments**
UST because you decided that they should remain
(לְמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **judgments**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [According to your decisions]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **all things are your servants**
UST everything on the earth serves you
(הַכֹּל עֲבָדֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of **all things** as if they were people who could serve Yahweh as **servants**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [everything you created obeys your commands]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| By your judgments | because you decided that they should remain |
| are your servants | serves you |

# Psalms 119:92

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *If your teaching {had} not {been} my delight, then I would have perished in my affliction.* | *If I had not been delighted to obey your instructions, then I would have died because of what I was suffering.* |

**ULT If your teaching {had} not {been} my delight, then I would have perished in my affliction**

UST If I had not been delighted to obey your instructions, then I would have died because of what I was suffering

(לוּלֵי תוֹרָתְךָ שַׁעֲשֻׁעָי אָז אָבַדְתִּי בְעָנְיִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if **your teaching had not been my delight** were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that that Yahweh's teaching has been his delight. If your readers might think that what the psalmist is saying is uncertain, then you could translate this as a confident positive statement. Alternate translation: [Because your teaching has been my delight, I have not perished in my affliction]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions

**ULT in my affliction**

UST because of what I was suffering

(בְעָנְיִי)

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: [when I was afflicted]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your teaching | your instructions |
| had … {been} my delight | I had … been delighted to obey |
| I would have perished | I would have died |
| in my affliction | because of what I was suffering |

# Psalms 119:93

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will not forget your precepts forever, for through them you have preserved me alive.* | *I will always remember what you have declared that we should do. I obeyed those things, and as a result, you have enabled me to continue to live.* |

ULT **I will not forget**
UST I will always remember
(לֹא־אֶשְׁכָּֽח)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word **forget** to emphasize that he will carefully remember Yahweh's precepts. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [I will continually keep it in mind]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

ULT **for through them you have preserved me alive**
UST I obeyed those things, and as a result, you have enabled me to continue to live
(כִּ֤י בָם֙ חִיִּיתָֽנִי)

The word **for** indicates that the psalmist is giving the reason why he will not forget Yahweh's precepts. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason. Alternate translation: [because I obeyed them, you have kept me alive]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| forever | always remember |

# Psalms 119:94

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I am yours; save me, for I seek your precepts.* | *I belong to you; please save me from my enemies because I intentionally obey what you have declared that we should do.* |

**ULT I seek your precepts**
**UST** I intentionally obey what you have declared that we should do
(פִּקּוּדֶיךָ דָרָשְׁתִּי)

Here the psalmist is speaking of trying to obey Yahweh's instructions as if they were were an object for which a person must **seek**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I try hard to obey all your precepts]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| save me | please save me from my enemies |
| I seek | I intentionally obey |

# Psalms 119:95

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The wicked wait for me to destroy me; I pay attention to your testimonies.* | *Wicked men are waiting to ambush and kill me, but I think about what you have instructed {us to do}.* |

**ULT The wicked**
**UST** Wicked men
(רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist 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: [Those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT I pay attention to your testimonies**
**UST** but I think about what you have instructed {us to do}
(עֵדֹתֶיךָ אֶתְבּוֹנָן)

The phrase **I pay attention to your testimonies** marks a contrast between the psalmist and the wicked who wait to destroy him. Use a connector in your language that makes this contrast clear. Alternate translation: [I, however, pay attention to your testimonies]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The wicked | Wicked men |
| to destroy me | and kill me |
| your testimonies | what you have instructed {us to do} |

# Psalms 119:96

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have seen an end for all perfection; your commandment is very broad. MEM* | *I have learned that there is a limit to {even} the best {that people can achieve}, but what you decree is limitless. MEM* |

**ULT perfection**
**UST** the best {that people can achieve}
(תִּכְלָה)

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: [things that are perfect]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT I have seen an end for all perfection**
**UST** I have learned that there is a limit to {even} the best {that people can achieve}
(לְכָל תִּכְלָה רָאִיתִי קֵץ)

Here the psalmist uses or invents a proverb in order to convey the idea that even the best that man can do has its limits and comes to an end. Translate this proverb in a way that will be recognized as a proverb and be meaningful in your language and culture. Alternate translation: [I have seen that even the best has a limit]

**Support Reference:** Proverbs

**ULT your commandment is very broad**
**UST** but what you decree is limitless
(רְחָבָה מִצְוָתְךָ מְאֹד)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's **commandment** as if it were a physical space that is **very broad**, meaning it is without limit in its scope or application. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your commandment has no limits]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **your commandment is very broad**
> UST but what you decree is limitless
> (רְחָבָה מִצְוָתְךָ מְאֹד)

If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. [however, your commandment is very broad]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

# Psalms 119:97

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *How I love your teaching! It is my meditation all the day.* | *I love your instructions very much! I meditate on them throughout the day.* |

**ULT my meditation**
**UST** I meditate on
(שִׂיחָתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **meditation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what I think deeply about]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I love | I love |
| your teaching | your instructions |
| my meditation | I meditate on |

# Psalms 119:98

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is with me forever.* | *Because I know what you have told us to do and because I think about those things all the time, I have become wiser than my enemies.* |

ULT **Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is with me forever**
UST Because I know what you have told us to do and because I think about those things all the time, I have become wiser than my enemies
(מֵאֹיְבַי תְּחַכְּמֵנִי מִצְוָתְךָ כִּי לְעוֹלָם הִיא־לִי)

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 meditate on your commandment all the time, it makes me wiser than my enemies]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| makes me wiser | I have become wiser |
| than my enemies | than my enemies |
| forever | all the time |

# Psalms 119:99

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have more insight than all my teachers, for your testimonies are a meditation to me.* | *I understand more than any of my teachers do because I continually think about everything that you tell {us}.* |

ULT **I have more insight than all my teachers, for your testimonies are a meditation to me**

UST I understand more than any of my teachers do because I continually think about everything that you tell {us … }
(מִכָּל־מְלַמְּדַי הִשְׂכַּלְתִּי כִּי עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ שִׂיחָה לִי)

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: [Since your testimonies are a meditation to me, I have more insight than all my teachers]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **are a meditation to me**

UST I continually think about
(שִׂיחָה לִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **meditation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [are what I meditate on]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I have … insight | I understand |
| my teachers | my teachers |
| your testimonies | everything that you tell {us} |
| are a meditation | continually think about |

# Psalms 119:100

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I understand more than the elders, for I have kept your precepts.* | *I behave more intelligently than many old people do because I obey what you have declared that we should do.* |

ULT **I understand more than the elders, for I have kept your precepts**
UST I behave more intelligently than many old people do because I obey what you have declared that we should do
(מִזְּקֵנִים אֶתְבּוֹנָן כִּי פִקּוּדֶיךָ נָצָרְתִּי)

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 have kept your precepts, I understand more than the elders]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I understand | I behave … intelligently |
| more than the elders | more … than many old people do |

# Psalms 119:101

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have restrained my feet from every evil path, so that I might keep your word.* | *I have avoided all evil behavior in order that I may obey what you have told us to do.* |

ULT **I have restrained my feet**
UST I have avoided
(כָּלֶ֥אתִי רַגְלָ֑י)

The psalmist is using one part of a person, his **feet**, to mean all of himself in the act of conducting his life. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I have kept myself]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **from every evil path**
UST all evil behavior
(מִכָּל־אֹ֣רַח רָ֭ע)

The psalmist is speaking of avoiding sinful behavior as if he were staying away from walking on an **evil path**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from every sinful behavior]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| evil | evil |
| I might keep | I may obey |

# Psalms 119:102

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have not turned aside from your judgments, for you, you have taught me.* | *I have not stopped obeying your regulations because you are the one who taught {them} to me.* |

ULT **I have not turned aside**
UST I have not stopped obeying
(לֹא־סָרְתִּי)

The psalmist is speaking of disobeying Yahweh's **judgments** as if they were path that he could physically **turn aside from** or depart from. Your language may have a comparable expression you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I have not departed]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **from your judgments**
UST your regulations
(מִמִּשְׁפָּטֶיךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **judgments**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from what you have decreed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **you, you have taught me**
UST you are the one who taught {them} to me
(אַתָּה הוֹרֵתָנִי)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **have taught** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that it is Yahweh himself who has taught him. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [you yourself have taught me]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from your judgments | your regulations |

# Psalms 119:103

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *How your word is sweet to my palate, more than honey to my mouth!* | *When I read your words, it is like eating something sweet; {yes,} it is even better than eating honey!* |

**ULT How your word is sweet to my palate**
**UST** When I read your words, it is like eating something sweet
(מַה־נִּמְלְצוּ לְחִכִּי אִמְרָתֶךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's **word** as pleasing and satisfying as if it were food that could be eaten and taste **sweet**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [How pleasing your word is to me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| more than honey | {yes,} it is even better than … honey |

# Psalms 119:104

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *From your precepts I gain understanding; therefore, I hate every path of falsehood. NUN* | *Because I have learned what you have declared that we should do, I am able to understand {many things}; therefore, I hate all evil activities. NUN* |

**ULT I gain understanding**
**UST** I am able to understand {many things}
(אֶתְבּוֹנָן)

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: [I come to understand things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT therefore, I hate every path of falsehood**
**UST** therefore, I hate all evil activities
(עַל־כֵּן שָׂנֵאתִי ׀ כָּל־אֹרַח שָׁקֶר)

The term translated as **therefore** indicates that what follows is a result of what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [as a result, I hate every path of falsehood]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT every path of falsehood**
**UST** all evil activities
(כָּל־אֹרַח שָׁקֶר)

The psalmist is speaking of behavior as if it were a **path** that a person walks along. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [every way of living that is false]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT every path of falsehood**
**UST** all evil activities
(כָּל־אֹרַח שָׁקֶר)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **path** that is characterized by **falsehood**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [every false path]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **falsehood**
UST evil
(שֶׁקֶר)

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: [what is false]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I gain understanding | I am able to understand {many things} |

# Psalms 119:105

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Your word {is} a lamp to my foot and a light to my path.* | *Your instruction is like a lamp that guides me; yes, it is like a light that shows me where to walk.* |

**ULT Your word {is} a lamp to my foot and a light to my path**
**UST** Your instruction is like a lamp that guides me; yes, it is like a light that shows me where to walk
(נֵר־לְרַגְלִי דְּבָרֶךָ וְאוֹר לִנְתִיבָתִי)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's **word** providing guidance for how to live as if it were a **lamp** and a **light** that illuminate a dark **path** that a person is walking along. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Your word guides my steps and shows me how to live]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT { … is} a lamp to my foot and a light to my path**
**UST** is like a lamp that guides me; yes, it is like a light that shows me where to walk
(נֵר־לְרַגְלִי & וְאוֹר לִנְתִיבָתִי)

These two phrases **a lamp to my foot** and **a light to my path** mean basically the same thing. The psalmist 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: [is a guide for where I should walk]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {is} a lamp | is like a lamp that guides |

# Psalms 119:106

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have sworn and I will confirm {it}, to keep the judgments of your righteousness.* | *I have solemnly promised, and I am solemnly promising it again, that I will always obey your regulations; they are always right.* |

ULT **to keep the judgments of your righteousness**
UST that I will always obey your regulations; they are always right
(לִשְׁמֹר מִשְׁפְּטֵי צִדְקֶךָ)

Here, **to keep** marks **the judgments of your righteousness** as the goal or purpose of **I have sworn and I will confirm it**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that I would keep the judgments of your righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **the judgments of your righteousness**
UST your regulations; they are always right
(מִשְׁפְּטֵי צִדְקֶךָ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **judgments** that is characterized by **righteousness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the judgments that reflect your righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the judgments of your righteousness**
UST your regulations; they are always right
(מִשְׁפְּטֵי צִדְקֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract nouns for the ideas of **judgments** and **righteousness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [all that you have declared to be right]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I have sworn | I have solemnly promised |
| and I will confirm {it} | and I am solemnly promising it again |
| the judgments of | your regulations |
| your righteousness | they are always right |

# Psalms 119:107

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have been afflicted exceedingly; Yahweh, revive me according to your word.* | *Yahweh, I am suffering very much; cause me to be strong again as you have promised to do.* |

**ULT I have been afflicted exceedingly**
**UST** I am suffering very much
(נַעֲנֵיתִי עַד־מְאֹד)

The expression **been afflicted exceedingly** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Others have afflicted me exceedingly] or [I have suffered exceedingly]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT revive me**
**UST** cause me to be strong again
(חַיֵּנִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if he were dead and is asking Yahweh to **revive** or make him alive again. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [restore me to a full life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I have been afflicted | I am suffering |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 119:108

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Please accept the freewill offerings of my mouth, Yahweh, and teach me your judgments.* | *Yahweh, sometimes the sacrifices that I offer to you are just my prayers to thank and praise you. Please accept them, and teach me the things that you tell us to do.* |

**ULT the freewill offerings of my mouth**

**UST** sometimes the sacrifices that I offer to you are just my prayers to thank and praise you (נִדְבוֹת פִּי)

The psalmist is speaking of the praises that he says with his **mouth** as if they were a physical **freewill offerings** that he is voluntarily or freely presenting to Yahweh. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the praises that I freely bring to you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Please | Please |
| the freewill offerings of | sometimes the sacrifices that I offer to you … to thank and praise you |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and … your judgments | and … the things that you tell us to do |
| teach me | teach me |

# Psalms 119:109

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My soul {is} in my palm continually, but I do not forget your teaching.* | *My enemies are constantly trying to kill me, but I do not forget your instructions.* |

**ULT My soul {is} in my palm continually**
**UST** My enemies are constantly trying to kill me
(נַפְשִׁי בְכַפִּי תָמִיד)

The psalmist is using **My soul is in my palm** as a common expression of his culture to mean that the psalmist's life is in constant danger. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [My life is in constant danger]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT I do not forget**
**UST** I do not forget
(לֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word **forget** to emphasize that he will carefully remember Yahweh's precepts. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [I will continually keep in mind everything in]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My soul | My enemies are … trying to kill me |
| but … your teaching | but … your instructions |

# Psalms 119:110

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The wicked have set a snare for me, but I have not wandered from your precepts.* | *Wicked people have tried to seize me {as a hunter tries to catch little animals} with a trap, but I have not disobeyed what you declared that we should do.* |

ULT **The wicked**
UST Wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [Those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **have set a snare for me**
UST have tried to seize me {as a hunter tries to catch little animals} with a trap
(נָתְנוּ פַּח לִי)

The psalmist is speaking of the wicked plotting against him as if they had **set a snare** for him like a hunter trapping an animal. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [have plotted to catch me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **but I have not wandered from your precepts**
UST but I have not disobeyed what you declared that we should do
(וּמִפִּקּוּדֶיךָ לֹא תָעִיתִי)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's **precepts** as if they were a path and disobedience to them as if it were **wandering** away from that path. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but I have not stopped obeying your instructions]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The wicked | Wicked people |
| a snare | {as a hunter tries to catch little animals} with a trap |

# Psalms 119:111

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *I have inherited your testimonies forever, for they {are} the joy of my heart.* | *You have given me your instructions and they are mine forever; Indeed, they are what make me joyful.* |

**ULT I have inherited your testimonies forever**
**UST** You have given me your instructions and they are mine forever
(נָחַלְתִּי עֵדְוֹתֶיךָ לְעוֹלָם)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's **testimonies** being a valuable gift that the psalmist has given to keep forever as if they were **inherited** gift of land or goods which is given to someone's descendants. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Your testimonies are a valuable gift to me for all time]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the joy of my heart**
**UST** what make me joyful
(שָׂשׂוֹן לִבִּי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **joy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what makes my heart rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT my heart**
**UST** me
(לִבִּי)

The psalmist is using the word **heart** to refer to the place where his inner feelings and emotions exist. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my inner being]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| I have inherited | You have given me |
| your testimonies | your instructions |
| forever | and they are mine forever |
| the joy of | what make … joyful |

# Psalms 119:112

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have inclined my heart to do your statutes to forever, the end. SAMEKH* | *I have determined that I will always obey your commands as long as I live, to the very end. SAMEKH* |

**ULT I have inclined my heart**
**UST** I have determined
(נָטִ֥יתִי לִבִּ֗י)

Here the psalmist is speaking of desiring or resolving to do Yahweh's will as if his **heart** were **inclined** or leaning toward Yahweh's teachings. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I have resolved]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your statutes | your commands |
| to forever | as long as I live |

# Psalms 119:113

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The double-minded I have hated, but your teaching I have loved.* | *I hate people who cannot decide what to commit to, but I love your instructions.* |

ULT **The double-minded**
UST people who cannot decide what to commit to
(סֵעֲפִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **double-minded** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [People who are double-minded]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **The double-minded**
UST people who cannot decide what to commit to
(סֵעֲפִים)

Here the psalmist is speaking of a person who is not fully committed to obeying Yahweh as if they had two minds or were **double-minded**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Those who are not completely committed to obeying you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| but your teaching | your instructions |
| I have loved | but I love |
| The double-minded | people who cannot decide what to commit to |

# Psalms 119:114

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My hiding place and my shield {are} you; for your word I wait.* | *You are like a place where I can hide {from my enemies}, and you are like a shield {behind which I am protected from them}; I will wait, knowing that you will answer {my prayer}.* |

**ULT My hiding place and my shield {are} you**
**UST** You are like a place where I can hide {from my enemies}, and you are like a shield {behind which I am protected from them … }
(סִתְרִי וּמָגִנִּי אָתָּה)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh protecting him as if he were a **hiding place** and a **shield** that provide safety from danger. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You are the one who hides me and defends me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT My hiding place and my shield {are} you**
**UST** You are like a place where I can hide {from my enemies}, and you are like a shield {behind which I am protected from them … }
(סִתְרִי וּמָגִנִּי אָתָּה)

The terms **hiding place** and **shield** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [You are my sure protection]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and my shield | are like a shield {behind which I am protected from them} |

# Psalms 119:115

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Turn aside from me, doers of evil, and let me keep the commandments of my God.* | *You people who do evil things, go away from me so that I may obey what my God has commanded!* |

**ULT doers of evil**
**UST** You people who do evil things
(מְרֵעִים)

The psalmist is using the phrase **doers of evil** to describe people. If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [you who make a practice of doing evil things]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT and let me keep the commandments of my God**
**UST** so that I may obey what my God has commanded
(וְאֶצְּרָה מִצְוֹת אֱלֹהָי)

Here, **and let me keep** marks **the commandments of my God** as the goal or purpose of the evildoers departing. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [in order to allow me to keep the commandments of my God]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| doers of evil | You people who do evil things |
| of my God | my God |

# Psalms 119:116

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sustain me according to your word so that I may live, and do not make me ashamed of my hope.* | *Please enable me to be strong as you promised that you would do, in order that I may {continue to} live. I am confidently expecting {that you will restore me}; please do not disappoint me.* |

**ULT of my hope**

**UST** I am confidently expecting {that you will restore me}
(מִשִּׂבְרִי)

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: [of what I hope for]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| make me ashamed | please do … disappoint me |
| of my hope | I am confidently expecting {that you will restore me} |

# Psalms 119:117

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Support me so that I will be saved, and so I may gaze on your statutes continually.* | *Please take care of me so that I can be safe and so that I can always pay attention to what you have decreed that we should do.* |

**ULT so that I will be saved**
**UST** so that I can be safe
(וְאִוָּשֵׁעָה)

The expression **will be saved** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [so that you will save me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT so that I will be saved, and so I may gaze**
**UST** so that I can be safe and so that I can … pay attention to
(וְאִוָּשֵׁעָה וְאֶשְׁעָה)

Here, **so that** marks **I will be saved** and **I may gaze on your statutes** as two goals or purposes of the request **Support me**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that these are the purposes. Alternate translation: [in order that I will be saved and may gaze]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

**ULT and so I may gaze on your statutes**
**UST** and so that I can … pay attention to what you have decreed that we should do
(וְאֶשְׁעָה בְחֻקֶּיךָ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of understanding Yahweh's **statutes** as if it were an object that someone could **gaze** at with his eyes. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [so that I may understand all of your instructions]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| so that I will be saved | so that I can be safe |
| on your statutes | what you have decreed that we should do |

# Psalms 119:118

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You reject all those straying from your statutes, for their deceit {is} falsehood.* | *You despise everyone who disregards what you have decreed that we should do; indeed, they deceive others by lying.* |

**ULT all those straying from your statutes**
**UST** everyone who disregards what you have decreed that we should do
(כָּל־שֹׁגִים מֵחֻקֶּיךָ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's **precepts** as if they were a path and disobedience to them as if it were **straying** away from that path. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all those disobeying your statutes]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT their deceit**
**UST** they deceive others
(תַּרְמִיתָם)

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: [how they deceive]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT {is} falsehood**
**UST** by lying
(שֶׁקֶר)

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: [is false]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| You reject | You despise |
| from your statutes | what you have decreed that we should do |

# Psalms 119:119

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You cause to cease {as} dross all the wicked of the earth; therefore, I love your testimonies.* | *You get rid of all the wicked people on the earth as {people get rid of} trash; therefore, I love what you say to us.* |

**ULT You cause to cease {as} dross all the wicked of**
**UST** You get rid of all the wicked people … as {people get rid of} trash
(סִגִּים הִשְׁבַּתָּ כָל־רִשְׁעֵי)

The point of this comparison is that just as a metalworker removes **dross** or worthless waste from metal, so Yahweh removes **the wicked** from the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [You discard like worthless waste all the wicked of]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT the wicked of the earth**
**UST** the wicked people on the earth
(רִשְׁעֵי־אָרֶץ)

The psalmist is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [those on earth who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT therefore**
**UST** therefore
(לָכֵן)

The term translated as **therefore** indicates that what follows is a result of what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [This is why]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the wicked of | the wicked people |
| the earth | on the earth |
| I love | I love |
| your testimonies | what you say to us |

# Psalms 119:120

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My flesh shudders from dread of you, and I fear your judgments. AYIN* | *I tremble because I am afraid of you; I am afraid {because you punish those who do not obey} the rules that you have given to us. AYIN* |

**ULT My flesh shudders**
**UST** I tremble
(סָמַר & בְּשָׂרִי)

The psalmist is using one part of a person, his **flesh**, to mean all of himself in the act of trembling with fear. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I shudder]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT from dread of you**
**UST** because I am afraid of you
(מְפַחְדֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **dread**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [because I dread you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and I fear your judgments**
**UST** I am afraid {because you punish those who do not obey} the rules that you have given to us
(וּמִמִּשְׁפָּטֶיךָ יָרֵאתִי)

The phrase **and I fear your judgments** is explaining the a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because I fear your judgments]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from dread of you | because I am afraid of you |
| and I fear | I am afraid |
| your judgments | {because you punish those who do not obey} the rules that you have given to us |

# Psalms 119:121

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have done justice and righteousness; do not leave me to those oppressing me.* | *But I have done what is right and fair; so please do not allow people to oppress me.* |

ULT **justice and righteousness**
UST what is right and fair
(מִשְׁפָּט וְצֶדֶק)

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: [what is just and what is right]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| justice | what is right |
| and righteousness | and fair |
| do not leave me | so please do not allow |

# Psalms 119:122

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Be surety for your servant for good; do not let the arrogant oppress me.* | *Please ensure that good things will happen for me, your servant, and do not allow proud people to oppress me.* |

ULT **Be surety for your servant for good; do not let the arrogant oppress me**
UST Please ensure that good things will happen for me, your servant, and do not allow proud people to oppress me
(עָרֹב עַבְדְּךָ לְטוֹב אַל־יַעַשְׁקֻנִי זֵדִים)

These are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than commands. If the imperatives do not communicate polite requests for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates polite requests. It may be helpful to add an expression such as "please" to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please guarantee the safety of your servant; please do not let arrogant people oppress me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Be surety for your servant**
UST Please ensure that … for me, your servant
(עָרֹב עַבְדְּךָ)

Here, **Be surety** means to be a guarantor for. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Guarantee the safety of your servant]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **for your servant**
UST for me, your servant
(עַבְדְּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

ULT **the arrogant**
UST proud people
(זֵדִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **arrogant** 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: [arrogant people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| for your servant | for me, your servant |
| for good | good things will happen |
| the arrogant | proud people |

# Psalms 119:123

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My eyes have failed for your salvation and for the word of your righteousness.* | *My eyes are tired from watching for you to save me, yes, from watching for you to do what is right, as you promised to do.* |

**ULT My eyes have failed**
**UST** My eyes are tired from watching
(עֵינַי כָּלְוּ)

The psalmist is using one part of himself, his **eyes**, to mean all of himself in the act of watching and waiting. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I have grown weary from watching]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT for your salvation**
**UST** for you to save me
(לִישׁוּעָתֶךָ)

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: [waiting for you to rescue me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and for the word of your righteousness**
**UST** yes, from watching for you to do what is right, as you promised to do
(וּלְאִמְרַת צִדְקֶךָ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **word** that is characterized by **righteousness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and for your righteous word]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT your righteousness**
**UST** what is right
(צִדְקֶךָ)

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: [your righteous promise]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for your salvation | for you to save me |
| your righteousness | what is right |

# Psalms 119:124

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Deal with your servant according to your covenant faithfulness, and teach me your statutes.* | *Please do {things} for me, your servant, to show that you faithfully love me, and teach me how to do what you have decreed that we should do.* |

ULT **your servant**
UST me, your servant
(עַבְדֶּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

ULT **according to your covenant faithfulness**
UST to show that you faithfully love me
(כְּחַסְדֶּךָ)

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: [by loving me faithfully as you have promised]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your servant | me, your servant |
| according to your covenant faithfulness | to show that you faithfully love me |
| and … your statutes | and … what you have decreed that we should do |

# Psalms 119:125

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I {am} your servant; give me understanding, so that I can know your testimonies.* | *I am one who serves you; please enable me to understand {what you want me to know} in order that I may learn what you have instructed us to do.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your servant | am one who serves you |
| give me understanding | please enable me to understand {what you want me to know} |
| so that I can know | in order that I may learn |
| your testimonies | what you have instructed us to do |

# Psalms 119:126

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{It is} time for Yahweh to act; they have broken your law.* | *Yahweh, you should punish {people} now because they have disobeyed your laws.* |

**ULT { … It is} time for Yahweh to act; they have broken your law**
**UST** Yahweh, you should punish {people} now because they have disobeyed your laws
(עֵת לַעֲשׂוֹת לַיהוָה הֵפֵרוּ תּוֹרָתֶךָ)

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 they have broken your law, it is time for Yahweh to act]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT for Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh
(לַיהוָה)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh in the third person even though he has been addressing him directly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the second person. Alternate translation: [for you, Yahweh,]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {It is} time | now |
| for Yahweh | Yahweh |
| your law | your laws |

# Psalms 119:127

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Therefore, I love your commandments more than gold and more than fine gold.* | *Because {I do not want to be like those people,} I love your instructions more than I love gold; I love them more than I love very pure gold.* |

**ULT Therefore, I love your commandments**
**UST** Because {I do not want to be like those people,} I love your instructions
(עַל־כֵּן אָהַבְתִּי מִצְוֹתֶיךָ)

The term translated as **Therefore** indicates that what follows is a result of the psalmist's reaction to what came before. Here the psalmist's reaction to the commandments is in contrast with those mentioned in the previous verse who broke Yahweh's laws. Use a connector in your language that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [Because, unlike those people, I love your commandments]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I love | I love |
| more than gold | more than I love gold |
| and more than fine gold | I love them more than I love very pure gold |

# Psalms 119:128

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Therefore, all the precepts of everything I carefully observe; every path of falsehood I hate. PE* | *So I am careful to obey everything that you have declared that we should do, and I hate all of the evil things that people do. PE* |

ULT **Therefore**
UST So
(עַל־כֵּן)

The term translated as **Therefore** indicates that what follows is a result of what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [Because of this]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **every path of falsehood**
UST all of the evil things that people do
(כָּל־אֹרַח שָׁקֶר)

Here the psalmist is speaking of behavior as if it were a **path** that a person walks on. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [every way of living that is false]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **every path of falsehood**
UST all of the evil things that people do
(כָּל־אֹרַח שָׁקֶר)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **path** that is characterized by **falsehood**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [every false path]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **falsehood**
UST the evil things that people do
(שָׁקֶר)

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: [what is false]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

# Psalms 119:129

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your testimonies {are} wonderful; therefore, my soul has kept them.* | *All the things that you have instructed us to do are wonderful, so I obey them enthusiastically.* |

**ULT my soul has kept them**
**UST** I obey them enthusiastically
(נְצָרַתַם נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using one part of himself, his **soul**, to mean all of himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I have kept them]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Your testimonies | All the things that you have instructed us to do |
| my soul | I … enthusiastically |

# Psalms 119:130

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The doorway of your words gives light, giving understanding to the simple.* | *When someone explains what you have said {to us}, it is as though he is opening a door to a bright light {that allows people to see what they did not see before}; what he says causes {even} people who have not studied your instructions to be wise.* |

ULT **The doorway of your words gives light**
UST When someone explains what you have said {to us}, it is as though he is opening a door to a bright light {that allows people to see what they did not see before … }
(פֵּתַח דְּבָרֶיךָ יָאִיר)

Here the psalmist is speaking of understanding and insight that he gets from Yahweh's words as if it were a **light** shining through an open **doorway**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [When your words are explained, they bring insight]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **giving understanding to the simple**
UST what he says causes {even} people who have not studied your instructions to be wise
(מַבִין פְּתָיִים)

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: [helping the simple to understand]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the simple**
UST {even} people who have not studied your instructions
(פְּתָיִים)

SPEAKER is using the adjective **simple** 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: [those who are unlearned]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The doorway of | When someone explains … it is as though he is opening a door |
| giving understanding to | what he says causes … to be wise |

# Psalms 119:131

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I open wide my mouth and I pant, for I long for your commandments.* | *I eagerly desire to know what you have commanded {us}, as eagerly as though I were panting {for food and water}.* |

ULT **I open wide my mouth and I pant, for I long for your commandments**
UST I eagerly desire to know what you have commanded {us}, as eagerly as though I were panting {for food and water … }
(פִּי־פָעַרְתִּי וָאֶשְׁאָפָה כִּי לְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ יָאָבְתִּי)

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 long for your commandments, I open wide my mouth and I pant]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **I open wide my mouth and I pant**
UST as eagerly as though I were panting {for food and water}
(פִּי־פָעַרְתִּי וָאֶשְׁאָפָה)

Here the psalmist is speaking of his spiritual desire for Yahweh's commandments as if it caused him to **open wide** his **mouth** and **pant**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I eagerly desire and yearn deeply]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 119:132

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Turn to me and be gracious to me, according to the judgment for the ones loving your name.* | *Pay attention to me and act kindly to me as is right {for you to do} for {all} those who love you.* |

**ULT according to the judgment**
**UST** as is right {for you to do}
(כְּמִשְׁפָּט)

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: [according to how you judge]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Turn to me**
**UST** Pay attention to me
(פְּנֵה־אֵלַי)

The psalmist is speaking as if God were not looking at him and he asked him to **turn to** him and notice him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Consider me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT your name**
**UST** you
(שְׁמֶךָ)

Here, **your name** represents Yahweh himself, including his character and reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [everything about who you are]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and be gracious to me | and act kindly to me |
| according to the judgment | as is right {for you to do} |
| for the ones loving | for {all} those who love |

# Psalms 119:133

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Establish my steps in your word, and do not let any iniquity rule over me.* | *Please guide me by your instructions; do not allow me to desire to do sinful things more than to obey you.* |

**ULT Establish my steps in your word**
**UST** Please guide me by your instructions
(פָּעָמַי הָכֵן בְּאִמְרָתֶךָ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of his conduct in life as if it were **steps** that Yahweh could **Establish** or direct. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Guide my conduct by your word]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and do not let any iniquity rule over me**
**UST** do not allow me to desire to do sinful things more than to obey you
(וְאַל־תַּשְׁלֶט־בִּי כָל־אָוֶן)

The psalmist is speaking of **iniquity** as if it were (1) a living thing that could **rule over** someone, Alternate translation: [and do not let me be controlled by any sin] or (2) evil men that could have power over the psalmist. Alternate translation: [and do not let wicked men have power over me]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT iniquity**
**UST** sinful things
(אָוֶן)

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 thing]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Establish | Please guide |
| do … let … rule | do … allow … to desire to do … more than to obey you |
| iniquity | sinful things |

# Psalms 119:134

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Redeem me from the oppression of man, that I may keep your precepts.* | *Rescue me from the people who oppress me so that I may obey what you have declared that we should do.* |

ULT **from the oppression of man**
UST from the people who oppress me
(מֵעֹ֣שֶׁק אָדָ֑ם)

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: [from those who mistreat me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **from the oppression of man**
UST from the people who oppress me
(מֵעֹ֣שֶׁק אָדָ֑ם)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **oppression** that is performed by **man**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from those who mistreat me]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Redeem me | Rescue me |

# Psalms 119:135

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Make your face shine on your servant, and teach me your statutes.* | *Please act kindly toward me, your servant, and teach me what you have decreed that we should do.* |

ULT **Make your face shine**
UST Please act kindly toward
(פָּנֶיךָ הָאֵר)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh showing favor and kindness as if his **face** could **shine** on someone. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Show favor]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **your face**
UST Please act kindly toward
(פָּנֶיךָ)

Here, **your face** represents Yahweh's presence and attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **on your servant**
UST me, your servant
(בְּעַבְדֶּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person. Alternate translation: [on me, your servant]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| on your servant | me, your servant |
| and teach me | and teach me |
| your statutes | what you have decreed that we should do |

# Psalms 119:136

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Streams of water go down {from} my eyes, because they do not keep your law. TSADE* | *I cry very much because many people do not obey your instructions. TSADHE* |

**ULT Streams of water go down {from} my eyes**
**UST** I cry very much
(פַּלְגֵי־מַיִם יָרְדוּ עֵינָי)

Here the psalmist is speaking of his many tears as if they were **Streams of water** coming out of his **eyes**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I weep greatly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT they do not keep your law**
**UST** many people do not obey your instructions
(לֹא־שָׁמְרוּ תוֹרָתֶךָ)

Here the psalmist is using the pronoun **they** in a general sense, not to refer to specific people. Use an expression for this that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [people do not keep your law]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they do … keep | many people do … obey |
| your law | your instructions |

# Psalms 119:137

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Righteous {are} you, Yahweh, and upright {are} your judgments.* | *Yahweh, you are righteous and the rules that you have given to us are just.* |

**ULT Righteous {are} you, Yahweh, and upright {are} your judgments**
UST Yahweh, you are righteous and the rules that you have given to us are just
(צַדִּיק אַתָּה יְהוָה וְיָשָׁר מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Righteous are you, Yahweh, indeed, upright are your judgments]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Righteous {are} | are righteous |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and upright {are} | and … are just |
| your judgments | the rules that you have given to us |

# Psalms 119:138

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You have commanded your testimonies {in} righteousness and faithfulness exceedingly.* | *All of the things that you have instructed us to do are absolutely right and exactly what we need.* |

**ULT your testimonies {in} righteousness and faithfulness exceedingly**
**UST** All of the things … us to do are absolutely right and exactly what we need
(צֶדֶק עֵדְתֶּיךָ וֶאֱמוּנָה מְאֹד)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **righteousness** and **faithfulness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [your testimonies rightly and faithfully beyond measure]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your testimonies | All of the things … us to do |
| {in} righteousness | are absolutely right |
| and faithfulness | and … what we need |

# Psalms 119:139

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My zeal consumes me, for my adversaries have forgotten your words.* | *I am furious because my enemies disregard what you have told us to do.* |

**ULT** **My zeal consumes me**
**UST** I am furious
(צִמָּתַתְנִי קִנְאָתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **zeal**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [I am overwhelmingly angry]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My zeal | I am furious |
| consumes me | I am furious |
| my adversaries | my enemies |

# Psalms 119:140

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your word {is} refined exceedingly, and your servant loves it.* | *All of the things that you have said are perfectly dependable, and I, your servant, love them.* |

**ULT Your word {is} refined exceedingly**
**UST** All of the things that you have said are perfectly dependable
(צְרוּפָה אִמְרָתְךָ מְאֹד)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the purity of Yahweh's **word** as if it were metal that has been **refined** by fire to remove impurities. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Your word is completely pure]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Your word {is} refined exceedingly**
**UST** All of the things that you have said are perfectly dependable
(צְרוּפָה אִמְרָתְךָ מְאֹד)

The expression **is refined** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [You have completely tested and proven your word to be pure]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT and your servant**
**UST** and I, your servant
(וְעַבְדְּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and your servant | and I, your servant |
| loves it | love them |

# Psalms 119:141

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Small {am} I and despised; your precepts I have not forgotten.* | *I am not important, and people despise me, but I do not forget what you have declared that we should do.* |

**ULT and despised**
**UST** and people despise me
(וְנִבְזֶה)

The expression **despised** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is people generally. Alternate translation: [and others look down on me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT I have not forgotten**
**UST** but I do not forget
(לֹא שָׁכָחְתִּי)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word **forgotten** to emphasize that he will carefully remember Yahweh's precepts. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [I have carefully kept in my mind]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

# Psalms 119:142

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your righteousness {is} righteousness forever, and your law {is} truth.* | *You are righteous and you will be righteous forever, and your instructions are completely reliable.* |

ULT **Your righteousness {is} righteousness forever**
UST You are righteous and you will be righteous forever
(צִדְקָתְךָ צֶדֶק לְעוֹלָם)

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: [You always do what is right, and you will always be righteous]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **truth**
UST are completely reliable
(אֱמֶת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **truth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [trustworthy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Your righteousness {is} | You are righteous |
| righteousness | and you will be righteous |
| forever | forever |
| and your law {is} | and your instructions |

# Psalms 119:143

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Narrow and distress have found me; your commandments {are} my delight.* | *I am constantly stressed and anxious, but what you have commanded {us} causes me to rejoice.* |

ULT **Narrow and distress have found me**
UST I am constantly stressed and anxious
(צַר־וּמָצוֹק מְצָאֻנִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distress**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [I am troubled and and distressed]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Narrow and distress have found me**
UST I am constantly stressed and anxious
(צַר־וּמָצוֹק מְצָאֻנִי)

The terms **Narrow** and **distress** mean similar things. The psalmist 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 trouble has found me]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **Narrow and distress have found me**
UST I am constantly stressed and anxious
(צַר־וּמָצוֹק מְצָאֻנִי)

The psalmist is speaking of **Narrow and distress** as if they were living things that could have **found** a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am experiencing great trouble]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **your commandments {are} my delight**
UST but what you have commanded {us} causes me to rejoice
(מִצְוֹתֶיךָ שַׁעֲשֻׁעָי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **delight**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [your commandments delight me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and distress | and anxious |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my delight | causes me to rejoice |

# Psalms 119:144

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The righteousness of your testimonies {is} forever; give me understanding, so that I may live. QOPH* | *All of the things that you have instructed us to do are always right; help me to understand them in order that I may {continue to} live. QOPH* |

ULT **The righteousness of your testimonies {is} forever**
UST All of the things that you have instructed us to do are always right
(צֶ֣דֶק עֵדְוֹתֶ֣יךָ לְעוֹלָ֑ם)

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: [Your testimonies are righteous forever]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **The righteousness of your testimonies {is} forever**
UST All of the things that you have instructed us to do are always right
(צֶ֣דֶק עֵדְוֹתֶ֣יךָ לְעוֹלָ֑ם)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **testimonies** that are characterized by **righteousness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Your righteous testimonies last forever]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **give me understanding**
UST help me to understand them
(הֲבִינֵ֥נִי)

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: [enable me to understand them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The righteousness of | are … right |
| your testimonies | All of the things that you have instructed us to do |
| {is} forever | always |
| give me understanding | help me to understand them |

# Psalms 119:145

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I call out with a whole heart; answer me, Yahweh! I shall keep your statutes.* | *Yahweh, fervently I call out to you; please answer me! I fully intend to obey what you have decreed that we should do.* |

**ULT with a whole heart**
**UST** fervently
(בְּכָל־לֵבָב)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's intentions and motives exist. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with complete sincerity]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I call out | I call out to |
| Yahweh | Yahweh … you |
| your statutes | what you have decreed that we should do |

# Psalms 119:146

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I call out to you; save me, so that I may keep your testimonies.* | *I call out to you, "Save me, in order that I may obey the things that you have instructed us to do."* |

**ULT save me**
**UST** Save me
(הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי)

The psalmist is using the imperative **save me** to make a request to Yahweh. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please save me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I call out to you | I call out to you |
| save me | Save me |
| your testimonies | the things that you have instructed us to do |

# Psalms 119:147

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I preempt the dawn and cry for help; for your words I wait.* | *{Each morning} I arise before dawn and call to you to help me; I confidently wait for you to do what you have promised to do.* |

**ULT I preempt the dawn**
**UST** {Each morning} I arise before dawn
(קִדַּמְתִּי בַנֶּשֶׁף)

The psalmist is using **preempt the dawn** as a common expression of his culture to mean rising before the sun comes up. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I wake up before daylight]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and cry for help | and call to you to help me |

# Psalms 119:148

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My eyes preempt the night watches, to meditate on your word.* | *All during the night I am awake, so that I can think about what you have said {to us}.* |

ULT **My eyes preempt the night watches**
UST All during the night I am awake
(קִדְּמוּ עֵינַי אַשְׁמֻרוֹת)

Here, **My eyes preempt the night watches** represents the psalmist staying awake throughout the night (the night was divided into 3 periods called **watches**). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I stay awake through the night]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **to meditate on your word**
UST so that I can think about what you have said {to us}
(לָשִׂיחַ בְּאִמְרָתֶךָ)

The phrase **to meditate on your word** communicates the purpose for staying awake. The psalmist stays awake in order to think about what Yahweh has said. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this connection more explicit. Alternate translation: [in order to meditate on your word]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the night watches | All during the night |
| to meditate | so that I can think about |

# Psalms 119:149

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hear my voice according to your covenant faithfulness; Yahweh, according to your judgment, revive me.* | *Yahweh, because you faithfully love me, please listen to me {while I pray}; because you do what is right, make me joyful again in living {for you}.* |

ULT **Hear my voice**
UST please listen to me {while I pray}
(קוֹלִי שִׁמְעָה)

Here, **my voice** represents what the psalmist says when he prays. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Hear my prayer]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **according to your covenant faithfulness**
UST because you faithfully love me
(כְּחַסְדֶּךָ)

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: [loving me faithfully as you have promised]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **according to your judgment**
UST because you do what is right
(כְּמִשְׁפָּטֶךָ)

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: [according to the way you judge]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **revive me**
UST make me joyful again in living {for you}
(חַיֵּנִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if he were dead and is asking Yahweh to **revive** or make him alive again. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [bring me back to right living]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| according to your covenant faithfulness | because you faithfully love me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| according to your judgment | because you do what is right |

# Psalms 119:150

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The pursuers of evil purpose have drawn near; from your law they are far away.* | *People who intend to harm me are approaching me; they completely disregard your instructions.* |

**ULT The pursuers of evil purpose**
**UST** People who intend to harm me
(רֹדְפֵי זִמָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **evil purpose**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Those who are scheming to do evil things to me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT from your law they are far away**
**UST** they completely disregard your instructions
(מִתּוֹרָתְךָ רָחָקוּ)

The psalmist is speaking of the wicked people as if they were physically **far away** from Yahweh's law. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they do not obey your law at all]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| evil purpose | People who intend to harm me |
| from your law | your instructions |

# Psalms 119:151

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Near {are} you, Yahweh, and all your commandments {are} truth.* | *But Yahweh, you are near to me, and {I know that} what you command is completely right.* |

ULT **Near {are} you, Yahweh**
UST But Yahweh, you are near to me
(קָרוֹב אַתָּה יְהוָה)

The psalmist is speaking of the closeness of Yahweh's presence and help as if he were physically **Near**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You are present with me, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{are} truth**
UST is completely right
(אֱמֶת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **truth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [are true]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | But Yahweh |

# Psalms 119:152

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Long ago, I knew from your testimonies that you have founded them forever. RESH* | *Long ago, I learned from what you have said that you established your commandments to last forever. RESH* |

**ULT that you have founded them forever**
**UST** that you established your commandments to last forever
(כִּי לְעוֹלָם יְסַדְתָּם)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh's testimonies as if they were a structure built on a strong foundation that will last **forever**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that you issued them to last forever]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I knew | I learned |
| from your testimonies | from what you have said |
| you have founded them | you established your commandments |
| forever | to last forever |

# Psalms 119:153

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *See my affliction and rescue me, for I have not forgotten your law.* | *Please acknowledge that I am suffering, and save me {from it}, because I continually obey your instructions.* |

**ULT my affliction**
**UST** that I am suffering
(עָנְיִ֑י)

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: [how I am afflicted]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT for I have not forgotten your law**
**UST** because I continually obey your instructions
(כִּי־תוֹרָתְךָ֥ לֹ֗א שָׁכָֽחְתִּי)

Here, **for** introduces the reason why the psalmist appeals to Yahweh. He grounds his request in his faithfulness to Yahweh's law. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this connection more explicit as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my affliction | that I am suffering |
| and rescue me | and save me {from it} |
| your law | your instructions |

# Psalms 119:154

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Plead my plea and redeem me; for your word, revive me.* | *Defend me {when others accuse me} and rescue me {from them}; allow me {to continue} to live as you promised that you would do.* |

**ULT Plead my plea**
**UST** Defend me {when others accuse me}
(רִיבָה רִיבִי)

The psalmist is using a construction in which the 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 another way of saying this. Alternate translation: [Please defend my cause]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

**ULT for your word**
**UST** as you promised that you would do
(לְאִמְרָתֶךָ)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because of what you have promised]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT revive me**
**UST** allow me {to continue} to live
(חַיֵּנִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if he were dead and is asking Yahweh to **revive** or make him alive again. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [preserve my life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Plead | Defend me |
| my plea | when others accuse me |
| and redeem me | and rescue me {from them} |

# Psalms 119:155

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Salvation {is} far from the wicked, for they have not sought your statutes.* | *Wicked people do not obey what you have decreed that we should do, so you will certainly not save them.* |

**ULT Salvation {is} far from the wicked, for they have not sought your statutes**
**UST** Wicked people do not obey what you have decreed that we should do, so you will certainly not save them
(רָחוֹק מֵרְשָׁעִים יְשׁוּעָה כִּי־חֻקֶּיךָ לֹא דָרָשׁוּ)

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 the wicked have not sought your statutes, salvation is far from them]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT Salvation {is} far from the wicked**
**UST** Wicked people … you will certainly not save them
(רָחוֹק מֵרְשָׁעִים יְשׁוּעָה)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh not saving the wicked as if **Salvation** were an object that was physically **far** from them. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The wicked have no hope of being delivered]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Salvation**
**UST** save them
(יְשׁוּעָה)

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: [Being saved]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **from the wicked**
UST Wicked people
(מֵרְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to refer to a type of person. If your language does not use adjectives this way, you could translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [from those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Salvation | save them |
| from the wicked | Wicked people |
| they have … sought | do … obey |
| your statutes | what you have decreed that we should do |

# Psalms 119:156

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your compassions {are} many, Yahweh; according to your judgments, revive me.* | *Yahweh, you are constantly being merciful {to me} in many ways; because you always do what is right, please allow me {to continue} to live.* |

ULT **Your compassions**
UST you are constantly being merciful {to me}
(רַחֲמֶ֣יךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **compassions**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Your acts of compassion]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **according to your judgments**
UST because you always do what is right
(כְּמִשְׁפָּטֶ֣יךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **judgments**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [according to the way you judge]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **revive me**
UST please allow me {to continue} to live
(חַיֵּֽנִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if he were dead and is asking Yahweh to **revive** or make him alive again. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [preserve my life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Your compassions | you are constantly being merciful {to me} |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| according to your judgments | because you always do what is right |

# Psalms 119:157

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Many {are} my pursuers and my adversaries; from your testimonies I do not turn aside.* | *Many people cause me to suffer, but I continue to obey what you have instructed us to do.* |

**ULT my pursuers and my adversaries**
**UST** cause me to suffer
(רֹדְפַי וְצָרָי)

The terms **my pursuers** and **my adversaries** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [my enemies who pursue me]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT from your testimonies I do not turn aside**
**UST** but I continue to obey what you have instructed us to do
(מֵעֵדְוֹתֶיךָ לֹא נָטִיתִי)

The psalmist is speaking of obedience to Yahweh's **testimonies** as if it were staying on a physical path, and disobedience as if it were to **turn aside** from that path. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I do not disobey your testimonies]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and my adversaries | cause me to suffer |
| from your testimonies | but … what you have instructed us to do |

# Psalms 119:158

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have seen the treacherous, and I was disgusted, because they have not kept your word.* | *When I look at those who are not faithful to you, I feel disgust because they do not obey what you have instructed us to do.* |

ULT **the treacherous**
UST those who are not faithful to you
(בֹּגְדִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **treacherous** as a noun to refer to a type of person. If your language does not use adjectives this way, you could translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [treacherous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

# Psalms 119:159

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *See that I have loved your precepts; Yahweh, according to your covenant faithfulness, revive me.* | *Yahweh, please notice that I love what you have declared that we should do; because you faithfully love me, please allow me {to continue} to live.* |

ULT **according to your covenant faithfulness**
UST because you faithfully love me
(בְּחַסְדֶּךָ)

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: [according to how you love me so faithfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **revive me**
UST please allow me {to continue} to live
(חַיֵּנִי)

The psalmist is speaking as if he were dead and is asking Yahweh to **revive** or make him alive again. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [preserve my life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I have loved | I love |
| your precepts | what you have declared that we should do |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| according to your covenant faithfulness | because you faithfully love me |

# Psalms 119:160

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The head of your word {is} truth, and every judgment of your righteousness {is} forever. SHIN* | *Everything that you have said is true; every statement that you have made is right and will endure forever. SIN and SHIN* |

ULT **The head of your word**
UST Everything that you have said
(רֹאשׁ־דְּבָרְךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of the essence or totality of Yahweh's **word** as if it were the **head**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The essence of your word]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{is} truth**
UST is true
(אֱמֶת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **truth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [is trustworthy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **every judgment of your righteousness**
UST every statement that you have made is right
(כָּל־מִשְׁפַּט צִדְקֶךָ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **judgment** characterized by Yahweh's **righteousness**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this differently. Alternate translation: [every judgment that comes from your righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **of your righteousness**
UST is right
(צִדְקֶךָ)

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: [of your right standards]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and … {is} forever | and will endure forever |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| judgment<br>of your righteousness | statement that you have made<br>is right |

# Psalms 119:161

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Princes pursue me without cause, and my heart trembles from your words.* | *Rulers persecute me for no reason, but I deeply respect your words.* |

**ULT and my heart trembles from your words**
**UST** but I deeply respect your words
(ומדבריך פָּחַד לִבִּי)

Here, **and** introduces a contrast. Even though his enemies are persecuting the psalmist without cause, his fear and reverence are directed toward Yahweh's words, not toward the princes. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this contrast more explicit. Alternate translation: [however, my heart trembles from your words]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

**ULT my heart trembles**
**UST** I deeply respect
(פָּחַד לִבִּי)

Here the psalmist describes his deep inner reverence or awe as if his **heart** were actually trembling in fear. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am in awe]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Princes | Rulers |
| trembles | deeply respect |

# Psalms 119:162

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I am rejoicing over your word, like one finding great plunder.* | *The things that you say make me very happy, as happy as someone who has found a great treasure.* |

**ULT like one finding great plunder**
**UST** as happy as someone who has found a great treasure
(כְּמוֹצֵא שָׁלָל רָב)

The point of this comparison is to emphasize the great joy the psalmist finds in Yahweh's word, comparing it to the joy of discovering something very valuable or **great plunder**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make the meaning of this comparison more explicit. Alternate translation: [as joyful as one who finds a great treasure]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| am rejoicing | very happy |
| plunder | a … treasure |

# Psalms 119:163

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Falsehood I hate and I abhor; your law I love.* | *I thoroughly hate {all} lies but I love your instructions.* |

**ULT Falsehood**
**UST** {all} lies
(שֶׁקֶר)

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: [Everything that is false]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT I hate and I abhor**
**UST** I thoroughly hate
(שָׂנֵאתִי וַאֲתַעֵבָה)

The terms **I hate** and **I abhor** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [I completely despise]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Falsehood | {all} lies |
| your law | your instructions |
| I love | but I love |

# Psalms 119:164

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Seven times in the day I praise you, because of the judgments of your righteousness.* | *I praise you throughout the day because everything that you tell us to do is completely right.* |

ULT **Seven times in the day**
UST throughout the day
(שֶׁבַע בַּיּוֹם)

The psalmist says **Seven times in the day** as a generalization to emphasize how frequently he praises Yahweh. He does not necessarily mean exactly seven times. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [Many times in the day]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **the judgments of your righteousness**
UST everything that you tell us to do is completely right
(מִשְׁפְּטֵי צִדְקֶךָ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **judgments** characterized by Yahweh's **righteousness**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this differently. Alternate translation: [your righteous judgments]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **your righteousness**
UST is completely right
(צִדְקֶךָ)

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: [your right standards]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Seven times | throughout |
| I praise you | I praise you |
| the judgments of | everything that you tell us to do |
| your righteousness | is completely right |

# Psalms 119:165

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Great peace {is} to the ones loving your law, and there is no stumbling block for them.* | *Those who love your instructions live very peacefully; they will continually do the right thing.* |

ULT **peace**
UST live … peacefully
(שָׁלֹום)

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: [well-being]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and there is no stumbling block for them**
UST they will continually do the right thing
(וְאֵין־לָמֹו מִכְשֹׁול)

The psalmist is speaking of sinning as if it were a physical **stumbling block** which those who love Yahweh's law do not need to trip over. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and nothing causes them to sin]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| peace | live … peacefully |
| {is} to the ones loving | Those who love |
| your law | your instructions |
| stumbling block | they will continually do the right thing |

# Psalms 119:166

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I hope for your salvation, Yahweh, and I do your commandments.* | *Yahweh, I confidently expect that you will rescue me, and I obey what you have commanded {us}.* |

**ULT for your salvation**
**UST** that you will rescue me
(לִישׁוּעָתְךָ)

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: [for when you will save me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I hope | I confidently expect |
| for your salvation | that you will rescue me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 119:167

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My soul keeps your testimonies, and I love them exceedingly.* | *I obey what you have told us to do; I love all of it very much.* |

**ULT My soul keeps your testimonies**
**UST** I obey what you have told us to do
(שָׁמְרָה נַפְשִׁי עֵדֹתֶיךָ)

The psalmist is using one part of himself, his **soul**, to represent his whole person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I keep your testimonies]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My soul | I |
| keeps | obey |
| your testimonies | what you have told us to do |
| and I love them | I love all of it |

# Psalms 119:168

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I keep your precepts and your testimonies, for all my ways {are} before you. TAV* | *I obey what you have instructed us to do, because you know everything that I do. TAW* |

ULT **I keep your precepts and your testimonies, for all my ways {are} before you**
UST I obey what you have instructed us to do, because you know everything that I do
(שָׁמַרְתִּי פִקּוּדֶיךָ וְעֵדֹתֶיךָ כִּי כָל־דְּרָכַי נֶגְדֶּךָ)

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 all my ways are before you, I keep your precepts and your testimonies]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **all my ways {are} before you**
UST you know everything that I do
(כָל־דְּרָכַי נֶגְדֶּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh seeing and knowing everything he does as if his **ways** were physical paths that are visible **before** Yahweh. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for you see everything I do]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I keep | I obey |
| your precepts | what you have instructed us to do |
| and your testimonies | what you have instructed us to do |

# Psalms 119:169

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May my cry come near to your face, Yahweh; according to your word, give me understanding.* | *Yahweh, please listen as I call out to you {to help me}; help me to understand {your message}, as you said that you would do.* |

ULT **May my cry come near to your face**
UST please listen as I call out to you {to help me}
(תִּקְרַב רִנָּתִי לְפָנֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of his **cry** as if it were a living thing that could **come near** to Yahweh on its own. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly here and in the other verses. Alternate translation: [May you hear my cry]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **May my cry come near to your face**
UST please listen as I call out to you {to help me}
(תִּקְרַב רִנָּתִי לְפָנֶיךָ)

From this verse through verse 175, the psalmist is expressing his desire that something will do something using third-person verb forms. Here he wants his **cry** to **come near** to Yahweh. See the discussion in the introduction to Psalms about about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [I desire that my cry would come near to you]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **to your face**
UST to you
(לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here, **your face** represents being in Yahweh’s presence and attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [to your attention]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **give me understanding**
UST help me to understand {your message}
(הֲבִינֵנִי)

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: [cause me to understand]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my cry | as I call out … to help me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| give me understanding | help me to understand {your message} |

# Psalms 119:170

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May my plea come to your face; according to your word, deliver me.* | *Please pay attention to me while I pray to you to help me, and rescue me as you said that you would do.* |

**ULT May my plea come to your face**
**UST** Please pay attention to me while I pray to you to help me
(תָּבוֹא תְחִנָּתִי לְפָנֶיךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of his **plea** as if it were a living thing that could **come** to Yahweh on its own. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May you hear my plea]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT to your face**
**UST** to you
(לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here, **your face** represents your presence and attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [to your attention]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my plea | while I pray … to help me |
| deliver me | and rescue me |

# Psalms 119:171

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May my lips gush out praise, for you teach me your statutes.* | *I intend to continue praising {you} abundantly because you teach me what you have told us to do.* |

**ULT my lips**
**UST** I intend to continue … abundantly
(שְׂפָתַי)

Here, **my lips** represents the psalmist's speech. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my words]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT praise**
**UST** praising {you}
(תְּהִלָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [words that praise you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| praise | praising {you} |
| your statutes | what you have told us to do |

# Psalms 119:172

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May my tongue sing of your word, for all your commandments {are} righteousness.* | *I intend to continue singing about your instructions because everything that you command us to do is right.* |

ULT **my tongue**
UST I intend to continue singing
(לְשׁוֹנִי)

Here, **my tongue** represents the psalmist's speech. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my voice]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **{are} righteousness**
UST is right
(צֶדֶק)

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: [are just and fair]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my tongue | I intend to continue singing |
| {are} righteousness | is right |

# Psalms 119:173

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May your hand be to help me, for I have chosen your precepts.* | *Please be always ready to help me because I have chosen to obey what you have declared that we should do.* |

ULT **May your hand be to help me, for I have chosen your precepts**
UST Please be always ready to help me because I have chosen to obey what you have declared that we should do
(תְּהִי־יָדְךָ לְעָזְרֵנִי כִּי פִקּוּדֶיךָ בָחָרְתִּי)

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 have chosen your precepts, let your hand be to help me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **May your hand be**
UST Please be always ready
(תְּהִי־יָדְךָ)

The psalmist is using one part of Yahweh, his **hand**, to mean all of him in the act of helping him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [May you act]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I have chosen | I have chosen to obey |
| your precepts | what you have declared that we should do |

# Psalms 119:174

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I long for your salvation, Yahweh, and your law {is} my delight.* | *Yahweh, I eagerly desire for you to rescue me {from my enemies}, and I greatly enjoy your instructions.* |

**ULT for your salvation**
**UST** for you to rescue me {from my enemies}
(לִישׁוּעָתְךָ)

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: [for you to save me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT {is} my delight**
**UST** I greatly enjoy
(שַׁעֲשֻׁעָי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of delight, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [delights me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for your salvation | for you to rescue me {from my enemies} |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and your law | and … your instructions |
| {is} my delight | I greatly enjoy |

# Psalms 119:175

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May my soul live, and may it praise you, and may your judgments help me.* | *Please allow me to {continue to} live in order that I may {continue to} praise you and may the things that you tell us to do {continue to} help me.* |

ULT **May my soul live, and may it praise you**
UST Please allow me to {continue to} live in order that I may {continue to} praise you
(תְּחִי־נַפְשִׁי וּתְהַלְלֶךָּ)

The psalmist 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: [Let me live, and let me praise you]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **your judgments**
UST and … the things that you tell us to do
(וּמִשְׁפָּטֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **judgments**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the things you have decided]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my soul | me |
| and may it praise you | in order that I may {continue to} praise you |
| your judgments | and … the things that you tell us to do |

# Psalms 119:176

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have strayed like a perishing sheep; seek your servant, for I have not forgotten your commandments.* | *I am as vulnerable as a sheep that has left its flock; please search for me, your servant, because I have not forgotten what you have commanded {us}.* |

ULT **I have strayed like a perishing sheep**
UST I am as vulnerable as a sheep that has left its flock
(תָּעִ֥יתִי כְּשֶׂ֗ה אֹבֵ֫ד)

The point of this comparison is that just as a **perishing sheep** has wandered away from its shepherd and is lost and vulnerable, so the psalmist has **strayed** from Yahweh's ways and is in need of rescue. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [I have wandered away and am lost and vulnerable like a sheep that is about to die]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **seek your servant**
UST please search for me, your servant
(בַּקֵּ֣שׁ עַבְדֶּ֑ךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of himself in the third person as **your servant** to show humility. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in a humble form in the first person. Alternate translation: [seek for me, your servant]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

ULT **I have not forgotten your commandments**
UST I have not forgotten what you have commanded {us}
(מִצְוֹתֶ֖יךָ לֹ֣א שָׁכָֽחְתִּי)

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative particle **not** and the negative word **forgotten** to emphasize that he will carefully remember Yahweh's commandments. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [I have carefully kept your commandments in my mind]

**Support Reference:** Double Negatives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| like a … sheep | as a sheep |
| perishing | I am as vulnerable |
| seek | please search |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your servant | for me, your servant |

# Psalms 120

## Psalm 120 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 120 is one of the songs of ascents (Psalms 120–134). These are generally understood to be songs that were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the three major annual festivals. The term “ascents” is used because going up to the temple in Jerusalem involved a climb up Mount Zion.

1. Plea for deliverance (1–2)
2. Judgment on the deceiver (3–4)
3. Complaint of distant dwelling (5–7)

# Psalms 120:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A song of ascents. To Yahweh, in the distress to me, I called, and he answered me.* | *A psalm for people going up to the temple to worship. When I was distressed, I called out to Yahweh, and he answered me.* |

ULT **in the distress to me**
UST When I was distressed
(בַּצָּרָתָה לִּי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distress**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [while I was suffering]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| in the distress | When I was distressed |
| I called | I called out |

# Psalms 120:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, deliver my soul from a lip of falsehood, from a tongue of deceit.* | *{I prayed,} "Yahweh, rescue me from people who tell lies, who say things to deceive me!"* |

ULT **deliver my soul**
UST rescue me
(הַצִּ֣ילָה נַפְשִׁ֑י)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please deliver my soul]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **my soul**
UST me
(נַפְשִׁ֑י)

The psalmist is using **my soul** to represent himself as a whole person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **from a lip of falsehood, from a tongue of deceit**
UST from people who tell lies, who say things to deceive me
(מִשְּׂפַת־שֶׁ֭קֶר מִלְּשׁ֣וֹן רְמִיָּֽה)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [from those who speak lies]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **from a lip of falsehood, from a tongue of deceit**
UST from people who tell lies, who say things to deceive me
(מִשְׂפַּת־שֶׁקֶר מִלְּשׁוֹן רְמִיָּה)

The psalmist is using is using parts of a person, **lips** and **tongue** to represent his enemies who are telling lies about him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from people speaking falsehood and deceit about me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **from a lip of falsehood**
UST from people who tell lies
(מִשְׂפַּת־שֶׁקֶר)

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: [from those who speak falsely]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **from a tongue of deceit**
UST who say things to deceive me
(מִלְּשׁוֹן רְמִיָּה)

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: [from those who deceive]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | {I prayed,} “Yahweh |
| deliver | rescue |
| my soul | me |
| from a lip of falsehood | from people who tell lies |
| from a tongue of | who say things to deceive me |

# Psalms 120:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *What will he give to you, and what will he add to you, O tongue of deceit?* | *You people who lie, God will certainly punish you. He will do even more to you than that.* |

ULT **What will he give to you, and what will he add to you**
UST God will certainly punish you. He will do even more to you than that
(מַה־יִּתֵּן לְךָ וּמַה־יֹּסִיף לָּךְ)

The psalmist is using the question form to warn his enemies of certain punishment from God. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this question as a statement or as exclamation. Alternate translation: [He will give punishment to you, and he will add more to you]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **What will he give to you, and what will he add to you**
UST God will certainly punish you. He will do even more to you than that
(מַה־יִּתֵּן לְךָ וּמַה־יֹּסִיף לָּךְ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [What severe punishment will he give to you]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **will he give**
UST God will certainly punish you
(יִּתֵּן)

The pronoun **he** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [will Yahweh give]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **O tongue of deceit**
UST You people who lie
(לָשׁוֹן רְמִיָּה)

As in the previous verse, **tongue of deceit** represents the psalmist's enemies who are telling lies about him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [O you who speak deceitfully]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| O tongue of | You people who lie |
| deceit | You people who lie |

# Psalms 120:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Arrows of a warrior, sharpened, with coals of broom trees.* | *He will punish you severely as with a warrior's sharp arrows, and as with burning coals from broom tree wood.* |

ULT **Arrows of a warrior, sharpened, with coals of broom trees**
UST He will punish you severely as with a warrior's sharp arrows, and as with burning coals from broom tree wood
(חִצֵּי גִבּוֹר שְׁנוּנִים עִם גַּחֲלֵי רְתָמִים)

The psalmist 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 of the previous verse if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [He will give you arrows of a warrior, sharpened, with coals of broom trees]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **Arrows of a warrior, sharpened**
UST He will punish you severely as with a warrior's sharp arrows
(חִצֵּי גִבּוֹר שְׁנוּנִים)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if Yahweh's punishment were **arrows of a warrior, sharpened**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Severe punishment]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **sharpened**
UST sharp
(שְׁנוּנִים)

The expression **sharpened** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [that someone has sharpened]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **coals of broom trees**
UST burning coals from broom tree wood
(גַּחֲלֵי רְתָמִים)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if God's punishment were **coals of broom trees**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [burning destruction]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a warrior | a warrior's |

# Psalms 120:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Woe to me, for I am sojourning {in} Meshech; I am dwelling with the tents of Kedar.* | *It is terrible for me that I {have to} live among {people like those in} Meshech, {that} I {have to} dwell with {people like those who live in} the tents of Kedar.* |

**ULT Woe to me**
**UST** It is terrible for me
(אֽוֹיָה־לִּי)

The psalmist is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling, distress, about his situation. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. If not, you could say what the psalmist was feeling. Alternate translation: [How miserable I am]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

**ULT I am sojourning {in} Meshech; I am dwelling with the tents of Kedar**
**UST** I {have to} live among {people like those in} Meshech, that} I {have to} dwell with {people like those who live in} the tents of Kedar
(גָּרְתִּי מֶשֶׁךְ שָׁכַנְתִּי עִם־אָהֳלֵי קֵדָר)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. The places named both refer to the people who lived in those places who were considered barbarian or savage. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [I have lived for a long time among hostile people]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT the tents of Kedar**
**UST** {people like those who live in} the tents of Kedar
(אָהֳלֵי קֵדָר)

Here, **the tents of Kedar** represents the people who live in those tents. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people of Kedar]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Woe | It is terrible |
| I am sojourning | I {have to} live among |
| {in} Meshech | {people like those in} Meshech |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the tents of<br>Kedar | {people like those who live in} the tents of<br>Kedar |

# Psalms 120:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My soul has dwelt much to itself with a hater of peace.* | *I have lived too long among people who hate to live peacefully with others.* |

**ULT My soul has dwelt much to itself**
**UST** I have lived too long
(רַבַּת שָׁכְנָה־לָּהּ נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using **My soul** to represent himself as a whole person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I have dwelt for a long time]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT a hater of peace**
**UST** people who hate to live peacefully with others
(שׂוֹנֵא שָׁלוֹם)

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: [those who hate to live peacefully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| My soul | I |
| peace | peacefully with others |

# Psalms 120:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I {am} peace, but when I speak, they {are} for war.* | *I want to live peacefully, but whenever I speak {about it}, they want to fight.* |

**ULT I {am} peace**
UST I want to live peacefully
(אֲנִי־שָׁלוֹם)

The psalmist 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 am for peace]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT {am} peace**
UST peacefully
(שָׁלוֹם)

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: [am someone who wants to live peacefully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT but when I speak**
UST but whenever I speak {about it}
(וְכִי אֲדַבֵּר)

The psalmist 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 when I speak about peace]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT but when**
UST but whenever
(וְכִי)

The psalmist uses the word **but** here to indicate a contrast between his peaceful disposition and his neighbors' desire for conflict. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and yet when]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **they {are} for war**
UST they want to fight
(הֵ֣מָּה לַ֭מִּלְחָמָה)

The pronoun **they** refers to those who hate peace mentioned in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [those people are for war]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **{are} for war**
UST want to fight
(לַ֭מִּלְחָמָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **war**, you could express the same idea in another way as is modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {am} peace | peacefully |

# Psalms 121

## Psalm 121 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 121 is one of the songs of ascents (Psalms 120–134). These are generally understood to be songs that were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the three major annual festivals. The term “ascents” is used because going up to the temple in Jerusalem involved a climb up Mount Zion.

1. Confession of trust (1–2)
2. Assurance of protection (3–6)
3. Promise of preservation (Verses 7–8)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Multiple speakers

This psalm is a dialogue between two individuals as is made clear by the implied information in the UST. Make sure this is clear to your readers.

# Psalms 121:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A song of ascents. I lift up my eyes to the mountains. From where does my help come?* | *A psalm for people going up to the temple to worship. I look toward the hills {and I ask myself,} "Where will anyone to help me come from?"* |

ULT **I lift up my eyes**
UST I look
(אֶשָּׂא עֵינַי)

The psalmist is using **lift up my eyes** as a common expression of the culture to mean "to look up at" If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I look up]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **From where does my help come**
UST {and I ask myself,} "Where will anyone to help me come from
(מֵאַיִן יָבֹא עֶזְרִי)

The psalmist is using the question form to set up a confident answer that he provides in verse 2. 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 know where my help comes from!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **my help**
UST anyone to help me
(עֶזְרִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **help**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [someone to help me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

# Psalms 121:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My help {is} from with Yahweh, maker of heaven and earth.* | *{I answer myself,} "Yahweh is the one who helps me." He is the one who made everything that exists.* |

**ULT My help {is} from with Yahweh**
**UST** {I answer myself,} "Yahweh is the one who helps me
(עֶזְרִי מֵעִם יְהוָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **help**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [The one who helps me is Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT heaven and earth**
**UST** everything that exists
(שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ)

The psalmist is referring to all of creation by naming two extremes, **heaven** and **earth**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all creation]

**Support Reference:** Merism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| maker of | He is the one who made |
| heaven | everything that exists |
| and earth | everything that exists |

# Psalms 121:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May he not give your foot to the slipping; may your keeper not slumber.* | *{You say,} "May Yahweh not let you stumble. May Yahweh, who protects you, not become drowsy!"* |

**ULT May he not give your foot to the slipping; may your keeper not slumber**
**UST** { … You say,} "May Yahweh not let you stumble. May Yahweh, who protects you, not become drowsy
(אַל־יִתֵּן לַמּוֹט רַגְלֶךָ אַל־יָנוּם שֹׁמְרֶךָ)

By using **May**, the psalmist is expressing what he desires or prays will happen. See the discussion in the introduction to Psalms about "let" and "may" and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [I desire that he will not give your foot to the slipping; that your keeper will not slumber]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

**ULT May he not give**
**UST** {You say,} "May Yahweh not let
(אַל־יִתֵּן)

The pronoun **he** refers to Yahweh, who was named in verse 2. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers as is modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT your foot to the slipping**
**UST** you stumble … not
(לַמּוֹט רַגְלֶךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of experiencing danger or hardship as if it were a person's **footslipping** and causing him to fall. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you over to danger]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **your keeper**
> UST who protects you
> (שֹׁמְרֶךָ)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean the one who keeps you safe. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the one who keeps you safe]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your keeper | who protects you |

# Psalms 121:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Behold, he will not slumber, and he will not sleep, the keeper of Israel.* | *{I reply,} "Listen to me, the one who protects the people of Israel will never become drowsy; he never sleeps!"* |

**ULT** **Behold**
**UST** {I reply,} "Listen to me
(הִנֵּה)

The psalmist is using the term **Behold** to focus his listeners' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Pay attention]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT** **he will not slumber, and he will not sleep**
**UST** will never become drowsy; he never sleeps
(לֹא־יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [he will not slumber, indeed, he will not sleep]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT** **the keeper of Israel**
**UST** the one who protects the people of Israel
(שֹׁומֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean the one who keeps Israel safe. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the one who keeps Israel]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the keeper of Israel | the one who protects the people of Israel |

# Psalms 121:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh {is} your keeper; Yahweh {is} your shade upon your right hand.* | *Yahweh watches over you. He stays between you and what might harm you, like a shade {from the sun}.* |

**ULT Yahweh {is} your shade**
**UST** He stays between you and what might harm you, like a shade {from the sun}
(יְהוָה צִלֶּךָ)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh as if he were **shade** that protects a person from the heat of the sun. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is your protection]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT upon your right hand**
**UST** stays between you and what might harm you, like a shade {from the sun}
(עַל־יַד יְמִינֶךָ)

The psalmist is using **upon your right hand** as a common expression of the culture to mean “at your side” or “close beside you.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [at your side]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} your keeper | watches over you |
| Yahweh | He |

# Psalms 121:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *By day the sun will not strike you, and the moon by night.* | *The sun will not harm you during the day, and the moon will not harm you at night.* |

**ULT the sun will not strike you, and the moon by night**
UST The sun will not harm you … and the moon will not harm you at night
(הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא־יַכֶּכָּה וְיָרֵחַ בַּלָּיְלָה)

The psalmist is speaking of **the sun** and **the moon** as if they were living things that could **strike** a person and cause harm. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the heat of the sun will not harm you, and the moon will not harm you by night]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT and the moon by night**
UST and the moon … at night
(וְיָרֵחַ בַּלָּיְלָה)

The psalmist 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 moon will not strike you by night]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

# Psalms 121:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh will keep you from all evil; he will keep your soul.* | *Yahweh will protect you from everything that could harm you. He will keep you safe.* |

**ULT Yahweh will keep you from all evil; he will keep your soul**
UST Yahweh will protect you from everything that could harm you. He will keep you safe
(יְהוָה יִשְׁמָרְךָ מִכָּל־רָע יִשְׁמֹר אֶת־נַפְשֶׁךָ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will protect you from all evil, yes, he will keep your soul]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT from all evil**
UST from everything that could harm you
(מִכָּל־רָע)

The psalmist is using the adjective **evil** as a noun to mean evil things in general. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [from all evil things]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT your soul**
UST you
(אֶת־נַפְשֶׁךָ)

The psalmist is using one part of a person, his **soul**, to mean all of him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your very life]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| will keep you | will protect you |
| evil | that could harm you |
| he will keep | He will keep … safe |
| your soul | you |

# Psalms 121:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh will keep your going out and your coming in, from now and to forever.* | *Yahweh will protect you in everything that you do. {He will do that} now, and {he will do that} forever.* |

**ULT your going out and your coming in**
**UST** you in everything that you do
(צֵאתְךָ וּבוֹאֶךָ)

The psalmist is referring to all of a person's activities by naming two extremes, **your going out** and **your coming in**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [you safe everywhere you go]

**Support Reference:** Merism

**ULT from now and to forever**
**UST** {He will do that} now, and {he will do that} forever
(מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם)

The psalmist is referring to all of time by naming two extremes, **now** and **forever**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [for all time]

**Support Reference:** Merism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| will keep | will protect |
| forever | and {he will do that} forever |

# Psalms 122

## Psalm 122 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 122 one of the songs of ascents (Psalms 120–134). These are generally understood to be songs that were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the three major annual festivals. The term “ascents” is used because going up to the temple in Jerusalem involved a climb up Mount Zion.

1. Joy of arrival and worship (1–2)
2. The commendation of Jerusalem (vv. 3–5)
3. A prayer for peace and prosperity (6–9)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### “house of Yahweh”

In this psalm, the phrase “house of Yahweh” is used to talk about the temple. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state the meaning plainly.

#### “Jerusalem”

Many times in this Psalm, the psalmist speaks directly to the city of Jerusalem even though it is not a person and cannot hear. He refers to Jerusalem in both the second and third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about Jerusalem.

# Psalms 122:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A song of ascents; of David. I rejoiced in the ones saying to me, "Let us go {to} the house of Yahweh."* | *A psalm for people going up to the temple to worship. This is a psalm of David. I was very happy when people said to me, "We should go to Yahweh's temple {in Jerusalem}!"* |

**ULT {to} the house of Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh's temple {in Jerusalem}
(בֵּית יְהוָה)

David is speaking of the temple where Yahweh is worshiped as if it were a **house** in which he lived. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the temple of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of David | This is a psalm of David |
| I rejoiced | I was very happy |
| in the ones saying | when people said |
| {to} the house of Yahweh | Yahweh's temple {in Jerusalem} |

# Psalms 122:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Our feet are standing in your gates, Jerusalem.* | *Now we are standing inside the gates of Jerusalem.* |

**ULT Our feet are standing**
**UST** Now we are standing
(עֹמְדוֹת הָיוּ רַגְלֵינוּ)

Here David is using one part of their bodies, their **feet**, to mean all of them in the act of standing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [We are standing]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT in your gates, Jerusalem**
**UST** inside the gates of Jerusalem
(בִּשְׁעָרַיִךְ יְרוּשָׁלָ͏ִם)

David is speaking to **Jerusalem**, which is a city that cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him how he feels about Jerusalem. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [within the gates of Jerusalem]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

**ULT in your gates**
**UST** inside the gates of
(בִּשְׁעָרַיִךְ)

Here the word **gates** refers to the entire city or town. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [within you, the city of]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in your gates | inside the gates of |
| Jerusalem | Jerusalem |

# Psalms 122:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Jerusalem, the one built like a city that is joined to itself together.* | *This is Jerusalem, the city that people have built in a way that everything fits closely together.* |

**ULT like a city that is joined to itself together**
**UST** the city … in a way that everything fits closely together
(כְּעִ֥יר שֶׁחֻבְּרָה־לָּ֖הּ יַחְדָּֽו)

The point of this comparison is that just as a city whose parts are **joined** together is compact and unified, so is Jerusalem well-constructed and cohesive. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [so that all its parts are compact and unified]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT that is joined to itself together**
**UST** in a way that everything fits closely together
(שֶׁחֻבְּרָה־לָּ֖הּ יַחְדָּֽו)

The expression **is joined** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [that holds itself together]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Jerusalem | This is Jerusalem |

# Psalms 122:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Where the tribes go up, the tribes of Yah, a testimony to Israel, to give thanks to the name of Yahweh.* | *The tribes of Israel who belong to Yahweh go there, as Yahweh told them to do, in order to thank him.* |

ULT **the tribes of Yah**
UST who belong to Yahweh
(שִׁבְטֵי־יָהּ)

David is using this possessive form to mean that the tribes belong to and worship Yahweh because he is their God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the tribes that worship Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **Yah**
UST who belong to Yahweh
(יָהּ)

The word **Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **a testimony to Israel**
UST as Yahweh told them to do
(עֵדוּת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **testimony**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [as Yahweh instructed the people of Israel to do]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to give thanks to the name of Yahweh**
UST in order to thank him
(לְהֹדוֹת לְשֵׁם יְהוָה)

Here, **to** marks **give thanks to the name of Yahweh** as the goal or purpose of the tribes going up. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that they can give thanks to the name of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **to the name of Yahweh**
UST him
(לְשֵׁם יְהוָה)

David is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is or to refer to Yahweh himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to Yahweh himself]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the tribes | The tribes of Israel |
| the tribes of | who belong to Yahweh |
| Yah | who belong to Yahweh |
| a testimony | as Yahweh told … to do |
| to Israel | them |
| Yahweh | him |

# Psalms 122:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For there sit thrones for judgment, thrones for the house of David.* | *Indeed, the kings who belong to King David's family sit on their thrones there and judge {the people}.* |

**ULT For there sit thrones for judgment**
**UST** Indeed … sit on their thrones there and judge {the people}
(כִּי שָׁמָּה ׀ יָשְׁבוּ כִסְאוֹת לְמִשְׁפָּט)

Here, **For** introduces the reason why the tribes go up to Jerusalem: it is the place where kings will sit on their thrones to render justice. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason. Alternate translation: [Because that is where kings sit on thrones for judgment]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT thrones for judgment**
**UST** on their thrones … and judge {the people}
(כִּסְאוֹת לְמִשְׁפָּט)

Here, **thrones** represents the kings' royal authority to rule and judge. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [kings to carry out their judicial authority]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT for judgment**
**UST** and judge {the people}
(לְמִשְׁפָּט)

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: [where kings are judging]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT thrones for the house of David**
**UST** the kings who belong to King David's family
(כִּסְאוֹת לְבֵית דָּוִיד)

David is leaving out 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 sit thrones for the house of David]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **for the house of David**
UST the kings who belong to King David’s family
(לְבֵ֖ית דָּוִֽיד)

Here, **house** means all the people descended from a particular person. It envisions them as if they were one household living together. So **the house of David** figuratively means all the people descended from David. Alternate translation: [for the descendants of David]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| thrones | on their thrones |
| for judgment | and judge {the people} |
| for the house of David | the kings who belong to King David’s family |

# Psalms 122:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Ask {for} the peace of Jerusalem; may the ones loving you prosper.* | *Pray that people will live peacefully in Jerusalem! May those who love Jerusalem be successful.* |

ULT **Ask {for} the peace of Jerusalem; may the ones loving you prosper**
UST Pray that people will live peacefully in Jerusalem! May those who love Jerusalem be successful
(שַׁאֲלוּ שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלִַם יִשְׁלָיוּ אֹהֲבָיִךְ)

David is using words with similar sounds for poetic effect. In the original language, the words for **ask**, **peace**, and **prosper** all share sounds similar to the word for **Jerusalem**. David is using this wordplay to connect his prayer for the city with its very name. You may want to reproduce this effect if poetry in your language does this. If not, you could indicate it in a footnote.

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **Ask {for} the peace of Jerusalem**
UST Pray that people will live peacefully in Jerusalem
(שַׁאֲלוּ שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלִַם)

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: [Ask that those in the city of Jerusalem may live peacefully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Jerusalem**
UST people … in Jerusalem
(יְרוּשָׁלִַם)

Here the name **Jerusalem** represents the people who live in that city. Alternate translation: [those who live in Jerusalem]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **may the ones loving you prosper**
UST May those who love Jerusalem be successful
(יִשְׁלָיוּ אֹהֲבָיִךְ)

In this verse and to the end of the psalm, David is again speaking to Jerusalem, which is a city that cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about the welfare of those who love the city. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [may the ones loving Jerusalem prosper]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

ULT **may the ones loving you prosper**
UST May those who love Jerusalem be successful
(יִשְׁלָיוּ אֹהֲבָיִךְ)

David is saying what he wants to happen. See the discussion in the introduction to Psalms about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [I pray that the ones loving you will prosper]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the peace of | will live peacefully |
| Jerusalem | people … in Jerusalem |
| may … prosper | May … be successful |
| the ones loving you | those who love Jerusalem |

# Psalms 122:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let there be peace within your rampart, prosperity in your citadels.* | *May everyone inside the city walls live well and prosper.* |

> ULT **Let there be peace within your rampart, prosperity in your citadels**
> UST May everyone inside the city walls live well and prosper
> (יְהִי־שָׁלוֹם בְּחֵילֵךְ שַׁלְוָה בְּאַרְמְנוֹתָיִךְ׃)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the ideas of **peace** and **prosperity**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [May people live peacefully within your rampart, prosperously in your citadels]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

> ULT **Let there be peace within your rampart, prosperity in your citadels**
> UST May everyone inside the city walls live well and prosper
> (יְהִי־שָׁלוֹם בְּחֵילֵךְ שַׁלְוָה בְּאַרְמְנוֹתָיִךְ׃)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. David uses the two phrases together to emphasize his desire for the well-being of Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way, as the UST does. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Let there be peace within your rampart, yes, let there be prosperity in your citadels]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

> ULT **Let there be peace**
> UST May … live well
> (יְהִי־שָׁלוֹם)

David is asking Yahweh to bless the people of Israel. In your translation, use a form that people would recognize as a blessing in your language. You might express this as a prayer, if that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [May Yahweh bring peace]

**Support Reference:** Blessings

ULT **prosperity**
UST and prosper
(שַׁלְוָה)

David 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: [let there be prosperity]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| peace | May … live well |
| prosperity | and prosper |
| in your citadels | everyone inside the city walls |

# Psalms 122:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the sake of my brothers and my companions, let me speak, please, peace in you.* | *Because I love my fellow Israelites and my friends, I want to say, "May the people in Jerusalem live well."* |

ULT **For the sake of my brothers and my companions**
UST Because I love my fellow Israelites and my friends
(לְמַעַן אַחַי וְרֵעָי)

Here, **For** marks **the sake of my brothers and my companions** as the motivation for David speaking peace. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [Because I love my brothers and my companions]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **my brothers**
UST my fellow Israelites
(אַחַי)

The psalmist is using the term **brothers** to describe people who are descended from the same ancestor or all the Israelites. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my countrymen]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **let me speak, please, peace in you**
UST I want to say, May the people in Jerusalem live well
(אֲדַבְּרָה־נָּא שָׁלוֹם בָּךְ)

David is using **please, peace in you** as a common expression of his culture used to wish someone well or to pronounce a blessing. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [let me say, "Peace be with you"] or [I pray for peace for you]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **peace in you**
UST May the people in Jerusalem live well
(שָׁלוֹם בָּךְ)

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: [may people live peacefully within you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and my companions | and my friends |
| please | I want to say |
| peace | live well |

# Psalms 122:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the sake of the house of Yahweh our God, let me seek good for you.* | *Because Yahweh our God has his temple there, I intend to always do what is best for Jerusalem.* |

ULT **For the sake of the house of Yahweh our God**
UST Because Yahweh our God has his temple there
(לְמַעַן בֵּית־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

Here, **For** marks **the sake of the house of Yahweh our God** as the motivation for David seeking good. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [Because I love the house of Yahweh our God]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **the house of Yahweh**
UST Yahweh … has his temple there
(בֵּית־יְהוָה)

David is speaking of the temple where Yahweh is worshiped as if it were a **house** in which he lived. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the temple of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **good**
UST what is best
(טוֹב)

David is using the adjective **good** as a noun to refer to good things. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [what is good]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the house of Yahweh | Yahweh … has his temple there |
| our God | our God |
| let me seek | I intend to always do |
| good | what is best |

# Psalms 123

## Psalm 123 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 123 is one of the songs of ascents (Psalms 120–134). These are generally understood to be songs that were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the three major annual festivals. The term “ascents” is used because going up to the temple in Jerusalem involved a climb up Mount Zion.

1. The servant’s posture: looking to Yahweh (1–2)
2. The servant’s plea: request for mercy (3–4)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Trust

Just as a servant trusts his master to protect him, so the psalmist is trusting God to stop proud people from insulting him. (See: trust, trusted, trustworthy, trustworthiness)

# Psalms 123:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A song of ascents. To you I lift up my eyes, the one dwelling in the heavens.* | *A psalm for people going up to the temple to worship. Yahweh, I look up toward you who live in heaven.* |

ULT **I lift up my eyes**
UST I look up
(נָשָׂאתִי אֶת־עֵינָי)

The psalmist is using **I lift up my eyes** as a common expression of the culture to mean that he looks expectantly toward God for help. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I look expectantly]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **I lift up my eyes**
UST I look up
(נָשָׂאתִי אֶת־עֵינָי)

Here the pronouns **I** and **my** refers to the psalmist, who speaks as an individual in this verse. However, in verse 2, the psalmist shifts to the plural **our** and **us**, indicating that he is now speaking on behalf of a group. If using the singular form of the pronouns here would not be natural in your language, you could use the plural forms in your translation. Alternate translation: [we lift up our eyes]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the heavens | in heaven |

# Psalms 123:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Behold, as the eyes of servants {are} to the hand of their masters, as the eyes of a maidservant {are} to the hand of her mistress, thus our eyes {are} to Yahweh our God, until he is gracious to us.* | *You see, just as servants watch their master closely, waiting for him to provide for them, and just as a female servant watches her mistress, in the same way, we look to Yahweh our God, waiting for him to be merciful to us.* |

ULT **Behold**
UST You see
(הִנֵּה)

The psalmist is using the term **behold** to focus his listeners' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Look]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **as the eyes of servants {are} to the hand of their masters, as the eyes of a maidservant {are} to the hand of her mistress, thus our eyes {are} to Yahweh our God**
UST just as servants watch their master closely, waiting for him to provide for them, and just as a female servant watches her mistress, in the same way, we look to Yahweh our God
(כְּעֵינֵי עֲבָדִים אֶל־יַד אֲדוֹנֵיהֶם כְּעֵינֵי שִׁפְחָה אֶל־יַד גְּבִרְתָּהּ כֵּן עֵינֵינוּ אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **servants** look to the hand of **their masters** for provision and direction, so the psalmist and his people look to **Yahweh** to provide for them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [just as servants depend on their masters, and just as a maidservant depends on her mistress, so we wait on Yahweh our God]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **as the eyes of servants {are} to the hand of their masters, as the eyes of a maidservant {are} to the hand of her mistress**
UST just as servants watch their master closely, waiting for him to provide for them, and just as a female servant watches her mistress
(כְּעֵינֵ֣י עֲבָדִ֣ים אֶל־יַ֣ד אֲדוֹנֵיהֶ֗ם כְּעֵינֵ֥י שִׁפְחָה֙ אֶל־יַ֣ד גְּבִרְתָּ֔הּ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. In the first phrase, the psalmist refers to male **servants** and their **masters**, and in the second, to a **maidservant** and her **mistress**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine the phrases. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [as servants watch the hand of their masters for direction] or [as the eyes of the servants are to the hand of their masters, indeed, as the eyes of a maidservant are to the hand of her mistress]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the hand of their masters … the hand of her mistress**
UST their master … waiting for him to provide for them … her mistress
(יַ֣ד אֲדוֹנֵיהֶ֗ם & יַ֣ד גְּבִרְתָּ֔הּ)

Here, **hand** represents the provision and direction of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the direction of their masters … the direction of her mistress]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| servants | servants |
| their masters | their master |
| a maidservant | a female servant |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| our God | our God |
| he is gracious to us | for him to be merciful to us |

# Psalms 123:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Be gracious to us, Yahweh, be gracious to us, for we are greatly satiated with contempt.* | *Yahweh, please be very merciful to us, because people have despised us so much that we cannot endure any more.* |

ULT **Be gracious to us, Yahweh, be gracious to us**
UST Yahweh, please be very merciful to us
(חָנֵּנוּ יְהוָה חָנֵּנוּ)

**Be gracious** is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please be gracious to us, Yahweh, be gracious to us]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **for we are greatly satiated with contempt**
UST because people have despised us so much that we cannot endure any more
(כִּי־רֹב שָׂבַעְנוּ בוּז)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. The psalmist asks Yahweh to be gracious because they have been despised for so long. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because we are greatly satiated with contempt]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **we are greatly satiated with contempt**
UST people have despised us so much that we cannot endure any more
(רֹב שָׂבַעְנוּ בוּז)

The psalmist is speaking of being treated with **contempt** as if it were food that fills a person. He means that they have experienced so much contempt that they cannot endure any more. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [we have experienced more contempt than we can endure]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **with contempt**
UST people have despised us
(בָּוז)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **contempt**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with how others despise us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Be gracious to us | please be very merciful to us |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| with contempt | people have despised us |

# Psalms 123:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Greatly our soul is satiated with it, the scorn of the arrogant, the contempt of the proud.* | *We have endured far too much mocking from people who are arrogant, yes, from proud people who despise us.* |

**ULT our soul is satiated with it, the scorn of**
**UST** We have endured … mocking
(שָׂבְעָה־לָּהּ נַפְשֵׁנוּ הַלַּעַג)

The psalmist is speaking of being treated with **scorn** as if it were food that fills a person. He means that they have experienced so much scorn that they cannot endure any more. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [we have been treated with too much scorn from]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT our soul is satiated with it**
**UST** We have endured
(שָׂבְעָה־לָּהּ נַפְשֵׁנוּ)

The psalmist is using one part of a person, their **soul**, to mean all of them in the act of experiencing scorn and contempt. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [we are satiated with]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT is satiated with it**
**UST** have endured
(שָׂבְעָה־לָּהּ)

The pronoun **it** refers to the scorn and contempt that the psalmist specifies later in the verse. The psalmist uses this pronoun before naming what it refers to. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [is satiated with these things]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the scorn of the arrogant, the contempt of the proud**
UST mocking from people who are arrogant, yes, from proud people who despise us
(הַלַּעַג הַשַּׁאֲנַנִּים הַבּוּז לְגַאֲיוֹנִים)

These two phrases **the scorn of the arrogant** and **the contempt of the proud** mean basically the same thing. See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [the great mockery of arrogant people]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the scorn of**
UST mocking
(הַלַּעַג)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **scorn**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [being mocked by]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the arrogant**
UST from people who are arrogant
(הַשַּׁאֲנַנִּים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **arrogant** 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: [arrogant people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the contempt of**
UST who despise us
(הַבּוּז)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **contempt**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [being despised by]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the contempt of**
UST who despise us
(הַבּוּז)

The psalmist 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: [satiated with the contempt of]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **the proud**
UST yes, from proud people
(לְגַאֲיוֹנִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **proud** 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: [proud people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| our soul | We |
| the arrogant | from people who are arrogant |
| the contempt of | who despise us |
| the proud | yes, from proud people |

# Psalms 124

## Psalm 124 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 124 is one of the songs of ascents (Psalms 120–134). These are generally understood to be songs that were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the three major annual festivals. The term “ascents” is used because going up to the temple in Jerusalem involved a climb up Mount Zion.

1. Acknowledge Yahweh’s protection from enemies (1–5)
2. Bless Yahweh who did not let us be destroyed (6–7)
3. Confess Yahweh as our help and creator (8)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Various images for enemies

The psalmist depicts enemies through three different images: devouring beasts (verses 3, 6), an overwhelming flood (verses 4–5), and a trapper’s snare (verse 7). Translators should preserve these distinct images.

# Psalms 124:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A song of ascents; of David. If not Yahweh who was for us— let Israel indeed say—* | *A psalm for people going up to the temple to worship; of David. If Yahweh had not been helping us— All Israelites should repeat this —* |

ULT **If not Yahweh who was for us**
UST If Yahweh had not been helping us
(לוּלֵי יְהוָה שֶׁהָיָה לָנוּ)

David is making a conditional statement **If not Yahweh**, that sounds hypothetical, but he knows that the condition is not true. Yahweh was indeed for Israel, and therefore the disastrous results David goes on to describe did not happen. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that the speaker believes is not true. Alternate translation: [If Yahweh had not been on our side]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions

ULT **let Israel indeed say**
UST All Israelites should repeat this
(יֹאמַר־נָא יִשְׂרָאֵל)

David is saying what he wants the people of Israel to do and inviting them to join in communal recitation. See the discussion in the introduction to Psalms about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [Israel should indeed say]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of David | of David |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Israel | All Israelites |

# Psalms 124:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *if not Yahweh who was for us when man rose up against us,* | *If Yahweh had not been helping us when our enemies attacked us,* |

ULT **when man rose up against us**
UST when our enemies attacked us
(בְּקוֹם עָלֵינוּ אָדָם)

Here David is speaking as if the enemies attacking the Israelites actually **rose up** physically above Israel to destroy them. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. [when our enemies came to fight against us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **man**
UST our enemies
(אָדָם)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [people]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 124:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *then they would have swallowed us alive when their nose burned against us.* | *then they would have destroyed us completely, because they were so angry with us.* |

ULT **then**
UST then
(אָז)

Here and through verse 5, the word **then** introduces what the consequences could have been if the condition proposed in the previous verse (if Yahweh had not been with them when their enemies attacked) had actually happened. Use a natural form in your language for introducing the consequence of this possible condition. Alternate translation: [in that case,]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

ULT **they would have swallowed us alive**
UST they would have destroyed us completely
(חַיִּים בְּלָעֻונוּ)

Here David is speaking as if the enemies who could have killed all the Israelites were wild animals that could have **swallowed** Israel **alive**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [then they would have killed us all]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **they would have swallowed us**
UST they would have destroyed us
(בְּלָעֻונוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to the enemies described as “man” in verse 2. The singular “man” has shifted to a plural pronoun here and following. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [then those enemies]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **when their nose burned against us**
> UST because they were so angry with us
> (בַּחֲרוֹת אַפָּם בָּנוּ)

David is using **nose burned** as a common expression of his culture to mean “to be very angry.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they were fiercely angry with us]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

# Psalms 124:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then the waters would have overflowed us; the torrent would have passed over our soul.* | *They would have overwhelmed us like a flood; they would have swept over us like a raging river.* |

ULT **the waters would have overflowed us; the torrent would have passed over our soul**
UST overwhelmed us like a flood; they would have swept over us like a raging river
(הַמַּ֤יִם שְׁטָפ֨וּנוּ נַ֗חְלָה עָבַ֥ר עַל־נַפְשֵׁ֑נוּ)

Here David is speaking of the attacks of the enemies as if they were **waters** and a **torrent** that was like a river overflowing its banks or a flood that could overwhelm and drown Israel. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Then the enemies would have overwhelmed us; the attacks would have destroyed us]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **our soul**
UST us
(נַפְשֵׁ֑נוּ)

Here, **soul** represents the people themselves. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all of us]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| our soul | us |

# Psalms 124:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then the raging waters would have passed over our soul.* | *{They would have destroyed us as completely as} raging waters would have drowned us.* |

**ULT Then the raging waters would have passed over our soul**
**UST** {They would have destroyed us as completely as} raging waters would have drowned us
(אֲזַי עָבַר עַל־נַפְשֵׁנוּ הַמַּיִם הַזֵּידוֹנִים)

This phrase is basically repeating the two phrases from the previous verse; “the waters would have overflowed us” and “the torrent would have passed over our soul,” The second and third phrases emphasize the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could begin this phrase with a connecting word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Then indeed, our enemies would have completely annihilated us]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT our soul**
**UST** us
(נַפְשֵׁנוּ)

Here, **soul** represents the people themselves. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all of us]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| raging | raging |
| our soul | us |

# Psalms 124:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Blessed {be} Yahweh, who did not make us prey for their teeth.* | *We praise Yahweh because he did not let our enemies destroy us as wild animals devour their prey.* |

**ULT Blessed {be} Yahweh**
**UST** We praise Yahweh
(בָּר֣וּךְ יְהוָ֑ה)

The expression **Blessed be** is a passive verbal form. The psalmist is expressing his desire to praise Yahweh. If it would be unnatural to use that form for this purpose, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [We bless Yahweh] or [Let us praise Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT who did not make us prey for their teeth**
**UST** because he did not let our enemies destroy us as wild animals devour their prey
(שֶׁלֹּ֣א נְתָנָ֣נוּ טֶ֣רֶף לְשִׁנֵּיהֶֽם)

Here David is speaking of the enemies attacking and destroying Israel as if they were predatory animals that could devour Israel as **prey** with **their teeth**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [who did not hand us over to be destroyed by our enemies]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT for their teeth**
**UST** destroy us as wild animals devour their prey
(לְשִׁנֵּיהֶֽם)

The pronoun **their** refers to the enemies described as “man” in verse 2 and “they” in verse 3. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [for the teeth of our enemies]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Blessed {be} | We praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| prey | destroy us as wild animals devour their prey |

# Psalms 124:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Our soul {is} like a bird {that} escaped from the snare of the trappers; the snare was broken, and we, we escaped.* | *We escaped from them like a bird that gets free from a hunter's trap. It was as though the trap broke, and, as for us, we went free!* |

ULT **Our soul {is} like a bird {that} escaped from the snare of the trappers**
UST We escaped from them like a bird that gets free from a hunter's trap
(נַפְשֵׁנוּ כְּצִפּוֹר נִמְלְטָה מִפַּח יוֹקְשִׁים)

The point of this comparison is that just as a **bird** that **escaped from the snare of the trappers** flew away to safety, so the people of Israel escaped from the power of their enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [We are like a bird that escaped from the trap of the hunters]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **Our soul {is} like a bird**
UST We escaped from them like a bird
(נַפְשֵׁנוּ כְּצִפּוֹר)

David is using the term **soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [We are like a bird]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the snare was broken**
UST It was as though the trap broke
(הַפַּח נִשְׁבָּר)

The expression **was broken** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [the snare broke]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and we, we escaped**
UST and, as for us, we went free
(וַאֲנַחְנוּ נִמְלָטְנוּ)

David is stating the pronoun **we** separately, even though the verb translated as **we escaped** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize the tension of the escape. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing this emphasis. Alternate translation: [and we indeed escaped!]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Our soul | We escaped from them |
| from the snare | from … trap |
| the snare | the trap |

# Psalms 124:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Our help {is} in the name of Yahweh, the maker of heaven and earth.* | *Yahweh is the one who helps us; he is the one who made everything that exists.* |

**ULT Our help {is} in the name of Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh is the one who helps us
(עֶזְרֵנוּ בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **help**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [It is Yahweh himself who helps us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT {is} in the name of Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh
(בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה)

David is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is and his authority and power. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [is in Yahweh himself]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT heaven and earth**
**UST** everything that exists
(שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ)

David is referring to all of creation by naming two extremes, **heaven** and **earth**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [of all things]

**Support Reference:** Merism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the maker of | he is the one who made |
| heaven | everything that exists |
| and earth | everything that exists |

# Psalms 125

## Psalm 125 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 125 is one of the songs of ascents (Psalms 120–134). These are generally understood to be songs that were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the three major annual festivals. The term “ascents” is used because going up to the temple in Jerusalem involved a climb up Mount Zion. This song is also a “psalm of trust,” expressing communal confidence that Yahweh protects his people as permanently as mountains surround Jerusalem. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Those who trust in Yahweh are secure (1–2)
2. Yahweh preserves the righteous from evil rule (3–5)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh’s protection as surrounding presence

The psalmist pictures Yahweh’s care as physical encirclement, like the hills around Zion. This spatial metaphor may need adaptation where mountains are unfamiliar.

#### The righteous and the wicked

The psalm contrasts the righteous with workers of iniquity, promising that evil rule will not persist over God’s allotted land.

# Psalms 125:1

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *A song of ascents. Those trusting in Yahweh {are} like Mount Zion; it will not be shaken; forever it abides.* | *A psalm for people going up to the temple to worship. People who trust in Yahweh are as secure as Mount Zion, which will stand firm forever.* |

ULT **{are} like Mount Zion**
UST are as secure as Mount Zion
(כְּהַר־צִיּוֹן)

The point of this comparison is that just as **Mount Zion** is immovable and endures permanently, so those **trusting in Yahweh** are secure and will endure permanently. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [are as stable and immovable as Mount Zion]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **it will not be shaken; forever it abides**
UST which will stand firm forever
(לֹא־יִמּוֹט לְעוֹלָם יֵשֵׁב)

The pronoun **it** refers to Mount Zion in both instances. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Mount Zion will not be shaken; forever Mount Zion abides]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **it will not be shaken**
UST which will stand firm
(לֹא־יִמּוֹט)

The expression **be shaken** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [no one can move it] or [nothing can shake it]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Those trusting | People who trust |
| in Yahweh | in Yahweh |
| {are} like Mount Zion | are as secure as Mount Zion |
| Zion | Zion |
| it will not be shaken | which will stand firm |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 125:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Jerusalem—mountains {are} around her, and Yahweh {is} around his people, from now and to forever.* | *Just as the hills surrounding Jerusalem protect the city, so Yahweh protects his people, and he will protect them forever.* |

**ULT Jerusalem—mountains {are} around her, and Yahweh {is} around his people**
**UST** Just as the hills surrounding Jerusalem protect the city, so Yahweh protects his people
(יְרוּשָׁלַ֗͏ִם הָרִ֥ים סָ֝בִ֗יב לָ֑הּ וַֽיהוָ֥ה סָ֝בִ֗יב לְעַמּ֑וֹ)

David is speaking of Yahweh protecting his people as if he were physically wrapped **around** them like the **mountains** around Jerusalem. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [Yahweh surrounds and protects his people just as mountains surround Jerusalem]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT and Yahweh {is} around his people**
**UST** so Yahweh protects his people
(וַֽיהוָ֥ה סָ֝בִ֗יב לְעַמּ֑וֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of Yahweh protecting his people as if he were physically **around** his people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and Yahweh protects his people on every side]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Jerusalem | Jerusalem |
| and Yahweh | so Yahweh |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 125:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the rod of wickedness will not rest on the lot of the righteous, so that the righteous will not stretch out their hands in unrighteousness.* | *Indeed, wicked people will not rule over the land that God gave to righteous people, so that righteous people will not start doing what is wrong.* |

ULT **For**
UST Indeed
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation of why those who trust in Yahweh are secure as stated in the previous verse. If the connection between this statement and the previous one is not clear, you may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [After all,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **the rod of wickedness**
UST wicked people will not rule
(שֵׁבֶט הָרֶשַׁע)

Here, **the rod** represents the rule or authority of wicked people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the rule of wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the rod of wickedness**
UST wicked people will not rule
(שֵׁבֶט הָרֶשַׁע)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **rod** that is characterized by **wickedness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the wicked rod] or [the rod of wicked rulers]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **wickedness**
UST wicked people
(הָרֶ֫שַׁע)

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: [the wicked] or [those who do wicked things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **will not rest on the lot of the righteous**
UST will not rule over the land that God gave to righteous people
(לֹ֤א יָנ֨וּחַ & עַל־גּוֹרָ֣ל הַצַּדִּיקִ֑ים)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the authority the wicked would have over the righteous people as if the ruler's rod were able to **rest** on them. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [will not have authority over the righteous]

ULT **the lot of the righteous**
UST the land that God gave to righteous people
(גּוֹרָ֣ל הַצַּדִּיקִ֑ים)

Here, **the lot** represents the land that was allotted to the righteous as their inheritance. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the land allotted to the righteous] or [the inheritance of the righteous]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the lot of the righteous**
UST the land that God gave to righteous people
(גּוֹרָ֣ל הַצַּדִּיקִ֑ים)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean the land that was allotted to the righteous people. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the land belonging to the righteous]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **the righteous**
UST righteous people
(הַצַּדִּיקִים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [those who trust in God]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **so that**
UST so that
(לְמַ֗עַן)

Here, **so that** marks the clause that follows as the purpose of the rod of wickedness not resting on the lot of the righteous. The goal is that the righteous will not be tempted to do wrong. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [in order that]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **the righteous will not stretch out their hands in unrighteousness**
UST righteous people will not start doing what is wrong
(לֹא־יִשְׁלְחוּ הַצַּדִּיקִים בְּעַוְלָתָה יְדֵיהֶם)

Here, **hands** represents actions and participation. The expression **stretch out their hands** means to participate in or engage in something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [those who trust in God will not participate in unrighteousness]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in unrighteousness**
UST what is wrong
(בְּעַוְלָתָה)

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: [in doing ungodly things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the rod of | will not rule |
| wickedness | wicked people |
| the lot of | the land that God gave to |
| the righteous | righteous people |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in unrighteousness | what is wrong |

# Psalms 125:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do good, Yahweh, to the good, and to the upright in their hearts.* | *Yahweh, please do good things for people who do good things for others, yes, for those who obey you sincerely.* |

**ULT Do good, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh, please do good things
(הֵיטִיבָה יְהוָה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. The psalmist is praying to Yahweh and asking him to act. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please do good, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT to the good, and to the upright in their hearts**
UST for people who do good things for others, yes, for those who obey you sincerely
(לַטּוֹבִים וְלִישָׁרִים בְּלִבּוֹתָם)

These two phrases **to the good** and **to the upright in their hearts** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional, as the UST does. Another approach would be to combine them into a single phrase and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [to those who sincerely try to do good things]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT to the good**
UST for people who do good things for others
(לַטּוֹבִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **good** 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: [to good people] or [to those who are good]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and to the upright**
UST yes, for those who obey you
(וְלִישָׁרִים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [and to upright people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **in their hearts**
UST sincerely
(בְּלִבּוֹתָם)

The psalmist is speaking of the **hearts** of the upright as if the heart were the location of a person's true motives and intentions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in their inner being]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Do good | please do good things |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| to the good | for people who do good things for others |
| and to the upright | yes, for those who obey you |

# Psalms 125:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And those twisting their crooked {ways}, Yahweh will make them go with the workers of iniquity. Peace {be} upon Israel.* | *But as for those people who choose to do evil things, Yahweh will send them away along with everyone else who does evil things. May Yahweh bless the people of Israel!* |

ULT **And those twisting their crooked {ways}**
UST But as for those people who choose to do evil things
(וְהַמַּטִּים עֲקַלְקַלּוֹתָם)

The psalmist is speaking of the behavior of these people as if it were a path that they walk along. He speaks of their disobedience as **twisting their crooked ways**, that is, deviating from the straight path of righteousness. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And those who behave dishonestly]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the workers of iniquity**
UST everyone else who does evil things
(פֹּעֲלֵי הָאָוֶן)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **workers** who are characterized by **iniquity**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the people who do evil things]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **iniquity**
UST evil things
(הָאָוֶן)

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 things]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Peace {be} upon Israel**
UST May Yahweh bless the people of Israel
(שָׁלוֹם עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist is asking Yahweh to bless the people of Israel. In your translation, use a form that people would recognize as a blessing in your language. You might express this as a prayer, if that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [May Yahweh give peace to Israel]

**Support Reference:** Blessings

ULT **Peace**
UST May Yahweh bless
(שָׁלוֹם)

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: [Well-being]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| iniquity | evil things |
| Peace | May Yahweh bless |
| Israel | the people of Israel |

# Psalms 126

## Psalm 126 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 126 is one of the songs of ascents (Psalms 120–134). These are generally understood to be songs that were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the three major annual festivals. The term “ascents” is used because going up to the temple in Jerusalem involved a climb up Mount Zion. This song is a “psalm of praise” for Yahweh bringing captives home. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Rejoice in Yahweh’s past restoration (1–3)
2. Pray for renewed restoration and blessing (4–6)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Sorrow and joy

People may have sorrow now; but later it will turn into joy. (See: joy, joyful, rejoice, glad)

# Psalms 126:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A song of ascents. When Yahweh returned the captivity of Zion, we were like ones dreaming.* | *A psalm for people going up to the temple to worship. When Yahweh brought us back to Zion after our enemies had captured us {and taken us away}, we felt as if we were dreaming.* |

ULT **the captivity of**
UST after our enemies had captured us {and taken us away}
(אֶת־שִׁיבַת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **captivity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [those whom our enemies had captured from]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **we were like ones dreaming**
UST we felt as if we were dreaming
(הָיִינוּ כְּחֹלְמִים)

The point of this comparison is that just as people who are **dreaming** have a hard time believing what is happening, so the people of Israel could hardly believe that Yahweh was restoring them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [we could hardly believe it was real]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the captivity of | after our enemies had captured us {and taken us away} |
| Zion | to Zion |
| like ones dreaming | as if we were dreaming |

# Psalms 126:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Then our mouth was filled {with} laughter, and our tongue {with} a shout of joy. Then they said among the nations, "Yahweh has made great to do with these."* | *We laughed and shouted joyfully. Then people from other people groups said about us, "Yahweh has done great things for them!"* |

ULT **Then our mouth was filled {with} laughter, and our tongue {with} a shout of joy**
UST We laughed and shouted joyfully
(אָז יִמָּלֵא שְׂחוֹק פִּינוּ וּלְשׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way, as in the UST. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Then our mouth was filled with laughter, indeed, our tongue with a shout of joy]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **our mouth was filled {with} laughter**
UST We laughed
(יִמָּלֵא שְׂחוֹק פִּינוּ)

The psalmist is using one part of a person, their **mouth**, to mean all of them in the act of laughing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [we were filled with laughter]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **was filled {with}**
UST We laughed
(יִמָּלֵא)

The expression **was filled** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [overflowed with]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and our tongue {with} a shout of joy**
UST and shouted joyfully
(וּלְשׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה)

The psalmist 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 our tongue was filled with a shout of joy]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **and our tongue**
UST and shouted
(וּלְשׁוֹנֵנוּ)

The psalmist is using one part of a person, their **tongue**, to mean all of them in the act of shouting. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [we were filled]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **{with} a shout of joy**
UST joyfully
(רִנָּה)

If your language does not use abstract noun for the idea of **joy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with joyful shouting]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **they said among the nations**
UST people from other people groups said about us
(יֹאמְרוּ בַגּוֹיִם)

The pronoun **they** refers to the people of other nations. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the people of other nations said among themselves]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **they said among the nations**
UST people from other people groups said about us
(יֹאמְרוּ בַגּוֹיִם)

The words **they said among the nations** introduce a direct quotation. In your translation, use a natural way of introducing direct quotations in your language. Alternate translation: [the people of other nations said]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **Yahweh has made great to do with these**
UST Yahweh has done great things for them
(הִגְדִּ֣יל יְהוָ֣ה לַעֲשׂ֣וֹת עִם־אֵ֑לֶּה)

The psalmist is using **has made great to do** as a common expression of the culture to mean "has done great things." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh has done great things for his people]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and our tongue | and shouted |
| {with} a shout of joy | joyfully |
| among the nations | from other people groups |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 126:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh has made great to do with us; we are joyful.* | *{Yes!} Yahweh {truly} has done great things for us, and we are very happy.* |

> ULT **Yahweh has made great to do with us**
> UST {Yes!} Yahweh {truly} has done great things for us
> (הִגְדִּיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ)

The psalmist is using **has made great to do** as a common expression of the culture to mean "has done great things." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh has done wonderful things for us]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| joyful | very happy |

# Psalms 126:4

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Return, Yahweh, our captivity, like the streams in the Negev.* | *Yahweh, restore us as before our enemies captured us, as you restore the streams in the Negev {that flow again after being dry}.* |

ULT **Return, Yahweh, our captivity, like the streams in the Negev**
UST Yahweh, restore us as before our enemies captured us, as you restore the streams in the Negev {that flow again after being dry … }
(שׁוּבָה יְהוָה אֶת־שבותנו כַּאֲפִיקִים בַּנֶּגֶב)

The point of this comparison is that just as the dry streambeds in the desert are suddenly restored to flowing **streams** when rain comes, so the psalmist asks Yahweh to suddenly restore the fortunes of his people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [Restore those who were taken captive, Yahweh, just as you suddenly restore the dry streams in the Negev with rain]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **Return, Yahweh, our captivity**
UST Yahweh, restore us as before our enemies captured us
(שׁוּבָה יְהוָה אֶת־שבותנו)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please return, Yahweh, our captivity]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **our captivity**
UST as before our enemies captured us
(אֶת־שבותנו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **captivity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [our people whom our enemies have captured]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Return | restore us |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| our captivity | as before our enemies captured us |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the Negev | in the Negev |

# Psalms 126:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The ones sowing in tears will reap in a shout of joy.* | *Those who sow seeds while crying will shout joyfully when they gather the harvest.* |

ULT **The ones sowing in tears will reap in a shout of joy**
UST Those who sow seeds while crying will shout joyfully when they gather the harvest
(הַזֹּרְעִים בְּדִמְעָה בְּרִנָּה יִקְצֹרוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of people who keep working even while they suffer as if they were farmers **sowing** their seeds even though **in tears**, and of the future joy they will experience as a result as if they would **reap** their harvest with **a shout of joy**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Those who do their work while suffering will celebrate joyfully when they see the results]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in a shout of joy**
UST will shout joyfully
(בְּרִנָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **joy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with a joyful shout]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The ones sowing | Those who sow seeds |
| will reap | when they gather the harvest |
| in a shout of joy | will shout joyfully |

# Psalms 126:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Going, he may go and weeping, carrying the bag of seed. Coming, he will come in a shout of joy, carrying his sheaves.* | *They may indeed walk {through the field} crying, as they spread the seed from their bags. But they will surely come back shouting joyfully, carrying their bundles of grain.* |

**ULT Going, he may go and weeping**
**UST** They may indeed walk {through the field} crying
(הָלוֹךְ יֵלֵךְ ו וּבָכֹה)

The psalmist is repeating forms of the verb **go** in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [He may indeed go, weeping]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

**ULT the bag of seed**
**UST** the seed from their bags
(מֶשֶׁךְ־הַזָּרַע)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean a bag that contains seed. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the bag full of seed]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT Coming, he will come**
**UST** But they will surely come back
(בֹּא־יָבוֹא)

The psalmist is repeating forms of the verb **come** in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [He will certainly come]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

ULT **in a shout of joy**
UST shouting joyfully
(בְּרִנָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **joy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with a joyful shout]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| and weeping | crying |
| carrying | as they spread |
| seed | the seed |
| in a shout of joy | shouting joyfully |

# Psalms 127

## Psalm 127 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 127 is one of the songs of ascents (Psalms 120–134). These are generally understood to be songs that were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the three major annual festivals. The term “ascents” is used because going up to the temple in Jerusalem involved a climb up Mount Zion.

1. Recognize the futility of work without Yahweh (1–2)
2. Receive children as Yahweh’s gift and blessing (3–5)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Blessings

Yahweh wants his people to have rest. It is a blessing to have many children. (See: bless, blessed, blessing)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### “of Solomon”

The superscription of this psalm is “of Solomon.” This may mean that Solomon wrote this psalm. But it may also mean that someone else wrote this psalm in honor of Solomon. We recommend that you translate the superscription in a way that allows for this possibility as well as for the possibility that Solomon was the author.

# Psalms 127:1

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *A song of ascents; of Solomon. If Yahweh does not build a house, {in} vain its builders have labored on it. If Yahweh does not watch a city, {in} vain the watchman has stayed awake.* | *This is a psalm for people going up to the temple to worship. It is of Solomon. If people are building a house, but Yahweh does not approve of it, those who build it are doing nothing useful. If Yahweh does not protect a city, it is useless for the guards to stay awake watching it.* |

ULT **{in} vain its builders have labored on it**
UST those who build it are doing nothing useful
(שָׁוְא ׀ עָמְלוּ בוֹנָיו בּוֹ)

This phrase introduces the consequence of the condition proposed in the previous phrase. Use a natural form in your language for introducing the consequence of this possible condition. Alternate translation: [then it does not help for its builders to labor on it]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

ULT **{in} vain the watchman has stayed awake**
UST it is useless for the guards to stay awake watching it
(שָׁוְא ׀ שָׁקַד שׁוֹמֵר)

This phrase introduces the consequence of the condition proposed in the previous phrase. Use a natural form in your language for introducing the consequence of this possible condition. Alternate translation: [then it does no good for the watchman to stand guard over it]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| of Solomon | It is of Solomon |
| Yahweh | but Yahweh |
| a house | a house |
| {in} vain | nothing useful |
| does … watch | does … protect |
| {in} vain | it is useless |
| the watchman | for the guards |

# Psalms 127:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{It is} vain for you, the ones rising early to get up, the ones being late to sit down, the ones eating the bread of toils; certainly he gives to his beloved one sleep.* | *It is useless for you to get up very early and stay up very late, working hard to get food, because Yahweh wants to give sleep to those whom he loves.* |

ULT **the ones rising early to get up, the ones being late to sit down**
UST to get up very early and stay up very late
(מַשְׁכֵּימֵי קוּם מְאַחֲרֵי־שָׁבֶת)

Solomon is referring to all of a person's working time by naming two extremes, **the ones rising early to get up** and **the ones being late to sit down**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the ones working from early morning until late at night]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **the ones eating the bread of toils**
UST working hard to get food
(אֹכְלֵי לֶחֶם הָעֲצֵבִים)

Solomon is speaking of working hard to raise the food that people eat as if it were **bread of toils**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those toiling to earn your food]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the bread of toils**
UST working hard … food
(לֶחֶם הָעֲצֵבִים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **toils**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [bread gained by toiling]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the bread of toils**
UST working hard … food
(לֶ֭חֶם הָעֲצָבִ֑ים)

Solomon is using the possessive form to describe **bread** that is characterized by **toils**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [bread earned through hard work]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **certainly he gives to his beloved one sleep**
UST because Yahweh wants to give sleep to those whom he loves
(כֵּ֣ן יִתֵּ֣ן לִֽידִידֹ֣ו שֵׁנָ֑א)

The pronoun **he** refers to Yahweh, who is named in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [certainly Yahweh gives to his beloved one sleep]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {It is} vain | It is useless |
| the ones eating | to get |
| the bread | food |
| of toils | working hard |
| to his beloved one | to those whom he loves |

# Psalms 127:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Behold, the inheritance of Yahweh {is} sons; a reward {is} the fruit of the womb.* | *Children are a gift that Yahweh gives; Offspring are a benefit {from him}.* |

ULT **Behold**
UST that
(הִנֵּה)

Solomon is using the word **Behold** to focus the readers' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Look]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the inheritance of Yahweh {is} sons; a reward {is} the fruit of the womb**
UST Children are a gift … Yahweh gives; Offspring are a benefit {from him … }
(נַחֲלַת יְהוָה בָּנִים שָׂכָר פְּרִי הַבָּטֶן)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition, and you may want to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation. If it is helpful, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [what Yahweh gives as an inheritance is sons, indeed, the fruit of the womb is his reward]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the inheritance of Yahweh**
UST are a gift … Yahweh gives
(נַחֲלַת יְהוָה)

If your language does not use abstract noun for the idea of **inheritance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what Yahweh gives as a gift]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **a reward**
UST are a benefit {from him}
(שָׂכָר)

If your language does not use abstract noun for the idea of **reward**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what he gives to reward you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{is} the fruit of the womb**
UST Offspring
(פְּרִי הַבֶּטֶן)

Solomon is using **fruit of the womb** as a common expression of his culture to mean "children" or "offspring." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [is having children]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the inheritance of | are a gift … gives |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| a reward | are a benefit {from him} |
| {is} the fruit of | Offspring |
| the womb | Offspring |

# Psalms 127:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, thus {are} the sons of the youth.* | *When a man has sons while he is still young, those sons become as useful as arrows are in the hand of a warrior.* |

**ULT Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, thus {are} the sons of the youth**
**UST** When a man has sons while he is still young, those sons become as useful as arrows are in the hand of a warrior
(כְּחִצִּים בְּיַד־גִּבּוֹר כֵּן בְּנֵי הַנְּעוּרִים)

The point of this comparison is that just as **arrows** in the hand of a warrior are powerful and useful for defense, so **the sons** a man has in his youth can help defend a man from his enemies when he grows old. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [The sons of a man's youth are a powerful defense and as useful as arrows in the hand of a warrior]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT {are} the sons of the youth**
**UST** When a man has sons while he is still young, those sons
(בְּנֵי הַנְּעוּרִים)

Solomon is using this possessive form to describe **sons** who were born during a man's **youth**. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [are sons born during one's youth]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a warrior | a warrior |

# Psalms 127:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The happinesses of the man who has filled his quiver of them! They will not have shame when they speak with adversaries in the gate.* | *A man who has many sons has such a good life! When he argues with an opponent at the place where people settle disputes, the opponent will not defeat him.* |

ULT **The happinesses of**
UST has such a good life
(אַשְׁרֵי)

Solomon is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of joy about the man who has many sons. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [How happy is] or [Truly blessed is]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **the man**
UST A man
(הַגֶּבֶר)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means any man in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [any man]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **has filled his quiver of them**
UST has many sons
(מִלֵּא אֶת־אַשְׁפָּתוֹ מֵהֶם)

Solomon is continuing the arrow imagery from the previous verse, speaking of having many sons as if the father had **filled his quiver** with arrows. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [has been given many children]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **his quiver**
UST sons
(אֶת־אַשְׁפָּתוֹ)

A **quiver** is a container that a warrior carries on his back or at his side for holding arrows. If your readers would not be familiar with what a quiver is, you could use the name of a similar thing that your readers would recognize, or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [his arrow bag]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

ULT **They will not have shame when they speak**
UST When he argues … the opponent will not defeat him
(לֹא־יֵבֹשׁוּ כִּי־יְדַבְּרוּ)

The pronoun **They** likely refers to men who have many sons. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The man who have many sons will not have shame when he speaks]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **They will not have shame**
UST the opponent will not defeat him
(לֹא־יֵבֹשׁוּ)

By **have shame**, Solomon means that they will not feel the shame of being defeated by the adversary. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [They will not feel the shame of defeat]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **They will not have shame**
UST the opponent will not defeat him
(לֹא־יֵבֹשׁוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **shame**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [They will not be ashamed by being defeated]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

> ULT **in the gate**
> UST at the place where people settle disputes
> (בַּשָּׁעַר)

Solomon assumes that his readers will know that **the gate** of a city was where important legal and public matters were discussed and settled. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [in the place where public disputes are settled]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| They will … have shame | the opponent will … defeat him |
| adversaries | an opponent |
| in the gate | at the place where people settle disputes |

# Psalms 128

## Psalm 128 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 128 is one of the songs of ascents (Psalms 120–134). These are generally understood to be songs that were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the three major annual festivals. The term “ascents” is used because going up to the temple in Jerusalem involved a climb up Mount Zion.

1. Enjoy the fruit of fearing Yahweh (1–4)
2. Experience peace and prosperity from Yahweh (5–6)

# Psalms 128:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A song of ascents. The happinesses of everyone fearing Yahweh, the one walking in his ways.* | *This is a psalm for those going up to the temple to worship. How good life is for all who deeply revere Yahweh and who do what he tells them to do!* |

ULT **The happinesses of everyone fearing Yahweh**
UST How good life is for all who deeply revere Yahweh
(אַשְׁרֵי כָּל־יְרֵא יְהוָה)

The psalmist is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of joy. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [How happy is everyone fearing Yahweh] or [Truly blessed is everyone who fears Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **the one walking in his ways**
UST and who do what he tells them to do
(הַהֹלֵךְ בִּדְרָכָיו)

The psalmist is speaking of a person who obeys Yahweh as if that person were **walking** along Yahweh's **ways**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one living according to his commands]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| fearing | who deeply revere |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 128:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The labor of your palms, when you eat {it}, {is} your happiness, and good for you.* | *You will enjoy eating the food that you have worked hard for, and it will make you healthy.* |

ULT **The labor of your palms**
UST that you have worked hard for
(יְגִיעַ כַּפֶּיךָ)

Here, **labor of your palms** represents the result of the work done with someone's hands. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [The results of your work]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **{is} your happiness**
UST You will enjoy
(אַשְׁרֶיךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **happiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [makes you happy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The labor | that you have worked hard for |
| you eat {it} | eating the food |
| and good | and it will make you healthy |

# Psalms 128:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your wife {is} like a fruitful vine in the recesses of your house. Your sons {are} like shoots of olive trees, all around your table.* | *Your wife will bear many children in the innermost rooms of your house, like a grapevine that produces many grapes. Your children will grow strong like young olive trees as they fill the room around your table.* |

ULT **Your wife {is} like a fruitful vine**
UST Your wife will bear many children … like a grapevine that produces many grapes
(אֶשְׁתְּךָ ׀ כְּגֶפֶן פֹּרִיָּה)

The point of this comparison is that just as a **fruitful vine** produces much fruit, so the man's **wife** will have many children. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [Your wife will have many children]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **Your sons {are} like shoots of olive trees**
UST Your children will grow strong like young olive trees
(בָּנֶיךָ כִּשְׁתִלֵי זֵיתִים)

The point of this comparison is that just as **shoots of olive trees** are vigorous and healthy, so the man's **sons** will be strong and thriving. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [Your sons will be strong and healthy]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **Your sons {are}**
UST Your children will
(בָּנֶיךָ)

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 language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: [Your sons and daughters]

**Support Reference:** When Masculine Words Include Women

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| like a … vine | bear many children … like a grapevine |
| fruitful | that produces many grapes |
| of your house | your house |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| olive trees | olive trees |

# Psalms 128:4

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Behold, for thus the man fearing Yahweh will be blessed.* | *Yes, that is how Yahweh will bless every person who deeply reveres him.* |

ULT **Behold**
UST Yes
(הִנֵּה)

The psalmist is using the term **Behold** to focus his listeners' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Indeed]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the man fearing Yahweh will be blessed**
UST Yahweh will bless every person who deeply reveres him
(יְבֹרַךְ גָּבֶר יָרֵא יְהוָה)

The expression **will be blessed** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will bless the man who fears him]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **the man**
UST every person
(גָּבֶר)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [everyone]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| fearing | who deeply reveres |
| Yahweh | him |
| will be blessed | Yahweh will bless |

# Psalms 128:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May Yahweh bless you from Zion, that you may look on the good of Jerusalem all of the days of your life,* | *May Yahweh bless you from {where he lives} in Zion, so that you may be able to experience how the people of Jerusalem prosper during the whole time that you live,* |

**ULT that you may look on the good of Jerusalem**
**UST** so that you may be able to experience how the people of Jerusalem prosper
(וְרְאֵה בְּטוּב יְרוּשָׁלָֽם)

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: [that you might see Jerusalem prospering]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May … bless you | May … bless you |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| from Zion | from {where he lives} in Zion |
| on the good of | prosper |
| Jerusalem | how the people of Jerusalem |

# Psalms 128:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *and that you may see sons to your sons. Peace {be} upon Israel!* | *and so that you may live long enough to see your grandchildren! May the people of Israel live well!* |

ULT **and that you may see**
UST and so that you may live long enough to see
(וּרְאֵה)

Here, **and that** marks **you may see sons to your sons** as a further goal or purpose of Yahweh's blessing in the previous verse. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [and also so that you may see]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **sons to your sons**
UST your grandchildren
(בָּנִים לְבָנֶיךָ)

Here the masculine term **sons** has a generic sense that includes both male and female descendants. 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: [children of your children]

**Support Reference:** When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **sons to your sons**
UST your grandchildren
(בָּנִים לְבָנֶיךָ)

The psalmist is using **sons to your sons** as a common expression of the culture to mean grandchildren. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [many descendants]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

> ULT **Peace {be} upon Israel**
> UST May the people of Israel live well
> (שָׁלוֹם עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist is asking Yahweh to bless the people of Israel. In your translation, use a form that people would recognize as a blessing in your language. You might express this as a prayer, if that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [May Yahweh give peace to Israel]

**Support Reference:** Blessings

> ULT **Peace {be} upon**
> UST May … live well
> (שָׁלוֹם עַל)

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: [May well-being come upon]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Peace {be} | May … live well |
| Israel | the people of Israel |

# Psalms 129

## Psalm 129 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 129 is one of the songs of ascents (Psalms 120–134). These are generally understood to be songs that were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the three major annual festivals. The term “ascents” is used because going up to the temple in Jerusalem involved a climb up Mount Zion.

1. Recall Israel’s long affliction (1–4)
2. Trust Yahweh to defeat the enemies of Zion (5–8)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Yahweh saves

Israel’s enemies have always persecuted them but God has saved them from their enemies. He prays that this enemy will be destroyed with no one to wish them well. (See: save, saved, safe, salvation, rescue)

### Translation Issues in This Psalm

#### Israel addressed as a person

The first section of this psalm, verses 1–4, uses first person singular pronouns since the Israelites are asked to speak as a person who is reciting the story of how he has been cruelly treated by his enemies since he was young. This can be seen as the Israelites recitation of Israel’s history as a nation. If it would be more clear in your language you could use plural pronouns in this section.

# Psalms 129:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A song of ascents. Abundantly they have afflicted me from my youth. Let Israel indeed say:* | *A psalm for people going up to the temple to worship. Ever since I was young, my enemies have oppressed me frequently. All of the people of Israel should say this {with me}:* |

ULT **Abundantly**
UST frequently
(רַבַּת)

The word translated as **Abundantly** could refer to: (1) affliction that is frequent. Alternate translation: [Often] or (2) affliction that is severe. Alternate translation: [Severely]

ULT **they have afflicted me from my youth**
UST Ever since I was young, my enemies have oppressed me
(צָרָרוּנִי מִנְּעוּרָי)

The pronoun **me** here signals that from here through verse 4, people of Israel are speaking together as though they are the nation of Israel. See the discussion in the introduction to this psalm to decide whether your translation will use the plural pronoun forms or keep the singular. Alternate translation: [they have afflicted us from our youth]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **they have afflicted me**
UST my enemies have oppressed me
(צָרָרוּנִי)

The pronoun **they** does not refer to a specific group of people. It refers generally to the enemies of Israel throughout its history. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that more clearly. Alternate translation: [my enemies have afflicted me]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Let Israel indeed say**
UST All of the people of Israel should say this {with me}
(יֹאמַר־נָא יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist is saying what he wants the people of Israel to say and inviting them to join in communal recitation. See the discussion in the introduction to Psalms about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to say. Alternate translation: [Israel should indeed say]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they have afflicted me | my enemies have oppressed me |
| Israel | the people of Israel |

# Psalms 129:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Abundantly they have afflicted me from my youth; however, they did not prevail against me.* | *Ever since I was young, my enemies have oppressed me frequently, but they have never defeated me!* |

ULT **however, they did not prevail against me**
UST but they have never defeated me
(גַּם לֹא־יָכְלוּ לִי)

The psalmist uses the word **however** here to indicate a contrast between the repeated affliction described in the first half of the verse and the failure of the enemies to ultimately prevail. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [in spite of that, they did not prevail against me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| they have afflicted me | my enemies have oppressed me |

# Psalms 129:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Upon my back the plowers plowed; they made long their furrows.* | *{They oppressed me severely as though} they were plowing across my back, making long wounds like furrows in a field.* |

ULT **Upon my back the plowers plowed; they made long their furrows**
UST { … They oppressed me severely as though} they were plowing across my back, making long wounds like furrows in a field
(עַל־גַּבִּי חָרְשׁוּ חֹרְשִׁים הֶאֱרִיכוּ לְמַעַנוֹתָם)

The psalmist is speaking of the enemies' oppression as if they were farmers plowing furrows on his back. The image of **the plowers plowed** upon his back and **they made long their furrows** represents severe and prolonged suffering. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [They made me suffer, like a farmer plowing a field they made deep wounds in my back]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the plowers | {They oppressed me severely as though} they were plowing |
| plowed | {They oppressed me severely as though} they were plowing |

# Psalms 129:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh {is} righteous; he has cut the cords of the wicked.* | *Yahweh does what is right; he no longer allows wicked people to control me.* |

**ULT he has cut the cords of the wicked**
**UST** he no longer allows wicked people to control me
(קִצֵּץ עֲבֹות רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist is speaking of the control that wicked people had over Israel as if they were **cords** binding them, and God's deliverance as if he **cut** those cords. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he has freed me from the control of wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the wicked**
**UST** wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to refer to a type of person. If your language does not use adjectives in this way, you could translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [those who do evil]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} righteous | does what is right |
| the wicked | wicked people |

# Psalms 129:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let them have shame and withdraw backward, all the haters of Zion.* | *May everyone who hates the people of Zion be ashamed and go away.* |

**ULT Let them have shame**
**UST** May … be ashamed
(יֵבֹשׁוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **shame**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [May they feel disgraced]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT Zion**
**UST** the people of Zion
(צִיּוֹן)

The psalmist is using the name **Zion**, to represent the people who live in Jerusalem and worship God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those who worship God]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Let them have shame | May … be ashamed |
| Zion | the people of Zion |

# Psalms 129:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let them be like grass of the rooftops, that before one pulls {it} out, it dries up,* | *May they be {as insignificant} as the grass that grows on the rooftops that dries up before anyone can pull it out,* |

**ULT like grass of the rooftops, that before one pulls {it} out, it dries up**
**UST** the grass that grows on the rooftops that dries up before anyone can pull it out
(כַּחֲצִיר גַּגּוֹת שֶׁקָּדַמַת שָׁלַף יָבֵשׁ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **grass of the rooftops**, or worthless weeds which grow in a thin layer of soil dry up quickly before anyone can even pull it out, so the psalmist wishes that the lives of his enemies will be insignificant and short-lived. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [as insignificant and short-lived as grass on a rooftop which withers before anyone call pull it out]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| it dries up | dries up |

# Psalms 129:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *that the reaper does not fill his palm {with}, and the one binding sheaves, {does} not fill his bosom,* | *that no harvester would {bother to} pick up and that no one gathering bundles would {want to} wrap his arms around {to tie it up}.* |

ULT **that the reaper does not fill his palm {with}, and the one binding sheaves, {does} not fill his bosom**

UST that no harvester would {bother to} pick up and that no one gathering bundles would {want to} wrap his arms around {to tie it up … }

(שֶׁלֹּא מִלֵּא כַפּוֹ קוֹצֵר וְחִצְנוֹ מְעַמֵּר)

These two phrases are continuing the comparison of the enemies to the grass from the previous verse. Both phrases describe the worthlessness of the grass: **the reaper** cannot gather a handful of it nor can **the one binding sheaves** fill his arms with it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [so insignificant that the reaper cannot harvest it, nor can the one binding sheaves gather an armful to carry]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the reaper | harvester |
| the one binding sheaves | that no one gathering bundles |

# Psalms 129:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *and those passing by do not say, "The blessing of Yahweh {be} upon you; we bless you in the name of Yahweh."* | *They will never hear someone walking by {the reapers} say, "May Yahweh bless you!" {They will not hear the reapers reply,} "We bless you as representatives of Yahweh."* |

ULT **The blessing of Yahweh {be} upon you; we bless you in the name of Yahweh**
UST { … May Yahweh bless you!" They will not hear the reapers reply,} "We bless you as representatives of Yahweh
(בִּרְכַּת־יְהוָה אֲלֵיכֶם בֵּרַכְנוּ אֶתְכֶם בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה)

This is a traditional harvest blessing that workers would exchange with those passing by. The psalmist is saying that the enemies of Zion will never receive such a blessing. In your translation, use a form that people would recognize as a blessing in your language. Alternate translation: [May Yahweh make you prosper; may Yahweh bless you]

**Support Reference:** Blessings

ULT **The blessing of Yahweh**
UST May Yahweh bless
(בִּרְכַּת־יְהוָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **blessing**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [The favor of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **in the name of Yahweh**
UST as representatives of Yahweh
(בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה)

Here, **the name of Yahweh** represents the person and authority of Yahweh himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [by the authority of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The blessing of | May … bless |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| we bless | {They will not hear the reapers reply,} "We bless |

# Psalms 130

## Psalm 130 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 130 is one of the songs of ascents (Psalms 120–134). These are generally understood to be songs that were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the three major annual festivals. The term “ascents” is used because going up to the temple in Jerusalem involved a climb up Mount Zion. It is a “psalm of praise” that God forgives sins. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Cry out to Yahweh from the depths (1–4)
2. Wait and hope in Yahweh’s redeeming love (5–8)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Forgive

God forgives sin and helps the sinner. So Israel should trust in God for his forgiveness. (See: trust, trusted, trustworthy, trustworthiness)

# Psalms 130:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A song of ascents. Out of the depths I cry to you, Yahweh.* | *This is a psalm for people going up to the temple to worship. Yahweh, I am very distressed, so I call out to you.* |

**ULT Out of the depths**
**UST** I am very distressed
(מִמַּעֲמַקִּים)

The psalmist is speaking as if being in distress over all his troubles were being in the **depths** or a place of deep water. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Because of my many troubles]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I cry to you | so I call out to you |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 130:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Lord, hear my voice; let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.* | *Lord, please listen to me; please listen attentively as I call out to you to have mercy on me!* |

**ULT hear my voice; let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications**
**UST** please listen to me; please listen attentively as I call out to you to have mercy on me
(שִׁמְעָה בְקֹולִי תִּהְיֶינָה אָזְנֶיךָ קַשֻּׁבוֹת לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [listen attentively to my pleas for mercy] or [hear my voice, indeed, may your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT to the voice of my supplications**
**UST** as I call out to you to have mercy on me
(לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי)

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: [to my voice as I plead with you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Lord | Lord |

# Psalms 130:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *If you, Yah, would mark sins, Lord, who could stand?* | *Yahweh, if you kept a record of {the} sins {that we have committed}, Lord, you would have to condemn and punish every one of us!* |

**ULT If you, Yah, would mark sins**
**UST** Yahweh, if you kept a record of {the} sins {that we have committed}
(אִם־עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמָר־יָהּ)

Here, **If** introduces a hypothetical condition. The psalmist is saying that this is something that could happen. He is implying that no one could endure God's judgment if he kept a record of sins. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that could happen. Alternate translation: [Yah, suppose you would mark sins]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

**ULT you, Yah, would mark sins**
**UST** Yahweh … you kept a record of {the} sins {that we have committed}
(עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמָר־יָהּ)

The psalmist is using **mark sins** as a common expression of the culture to mean "keep a strict tally of sins." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you, Yah, would keep a count of our sins]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT Yah**
**UST** Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**ULT who could stand**
**UST** you would have to condemn and punish every one of us
(מִי יַעֲמֹד)

The psalmist is using the question form to emphasize that no one would be able to endure God's judgment. 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 could stand!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **could stand**
UST you would have to condemn and punish
(יַעֲמֹד)

The psalmist is speaking about staying alive or surviving attack or punishment as if it were being able to physically **stand**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [could survive] or [could withstand the punishment]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yah | Yahweh |
| sins | of {the} sins {that we have committed} |
| Lord | Lord |

# Psalms 130:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *However, {there is} forgiveness with you, so that you may be feared.* | *But you forgive us, with the result that we deeply revere you.* |

**ULT {there is} forgiveness with you**
**UST** you forgive us
(עִמְּךָ הַסְּלִיחָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **forgiveness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [you forgive people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT so that you may be feared**
**UST** with the result that we deeply revere you
(לְמַעַן תִּוָּרֵא)

Here, **so that** marks **you may be feared** as the goal or purpose of **there is forgiveness with you**. The psalmist is saying that God forgives so that people will revere him. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [in order that people may fear you]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

**ULT you may be feared**
**UST** we deeply revere you
(תִּוָּרֵא)

The expression **you may be feared** contains a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is people. Alternate translation: [people may fear you]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {there is} forgiveness | you forgive us |
| you may be feared | we deeply revere you |

# Psalms 130:5

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *I wait for Yahweh; my soul waits, and in his word I hope;* | *Yahweh has said {that he would help me}; I trust what he said, and so I wait eagerly for him {to do that}.* |

ULT **I wait for Yahweh; my soul waits**
UST Yahweh … and so I wait eagerly for him {to do that}
(קִוִּיתִי יְהוָה קִוְּתָה נַפְשִׁי)

These two phrases **I wait for Yahweh** and **my soul waits** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [I wait eagerly for Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **my soul waits**
UST and so I wait eagerly for … to do that
(קִוְּתָה נַפְשִׁי)

The psalmist is using the term **soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I wait with all my being]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and in his word I hope**
UST has said {that he would help me}; I trust what he said
(וְלִדְבָרוֹ הוֹחָלְתִּי)

The psalmist is using the term **word** to represent what Yahweh has promised. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and in Yahweh's promises I hope]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh … him |
| my soul | and so I wait eagerly for … to do that |
| I hope | I trust |

# Psalms 130:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *my soul for the Lord, more than watchmen for the morning, watchmen for the morning.* | *I wait for the Lord {to help me} more {eagerly} than watchmen wait for the morning {to come}; yes, I wait more eagerly than watchmen wait for the morning!* |

ULT **my soul for the Lord, more than watchmen for the morning**
UST I wait for the Lord {to help me} more {eagerly} than watchmen wait for the morning {to come … }
(נַפְשִׁי לַאדֹנָי מִשֹּׁמְרִים לַבֹּקֶר)

The point of this comparison is that just as **watchmen** stand on guard and eagerly watch **for the morning**, the psalmist eagerly anticipates the Lord's help. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [I eagerly anticipate the Lord's help just as eagerly as watchmen wait for the morning]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **my soul for the Lord**
UST I wait for the Lord {to help me}
(נַפְשִׁי לַאדֹנָי)

The psalmist is leaving out one of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the previous verse if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [My soul waits for the Lord]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **my soul for the Lord**
UST I wait for the Lord {to help me}
(נַפְשִׁי לַאדֹנָי)

The psalmist is using the term **soul** to mean the entire person from the perspective of his spiritual and emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I myself wait for the Lord]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **more than watchmen for the morning, watchmen for the morning**
UST more {eagerly} than watchmen wait for the morning {to come}; yes, I wait more eagerly than watchmen wait for the morning
(מִשֹּׁמְרִים לַבֹּקֶר שֹׁמְרִים לַבֹּקֶר)

The psalmist 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 previous verse if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [more than watchmen wait for the morning, watchmen wait for the morning]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **more than watchmen for the morning, watchmen for the morning**
UST more {eagerly} than watchmen wait for the morning {to come}; yes, I wait more eagerly than watchmen wait for the morning
(מִשֹּׁמְרִים לַבֹּקֶר שֹׁמְרִים לַבֹּקֶר)

The phrase **watchmen for the morning** is repeated as a poetic device for emphasis. If your language has a poetic way to indicate the emotion of this phrase, you could use it here. Alternate translation: [more than watchmen for the morning, even more eagerly than watchmen waiting for the morning]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my soul | I wait for … to help me |
| for the Lord | the Lord |
| more than watchmen | more {eagerly} than watchmen wait |
| watchmen | yes, I wait more eagerly than watchmen wait |

# Psalms 130:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Israel, hope in Yahweh, for with Yahweh {is} covenant faithfulness, and with him {is} abundant redemption.* | *{My fellow} Israelites, confidently expect that Yahweh will help us. {He will help us} because he faithfully loves us, and he is very willing to save us.* |

ULT **Israel, hope in Yahweh, for with Yahweh {is} covenant faithfulness, and with him {is} abundant redemption**

UST { … My fellow} Israelites, confidently expect that Yahweh will help us. He will help us} because he faithfully loves us, and he is very willing to save us

(יַחֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־יְהוָה כִּי־עִם־יְהוָה הַחֶסֶד וְהַרְבֵּה עִמּוֹ פְדוּת)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second and third phrases give the reasons for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: [Because with Yahweh is covenant faithfulness and with him is abundant redemption, Israel should hope in Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **with Yahweh {is} covenant faithfulness, and with him {is} abundant redemption**

UST he faithfully loves us, and he is very willing to save us

(עִם־יְהוָה הַחֶסֶד וְהַרְבֵּה עִמּוֹ פְדוּת)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant faithfulness** and **redemption**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Yahweh faithfully keeps his covenant, and he abundantly redeems his people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Israel | {My fellow} Israelites |
| hope | confidently expect that … will help us |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} covenant faithfulness | faithfully loves us |
| redemption | to save us |

# Psalms 130:8

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *And he, he will redeem Israel from all his sins.* | *It is he who will make it so he will not need to punish {us} Israelite people for all the sins that {we} have committed.* |

**ULT And he, he will redeem**
**UST** It is he who will make it so he will not need to punish
(וְהוּא יִפְדֶּה)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **he** separately, even though the verb translated as **he will redeem** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that Yahweh himself will be the one to redeem Israel. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [And it is he himself who will redeem]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT his sins**
**UST** the sins that {we} have committed
(עֲוֹנֹתָיו)

The pronoun **his** refers to Israel. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Israel's sins]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| he will redeem | will make it so he will not need to punish |
| Israel | {us} Israelite people |
| his sins | the sins that {we} have committed |

# Psalms 131

## Psalm 131 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 131 is one of the songs of ascents (Psalms 120–134). These are generally understood to be songs that were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the three major annual festivals. The term “ascents” is used because going up to the temple in Jerusalem involved a climb up Mount Zion. It is a “psalm of trust.” See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Reject pride and self-exaltation (1)
2. Rest quietly in Yahweh like a weaned child (2)
3. Call Israel to hope in Yahweh (3)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### Humility as Contentment

The psalmist expresses humility not as self-deprecation but as willing acceptance of one’s place before God, refusing to pursue matters beyond his scope.

#### The Weaned Child

A weaned child resting on its mother is content without demanding anything. This simile pictures a soul at peace with God, no longer driven by unmet desire.

# Psalms 131:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A song of ascents; of David. Yahweh, my heart is not high and my eyes are not raised up, and I do not walk in great and marvelous {things} beyond me.* | *This is a psalm for people going up to the temple to worship. It is a psalm of David. Yahweh, I am not a proud, haughty person. I do not concern myself with things that are too great or too amazing for me.* |

ULT **my heart is not high and my eyes are not raised up**
UST I am not a proud, haughty person
(לֹא־גָבַהּ לִבִּי וְלֹא־רָמּוּ עֵינָי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. Both phrases express that David is not proud. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way as in the UST. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [I am not at all proud, nor do I act arrogantly]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **my heart is not high**
UST I am not a proud
(לֹא־גָבַהּ לִבִּי)

Here the **heart** represents a person's thoughts and attitudes. David is speaking of a proud person's thoughts as if his heart were physically **high**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my thoughts are not proud]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and my eyes are not raised up**
UST haughty person
(וְלֹא־רָמּוּ עֵינָי)

The expression **are not raised up** contains a passive verbal form. If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and my eyes do not look too high]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **and my eyes are not raised up**
UST haughty person
(וְלֹא־רָמּוּ עֵינָי)

David is speaking of a proud person's arrogant attitude as if his **eyes** were physically **raised up**. If your language has a comparable expression, you could use it in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and my attitude is not arrogant]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and I do not walk in great and marvelous {things}**
UST I do not concern myself with things that are too great or too amazing
(וְלֹא־הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי ׀ בִּגְדֹלוֹת וּבְנִפְלָאוֹת)

David is speaking of occupying himself with things as if he were able to **walk** among them. If your language has a comparable expression, you could use it in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I do not occupy myself with great and marvelous things]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| of David | It is a psalm of David |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 131:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Rather, I have stilled and quieted my soul like a weaned child upon his mother; like a weaned child upon me {is} my soul.* | *Instead, I have calmed myself, like a weaned child who rests {calmly} on {the breast of} his mother. Yes, my inner being is peaceful like that contented child.* |

**ULT Rather**
**UST** Instead
(אִם־לֹ֣א)

David uses the word **Rather** here to indicate a contrast between what he denied about himself in the previous verse and what he now positively affirms about himself. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [On the contrary]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

**ULT I have stilled and quieted**
**UST** I have calmed
(שִׁוִּ֥יתִי ׀ וְדוֹמַ֗מְתִּי)

The terms **stilled** and **quieted** mean similar things. David 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: [I have completely calmed]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**ULT my soul**
**UST** myself
(נַפְשִׁ֑י)

David is using the term **soul** to mean his entire person from the perspective of his emotional existence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my inner self]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **like a weaned child upon his mother; like a weaned child upon me {is} my soul**
UST like a weaned child who rests {calmly} on {the breast of} his mother. Yes, my inner being is peaceful like that contented child
(כְּגָמֻל עָלַי אִמּוֹ כַּגָּמֻל עָלַי נַפְשִׁי)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a weaned child** resting **upon his mother** is calm and content, no longer crying for milk, so David's inner being (**my soul**) is at peace. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [so that I am content and at rest; my inner being is truly at peace]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **his mother**
UST his mother
(אִמּוֹ)

The pronoun **his** refers to the weaned child in the simile. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [upon the child's mother]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my soul | myself |

# Psalms 131:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Israel, hope in Yahweh from now and until forever!* | *Israelites, confidently expect Yahweh {to do good things for you}, now and forever!* |

**ULT from now and until forever**
**UST** now and forever
(מֵֽעַתָּ֥ה וְעַד־עוֹלָֽם)

David is referring to all of time by naming its two extremes, **now** and **forever**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [always]

**Support Reference:** Merism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Israel | Israelites |
| hope | confidently expect … to do good things for you |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 132

## Psalm 132 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 132 is one of the songs of ascents (Psalms 120–134). These are generally understood to be songs that were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the three major annual festivals. The term “ascents” is used because going up to the temple in Jerusalem involved a climb up Mount Zion.

1. Remember David’s devotion to Yahweh (1–9)
2. Affirm Yahweh’s promise to David’s line (10–12)
3. Celebrate Yahweh’s choice of Zion (13–18)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Psalm

#### The Davidic Covenant

Yahweh swore that David’s descendants would reign if they kept his covenant.

# Psalms 132:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A song of ascents. Remember, Yahweh, for David, all of his afflictions,* | *This is a psalm for people going up to the temple to worship. Yahweh, think about {King} David and the many ways that he suffered.* |

**ULT Remember, Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh, think
(זְכֹר־יְהוָה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. The psalmist is praying to God. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please remember, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT all of his afflictions**
**UST** and the many ways that he suffered
(אֵת כָּל־עֻנּוֹתָו)

The pronoun **his** refers to David. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [all of David’s afflictions]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT his afflictions**
**UST** that he suffered
(עֻנּוֹתָו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **afflictions**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the hardships he endured]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| for David | about {King} David |
| his afflictions | that he suffered |

# Psalms 132:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *who swore to Yahweh; vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob,* | *He made a solemn promise to Yahweh, the Mighty God whom Jacob worshiped.* |

**ULT who swore to Yahweh; vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob**
**UST** He made a solemn promise to Yahweh, the Mighty God whom Jacob worshiped
(אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁבַּע לַיהוָה נָּדַר לַאֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way, as the UST does. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [who swore to Yahweh, yes, he vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob**
**UST** made a solemn promise … the Mighty God whom Jacob worshiped
(נָּדַר לַאֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could mark the end of this verse in a way that shows that the next verse is the beginning of David's oath. Alternate translation: [vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob, saying,]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| swore | made a solemn promise |
| to Yahweh | to Yahweh |
| vowed | made a solemn promise |
| to the Mighty One | the Mighty God whom … worshiped |
| of Jacob | Jacob |

# Psalms 132:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“If I go into the tent of my house, if I go up on the bed of my couch,* | *{He said,} “I will not go home or lie down on my bed to rest.* |

**ULT If I go into the tent of my house, if I go up on the bed of my couch**
**UST** { … He said,} “I will not go home or lie down on my bed to rest
(אִם־אָבֹא בְּאֹהֶל בֵּיתִי אִם־אֶעֱלֶה עַל־עֶרֶשׂ יְצוּעָי)

Following the custom of the culture, David is swearing an oath by stating several conditions (“if”) from this verse through verse 5, but not the consequences for not meeting those conditions (“then”). The implied meaning is that something bad will happen to him if he does these things before finding a place for Yahweh.

**Support Reference:** Oath Formulas

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| into the tent | home |
| of my house | home |

# Psalms 132:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *if I give sleep to my eyes, slumber to my eyelids,* | *I will not allow myself to sleep at all* |

**ULT slumber to my eyelids**
**UST** at all
(לְעַפְעַפַּי תְּנוּמָה)

The psalmist 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 I give slumber to my eyelids]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

# Psalms 132:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *until I find a place for Yahweh, dwellings for the Mighty One of Jacob."* | *until I build a home for Yahweh, the Mighty God whom Jacob worshiped."* |

**ULT until I find a place for Yahweh, dwellings for the Mighty One of Jacob**
UST until I build a home for Yahweh, the Mighty God whom Jacob worshiped
(עַד־אֶמְצָא מָקוֹם לַיהוָה מִשְׁכָּנוֹת לַאֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב)

Following the custom of the culture, the psalmist is quoting David as swearing an oath by stating the first part of a condition ("if" clauses in verses 3 and 4) but not the second part ("then"). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explicitly state the consequence of not meeting this condition. Alternate translation: [until I find a place for Yahweh, dwellings for the Mighty One of Jacob, then may God strike me down]

**Support Reference:** Oath Formulas

**ULT dwellings for the Mighty One of Jacob**
UST a home … the Mighty God whom Jacob worshiped
(מִשְׁכָּנוֹת לַאֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב)

The psalmist 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 I find dwellings for the Mighty One of Jacob]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for Yahweh | for Yahweh |
| dwellings | a home |
| for the Mighty One | the Mighty God whom … worshiped |
| of Jacob | Jacob |

# Psalms 132:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah; we found it in the fields of Jaar.* | *Listen, we heard about the sacred chest in Ephrathah; we found it in the fields near Jaar (Kiriath-Jearim).* |

**ULT Behold**
**UST** Listen
(הִנֵּה)

The psalmist is using the term **behold** to focus his listeners' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Pay attention]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT we heard of it in Ephrathah; we found it in the fields of Jaar**
**UST** we heard about the sacred chest in Ephrathah; we found it in the fields near Jaar (Kiriath-Jearim
(שְׁמַעֲנֻהָ בְאֶפְרָתָה מְצָאנֻהוּ בִּשְׂדֵי־יָעַר)

The pronoun **it** in both clauses refers to the ark of the covenant. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [we heard of the ark of the covenant in Ephrathah; we found the ark in the fields of Jaar]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in Ephrathah | in Ephrathah |

# Psalms 132:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“Let us go to his dwellings; let us bow down at the footstool of his feet.”* | *{We said}, “Let us go to the place where Yahweh lives; let us worship {before the sacred chest} where he rests his feet.”* |

**ULT Let us go to his dwellings**
**UST** {We said}, “Let us go to the place where Yahweh lives
(נָבֹואָה לְמִשְׁכְּנֹותָיו)

This is the beginning of what the community of worshipers said. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could mark that this is a direct quote of the community. Alternate translation: [We said to one another, “Let us go to his dwellings]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

**ULT to his dwellings**
**UST** to the place where Yahweh lives
(לְמִשְׁכְּנֹותָיו)

The pronoun **his** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh’s dwellings]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT let us bow down**
**UST** let us worship
(נִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה)

Here, **bow down** is decribing a symbolic action by which people showed reverence and submission as an act of worship. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation. Alternate translation: [let us bow down in worship]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

**ULT at the footstool of his feet**
**UST** {before the sacred chest} where he rests his feet
(לַהֲדֹם רַגְלָיו)

Here the psalmist is speaking of the ark of the covenant as if it were **the footstool of his feet**, that is, the place where Yahweh rests his feet as he sits enthroned above the cherubim. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the place where he rests his feet]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to his dwellings | to the place where Yahweh lives |
| let us bow down | let us worship |
| at the footstool | {before the sacred chest} where |

# Psalms 132:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Arise, Yahweh, to your resting place, you and the box of your strength.* | *Yahweh, come to the place where you will stay, together with the sacred chest that represents your powerful presence.* |

ULT **Arise, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh, come
(קוּמָה יְהוָה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. The psalmist is praying to God. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please arise, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Arise**
UST come
(קוּמָה)

The psalmist is using **Arise** as a common expression of the culture to tell Yahweh to take action and come to his resting place. He is not telling Yahweh to stand up from a seated position. If this expression does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **to your resting place**
UST to the place where you will stay
(לְמְנוּחָתֶךָ)

Here Yahweh is speaking of remaining in one place as if he were **resting** there. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [come where you can remain]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **and the box of your strength**
> UST the sacred chest that represents your powerful presence
> (וַאֲרוֹן עֻזֶּךָ)

Here, **strength** represents Yahweh's powerful presence. The box (ark of the covenant) is called the box of Yahweh's strength because it symbolized his powerful presence among the people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [and the box where your power resides]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and the box | the sacred chest |
| of your strength | that represents your powerful presence |

# Psalms 132:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let your priests wear righteousness, and let your faithful shout for joy.* | *May your priests always do what is right, and may the people who are faithful to you shout joyfully.* |

ULT **Let your priests wear righteousness, and let your faithful shout for joy**
UST May your priests always do what is right, and may the people who are faithful to you shout joyfully
(כֹּהֲנֶיךָ יִלְבְּשׁוּ־צֶדֶק וַחֲסִידֶיךָ יְרַנֵּנוּ)

The psalmist is saying what he wants the priests and the faithful ones to do. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about "let" and "may" and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [Your priests should wear righteousness and your faithful ones should shout for joy]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **Let your priests wear righteousness**
UST May your priests always do what is right
(כֹּהֲנֶיךָ יִלְבְּשׁוּ־צֶדֶק)

Here the psalmist is speaking of **righteousness** as if it were clothing that the priests could **wear**. He means that the priests should be characterized by righteous behavior. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Let your priests be righteous in all they do]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **righteousness, and let your faithful shout for joy**
UST always do what is right, and may the people who are faithful to you shout joyfully
(צֶדֶק וַחֲסִידֶיךָ יְרַנֵּנוּ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **righteousness** and **joy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [righteous acts and let your faithful shout joyfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and let your faithful shout for joy**
UST and may the people who are faithful to you shout joyfully
(וַחֲסִידֶ֥יךָ יְרַנֵּֽנוּ)

The psalmist is using the adjective **faithful** as a noun to mean people who are faithful to God. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [and your faithful people should shout for joy]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| let … shout for joy | shout joyfully |
| your priests | May your priests |
| righteousness | always do what is right |
| and … your faithful | and may the people who are faithful to you |

# Psalms 132:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the sake of David your servant, do not turn back the face of your anointed.* | *Because of what you promised to David, who served you, do not reject the king whom you chose.* |

**ULT do not turn back the face of your anointed**
**UST** do not reject the king whom you chose
(אַל־תָּשֵׁב פְּנֵי מְשִׁיחֶךָ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. The psalmist is asking God not to reject the anointed king. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please do not turn back the face of your anointed]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT turn back the face of**
**UST** do … reject
(תָּשֵׁב פְּנֵי)

The psalmist is using **turn back the face** as a common expression of his culture to mean “reject.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [reject]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| David | David |
| your servant | who served you |
| turn back | do … reject |
| your anointed | the king whom you chose |

# Psalms 132:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh swore to David, {in} truth, he will not turn back from it: "From the fruit of your body I will set {one} on the throne for you.* | *Yahweh swore a promise to David, and he will certainly not take it back: "I will place one of your own descendants {to rule as king} on your throne.* |

ULT **{in} truth**
UST certainly
(אֱמֶת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **truth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [surely]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **he will not turn back from it**
UST and he will … not take it back
(לֹא־יָשׁוּב מִמֶּנָּה)

The pronoun **he** refers to Yahweh, and the pronoun **it** refers to the oath that he swore. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will not turn back from his promise]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **he will not turn back from it**
UST and he will … not take it back
(לֹא־יָשׁוּב מִמֶּנָּה)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh changing his mind about his promise as if he were going one way and then decided to **turn back from it**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he will not change his mind about it]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **From the fruit of your body**
UST one of your own descendants
(מִפְּרִי בִטְנְךָ)

After the clause "he will not turn back from it," Yahweh's direct speech begins. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could mark that this is a direct quote of Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh said, "From the fruit of your body]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **From the fruit of your body**
UST one of your own descendants
(מִפְּרִי בִטְנְךָ)

Here Yahweh is speaking of David's children as if they were **the fruit** that his body produces. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [From among your offspring]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **I will set {one} on the throne for you**
UST I will place … {to rule as king} on your throne
(אָשִׁית לְכִסֵּא־לָךְ)

Here Yahweh is speaking of choosing one of David's sons to rule his kingdom after him as if he were going to physically **set** him **on the throne**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will cause one of your sons to rule over Israel after you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **on the throne**
UST {to rule as king} on your throne
(לְכִסֵּא)

Here, **the throne** represents royal authority and the right to rule as king. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [as king over your kingdom]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| swore | swore a promise |
| to David | to David |
| From the fruit | one of your own descendants |
| on the throne | {to rule as king} on your throne |

# Psalms 132:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *If your sons keep my covenant and my testimonies that I will teach them, then also their sons, unto perpetuity, will sit on the throne for you."* | *If your sons obey my covenant and the commands that I will teach them, then their sons will also rule as kings on your throne forever."* |

ULT **my covenant and my testimonies**
UST my covenant and the commands
(בְּרִיתִ֗י וְעֵדֹתַ֥י)

The terms **covenant** and **testimonies** 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: [all my commands]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **will sit on the throne for you**
UST will … rule as kings on your throne
(יֵ֭שְׁבוּ לְכִסֵּא־לָ֑ךְ)

Here, **sit on the throne** represents ruling as king. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [will succeed you as kings]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my covenant | my covenant |
| and my testimonies | and the commands |
| unto perpetuity | forever |
| on the throne | on your throne |

# Psalms 132:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For Yahweh has chosen Zion; he desired {it} for a dwelling for himself.* | *Indeed, Yahweh has chosen Zion because he wanted it to be the place where he lives.* |

ULT **For**
UST Indeed
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation. You may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [Certainly,]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| has chosen | has chosen |
| Zion | Zion |

# Psalms 132:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“This {is} my resting place unto perpetuity; here I will dwell, for I have desired it.* | *{He said,} “This is the place where I will stay forever; I will live here because I have chosen this place.* |

**ULT This {is} my resting place**
**UST** {He said,} “This is the place where I will stay
(זֹאת־מְנוּחָתִי)

This is the beginning of what Yahweh said. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could mark that this is a direct quote of Yahweh. Alternate translation: [Yahweh said, “This is my resting place]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

**ULT {is} my resting place**
**UST** where I will stay
(מְנוּחָתִי)

Here Yahweh is speaking of remaining in one place as if he were **resting** there. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [where I will remain]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT for I have desired it**
**UST** because I have chosen this place
(כִּי אִוִּתִיהָ)

The word **for** here indicates that what follows is a reason for Yahweh’s decision to dwell in Zion. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because I have desired it]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

# Psalms 132:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Blessing I will bless her provisions; her needy I will satisfy {with} bread.* | *I will certainly give the people of Zion everything that they need; I will give enough food to satisfy {even} the poor people who live there.* |

ULT **Blessing I will bless**
UST I will certainly give
(בָּרֵךְ אֲבָרֵךְ)

Yahweh is repeating forms of the verb **bless** in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [I will abundantly bless]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

ULT **her provisions**
UST the people of Zion everything that they need
(צֵידָהּ)

Here and through the next verse, the pronoun **her** refers to Zion (see verse 13). It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Zion's provisions]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **her needy**
UST {even} the poor people who live there
(אֶבְיוֹנֶיהָ)

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: [I will bless her needy]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **her needy**
UST {even} the poor people who live there
(אֶבְיוֹנֶיהָ)

Yahweh is using the adjective **needy** as a noun to mean people who are in need. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [her needy people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **{with} bread**
UST food
(לֶחֶם)

The psalmist 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 expression. Alternate translation: [with enough to eat]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Blessing | certainly |
| I will bless | I will … give |
| {with} bread | food |

# Psalms 132:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And her priests I will clothe {with} salvation, and her faithful, shouting they will shout for joy.* | *I will enable the priests of Zion to show others what a person looks like whom I have saved, and the people there who are faithful to me will shout very joyfully.* |

ULT **And her priests I will clothe {with} salvation**
UST I will enable the priests of Zion to show others what a person looks like whom I have saved
(וְכֹהֲנֶיהָ אַלְבִּישׁ יֶשַׁע)

Here Yahweh is speaking the priests being examples of his saving power as if **salvation** were clothing that the priests could wear. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And her priests I will make examples of my saving power]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **{ … with} salvation, and her faithful, shouting they will shout for joy**
UST whom I have saved, and the people there who are faithful to me will shout very joyfully
(יֶשַׁע וַחֲסִידֶיהָ רַנֵּן יְרַנֵּנוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract nouns for the ideas of **salvation** and **joy**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [with the evidence that I save people, and her faithful people will shout joyfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and her faithful**
UST and the people there who are faithful to me
(וַחֲסִידֶיהָ)

Yahweh is using the adjective **faithful** as a noun to mean people who are faithful to God. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [and her faithful people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **shouting they will shout for joy**
UST will shout very joyfully
(רַנֵּן יְרַנֵּנוּ)

Yahweh is repeating forms of the verb **shout** in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [they will shout loudly for joy]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| And her priests | the priests of Zion |
| {with} salvation | whom I have saved |
| and her faithful | and the people there who are faithful to me |
| shouting | will shout very joyfully |
| they will shout for joy | will shout very joyfully |
| they will shout for joy | will shout very joyfully |

# Psalms 132:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *There I will make a horn sprout for David; I have arranged a lamp for my anointed one.* | *In Zion I will cause a powerful king to come from David's family; I have arranged for the king whom I have chosen that a son of his will always rule.* |

ULT **There**
UST In Zion
(שָׁם)

The word **There** refers to Zion, which was mentioned in verse 13. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [There in Zion]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **I will make a horn sprout for David**
UST I will cause a powerful king to come from David's family
(אַצְמִ֣יחַ קֶ֖רֶן לְדָוִ֑ד)

Here Yahweh is speaking of son of David's being born who will be powerful as if he were a **horn** that would **sprout** like a plant growing. A horn represents strength and power, and sprouting represents the arising of something new. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will make a powerful king rise up from David's line]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **a lamp for my anointed one**
UST for the king whom I have chosen that a son of his will always rule
(עָ֝רַ֗כְתִּי נֵ֥ר לִמְשִׁיחִֽי)

Here Yahweh is speaking of the continuing dynasty of the anointed king as if it were **a lamp** that keeps burning. A lamp that stays lit represents the continuation of a family line or kingdom. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a continuing dynasty for my anointed one]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a horn | a powerful king |
| for David | from David's family |
| a lamp | that a son of his will always rule |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for my anointed one | for the king whom I have chosen |

# Psalms 132:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *His enemies I will clothe {with} shame, but upon him his crown will flourish.”* | *I will cause his enemies to be very ashamed, but his kingdom will prosper.”* |

**ULT His enemies I will clothe {with} shame**
**UST** I will cause his enemies to be very ashamed
(אוֹיְבָיו אַלְבִּישׁ בֹּשֶׁת)

Here Yahweh is speaking of **shame** as if the enemies would wear it like clothing. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [His enemies I will thoroughly put to shame]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT His enemies**
**UST** his enemies
(אוֹיְבָיו)

Here, **His** and the pronoun **him** later in the verse refer to the anointed one mentioned in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The anointed one’s enemies]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT I will clothe {with} shame**
**UST** I will cause … to be very ashamed
(אַלְבִּישׁ בֹּשֶׁת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **shame**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [I will shame]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT but upon him his crown will flourish**
**UST** but his kingdom will prosper
(וְעָלָיו יָצִיץ נִזְרוֹ)

Yahweh uses the word **but** here to indicate a contrast between the fate of the anointed one’s enemies and the fate of the anointed one himself. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [however, upon him his crown will flourish]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

> ULT **his crown will flourish**
> UST his kingdom will prosper
> (יָצִיץ נִזְרוֹ)

Here Yahweh is speaking of the anointed one's crown as if it were a plant that would **flourish** and grow. He means that the anointed one's reign will prosper and thrive. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his reign will be successful]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| His enemies | his enemies |
| {with} shame | to be very ashamed |
| his crown | his kingdom |

# Psalms 133

## Psalm 133 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 133 is one of the songs of ascents (Psalms 120–134). These are generally understood to be songs that were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the three major annual festivals. The term “ascents” is used because going up to the temple in Jerusalem involved a climb up Mount Zion.

1. Celebrate the goodness of unity (1–2)
2. Declare Yahweh’s blessing where unity dwells (3)

# Psalms 133:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A song of ascents; of David Behold, how good and how pleasant {is} the dwelling of brothers, yes, together!* | *This is a psalm for people going up to the temple to worship. It is of David. Think about how wonderful and delightful it is when God's people live together {in a unified way}!* |

ULT **Behold**
UST Think about
(הִנֵּה)

David is using the word **Behold** to focus the attention of his listeners on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Consider]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **good and how pleasant**
UST how wonderful and delightful it is
(טוֹב וּמַה־נָּעִים)

The terms **good** and **pleasant** mean similar things. David 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 delightful]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of David | It is of David |
| good | how wonderful |
| pleasant | and delightful it is |

# Psalms 133:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Like the good oil on the head, coming down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, that is coming down on the mouth of his garments,* | *It is as delightful as {watching someone pour} fine olive oil on the head of Aaron, {the priest,} oil that runs down onto his beard and flows down to the collar of his robes.* |

ULT **Like the good oil on the head, coming down on the beard, the beard of Aaron**
UST It is as delightful as {watching someone pour} fine olive oil on the head of Aaron, {the priest,} oil that runs down onto his beard
(כַּשֶּׁמֶן הַטּוֹב ׀ עַל־הָרֹאשׁ יֹרֵד עַל־הַזָּקָן זְקַן־אַהֲרֹן)

David assumes that readers will know that the **good oil** being poured on **the head** and **beard** of Aaron refers to Aaron's anointing as High Priest which was a solemn and joyful occasion. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [It is as good and pleasant as the anointing oil that is pouring down over Aaron's head and]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the mouth of his garments**
UST the collar of his robes
(פִּי מְדוֹתָיו)

Here, **the mouth of his garments** is a common expression that means the opening or neckline of a garment. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the neckline of his garments]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Like the … oil | It is as delightful as {watching someone pour} … olive oil |
| good | fine |
| the head | the head |
| Aaron | of Aaron, {the priest … } |

# Psalms 133:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *like the dew of Hermon that is coming down on the mountains of Zion, for there Yahweh commanded the blessing, life to forever.* | *It is as delightful as {feeling} the dew from Mount Hermon coming down on the mountains of Zion. That is where Yahweh blessed {his people}, giving them a way to live forever.* |

ULT **there**
UST That is where
(שָׁם)

Here the word **there** refers to Zion. David is using this word to refer back to the mountains of Zion that he mentioned previously. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [it was there on Zion that]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **like the dew of Hermon that is coming down on the mountains of Zion**
UST It is as delightful as {feeling} the dew from Mount Hermon coming down on the mountains of Zion
(כְּטַל־חֶרְמוֹן שֶׁיֹּרֵד עַל־הָרְרֵי צִיּוֹן)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the dew of Hermon** is refreshing and life-giving as it falls on the land, so the unity of God's people is refreshing and brings life. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [as the refreshing dew from Hermon falls on the mountains of Zion, so the unity of God's people refreshes and gives life]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **the blessing**
UST blessed {his people}
(אֶת־הַבְּרָכָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **the blessing**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [that he would bless his people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **life to forever**
UST giving them a way to live forever
(חַיִּים עַד־הָעוֹלָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **life**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [that they would live forever]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Zion | Zion |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the blessing | blessed {his people} |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 134

## Psalm 134 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 134 is one of the songs of ascents (Psalms 120–134). These are generally understood to be songs that were customarily sung by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem for one of the three major annual festivals. The term “ascents” is used because going up to the temple in Jerusalem involved a climb up Mount Zion.

1. Call Yahweh’s servants to bless him (1–2)
2. Receive blessing from Yahweh the creator (3)

# Psalms 134:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A song of the ascents. Behold, bless Yahweh, all servants of Yahweh, the ones standing in the house of Yahweh in the nights.* | *This is a psalm for people going up to the temple to worship. Listen! Praise Yahweh, all you who serve Yahweh, you who stand in Yahweh's temple during the night hours.* |

ULT **Behold**
UST Listen
(הִנֵּה)

The psalmist is using the term **Behold** to focus his listeners' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Pay attention]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the house of Yahweh**
UST in Yahweh's temple
(בְּבֵית־יְהוָה)

The psalmist is speaking of the temple of Yahweh as if it were a **house** in which he lived. Alternate translation: [in the temple of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| bless | Praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| servants of | you who serve |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| in the house of Yahweh | in Yahweh's temple |

# Psalms 134:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Lift up your hands {to the} holiness, and bless Yahweh.* | *Raise your hands {to pray toward} the holy place and praise Yahweh.* |

**ULT Lift up your hands**
**UST** Raise your hands {to pray … }
(שְׂאוּ־יְדֵכֶם)

To **Lift up** the **hands** was a symbolic action by which the Israelites showed their reverence and devotion to Yahweh in prayer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation. Alternate translation: [Lift up your hands in prayer]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

**ULT {to the} holiness**
**UST** { … toward} the holy place
(קֹדֶשׁ)

The word translated as **holiness** could refer to: (1) the holy place in the temple. Alternate translation: [to the holy place] or (2) the hands of the worshipers. Alternate translation: [in holiness]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {to the} holiness | { … toward} the holy place |
| and bless | and praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 134:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May Yahweh bless you from Zion, the maker of heaven and earth.* | *I pray that Yahweh will bless you from {his temple on} Mount Zion, {for} he is the one who made everything that exists.* |

**ULT May Yahweh bless you**
**UST** I pray that Yahweh will bless you
(יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה)

The pronoun **you** here is singular and refers to each individual worshiper among the servants addressed earlier in this psalm. There the psalmist addressed the servants as a group using plural forms, but here the blessing shifts to the singular. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [May Yahweh bless each of you]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT from Zion**
**UST** from {his temple on} Mount Zion
(מִצִּיּוֹן)

Here, **Zion** represents the place where Yahweh dwells among his people. The psalmist is using the name of this location to refer to God's special presence there. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from his dwelling on Zion]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT heaven and earth**
**UST** everything that exists
(שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ)

The psalmist is referring to all of creation by naming two extremes, **heaven** and **earth**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all things]

**Support Reference:** Merism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| May … bless you | I pray that … will bless you |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| from Zion | from {his temple on} Mount Zion |
| the maker of | {for} he is the one who made |
| heaven | everything that exists |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and earth | everything that exists |

# Psalms 135

## Psalm 135 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 135 is a “psalm of praise” focusing on worshiping God because his greatness.

1. Call to praise Yahweh (1–4)
2. Yahweh’s power over creation and history (5–14)
3. Idols are worthless but Yahweh is worthy of praise (15–21)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

#### Praise

The people, priests and their helpers should praise God because he is so great. He defeated the Egyptians and led his people to the promise land. Idols have no power.

# Psalms 135:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hallelu Yah! Praise the name of Yahweh; praise {him}, servants of Yahweh,* | *Praise Yahweh! Praise him because of who he is! You who serve Yahweh, praise him,* |

**ULT Hallelu Yah**
**UST** Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

**ULT Yah**
**UST** Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

**ULT the name of Yahweh**
**UST** because of who he is
(אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה)

The psalmist is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is or to refer to his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [everything about Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yah | Yahweh |
| Praise | Praise him |
| Yahweh | because of who he is |
| servants of | You who serve |

# Psalms 135:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *who are standing in the house of Yahweh, in the courts of the house of our God.* | *you who stand {and serve} in Yahweh's temple, in the courtyards of the house of our God!* |

ULT **in the house of Yahweh**
UST in Yahweh's temple
(בְּבֵית יְהוָה)

The psalmist is speaking of the temple where Yahweh is worshiped as if it were a house in which he lived. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in the temple of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the courts of the house of**
UST in the courtyards of the house of
(בַּחֲצֵרוֹת בֵּית)

The psalmist 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: [who are standing in the courts of the house of]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **our God**
UST our God
(אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

By using this possessive form, **our God**, the psalmist is not saying that the Israelites possess or control Yahweh. Rather he is using these words to indicate that Yahweh is the God whom the Israelites worship. See the introduction to Psalms for further discussion. Alternate translation: [the God whom we worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the house of Yahweh | in Yahweh's temple |
| Yahweh | Yahweh's |
| in the courts of | in the courtyards of |
| the house of our God | the house of our God |

# Psalms 135:3

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Hallelu Yah, for Yahweh {is} good; make music to his name, for {it is} pleasant.* | *Praise Yahweh, because he is good; sing praises to him, because doing that is delightful.* |

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ־יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **to his name**
UST to him
(לִשְׁמוֹ)

Here, **his name** represents who Yahweh is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [to Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yah | Yahweh |
| Yahweh | he |
| {is} good | is good |
| {it is} pleasant | doing that is delightful |

# Psalms 135:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For Yah chose Jacob for himself; Israel for his special possession.* | *Praise him because Yahweh chose {us,} the descendants of Jacob, the people of Israel, to belong only to him.* |

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **Jacob**
UST {us,} the descendants of Jacob
(יַעֲקֹב)

The psalmist is using the name **Jacob** to refer to the people of Israel who were all descendants of the patriarch Jacob, who was also known as Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Israel for his special possession**
UST the people of Israel, to belong only to him
(יִשְׂרָאֵל לִסְגֻלָּתוֹ)

The psalmist 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 chose Israel for his special possession]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **for his special possession**
UST to belong only to him
(לִסְגֻלָּתוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **possession**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [as his own special people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yah | Yahweh |
| chose | chose |
| Jacob | {us,} the descendants of Jacob |
| Israel | the people of Israel |
| for his special possession | to belong only to him |

# Psalms 135:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For I, I know that Yahweh {is} great, and our Lord than all gods.* | *Indeed, I know very well that Yahweh is great and that our Lord is more powerful than all other spirit beings.* |

ULT **For**
UST Indeed
(כִּי)

Here the word **For** introduces not a reason but an explanation. You may want to use a different connecting word to show how this statement relates to what comes before it. Alternate translation: [After all]

**Support Reference:** Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **I, I know**
UST I know very well
(אֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **I know** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize how confident he is in this knowledge. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [I definitely know]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and our Lord than all gods**
UST and that our Lord is more powerful than all other spirit beings
(וַאֲדֹנֵינוּ מִכָּל־אֱלֹהִים)

The psalmist 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 our Lord is greater than all gods]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT than all gods**
**UST** is more powerful than all other spirit beings
(מִכָּל־אֱלֹהִֽים)

The term “god,” when applied to a being other than Yahweh, can refer to an idol, but, as here, it can also refer to any lesser spirit being. Alternate translation: [than any other spiritual being]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| I know | I know very well |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and our Lord | and that our Lord |
| gods | other spirit beings |

# Psalms 135:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Everything that Yahweh desires, he does, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all deeps—* | *Yahweh does whatever he wants to do, everywhere, whether it is in heaven or on the earth or in the ocean, even deep down in the ocean.* |

ULT **in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all deeps**
UST everywhere, whether it is in heaven or on the earth or in the ocean, even deep down in the ocean
(בַּשָּׁמַיִם וּבָאָרֶץ בַּיַּמִּים וְכָל־תְּהוֹמוֹת)

The psalmist is referring to everywhere in all of creation by naming two pairs of extremes, **the heavens** and **the earth**, as well as **the seas** and **all deeps**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [everywhere in all of creation]

**Support Reference:** Merism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| in the heavens | everywhere, whether it is in heaven |
| and on the earth | or on the earth |

# Psalms 135:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *bringing up clouds from the end of the earth, he makes lightning bolts for the rain— bringing out wind from his storehouses,* | *He causes clouds to form in distant places on the earth; he makes lightning flash along with the rain, and he sends out wind from the places where he stores it.* |

ULT **bringing up clouds from the end of the earth**
UST He causes clouds to form in distant places on the earth
(מַעֲלֶה נְשִׂאִים מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ)

Here the word translated **bringing up** does not have an explicit subject. The context of the previous verse makes clear that the subject is Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is bringing up clouds from the end of the earth]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **from the end of the earth**
UST in distant places on the earth
(מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ)

The psalmist is using the phrase **from the end of the earth** as a common expression to mean “from distant places.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from everywhere on earth]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **from his storehouses**
UST from the places where he stores it
(מֵאוֹצְרוֹתָיו)

The psalmist is speaking of wind as if it were kept in **storehouses**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from where he has prepared it]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from his storehouses | from the places where he stores it |

# Psalms 135:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *who struck the firstborn of Egypt, from man to beast.* | *He killed every firstborn in Egypt, including those from both people and animals.* |

**ULT who struck the firstborn of Egypt**
**UST** He killed every firstborn in Egypt
(שֶׁהִכָּה בְּכוֹרֵי מִצְרָיִם)

The word **who** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh struck the firstborn of Egypt]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT who struck**
**UST** He killed
(שֶׁהִכָּה)

Here, **struck** represents to kill or slaughter. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT from man to beast**
**UST** including those from both people and animals
(מֵאָדָם עַד־בְּהֵמָה)

The psalmist is referring to all living beings by naming two extremes, **man** and **beast**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [of every kind of creature of Egypt]

**Support Reference:** Merism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the firstborn of | every firstborn in |
| Egypt | Egypt |
| beast | animals |

# Psalms 135:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He sent signs and wonders into your midst, Egypt, against Pharaoh and against all of his servants,* | *He did amazing miracles among the people of Egypt to punish Pharaoh and all of his officials.* |

ULT **signs and wonders**
UST amazing miracles
(אֹתוֹת וּמוֹפְתִים)

The terms **signs** and **wonders** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [extraordinary demonstrations of his power]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **into your midst, Egypt**
UST among the people of Egypt
(בְּתוֹכֵכִי מִצְרָיִם)

The psalmist is speaking to **Egypt**, which cannot hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about what God did there. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about Egypt. Alternate translation: [right in front of the Egyptians]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| signs | amazing miracles |
| and wonders | amazing miracles |
| Egypt | the people of Egypt |
| against Pharaoh | to punish Pharaoh |
| his servants | his officials |

# Psalms 135:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *who struck many nations and slew mighty kings:* | *He defeated many nations and killed their powerful kings.* |

> ULT **who struck many nations**
> UST He defeated many nations
> (שֶׁהִכָּה גּוֹיִם רַבִּים)

The word **who** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh struck many nations]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

> ULT **who struck**
> UST He defeated
> (שֶׁהִכָּה)

Here, **struck** represents killing or defeating in battle. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [who conquered]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| nations | nations |
| and slew | and killed |
| mighty | powerful |
| kings | their … kings |

# Psalms 135:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sihon, king of the Amorite, and Og, king of the Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan.* | *He killed Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, and all the kings of Canaan.* |

**ULT Sihon, king of the Amorite**
UST He killed Sihon, king of the Amorites
(לְסִיחֹון ו מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי)

The psalmist 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 defeated Sihon, king of the Amorite]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Sihon | He killed Sihon |
| king of | king of |
| the Amorite | the Amorites |
| and Og | and Og |
| the Bashan | Bashan |
| the kingdoms of | the kings of |
| Canaan | Canaan |

# Psalms 135:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he gave their land {as} an inheritance, an inheritance for Israel, his people.* | *Then he gave the land that those kings had ruled over to his own people, that is, to {us,} the people of Israel, to be our own land.* |

**ULT And he gave their land**
**UST** Then he gave the land that those kings had ruled over
(וְנָתַן אַרְצָם)

The pronoun **he** refers to Yahweh, while the word **their** refers to the defeated kings mentioned in the previous verses. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh gave the land of those kings]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT { … as} an inheritance, an inheritance**
**UST** to be our own land
(נַחֲלָה נַחֲלָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **inheritance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to them as a gift to inherit]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their land | the land that those kings had ruled over |
| {as} an inheritance | to be our own land |
| { … as} an inheritance, an inheritance | to be our own land |
| for Israel | that is, to {us,} the people of Israel |

# Psalms 135:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, your name {is} to forever; Yahweh, your remembrance {is} to generation and generation.* | *Yahweh, people will always know how great you are; Yahweh, people in every generation will remember you,* |

ULT **Yahweh, your name {is} to forever; Yahweh, your remembrance {is} to generation and generation**

UST Yahweh, people will always know how great you are; Yahweh, people in every generation will remember you

(יְהוָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם יְהוָה זִכְרְךָ לְדֹר־וָדֹר)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, you will be known and remembered through every generation] or [Yahweh, your name is to forever, indeed, your remembrance is to generation and generation]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **your name**

UST people will … know how great you are

(שִׁמְךָ)

Here, **name** represents Yahweh's reputation and character. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [your reputation]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **{is} to forever**

UST always

(לְעוֹלָם)

The psalmist is using **to forever** as a common expression of his culture to mean "eternally" or "without end." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [lasts throughout eternity]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **your remembrance {is} to generation and generation**
UST people in every generation will remember you
(זִכְרְךָ֥ לְדֹר־וָדֹֽר)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **remembrance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [people will remember you from generation to generation]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{is} to generation and generation**
UST people in every generation
(לְדֹר־וָדֹֽר)

The psalmist is using the phrase **to generation and generation** as a common expression to mean “forever.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [is through all generations] or [is forever]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} to forever | always |
| {is} to generation | people in every generation |
| and generation | people in every generation |

# Psalms 135:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For Yahweh vindicates his people, and he has compassion on his servants.* | *because Yahweh defends his people and is merciful to those who serve him.* |

ULT **For**
UST because
(כִּי)

The word **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| he has compassion | is merciful |
| his servants | those who serve him |

# Psalms 135:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The idols of the nations {are} silver and gold, the work of the hands of man.* | *The idols that other people groups worship are only statues made of silver and gold; people made them with their own hands.* |

**ULT the work of the hands of man**
**UST** people made them with their own hands
(מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי אָדָם)

Here, **the hands of man** represents the craftsmanship and ability of people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea with an equivalent expression.
Alternate translation: [the work of men] or [made by men]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The idols of | The idols |
| the nations | that other people groups worship |
| {are} silver | are only statues made of silver |
| and gold | and gold |
| the work of | people made them |

# Psalms 135:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A mouth {is} to them, but they do not speak; eyes {are} to them, but they do not see.* | *Those idols have mouths, but they cannot say anything; they have eyes, but they cannot see anything.* |

ULT **A mouth {is} to them, but they do not speak; eyes {are} to them, but they do not see**
UST Those idols have mouths, but they cannot say anything; they have eyes, but they cannot see anything
(פֶּה־לָהֶם וְלֹא יְדַבֵּרוּ עֵינַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יִרְאוּ)

See how you translated the same phrases in Psalm 115:5.

**Support Reference:** Idiom

# Psalms 135:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Ears {are} to them, but they do not listen; indeed there is no breath in their mouths.* | *They have ears, but they cannot hear anything; In fact, they do not even breathe.* |

**ULT Ears {are} to them, but they do not listen**

**UST** They have ears, but they cannot hear anything

(אָזְנַ֣יִם לָהֶ֣ם וְלֹ֣א יַאֲזִ֑ינוּ)

See how you translated the similar phrase, “ears are to them, but they do not hear” in Psalm 115:6.

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| breath | breathe |

# Psalms 135:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Their makers are like them— everyone who is trusting in them.* | *The people who make those idols will become as helpless as they are, and so will everyone who trusts in them.* |

ULT **Their makers are like them— everyone who is trusting in them**

UST The people who make those idols will become as helpless as they are, and so will everyone who trusts in them

(כְּמוֹהֶם יִהְיוּ עֹשֵׂיהֶם כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־בֹּטֵחַ בָּהֶם)

See how you translated the same phrases in Psalm 115:8.

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Their makers | The people who make those idols |
| is trusting | trusts |

# Psalms 135:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *House of Israel, bless Yahweh; house of Aaron, bless Yahweh.* | *You Israelites, praise Yahweh! You descendants of Aaron, praise Yahweh!* |

**ULT House of Israel**
**UST** You Israelites
(בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **House** means all the people descended from a particular person. It envisions them as if they were one household living together. So **House of Israel** figuratively means all the people descended from the patriarch Jacob, who was also known as Israel. Alternate translation: [People of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT house of Aaron**
**UST** You descendants of Aaron
(בֵּית אַהֲרֹן)

Here the psalmist is using the word **house** to mean all the people descended from Aaron. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly as modeled in the UST.

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| House of Israel | You Israelites |
| house of | You descendants |
| bless | praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Aaron | of Aaron |

# Psalms 135:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *House of the Levite, bless Yahweh; fearers of Yahweh, bless Yahweh!* | *You descendants of Levi, praise Yahweh! All you who deeply revere Yahweh, praise him!* |

**ULT House of the Levite**
UST You descendants of Levi
(בֵּית הַלֵּוִי)

Here the psalmist is using the word **House** to mean all the people descended from Levi. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [All you Levites]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| House of | You descendants of |
| the Levite | Levi |
| bless | praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| fearers of | All you who deeply revere |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 135:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Blessed {be} Yahweh from Zion, the one dwelling {in} Jerusalem. Hallelu Yah!* | *Praise Yahweh from his temple on Mount Zion, where he lives in Jerusalem! Praise Yahweh!* |

**ULT Blessed {be} Yahweh from Zion**
**UST** Praise Yahweh from his temple on Mount Zion
(בָּר֣וּךְ יְהוָ֣ה ׀ מִצִּיּ֑וֹן)

The expression **Blessed be** is a passive verbal form. The psalmist is expressing his desire to praise Yahweh. If it would be unnatural to use that form for this purpose, 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 indicates that it is the worshippers of Yahweh. Alternate translation: [May we bless Yahweh from Zion]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT the one dwelling {in} Jerusalem**
**UST** where he lives in Jerusalem
(שֹׁכֵ֖ן יְרוּשָׁלָ֑ם)

Here, **the one** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [who dwells in Jerusalem]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT Hallelu Yah**
**UST** Praise Yahweh
(הַֽלְלוּ־יָ֗הּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name “Yahweh,” the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Blessed {be} | Praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Yah | Yahweh |
| from Zion | from his temple on Mount Zion |
| Jerusalem | Jerusalem |

# Psalms 136

## Psalm 136 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 136 is a “psalm of thanksgiving.” It is a responsive psalm. One person or group would sing the first part and then the other group would sing the repeated refrain.

1. Give thanks for who Yahweh is (1–3)
2. Give thanks for Yahweh’s works in creation (4–9)
3. Give thanks for Yahweh’s acts of deliverance and care (10–26)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

#### Israel blessed

God has blessed Israel throughout its history and taken care of the needy people. (See: bless, blessed, blessing)

# Psalms 136:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Give thanks to Yahweh, for {he} is good, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *Thank Yahweh because he is good {to us}, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

ULT **Give thanks to Yahweh, for {he} is good, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever**
UST Thank Yahweh because he is good {to us}, because he faithfully loves {us} forever
(הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה כִּי־טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ)

See how you translated these same phrases in Psalm 106:1.

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **his covenant faithfulness**
UST he faithfully loves {us}
(חַסְדּוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **covenant faithfulness**, you could express the same idea here and throughout this psalm in another way. Alternate translation: [the way he is faithful to his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {he} is good | he is good {to us} |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Give thanks to the God of the gods, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *Thank God, the one who is greater than all other spirit beings, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

**ULT to the God of the gods**
**UST** God, the one who is greater than all other spirit beings
(לֵאלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים)

The term "god," when applied to a being other than Yahweh, can refer to an idol, but, as here, it can also refer to any lesser spirit being. Alternate translation: [to the God who is above any other spiritual being]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

**ULT for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever**
**UST** because he faithfully loves {us} forever
(כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ)

Here and throughout the psalm where this phrase is repeated, the psalmist is using **to forever** as a common expression of his culture to mean "eternally" or "without end." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for his covenant faithfulness lasts forever]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to the God of | God, the one who is greater than all other spirit beings |
| the gods | God, the one who is greater than all other spirit beings |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Give thanks to the Lord of the lords, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *Thank the Lord, the one who is greater than all other rulers; because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

**ULT to the Lord of the lords**
**UST** the Lord, the one who is greater than all other rulers
(לַאֲדֹנֵי הָאֲדֹנִים)

The psalmist is using this possessive form to mean that Yahweh is the supreme Lord, greater than all other rulers. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the Lord who is above all other lords]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to the Lord of | the Lord, the one who is greater than all other rulers |
| the lords | the Lord, the one who is greater than all other rulers |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the doer of great wonders, him alone, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *{Thank} him, the only one who does wonderful miracles, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

**ULT To the doer of great wonders**
**UST** {Thank} him, the … one who does wonderful miracles
(לְעֹשֵׂה נִפְלָאוֹת גְּדֹלוֹת)

The psalmist 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: [Give thanks to the one doing great wonders]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| wonders | miracles |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the maker of the heavens by understanding, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *{Thank} him, the one who wisely created the heavens; because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

ULT **To the maker of the heavens**
UST {Thank} him, the one who … created the heavens
(לְעֹשֵׂה הַשָּׁמַיִם)

The psalmist 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: [Give thanks to the one making the heavens]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **To the maker of the heavens by understanding**
UST {Thank} him, the one who wisely created the heavens
(לְעֹשֵׂה הַשָּׁמַיִם בִּתְבוּנָה)

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: [To the one who skillfully made the heavens]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| To the maker of | {Thank} him, the one who … created |
| the heavens | the heavens |
| by understanding | wisely |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the one spreading out the earth over the waters, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *{Thank} him, the one who formed the earth over the waters; because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

**ULT To the one spreading out the earth**
**UST** {Thank} him, the one who formed the earth
(לְרֹקַע הָאָרֶץ)

The psalmist 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: [Give thanks to the one spreading out the earth]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the maker of great lights, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever,* | *{Thank} him, the one who created the great lights {in the sky}; because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

**ULT To the maker of great lights**

UST Thank} him, the one who created the great lights {in the sky}

(לְעֹשֵׂה אוֹרִים גְּדֹלִים)

The psalmist 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: [Give thanks to the one making great lights]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| To the maker of | {Thank} him, the one who created |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the sun for dominion in the day, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever,* | *{He made} the sun to light up the daytime, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

ULT **the sun for dominion in the day**
UST {He made} the sun to light up the daytime
(אֶת־הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לְמֶמְשֶׁלֶת בַּיּוֹם)

The psalmist 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: [who made the sun for dominion in the day]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **the sun for dominion in the day**
UST {He made} the sun to light up the daytime
(אֶת־הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לְמֶמְשֶׁלֶת בַּיּוֹם)

The psalmist speaks of **the sun** as if it were a king that could have **dominion** or rule over the day. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the sun to give light in the day]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **for dominion**
UST to light up
(לְמֶמְשֶׁלֶת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **dominion**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to govern]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for dominion | to light up |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the moon and stars for dominion in the night, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *{He made} the moon and stars to light up the nighttime, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

ULT **the moon and stars for dominion in the night**
UST {He made} the moon and stars to light up the nighttime
(אֶת־הַיָּרֵחַ וְכוֹכָבִים לְמֶמְשְׁלוֹת בַּלָּיְלָה)

The psalmist 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: [who made the moon and stars for dominion in the night]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **the moon and stars for dominion in the night**
UST {He made} the moon and stars to light up the nighttime
(אֶת־הַיָּרֵחַ וְכוֹכָבִים לְמֶמְשְׁלוֹת בַּלָּיְלָה)

The psalmist speaks of **the moon and stars** as if they were kings that could have **dominion** or rule over the night. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the moon and stars to give light in the night]

**Support Reference:** Personification

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for dominion | to light up |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the striker of Egypt in their firstborn, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *{Thank} him, who killed the firstborn {sons} of the Egyptians; because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

ULT **To the striker of Egypt in their firstborn**
UST {Thank} him, who killed the firstborn {sons} of the Egyptians
(לְמַכֵּה מִצְרַיִם בִּבְכוֹרֵיהֶם)

Here, **striker** represents one who kills. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [To the one who killed the Egyptian's firstborn]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **To the striker of Egypt**
UST {Thank} him, who killed … the Egyptians
(לְמַכֵּה מִצְרַיִם)

The psalmist 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: [Give thanks to the one striking Egypt]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **Egypt**
UST the Egyptians
(מִצְרַיִם)

Here, **Egypt** represents the people of Egypt. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the Egyptians]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Egypt | the Egyptians |
| in their firstborn | the firstborn {sons} of |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he brought out Israel from their midst, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *He brought the Israelite people out from among them, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

**ULT Israel**
**UST** the Israelite people
(יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **Israel** represents the people of Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT from their midst**
**UST** out from among them
(מִתּוֹכָם)

The pronoun **their** refers to the Egyptians. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the midst of the Egyptians]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Israel | the Israelite people |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *By a strong hand and by an outstretched arm, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *He did that by being very powerful, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

ULT **By a strong hand and by an outstretched arm**
UST He did that by being very powerful
(בְּיָ֣ד חֲזָקָ֔ה וּבִזְר֖וֹעַ נְטוּיָ֑ה)

The terms **a strong hand** and **an outstretched arm** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [By his very great power]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **By a strong hand and by an outstretched arm**
UST He did that by being very powerful
(בְּיָ֣ד חֲזָקָ֔ה וּבִזְר֖וֹעַ נְטוּיָ֑ה)

Here, **strong hand** and **outstretched arm** both represent the power of Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [By his mighty power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| strong | He did that by being very powerful |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the parter of the Sea of Reeds into parts, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *{Thank} him, the one who divided the Sea of Reeds into {two} parts; because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

**ULT To the parter of the Sea of Reeds**
**UST** {Thank} him, the one who divided the Sea of Reeds
(לְגֹזֵר יַם־סוּף)

The psalmist 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: [Give thanks to the one parting the Sea of Reeds]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the Sea of Reeds | the Sea of Reeds |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he made Israel pass through the midst of it, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *He enabled the Israelite people to walk through the middle of it {on dry land}, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

**ULT Israel**
**UST** the Israelite people
(יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **Israel** represents the people of Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT the midst of it**
**UST** the middle of it {on dry land}
(בְּתוֹכוֹ)

The pronoun **it** refers to the Sea of Reeds. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the midst of the Sea of Reeds]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Israel | the Israelite people |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he tossed Pharaoh and his army into the Sea of Reeds, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *But he caused Pharaoh and his army to drown in the Sea of Reeds, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Pharaoh | Pharaoh |
| into the Sea of Reeds | in the Sea of Reeds |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the one leading his people in the wilderness, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *{Thank} him, the one who led his people {safely} through the desert, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

**ULT To the one leading his people**
UST Thank} him, the one who led his people {safely}
(לְמוֹלִיךְ עַמּוֹ)

The psalmist 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: [Give thanks to the one leading his people]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in the wilderness | through the desert |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *To the one striking great kings, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *{Thank} him, the one who defeated powerful kings, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

**ULT To the one striking great kings**
**UST** {Thank} him, the one who defeated powerful kings
(לְמַכֵּה מְלָכִים גְּדֹלִים)

The psalmist 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: [Give thanks to the one striking great kings]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT To the one striking**
**UST** {Thank} him, the one who defeated
(לְמַכֵּה)

Here, **striking** represents killing, defeating, or conquering. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [To the one conquering]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| kings | kings |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he killed mighty kings, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever,* | *He killed powerful kings, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And he killed | He killed |
| mighty | powerful |
| kings | kings |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sihon, king of the Amorite, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever,* | *{He killed} Sihon, the king of the Amorites, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

**ULT Sihon, king of the Amorite**
**UST** {He killed} Sihon, the king of the Amorites
(לְסִיחוֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי)

The psalmist 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 conquered Sihon, king of the Amorite]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Sihon | {He killed} Sihon |
| king of | the king of |
| the Amorite | the Amorites |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *and Og, king of the Bashan, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *{He killed} Og, the king of Bashan; because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

**ULT and Og, king of the Bashan**
UST {He killed} Og, the king of Bashan
(וְלְעוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן)

The psalmist 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 killed Og, king of the Bashan]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and Og | {He killed} Og |
| king of | the king |
| the Bashan | of Bashan |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he gave their land as an inheritance, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever,* | *He gave their land to the people of Israel to possess; because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

**ULT their land**
UST their land
(אַרְצָם)

The pronoun **their** refers to the defeated kings, Sihon and Og. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the land of those kings]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT as an inheritance**
UST to the people of Israel to possess
(לְנַחֲלָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **inheritance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [for the Israelites to inherit]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their land | their land |
| as an inheritance | to the people of Israel to possess |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *an inheritance to Israel his servant, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever,* | *{He gave it} to the people of Israel, who serve him, to be our own land, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

ULT **to Israel his servant**
UST to the people of Israel, who serve him
(לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עַבְדּוֹ)

Here, **Israel his servant** represents the people of Israel who served Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language.
Alternate translation: [to the Israelites, his servants]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **his servant**
UST who serve him
(עַבְדּוֹ)

Here the pronoun **his** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers.
Alternate translation: [Yahweh's servant]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| an inheritance | He gave it … to be our own land |
| to Israel | to the people of Israel |
| his servant | who serve him |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:23

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *who, in our humiliation, remembered us, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *He did not forget about us when our enemies were oppressing us, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

**ULT who, in our humiliation, remembered us**
**UST** He did not forget about us when our enemies were oppressing us
(שֶׁבְּשִׁפְלֵנוּ זָכַר לָנוּ)

Here the psalmist shifts from speaking about Israel in the third person to speaking as one of the Israelites, using the pronouns **our** and **us**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could maintain a consistent perspective. Alternate translation: [who, when his people were humbled, remembered them]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT who, in our humiliation**
**UST** when our enemies were oppressing us
(שֶׁבְּשִׁפְלֵנוּ)

The pronoun **who** refers to Yahweh, while the pronoun **our** refers to the Israelites. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [even when we Israelites were humiliated, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT who, in our humiliation**
**UST** when our enemies were oppressing us
(שֶׁבְּשִׁפְלֵנוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **humiliation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [who, when we were humbled]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| who, in our humiliation | when our enemies were oppressing us |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he tore us away from our adversaries, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever,* | *He rescued us from our enemies, because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

> ULT **And he tore us away from our adversaries**
> UST He rescued us from our enemies
> (וַיִּפְרְקֵנוּ מִצָּרֵינוּ)

Here the psalmist is speaking of Yahweh saving his people as if he physically **tore** them away from their enemies, as one would tear an object from the grip of another person. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And he rescued us from our adversaries]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from our adversaries | from our enemies |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:25

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *giving bread to all of flesh, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever.* | *He gives food to every living creature; because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

**ULT giving bread to all of flesh**
**UST** He gives food to every living creature
(נֹתֵן לֶחֶם לְכָל־בָּשָׂר)

Here the psalmist does not explicitly state who the one **giving**. The subject is Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, who gives bread to all of flesh]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT bread**
**UST** food
(לֶחֶם)

The psalmist 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]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT to all of flesh**
**UST** to every living creature
(לְכָל־בָּשָׂר)

The psalmist is using **all of flesh** to represent all living creatures. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to everyone]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| bread | food |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 136:26

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Give thanks to the God of the heavens, for his covenant faithfulness {is} to forever!* | *Thank God, who rules from heaven; because he faithfully loves {us} forever!* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to the God of | God |
| the heavens | who rules from heaven |
| his covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves {us} |
| {is} to forever | forever |

# Psalms 137

## Psalm 137 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 137 is a “psalm of supplication” or “lament.” See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Grief and remembrance in exile (1–4)
2. Commitment to remember Jerusalem (5–6)
3. Cry for Yahweh’s justice against enemies (7–9)

### Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

#### Songs of Zion

The captives are told to sing songs of Zion there in Babylon but they felt too unhappy to want to sing. The army from Babylon was cruel when it destroyed Jerusalem and the people of Edom encouraged them to destroy Jerusalem. They prayed that God will be cruel to the people of Edom and Babylon.

# Psalms 137:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, also we wept, when we remembered Zion.* | *{After soldiers had taken us to} Babylon, we sat down by the rivers there, and we cried when we thought about {the temple on Mount} Zion {in Jerusalem}.* |

**ULT Zion**
**UST** the temple on Mount} Zion {in Jerusalem}
(אֶת־צִיּוֹן)

Here, **Zion** represents the temple and the community of God's people who worshiped there. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [our homeland]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of Babylon | {After soldiers had taken us to} Babylon |
| also we wept | and we cried |
| Zion | the temple on Mount} Zion {in Jerusalem} |

# Psalms 137:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *On the willows in her midst we hung our harps.* | *We hung our harps on the willow trees there {and did not play them}.* |

**ULT On the willows in her midst**
**UST** on the willow trees there
(עַל־עֲרָבִים בְּתוֹכָהּ)

The psalmist refers to **willows** that are a kind of tree. If your readers would not be familiar with what willows are, you could use the name of another kind of tree that was common in that part of the world that your readers would recognize, or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [On the trees in Babylon]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| we hung | We hung |
| our harps | our harps … and did not play them |

# Psalms 137:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For there our captors requested of us words of a song, and our tormentors, joy: "Sing for us from a song of Zion."* | *We did that because those who had captured us {and taken us} there demanded that we sing for them. They tormented us and told us to sing a joyful song. {They said,} "Sing for us one of the songs about Zion!"* |

**ULT and our tormentors, joy: "Sing**
**UST** They tormented us and told us to sing a joyful song. {They said,} "Sing
(וְתוֹלָלֵינוּ שִׂמְחָה שִׁירוּ)

This is the beginning of what the captors and tormentors said. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could mark that this is a direct quote. Alternate translation: [and our tormenters, joy, demanding, "Sing]

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

**ULT and our tormentors, joy**
**UST** They tormented us and told us to sing a joyful song
(וְתוֹלָלֵינוּ שִׂמְחָה)

The psalmist 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 our tormentors requested of us joy]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| our captors | those who had captured us {and taken us} |
| and our tormentors | They tormented us |
| joy | and told us to sing a joyful song |
| Zion | Zion |

# Psalms 137:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *How shall we sing the song of Yahweh on the land of foreignness?* | *{We thought}, "We are not able to sing {joyful} songs about Yahweh in this foreign land!"* |

**ULT How shall we sing the song of Yahweh on the land of foreignness**
**UST** { … We thought}, "We are not able to sing {joyful} songs about Yahweh in this foreign land
(אֵיךְ נָשִׁיר אֶת־שִׁיר־יְהוָה עַל אַדְמַת נֵכָר)

The psalmist is using the question form to emphasize that the people of Israel were not able to sing the song of Yahweh while in exile. 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: [We cannot sing the song of Yahweh on the land of foreignness!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT on the land of foreignness**
**UST** in this foreign land
(עַל אַדְמַת נֵכָר)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **foreignness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in a land that is not our own]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of Yahweh | about Yahweh |
| on the land | in this … land |
| of foreignness | foreign |

# Psalms 137:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *If I forget you, Jerusalem, let my right hand forget.* | *If I ever forget about Jerusalem, may my right hand be unable {to play the harp}!* |

**ULT If I forget you, Jerusalem, let my right hand forget**
UST If I ever forget about Jerusalem, may my right hand be unable {to play the harp … }
(אִם־אֶשְׁכָּחֵךְ יְרוּשָׁלָ͏ִם תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי)

The psalmist is presenting a possible condition and its consequence. He says that if he forgets Jerusalem, then his right hand should no longer be able to play the harp. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that could happen. Alternate translation: [If I forget you, Jerusalem, then let my right hand forget]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

**ULT If I forget you**
UST If I ever forget about
(אִם־אֶשְׁכָּחֵךְ)

Here the psalmist shifts from speaking about the community as “we” in the previous verses to speaking as an individual using the pronoun **I**. He is making a personal vow.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT let my right hand forget**
UST may my right hand be unable {to play the harp}
(תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי)

The psalmist is using **let my right hand forget** as a common expression of the culture to mean that his hand would lose its ability to play a musical instrument. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [let my right hand lose its skill] or [let my right hand wither]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

> ULT **let my right hand forget**
> UST may my right hand be unable {to play the harp}
> (תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי)

The psalmist is saying what he wants to happen if he breaks his vow. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [I desire that my right hand would forget] or [may my right hand forget]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Jerusalem | Jerusalem |

# Psalms 137:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let my tongue cling to my palate if I do not remember you, if I do not cause Jerusalem to go up above the head of my joy.* | *May my tongue and my mouth make me unable to sing if I forget about Jerusalem, or {even} if I do not consider that Jerusalem causes me to be more joyful than anything else does.* |

ULT **Let my tongue cling to my palate if I do not remember you, if I do not cause Jerusalem to go up above the head of my joy**

UST May my tongue and my mouth make me unable to sing if I forget about Jerusalem, or {even} if I do not consider that Jerusalem causes me to be more joyful than anything else does

(תִּדְבַּק־לְשׁוֹנִי ׀ לְחִכִּי אִם־לֹא אֶזְכְּרֵכִי אִם־לֹא אַעֲלֶה אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם עַל רֹאשׁ שִׂמְחָתִי)

The psalmist is presenting the consequence first and then the condition. It may be helpful to reorder this sentence so that the conditional statement is first. Alternate translation: [If I fail to remember you, if I do not cause Jerusalem to go up above the head of my joy, then let me tongue cling to my palate]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

ULT **Let my tongue cling to my palate**

UST May my tongue and my mouth make me unable to sing

(תִּדְבַּק־לְשׁוֹנִי ׀ לְחִכִּי)

The psalmist is using **tongue cling to my palate** as a common expression of the culture to mean that he would be unable to speak or sing. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Let me be unable to sing] or [Let my mouth be silenced]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **if I do not cause Jerusalem to go up above the head of my joy**
UST or {even} if I do not consider that Jerusalem causes me to be more joyful than anything else does
(אִם־לֹ֣א אַעֲלֶ֣ה אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַ֗͏ִם עַ֚ל רֹ֣אשׁ שִׂמְחָתִֽי)

The psalmist is using **go up above the head** as a common expression of the culture to mean to the "highest point" or "greatest extent." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [if I do not cause Jerusalem to give me more joy than anything else]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **my joy**
UST causes me to be … joyful
(שִׂמְחָתִֽי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **joy**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what makes me rejoice]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my tongue | my tongue |
| Jerusalem | Jerusalem |
| my joy | causes me to be … joyful |

# Psalms 137:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Remember, Yahweh, for the sons of Edom, the day of Jerusalem, the ones saying, "Lay bare, lay bare, to the foundation in her!"* | *Yahweh, please punish the Edomites for what they did when the enemy destroyed Jerusalem. They shouted, "Completely tear it down to its foundations!"* |

**ULT for the sons of Edom**
**UST** the Edomites
(לִבְנֵי אֱדֹום)

The psalmist is speaking as if the people of the tribe of Esau were actually the **sons** of Edom, another name for Esau. Alternate translation: [the descendants of Esau] or [the people of Edom]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the day of Jerusalem**
**UST** for what they did when the enemy destroyed Jerusalem
(אֵת יֹום יְרוּשָׁלִָם)

The psalmist is using **the day of Jerusalem** as a common expression of the culture to mean the time when Jerusalem was destroyed. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [what happened to Jerusalem] or [the destruction of Jerusalem]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT Lay bare, lay bare**
**UST** Completely tear it down
(עָרּו ׀ עָרּו)

The psalmist is using repetition of the phrase **lay bare** for poetic effect. You may want to reproduce this effect if poetry in your language does this. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the intensification. Alternate translation: [Completely demolish]

**Support Reference:** Poetry

ULT **in her**
UST its
(בָּהּ)

The pronoun **her** refers to Jerusalem. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers.
Alternate translation: [in Jerusalem]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Edom | the Edomites |
| the day of | for what they did when |
| Jerusalem | the enemy destroyed Jerusalem |
| the foundation | foundations |

# Psalms 137:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Daughter Babylon, the devastated one, the happinesses of the one who makes complete to you your repayment that you paid to us!* | *Concerning the people of Babylon, who devastate {other nations}, How good it will be for the person who completely pays them back with what they did to us!* |

ULT **Daughter Babylon**
UST Concerning the people of Babylon
(בַּת־בָּבֶל)

The psalmist is speaking of **Babylon** as if it were a woman by calling it **Daughter**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Babylon] or [The city of Babylon]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **Daughter Babylon**
UST Concerning the people of Babylon
(בַּת־בָּבֶל)

The psalmist is speaking to **Babylon** as if the city could hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about the judgment that Babylon deserves. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about Babylon. Alternate translation: [As for Babylon]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

ULT **the devastated one**
UST who devastate {other nations}
(הַשְּׁדוּדָה)

The phrase **the devastated one** is a translation of the written Hebrew text. This reading, however, does not seem to make sense. You may want to follow an alternative reading from some ancient Greek and Aramaic translations. The UST follows that reading. Alternate translation: [you destroyer]

**Support Reference:** Alternative Readings

ULT **the happinesses of**
UST How good it will be for
(אַשְׁרֵי)

The psalmist is using an exclamation to express a strong desire for justice against Babylon. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [how happy is]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **your repayment that you paid to us**
UST with what they did to us
(אֶת־גְּמוּלֵךְ שֶׁגָּמַלְתְּ לָּנוּ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **repayment**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in order to repay you for all you did to us]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Babylon | Concerning the people of Babylon |
| the devastated one | who devastate {other nations} |
| the one who makes complete | the person who completely pays … back |

# Psalms 137:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The happinesses of the one who seizes and dashes your infants against the rock!* | *How good it will be for the one who seizes your babies and smashes them against the rocks!* |

**ULT The happinesses of**
**UST** How good it will be
(אַשְׁרֵי)

The psalmist is using an exclamation to express a strong desire for judgment on Babylon. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [How happy will be]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the one who seizes | for the one who seizes |

# Psalms 138

## Psalm 138 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm is a psalm of praise.

1. Wholehearted praise (1–3)
2. Global worship (4–6)
3. Confidence in God’s protection (7–8)

# Psalms 138:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Of David I will thank you with my whole heart; before the gods I will make music to you.* | *This is a psalm of David. Yahweh, I sincerely thank you. In the presence of {idols of} other gods, I sing to praise you.* |

**ULT with my whole heart**
**UST** sincerely
(בְּכָל־לִבִּי)

Here the **heart** represents the seat of a person's emotions and will. David is saying that he will thank Yahweh with complete devotion. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with all of my being]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT before the gods**
**UST** In the presence of {idols of} other gods
(נֶגֶד אֱלֹהִים)

Here, **the gods** could refer to: (1) idols of other nations that the psalmist sees either within Israel or while traveling. Alternate translation: [idols of foreign gods] or (2) God's heavenly council of angelic beings. Alternate translation: [the heavenly assembly]

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Of David | This is a psalm of David |
| the gods | {idols of} other gods |

# Psalms 138:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will bow down toward the temple of your holiness, and I will praise your name for your covenant faithfulness and for your trustworthiness, for you have exalted above all of your name your word.* | *I bow down toward your sacred temple {to worship you} and I thank you because you faithfully love us and because we can trust you to do all that you have promised. You have given cause for people everywhere to honor you and what you have said more than anything else.* |

ULT **the temple of your holiness**
UST your sacred temple
(הֵיכַל קָדְשְׁךָ)

David is using the possessive form to describe a **temple** that is characterized by God's **holiness**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [your holy temple]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **your holiness**
UST your sacred
(קָדְשְׁךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **holiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [you, the Holy One] or [all that is holy about you]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your name**
UST you
(אֶת־שִׁמְךָ)

David is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is and to refer to his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [who you are]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **your covenant faithfulness and for your trustworthiness**
UST you faithfully love us and because we can trust you to do all that you have promised
(חַסְדֶּךָ וְעַל־אֲמִתֶּךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **covenant faithfulness** and **trustworthiness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [the way you are faithful to your covenant and for being trustworthy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **your covenant faithfulness and for your trustworthiness**
UST you faithfully love us and because we can trust you to do all that you have promised
(חַסְדֶּךָ וְעַל־אֲמִתֶּךָ)

The terms **covenant faithfulness** and **trustworthiness** mean similar things. David 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: [your complete reliability]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **for you have exalted above all of your name your word**
UST You have given cause for people everywhere to honor you and what you have said more than anything else
(כִּי־הִגְדַּלְתָּ עַל־כָּל־שִׁמְךָ אִמְרָתֶךָ)

The phrase **for you have exalted above all of your name your word** is a translation of the written Hebrew text. This reading, however, does not seem to make sense. Scholars have proposed some alternative readings, and you may want to follow one of those. The UST follows the first alternative. Alternate translation: [for you have exalted above all else your name and your word] or [for you have exalted above all names your word]

**Support Reference:** Alternative Readings

ULT **your word**
UST and what you have said
(אִמְרָתֶךָ)

David is using the term **word** to represent what Yahweh has spoken. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all that you have spoken]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| I will bow down | I bow down … to worship you |
| the temple of | temple |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your holiness | your sacred |
| and I will praise | and I thank |
| your covenant faithfulness | you faithfully love us |
| your trustworthiness | we can trust you to do all that you have promised |
| you have exalted | to honor |

# Psalms 138:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *On the day that I called and you answered me, you emboldened my soul {with} power.* | *When I called out to you, you helped me; you enabled me to be brave and strong.* |

ULT **my soul**
UST me
(בְּנַפְשִׁי)

David is using the word **soul** to refer to his whole self. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **{with} power**
UST and strong
(עֹז)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **power**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to be mighty]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| that I called | I called out to you |
| my soul | me |

# Psalms 138:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May all the kings of the earth thank you, Yahweh, because they heard the words from your mouth.* | *Yahweh, {someday} all the kings of this earth should praise you because they will have heard what you have said.* |

ULT **all the kings of the earth**
UST all the kings of this earth
(כָּל־מַלְכֵי־אֶרֶץ)

David is saying **all the kings of the earth** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [kings everywhere]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

ULT **the words from your mouth**
UST what you have said
(אִמְרֵי־פִיךָ)

David is using **the words from your mouth** to represent everything that Yahweh has communicated. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the things you have declared]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the kings of | the kings of |
| the earth | this earth |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 138:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May they sing of the ways of Yahweh, for great is the glory of Yahweh.* | *They should sing about what you have done because you are very glorious.* |

> ULT **of the ways of Yahweh**
> UST you have done
> (בְּדַרְכֵי יְהוָה)

David is speaking of what Yahweh does as if those actions were **ways** or paths that he walks along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [of what Yahweh does]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **great is the glory of Yahweh**
> UST you are very glorious
> (גָּדוֹל כְּבוֹד יְהוָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is very glorious]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | you |
| the glory of | are … glorious |

# Psalms 138:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Though Yahweh is high, yet he sees the lowly, and the proud he knows from far off.* | *Yahweh, although you live in heaven, you take care of humble people. Proud people, however, you identify from far away.* |

ULT **Though Yahweh is high, yet he sees the lowly**
UST Yahweh, although you live in heaven, you take care of humble people
(כִּי־רָם֣ יְהוָ֑ה וְשָׁפָ֥ל יִרְאֶ֗ה)

David uses the word **Though** here to indicate a contrast between Yahweh's supreme status and his attention to those who are humble. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Even though Yahweh is high, he still sees the lowly]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **Yahweh is high**
UST Yahweh … you live in heaven
(רָם֣ יְהוָ֑ה)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh's supreme status as if it were a physical height, saying **Yahweh is high**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh is supreme]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **yet he sees the lowly**
UST you take care of humble people
(וְשָׁפָ֥ל יִרְאֶ֗ה)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [yet he sees lowly people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and the proud he knows from far off**
UST Proud people, however, you identify from far away
(וְגָבֹהַּ מִמֶּרְחָק יְיֻדָּע)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh's relationship to proud people as if it involved physical distance, saying he **knows** them **from far off**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the proud he keeps at a distance]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and the proud**
UST Proud people, however
(וְגָבֹהַּ)

David is using the adjective **proud** 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: [and those who are proud]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| yet … the lowly | humble people |
| and the proud | Proud people, however |
| he knows | you identify |

# Psalms 138:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Though I walk in the middle of trouble, you will keep me alive; you will stretch out your hand against the nose of my enemies, and your right hand will save me.* | *Even when dangerous things happen all around me, you keep me safe. You rescue me from my enemies who are angry with me.* |

ULT **Though I walk in the middle of trouble, you will keep me alive**
UST Even when dangerous things happen all around me, you keep me safe
(אִם־אֵלֵךְ ׀ בְּקֶרֶב צָרָה תְּחַיֵּנִי)

David uses the word **Though** here to indicate a contrast between the danger he faces and the protection Yahweh provides. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Despite that I walk in the middle of trouble, you will still keep me alive]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **I walk in the middle of trouble**
UST dangerous things happen all around me
(אֵלֵךְ ׀ בְּקֶרֶב צָרָה)

Here David is speaking of experiencing danger as if it were a place through which he walks, saying he will **walk in the middle of trouble**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I experience great trouble]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **you will stretch out your hand**
UST You rescue me
(תִּשְׁלַח יָדֶךָ)

Here, **hand** represents Yahweh's power to act. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you will use your power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the nose of my enemies**
UST my enemies who are angry with me
(אַף אֹיְבַי)

Here, **nose** represents the anger of David's enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the anger of my enemies]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and your right hand will save me**
UST You rescue me
(וְתוֹשִׁיעֵנִי יְמִינֶךָ)

Here, **right hand** represents Yahweh's power to deliver. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and you will powerfully save me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| trouble | dangerous things |
| and … will save me | rescue me |
| my enemies | my enemies |

# Psalms 138:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh will accomplish for my benefit; your covenant faithfulness, Yahweh, {is} forever. Do not forsake the works of your hands.* | *Yahweh, I know that you will continue to do what is good for me; Yahweh, you faithfully love {us} forever. Please do not abandon {us,} the people that you have made!* |

ULT **Yahweh will accomplish for my benefit**
UST Yahweh, I know that you will continue to do what is good for me
(יְהוָה֮ יִגְמֹ֪ר בַּ֫עֲדִ֥י)

By **Yahweh will accomplish for my benefit**, the psalmist means that whatever Yahweh does will be to fulfill his purpose for David. You could indicate this explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will accomplish his purpose for my benefit]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **your covenant faithfulness**
UST you faithfully love {us}
(חַסְדְּךָ)

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 way you are faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Do not forsake the works of your hands**
UST Please do not abandon {us,} the people that you have made
(מַעֲשֵׂ֣י יָ֭דֶיךָ אַל־תֶּרֶף)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please do not forsake the works of your hands]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **the works of your hands**
UST the people that you have made
(מַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ)

Here, **the works of your hands** represents what Yahweh has made and accomplished. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [what you have made]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| your covenant faithfulness | you faithfully love {us} |
| {is} forever | forever |
| Do … forsake | Please do … abandon {us … } |

# Psalms 139

## Psalm 139 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 139 is a psalm of praise.

1. God knows everything about me (1–6)
2. God is everywhere with me (7–12)
3. God formed me wonderfully (8–18)
4. God’s righteous anger guides me (19–22)
5. Inviting God’s search (23–24)

# Psalms 139:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; of David; a psalm. Yahweh, you have searched me and you know {me}.* | *This is a note for the worship leader: This is a psalm of David. Yahweh, you have thoroughly examined me, and you know {me completely}.* |

**ULT For the chief musician**
UST This is a note for the worship leader
(לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**ULT you have searched me**
UST you have thoroughly examined me
(חָקַרְתַּנִי)

Here David is speaking of God examining him thoroughly as if God had **searched** for something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you have thoroughly examined me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of David | David |
| a psalm | This is a psalm of |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| you have searched me | you have thoroughly examined me |
| and you know {me} | and you know {me completely} |

# Psalms 139:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *You, you know my sitting down and my rising up; you understand my thought from far away.* | *You are the one who knows everything that I do, including when I sit and when I stand. Even from far away, you know what I am thinking.* |

ULT **You, you know my sitting down and my rising up; you understand my thought from far away**
UST You are the one who knows everything that I do, including when I sit and when I stand. Even from far away, you know what I am thinking
(אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ שִׁבְתִּי וְקוּמִי בַּנְתָּה לְרֵעִי מֵרָחוֹק)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [You fully know everything I do and think, even from far away] or [You, you know my sitting down and my rising up; indeed, you understand my thought from far away]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **You, you know**
UST You are the one who knows
(אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ)

David is stating the pronoun **You** separately, even though the verb **know** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that it is Yahweh specifically who knows these things. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, you know]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **my sitting down and my rising up**
UST everything that I do, including when I sit and when I stand
(שִׁבְתִּי וְקוּמִי)

David is referring to all of his activities by naming two extremes, **my sitting down** and **my rising up**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [everything I do]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **my sitting down and my rising up**
UST everything that I do, including when I sit and when I stand
(שִׁבְתִּי וְקוּמִי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **sitting down** and **rising up**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [when I sit down and when I rise up]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **my thought**
UST what I am thinking
(לְרֵעִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **thought**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what I think]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| you know | who knows |
| you understand | you know |

# Psalms 139:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My path and my lying down you have winnowed, and you are familiar with all of my ways.* | *You have examined in detail all of my movements, from the time I go out until I lie down, and you know intimately all of my habits.* |

ULT **My path and my lying down you have winnowed, and you are familiar with all of my ways**
UST You have examined in detail all of my movements, from the time I go out until I lie down, and you know intimately all of my habits
(אָרְחִי וְרִבְעִי זֵרִיתָ וְכָל־דְּרָכַי הִסְכַּנְתָּה)

These two phrases **My path and my lying down you have winnowed** and **you are familiar with all of my ways** mean basically the same thing. See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [You have carefully examined everything I do; in fact, you know all of my activities intimately]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **My path and my lying down you have winnowed**
UST You have examined in detail all of my movements, from the time I go out until I lie down
(אָרְחִי וְרִבְעִי זֵרִיתָ)

Here David is speaking of God examining his life in detail as if God had **winnowed** grain to separate what is valuable from what is not. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [My path and my lying down you have carefully examined]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **My path and my lying down**
UST from the time I go out until I lie down
(אָרְחִי וְרִבְעִי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **path** and **lying down**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [where I go and where I lie down]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and you are familiar with all of my ways**
UST and you know intimately all of my habits
(וְכָל־דְּרָכַי הִסְכַּנְתָּה)

David is speaking of how he lives as if that were a **way** or path that he was walking along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and you are familiar with all of the things I do]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| you have winnowed | You have examined in detail all of my movements |

# Psalms 139:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For there is not a word on my tongue; behold, Yahweh, you know all of it.* | *Indeed, even before I say anything, Yahweh, you already know everything that I am going to say!* |

ULT **For**
UST Indeed
(כִּי)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [Certainly,]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **on my tongue**
UST I say
(בִּלְשׁוֹנִי)

Here, **on my tongue** represents what David is about to say. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [that I am about to speak]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **all of it**
UST everything that I am going to say
(כֻּלָּהּ)

The pronoun **it** refers to what David will say. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [all of what I will say]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| on my tongue | I say |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| you know | you … know |

# Psalms 139:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Behind and before you have enclosed me, and you have set your palm upon me.* | *You guard me on every side, and you put your hand on me {to protect me}.* |

ULT **Behind and before you have enclosed me**
UST You guard me on every side
(אָחֹור וָקֶדֶם צַרְתָּנִי)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put the information about the direction with the information about what God does. Alternate translation: [You have enclosed me behind and before]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **Behind and before you have enclosed me**
UST You guard me on every side
(אָחֹור וָקֶדֶם צַרְתָּנִי)

Here David is speaking of God protecting and guarding him as if God had physically **enclosed** him on all sides. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Behind and before you have guarded me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Behind and before**
UST on every side
(אָחֹור וָקֶדֶם)

David is referring to every direction by naming two extremes, **Behind** and **before**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [On every side]

**Support Reference:** Merism

> ULT **your palm**
> UST your hand
> (כַּפֶּכָה)

Here, **your palm** represents God's power and protective control. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your protective power]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

# Psalms 139:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{Such} knowledge {is} too wonderful for me; it is high; I am not capable of it.* | *I am in awe that you know everything about me. I am not able to comprehend that.* |

**ULT Such} knowledge {is}**
**UST** that you know everything
(דַּעַת)

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: [That you know all of this is]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT it is high**
**UST** to comprehend
(נִשְׂגְּבָה)

Here David is speaking of God's knowledge being impossible for him to comprehend as if **it** were physically **high** above him and out of reach. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [it is beyond my understanding]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT it is high**
**UST** to comprehend
(נִשְׂגְּבָה)

The pronoun **it** refers to the knowledge David described in the previous phrase. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [this knowledge is high]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Such} knowledge {is} | that you know everything |

# Psalms 139:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Where shall I go from your spirit? And where shall I flee from your face?* | *There is nowhere I could go to get away from your Spirit! There is nowhere I could run to escape from your presence!* |

ULT **Where shall I go from your spirit? And where shall I flee from your face**
UST There is nowhere I could go to get away from your Spirit! There is nowhere I could run to escape from your presence
(אָנָה אֵלֵךְ מֵרוּחֶךָ וְאָנָה מִפָּנֶיךָ אֶבְרָח)

These two phrases **Where shall I go from your spirit?** and **where shall I flee from your face?** mean basically the same thing. See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [There is truly nowhere I could go to escape your presence!] or [Where shall I go from your spirit? Indeed, where shall I flee from your face?]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Where shall I go from your spirit**
UST There is nowhere I could go to get away from your Spirit
(אָנָה אֵלֵךְ מֵרוּחֶךָ)

David is using the question form to emphasize that there is nowhere he could go to escape from God's spirit. 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 cannot go anywhere to escape from your spirit!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **And where shall I flee from your face**
UST There is nowhere I could run to escape from your presence
(וְאָנָה מִפָּנֶיךָ אֶבְרָח)

David is using the question form to emphasize that there is nowhere he could flee to escape from God's presence. 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: [There is no place to which I could flee from your presence!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

> ULT **from your face**
> UST to escape from your presence
> (מִפָּנֶיךָ)

Here, **your face** represents being in God's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [from you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| from your spirit | to get away from your Spirit |

# Psalms 139:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *If I ascend {to} the heavens, you {are} there, and I spread out {in} Sheol, behold, you!* | *If I went up to heaven, you would be there. Even if I lay down in the place where dead people go, you would be there!* |

ULT **If I ascend {to} the heavens, you {are} there, and I spread out {in} Sheol, behold, you**
UST If I went up to heaven, you would be there. Even if I lay down in the place where dead people go, you would be there
(אִם־אֶסַּק שָׁמַיִם שָׁם אָתָּה וְאַצִּיעָה שְׁאוֹל הִנֶּךָּ)

These two phrases **If I ascend to the heavens** and **I spread out in Sheol** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words, using a contrasting image. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [No matter where I go, whether to the highest or lowest place, you are there]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **If I ascend {to} the heavens**
UST If I went up to heaven
(אִם־אֶסַּק שָׁמַיִם)

Here, **If I ascend to the heavens** introduces the first part of a possible condition. David is using this hypothetical situation to emphasize that God is present everywhere. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a hypothetical condition. Alternate translation: [Even if I were to go up to the heavens]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

ULT **{ … to} the heavens, you {are} there, and I spread out {in} Sheol**
UST to heaven, you would be there. Even if I lay down in the place where dead people go
(שָׁמַיִם שָׁם אָתָּה וְאַצִּיעָה שְׁאוֹל)

David is referring to everywhere in the universe by naming two extremes, **the heavens** and **Sheol**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the highest place and the lowest place]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **behold, you**
UST you would be there
(הִנֵּה)

David 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: [behold, you are there]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {to} the heavens | to heaven |
| {in} Sheol | in the place where dead people go |

# Psalms 139:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{If} I lift up the wings of the dawn, dwell in the farthest part of the sea,* | *If I rose up and flew to where the sun rises in the east, or if I settled in the farthest place across the {western} sea,* |

ULT **{ … If} I lift up the wings of the dawn, dwell in the farthest part of the sea**
UST If I rose up and flew to where the sun rises in the east, or if I settled in the farthest place across the {western} sea
(אֶשָּׂא כַנְפֵי־שָׁחַר אֶשְׁכְּנָה בְּאַחֲרִית יָם)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [If I travel to the most distant place in the world]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **{If} I lift up**
UST If I rose up and flew
(אֶשָּׂא)

Here, **If I lift up** introduces the first part of a possible condition that continues from the hypothetical condition David began in verse 8. David is using this hypothetical situation to emphasize that God is present everywhere. Use a natural form in your language for introducing a condition that could happen. Alternate translation: [Even if I lift up]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

ULT **the wings of the dawn, dwell in the farthest part of the sea**
UST If I rose up and flew to where the sun rises in the east, or if I settled in the farthest place across the {western} sea
(כַנְפֵי־שָׁחַר אֶשְׁכְּנָה בְּאַחֲרִית יָם)

David is referring to everywhere by naming two extremes, the **wings of the dawn**, representing the east where the sun rises, and the **farthest part of the sea**, representing the distant west. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the farthest eastern horizon and the most remote western shore]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **the wings of the dawn**
UST If I rose up and flew to where the sun rises in the east
(כַּנְפֵי־שָׁחַר)

David is speaking of **the dawn** as if it were a bird that had **wings**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the first rays of the morning light]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **dwell in the farthest part of the sea**
UST or if I settled in the farthest place across the {western} sea
(אֶשְׁכְּנָה בְּאַחֲרִית יָם)

David 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 I dwell in the farthest part of the sea]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| of the sea | the {western} sea |

# Psalms 139:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *even there your hand will lead me, and your right hand will hold me.* | *even there you would guide me and you would keep me secure.* |

ULT **your hand will lead me, and your right hand will hold me**
UST you would guide me and you would keep me secure
(יָדְךָ תַנְחֵנִי וְתֹאחֲזֵנִי יְמִינֶךָ)

These two phrases **your hand will lead me** and **your right hand will hold me** mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [you yourself will surely guide me and sustain me]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **your hand will lead me**
UST you would guide me
(יָדְךָ תַנְחֵנִי)

Here, **hand** represents the power and agency of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your strength will lead me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **and your right hand will hold me**
UST and you would keep me secure
(וְתֹאחֲזֵנִי יְמִינֶךָ)

Here, **right hand** represents the power and strength of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your power will hold me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

# Psalms 139:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And I said, "Surely darkness will crush me, and night, the light around me."* | *Even if I said, "Let the darkness completely overwhelm me, and the light around me turn to night,"* |

ULT **And I said, "Surely darkness will crush me**
UST Even if I said, "Let the darkness completely overwhelm me
(וָאֹמַר אַךְ־חֲשֵׁךְ יְשׁוּפֵנִי)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: [And I said that surely darkness would crush me and night would be the light around me]

**Support Reference:** Direct and Indirect Quotations

ULT **darkness will crush me**
UST Let the darkness … overwhelm me
(חֲשֵׁךְ יְשׁוּפֵנִי)

David is speaking of **darkness** as if it were a living thing that could **crush** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [darkness will completely surround me]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **and night, the light around me**
UST and the light around me turn to night
(וְלַיְלָה אוֹר בַּעֲדֵנִי)

David 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 night will be the light around me]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

# Psalms 139:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Even darkness does not make it dark to you, and the night shines like the day; like darkness, like light.* | *even darkness is not dark to you, and the night shines as bright as the daytime. For you, darkness and light are the same.* |

ULT **Even darkness does not make it dark to you, and the night shines like the day**
UST even darkness is not dark to you, and the night shines as bright as the daytime
(גַּם־חֹשֶׁךְ֙ לֹא־יַחְשִׁ֣יךְ מִמֶּ֔ךָּ וְלַ֖יְלָה כַּיּ֣וֹם יָאִ֑יר)

These two phrases **Even darkness does not make it dark to you** and **the night shines like the day** mean basically the same thing. See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Not even the deepest darkness can hide anything from you, because you see just as clearly at night as during the day]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **and the night shines like the day**
UST and the night shines as bright as the daytime
(וְלַ֖יְלָה כַּיּ֣וֹם יָאִ֑יר)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the day** is fully bright and visible, so **the night** is equally bright and visible to Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [the night is as bright to you as the day]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **like darkness, like light**
UST For you, darkness and light are the same
(כַּחֲשֵׁיכָ֥ה כָאוֹרָֽהּ)

David is referring to all conditions of visibility by naming two extremes, **darkness** and **light**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [whether it is dark or light, it is the same to you]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **like darkness, like light**
UST For you, darkness and light are the same
(כַּחֲשֵׁיכָה כָּאוֹרָה)

David 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 you, vision in darkenss is like vision in light]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

# Psalms 139:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For you, you created my kidneys; you knit me together in the womb of my mother.* | *Indeed, you are the one who created my deepest inner parts; you formed me inside my mother's womb.* |

ULT **For**
UST Indeed
(כִּי)

The word **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. David is giving the reason why darkness and light are the same to Yahweh: because Yahweh is the all-knowing Creator. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **you, you created**
UST you are the one who created
(אַתָּה קָנִיתָ)

David is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb **created** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that it was Yahweh himself who created him. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [you yourself created]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **my kidneys**
UST my deepest inner parts
(כִלְיֹתָי)

Here, **my kidneys** represents David's deepest inner being, including his emotions and thoughts. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my innermost being]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **you knit me together**
UST you formed me
(תְּסַכְּנִי)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh creating him as if Yahweh were a craftsperson **knitting** material together. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you carefully crafted me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| you created | created |
| in the womb of | inside … womb |

# Psalms 139:14

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *I will thank you because fearsomely, I am wonderfully made. Wonderful {are} your works, and my soul knows {it} very well.* | *I praise you because you made me in such an awesome and wonderful way. Everything that you do is wonderful! I know that very well.* |

ULT **I am wonderfully made**
UST you made me in such … and wonderful way
(נִפְלֵיתִי)

The expression **I am wonderfully made** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [you made me wonderfully]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **your works**
UST Everything that you do
(מַעֲשֶׂיךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **works**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the things that you have done]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and my soul knows {it}**
UST I know that
(וְנַפְשִׁי יֹדַעַת)

David is using **my soul** to represent his whole self. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I know it]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| fearsomely | an awesome |
| Wonderful {are} | is wonderful |
| and my soul | I |
| knows {it} | know that |

# Psalms 139:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, {when} I was woven in the depths of the earth,* | *You saw my bones when you made me in that hidden place. As you wove me together deep in the womb,* |

**ULT My frame was not hidden from you**
**UST** You saw my bones
(לֹא־נִכְחַד עֲצָמִי מִמֶּךָּ)

The expression **was not hidden** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [No one hid my frame from you]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT when I was made**
**UST** when you made me
(אֲשֶׁר־עֻשֵּׂיתִי)

The expression **when I was made** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [when you made me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT {when} I was woven**
**UST** As you wove me together
(רֻקַּמְתִּי)

The expression **when I was woven** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [when you wove me]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **{when} I was woven**
UST As you wove me together
(רֻקַּמְתִּי)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh creating him as if Yahweh were a craftsperson **weaving** cloth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when you carefully assembled me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the depths of the earth**
UST deep in the womb
(בְּתַחְתִּיּוֹת אָרֶץ)

Here David is speaking of his mother's womb as if it were **the depths of the earth**. He is comparing the hidden, enclosed place where he was formed to the deep interior of the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in the hidden place of my mother's womb]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| of the earth | deep in the womb |

# Psalms 139:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *your eyes saw my unformed substance. And in your book all of them were written: the days were formed, and {yet} not one of them {was}.* | *you saw me before I had any form. You wrote in your book each day that you had planned for me to live, before any of those days had even started.* |

ULT **your eyes saw**
UST you saw
(רָֽאוּ עֵינֶ֗יךָ)

Here, **your eyes** represents Yahweh's perception and awareness. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you perceived] or [you observed]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **my unformed substance**
UST me before I had any form
(גֶּ֝לְמִ֗י)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **unformed substance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [me before my body had taken shape]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **And in your book all of them were written**
UST You wrote in your book each
(וְעַל־סִפְרְךָ֥ כֻּלָּ֗ם יִכָּתֵ֫בוּ)

Here David is speaking of Yahweh's plan for his life as if it were a written record **in your book**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And you recorded all of them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **all of them were written**
UST You wrote … each
(כֻּלָּם יִכָּתֵבוּ)

The expression **all of them were written** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [you wrote all of them]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **all of them**
UST each
(כֻּלָּם)

Here, **all of them** could refer to the days of David's life. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [all of my days]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the days were formed, and {yet} not one of them {was … }**
UST day that you had planned for me to live, before any of those days had even started
(יָמִים יֻצָּרוּ ולא אֶחָד בָּהֶם)

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reorder this clause to clarify its meaning. David is saying that Yahweh recorded his days before any of them actually existed. Alternate translation: [and yet when not one of them had come to be, the days were formed]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **the days were formed**
UST day that you had planned for me to live
(יָמִים יֻצָּרוּ)

The expression **the days were formed** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [you formed the days]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

# Psalms 139:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And to me, how precious are your thoughts, God! How numerous are their heads!* | *God, the things that you think are very valuable to me! There are so many of them!* |

**ULT your thoughts**
**UST** the things that you think
(רֵעֶיךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **thoughts**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the things that you think]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT How numerous are their heads**
**UST** There are so many of them
(מָה עָצְמוּ רָאשֵׁיהֶם)

David is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of amazement at how many things God thinks about. Alternate translation: [You think of so many things]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

**ULT their heads**
**UST** of them
(רָאשֵׁיהֶם)

David is using **their heads** as a common expression of the culture to mean "their total number." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they all] or [they in quantity]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |

# Psalms 139:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{If} I should count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I {am} still with you.* | *If I tried to count them, {I would not be able to do that, because} they are more than the grains of sand {on the earth}. {Every morning} I wake up, I am still with you, {and there are still more of them to count}.* |

ULT **they are more than the sand**
UST because} they are more than the grains of sand {on the earth}
(מֵחוֹל יִרְבֻּוּן)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the sand** cannot be counted, so God's thoughts cannot be counted. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [they are too many to count, like grains of sand]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **they are more than the sand**
UST because} they are more than the grains of sand {on the earth}
(מֵחוֹל יִרְבֻּוּן)

David says **they are more than the sand** as an extreme statement to emphasize that God's thoughts are too many to count. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Alternate translation: [they are far too many to count]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

# Psalms 139:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *If only you would kill the wicked, God! And men of bloodshed, depart from me,* | *God, I wish that you would kill all wicked people! I wish that all violent men would go away from me!* |

**ULT If only you would kill the wicked, God**
**UST** God, I wish that you would kill all wicked people
(אִם־תִּקְטֹל אֱלֹוהַּ ו רָשָׁע)

This is a wish that David is expressing to God rather than a command. If your language has a way of expressing a strong wish, use that form here. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [God, please kill the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT And men of bloodshed**
**UST** I wish that all violent men
(וְאַנְשֵׁי דָמִים)

David is using **men of bloodshed** as a common expression of the culture to indicate that a person has a certain characteristic. In this case, these men have the characteristic of being violent. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And violent men] or [And men who love violence]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT And men of bloodshed**
**UST** I wish that all violent men
(וְאַנְשֵׁי דָמִים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **bloodshed**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [And men who shed blood]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **bloodshed**
UST violent
(דָּמִ֑ים)

Here, **bloodshed** represents violence and murder. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [violence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **depart from me**
UST would go away from me
(סוּרוּ מֶנִּ֣י)

This is a wish that David is expressing rather than a direct command. If the imperative does not communicate a strong wish for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates a strong wish. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [please depart from me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| you would kill | you would kill |
| the wicked | all wicked people |
| God | God |
| bloodshed | violent |

# Psalms 139:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *who speak of you for an evil purpose; they lift up {your name} to emptiness—your enemies.* | *They say wicked things about you and plan evil things; your enemies misuse your name.* |

**ULT** **who speak of you**
**UST** They say
(אֲשֶׁר יֹאמְרֻךָ)

The pronoun **who** refers to the men of bloodshed mentioned in the previous verse. The pronoun **you** refers to Yahweh. Alternate translation: [men of bloodshed who speak of you, Yahweh,]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT** **for an evil purpose**
**UST** wicked things about you and plan evil things
(לְמִזְמָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **purpose**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in order to do evil]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT** **they lift up {your name} to emptiness**
**UST** misuse your name
(נָשְׂא לַשָּׁוְא)

David is using **they lift up your name to emptiness** as a common expression of the culture to mean “they misuse your name.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they misuse your reputation] or [they speak your name for worthless purposes]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT** **they lift up {your name} to emptiness**
**UST** misuse your name
(נָשְׂא לַשָּׁוְא)

David is using the term **name** to represent who God is and to refer to God’s reputation. Alternate translation: [they lift up your reputation to emptiness]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **they lift up {your name} to emptiness—your enemies**
UST your enemies misuse your name
(נָשָׂא לַשָּׁוְא עָרֶיךָ)

If it would be more natural in your language, you may want to put the information about who these people are before the information about what they do. Alternate translation: [your enemies, they lift up your name to emptiness]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

ULT **to emptiness**
UST misuse your name
(לַשָּׁוְא)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **emptiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [for what is worthless]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| for an evil purpose | wicked things about you and plan evil things |
| to emptiness | misuse your name |
| your enemies | your enemies |

# Psalms 139:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do I not hate the ones hating you, Yahweh? And do I not loathe the ones rising up against you?* | *Yahweh, I certainly hate those who hate you, and I am disgusted with those who rise up against you.* |

**ULT Do I not hate the ones hating you, Yahweh? And do I not loathe the ones rising up against you**

UST Yahweh, I certainly hate those who hate you, and I am disgusted with those who rise up against you

(הֲלוֹא־מְשַׂנְאֶיךָ יְהוָה ׀ אֶשְׂנָא וּבִתְקוֹמְמֶיךָ אֶתְקוֹטָט)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, I certainly hate and loathe all those who oppose you!] or [Do I not hate the ones hating you, Yahweh; yes, do I not loathe the ones rising up against you]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT Do I not hate the ones hating you, Yahweh**

UST Yahweh, I certainly hate those who hate you

(הֲלוֹא־מְשַׂנְאֶיךָ יְהוָה ׀ אֶשְׂנָא)

David is using the question form to emphasize his loyalty to God. 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: [Yahweh, I certainly hate the ones hating you!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

**ULT And do I not loathe the ones rising up against you**

UST and I am disgusted with those who rise up against you

(וּבִתְקוֹמְמֶיךָ אֶתְקוֹטָט)

David is using the question form to emphasize his loyalty to God. 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 certainly loathe the ones rising up against you!]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **And do I not loathe the ones rising up against you**
UST and I am disgusted with those who rise up against you
(וַֽ֭בְתְקוֹמְמֶ֣יךָ אֶתְקוֹטָֽט)

David is using **the ones rising up against you** as a common expression of the culture to mean ‘those who oppose you.’ If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And do I not loathe those who rebel against you] or [And do I not loathe those who oppose you]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 139:22

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{With} a completeness of hatred I hate them; they have become enemies to me.* | *I hate them completely; I consider them to be my enemies.* |

ULT **{ … With} a completeness of hatred I hate them; they have become enemies to me**
UST I hate them completely; I consider them to be my enemies
(תַּכְלִית שִׂנְאָה שְׂנֵאתִים לְאוֹיְבִים הָיוּ לִי)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [I completely hate them, for they are my enemies] or [{With} a completeness of hatred I hate them; indeed, they have become enemies to me]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **hatred**
UST completely
(שִׂנְאָה)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **completeness** and **hatred**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [I completely hate]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| enemies | my enemies |

# Psalms 139:23

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Search me, God, and know my heart; examine me and know my cares.* | *God, I invite you to search me and to know what I am thinking; please examine me and know what I worry about.* |

**ULT Search me, God, and know my heart; examine me and know my cares**
**UST** God, I invite you to search me and to know what I am thinking; please examine me and know what I worry about
(חָקְרֵנִי אֵל וְדַע לִבָּבִי בְּחָנֵנִי וְדַע שַׂרְעַפָּי)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [God, please thoroughly examine everything about me]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT Search me, God, and know my heart**
**UST** God, I invite you to search me and to know what I am thinking
(חָקְרֵנִי אֵל וְדַע לִבָּבִי)

This is a request that David is making to God rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please search me, God, and know my heart]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Search me**
**UST** I invite you to search me
(חָקְרֵנִי)

Here David is asking God to thoroughly examining his inner being, to **Search** through him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Thoroughly examine me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my heart**
UST what I am thinking
(לְבָבִי)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's thoughts and motives exist. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my innermost thoughts]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **examine me and know my cares**
UST please examine me and know what I worry about
(בְּחָנֵנִי וְדַע שַׂרְעַפָּי)

This is a request that David is making to God rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please examine me and know my cares]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **my cares**
UST what I worry about
(שַׂרְעַפָּי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **cares**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the things that concern me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Search me | I invite you to search me |
| God | God |
| and know | and to know |
| and know | and know |

# Psalms 139:24

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And see if a way of hurtfulness {is} in me, and lead me in the way of eternity.* | *See if there is any harmful way in me, and teach me to live in the way that lasts forever.* |

**ULT And see if a way of hurtfulness {is} in me**
**UST** See if there is any harmful way in me
(וּרְאֵה אִם־דֶּרֶךְ־עֹצֶב בִּי)

This is a request that David is making to God rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please see if a way of hurtfulness is in me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT if a way of hurtfulness**
**UST** if there is any harmful way
(אִם־דֶּרֶךְ־עֹצֶב)

David 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 helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [if a harmful way of living]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT hurtfulness**
**UST** harmful
(עֹצֶב)

The word translated as **hurtfulness** could refer to: (1) something that causes harm or pain. Alternate translation: [pain] or (2) an idol. Alternate translation: [idolatry]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and lead me in the way of eternity**
**UST** and teach me to live in the way that lasts forever
(וּנְחֵנִי בְּדֶרֶךְ עוֹלָם)

This is a request that David is making to God rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [and please lead me in the way of eternity]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **in the way of eternity**
UST in the way that lasts forever
(בְּדֶרֶךְ עוֹלָם)

David is speaking of how a person lives as if that were a **way** or path along which that the person was walking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in the way of living that lasts forever]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the way of eternity**
UST in the way that lasts forever
(בְּדֶרֶךְ עוֹלָם)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **eternity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the way that lasts forever]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| if a way of hurtfulness | if there is any harmful way |
| eternity | that lasts forever |

# Psalms 140

## Psalm 140 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 140 is a deliverance psalm. (See: deliver, deliverer, deliverance, delivered)

1. Cry to Yahweh for protection from the wicked (1–5)
2. Trust Yahweh as defender and refuge (6–8)
3. Ask Yahweh to judge evil and uphold the righteous (9–13)

# Psalms 140:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the chief musician; a psalm of David.* | *This is a note to the worship leader: David wrote this psalm.* |

> ULT **For the chief musician**
> UST This is a note to the worship leader
> (לַמְנַצֵּחַ)

The word translated as **chief musician** likely refers to the person in charge of music for worship. Some languages may have a term for a music leader. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the leader of worship music]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| a psalm | wrote this psalm |
| of David | David |

# Psalms 140:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Rescue me, Yahweh, from an evil man; from a man of violence preserve me,* | *Yahweh, please save me from evil people; protect me from people who want to attack me.* |

ULT **Rescue me, Yahweh, from an evil man; from a man of violence preserve me**
UST Yahweh, please save me from evil people; protect me from people who want to attack me
(חַלְּצֵנִי יְהוָה מֵאָדָם רָע מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים תִּנְצְרֵנִי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, rescue me and preserve me from evil, violent people]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Rescue me**
UST please save me
(חַלְּצֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please rescue me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **from a man of violence**
UST from people who want to attack me
(מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים)

David is using the possessive form to describe **a man** who is characterized by **violence**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a violent man]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **from a man of violence**
UST from people who want to attack me
(מֵאִ֣ישׁ חֲמָסִ֑ים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **violence**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from a man who acts violently]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **preserve me**
UST protect me
(תִּנְצְרֵ֥נִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please preserve me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Rescue me | please save me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| evil | evil |

# Psalms 140:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *who plot evil things in the heart; all the day they travel around {to} battles.* | *They are always planning how to do evil things, and every day they provoke fights.* |

**ULT who plot evil things**
**UST** They are always planning … evil things
(אֲשֶׁר חָשְׁבוּ רָעוֹת)

The word **who** refers to the evil man and the man of violence from the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [these evil people devise evil things]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT plot evil things in the heart**
**UST** are always planning how to do evil things
(חָשְׁבוּ רָעוֹת בְּלֵבָב)

Here, **heart** represents a person's thoughts and intentions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [have devised evil things in their thoughts]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT all the day**
**UST** and every day
(כָּל־יוֹם)

David is saying **all the day** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [constantly] or [all the time]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

**ULT they travel around {to} battles**
**UST** they provoke fights
(יָגֻורוּ מִלְחָמוֹת)

The phrase **travel around** is a translation of the written Hebrew text. Many translations, however, follow an alternative reading found in one Hebrew manuscript and some ancient translations. The UST follows that reading. Alternate translation: [they stir up battles]

**Support Reference:** Alternative Readings

ULT **they travel around {to} battles**
UST they provoke fights
(יָגֻ֖רוּ מִלְחָמֽוֹת)

The pronoun **they** refers to the evil man and the man of violence from verse 1. David uses the plural because he has multiple enemies in view. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [these evil people stir up battles]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| evil things | evil things |

# Psalms 140:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They have sharpened their tongue like a serpent; venom of a viper {is} under their lips. Selah* | *They say things {to people} that hurt {them}; what comes from their mouths is as deadly as the venom of a viper. Selah* |

**ULT They have sharpened their tongue like a serpent**
UST They say things {to people} that hurt {them}
(שָׁנְנ֣וּ לְשׁוֹנָ֣ם כְּמוֹ־נָ֑חָשׁ)

The point of this comparison is that just as a **serpent** has a dangerous, darting tongue, so the speech of these evil people is harmful. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [They use their words to harm people, as a serpent uses its tongue to strike]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT their tongue**
UST They say things {to people}
(לְשׁוֹנָ֣ם)

Here, **their tongue** represents their speech. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [their words]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT venom of a viper {is} under their lips**
UST what comes from their mouths is as deadly as the venom of a viper
(חֲמַ֣ת עַכְשׁ֣וּב תַּחַ֣ת שִׂפְתֵימֽוֹ)

David is speaking of the harmful words of these evil people as if the words were **venom of a viper** under their lips. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the words they speak are deadly and destructive]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT {is} under their lips**
UST what comes from their mouths
(תַּחַ֣ת שִׂפְתֵימֽוֹ)

Here, **their lips** represents what they say. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in their speech]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| their tongue | They say things {to people} |
| a serpent | that hurt {them} |
| a viper | a viper |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 140:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Guard me, Yahweh, from the hands of the wicked; from the man of violence preserve me, who have planned to push down my steps.* | *Yahweh, protect me from wicked people who want to harm me; keep me safe from violent people who have planned to destroy me.* |

ULT **Guard me, Yahweh, from the hands of the wicked; from the man of violence preserve me**

UST Yahweh, protect me from wicked people who want to harm me; keep me safe from violent people

(שָׁמְרֵנִי יְהוָה ׀ מִּידֵי רָשָׁע מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים תִּנְצְרֵנִי)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, guard me and preserve me from wicked, violent people]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Guard me**

UST protect me

(שָׁמְרֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please guard me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **from the hands of the wicked**

UST from wicked people who want to harm me

(מִּידֵי רָשָׁע)

Here, **the hands** of the wicked represents their power and control. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the control of the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **the wicked**
> UST wicked people
> (רָשָׁע)

David 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: [those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

> ULT **from the man of violence**
> UST from violent people
> (מֵאִ֣ישׁ חֲמָסִ֑ים)

David is using the possessive form to describe **the man** who is characterized by **violence**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the violent man]

**Support Reference:** Possession

> ULT **from the man of violence**
> UST from violent people
> (מֵאִ֣ישׁ חֲמָסִ֑ים)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **violence**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from the man who acts violently]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

> ULT **from the man of**
> UST from … people
> (מֵאִ֣ישׁ)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [from anyone of]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **preserve me**
UST keep me safe
(תִּנְצְרֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please preserve me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **who have planned to push down my steps**
UST who have planned to destroy me
(אֲשֶׁר חָשְׁבוּ לְדַחוֹת פְּעָמָי)

David is speaking of his way of life as if it were a path with **steps** that his enemies could **push down**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [who have planned to ruin my life]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **who have planned**
UST who have planned
(אֲשֶׁר חָשְׁבוּ)

The word **who** refers to the wicked and the man of violence. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the wicked people that have planned]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Guard me | protect me |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the wicked | wicked people |

# Psalms 140:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The proud have hidden a snare for me, and cords; they have spread out a net to the hand of the path; traps they have set for me. Selah* | *Proud people are trying to destroy me. {It is as though} they have hidden a snare for me; {It is as though} they have spread out a net along my path; {It is as though} they have set traps to catch me. Selah* |

ULT **The proud have hidden a snare for me, and cords; they have spread out a net to the hand of the path; traps they have set for me**

UST { … Proud people are trying to destroy me. It is as though} they have hidden a snare for me; It is as though} they have spread out a net along my path; It is as though} they have set traps to catch me

(טָמְנוּ־גֵאִים ׀ פַּח לִי וַחֲבָלִים פָּרְשׂוּ רֶשֶׁת לְיַד־מַעְגָּל מֹקְשִׁים שָׁתוּ־לִי)

David is speaking of his enemies as if they were hunters setting **a snare**, **cords**, **a net**, and **traps** to capture him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The proud have made secret plans to ruin me; they have plotted to catch me in their schemes wherever I go]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **The proud**

UST Proud people

(גֵּאִים)

David is using the adjective **proud** 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: [Those who are proud] or [Those who act proudly]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| The proud | Proud people |
| a snare | a snare |
| traps | traps |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 140:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I have said to Yahweh, "You {are} my God." Give ear, Yahweh, to the voice of my supplications.* | *I say to you, "Yahweh, you are my God." Yahweh, please listen to me as I plead with you to help me!* |

**ULT Give ear, Yahweh, to the voice of my supplications**
**UST** Yahweh, please listen to me as I plead with you to help me
(הַאֲזִינָה יְהוָה קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please give ear, Yahweh, to the voice of my supplications]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Give ear**
**UST** please listen
(הַאֲזִינָה)

David is using the term **ear** to mean hearing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Listen]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT to the voice of my supplications**
**UST** to me as I plead with you to help me
(קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי)

Here, **the voice** represents the words that David speaks. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the words of my supplications]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT my supplications**
**UST** as I plead with you to help me
(תַּחֲנוּנָי)

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: [my cries for help]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | to you, “Yahweh |
| my God | my God |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 140:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, Lord, the strength of my salvation, you have covered my head in the day of weaponry.* | *Yahweh, my Lord, you are the one who powerfully saves me; you have protected me during battles as though you had covered my head {with a helmet}.* |

ULT **the strength of my salvation**
UST you are the one who powerfully saves me
(עֹ֣ז יְשׁוּעָתִ֑י)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **strength** and **salvation**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [the mighty one who rescues me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the strength of my salvation**
UST you are the one who powerfully saves me
(עֹ֣ז יְשׁוּעָתִ֑י)

David is speaking of God's ability to save him as if it were physical **strength**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you who powerfully deliver me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **you have covered my head in the day of weaponry**
UST you have protected me during battles as though you had covered my head {with a helmet}
(סַכֹּ֖תָה לְרֹאשִׁ֣י בְּי֣וֹם נָֽשֶׁק)

David is speaking of Yahweh's protection as if Yahweh had physically **covered** his **head** with armor in battle. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you have protected me when I was in battle]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the day of weaponry**
UST during battles
(בְּיוֹם נָשֶׁק)

David is using **in the day of battle** as a common expression to mean “at the time of battle.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when I was in battle] or [at the time of fighting]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Lord | my Lord |
| my salvation | you are the one who … saves me |

# Psalms 140:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not grant, Yahweh, the desires of the wicked; do not bring forth his plot, {lest} they rise up. Selah* | *Yahweh, do not give wicked people what they want; do not let their plans succeed, or they will become proud. Selah* |

ULT **Do not grant, Yahweh, the desires of the wicked**
UST Yahweh, do not give wicked people what they want
(אַל־תִּתֵּן יְהוָה מַאֲוַיֵּי רָשָׁע)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please do not grant, Yahweh, the desires of the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **the desires of the wicked**
UST wicked people what they want
(מַאֲוַיֵּי רָשָׁע)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **desires**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what the wicked wish for]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רָשָׁע)

David 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: [those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **do not bring forth his plot**
UST do not let their plans succeed
(זָמָמוֹ אַל־תָּפֵק)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please do not bring forth his plot]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **do not bring forth his plot**
UST do not let their plans succeed
(זָמָמוֹ אַל־תָּפֵק)

David is using **bring forth** as a common expression of the culture to mean "grant success to." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [grant success to his plot]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **his plot**
UST their plans
(זָמָמוֹ)

The pronoun **his** is singular, even though David used the plural **the wicked** earlier in the verse. This is because he is thinking of the wicked as a group that acts with a single purpose. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [their plot]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **{lest} they rise up**
UST or they will become proud
(יָרוּמוּ)

It is difficult to know how the word translated as **they rise up** fits with the rest of the verse. The interpretation of the ULT and UST is one way. Some scholars believe that the word belongs with the first line of the next verse in which case it would start a new sentence with something like: "Those who surround me raise their heads." Here are some other possibilities. Alternate translation: [when they rise up] or [or they will rise up]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the wicked | wicked people |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 140:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The head of the ones surrounding me— let the mischief of their lips cover them.* | *As for the leaders of those who surround me, let the harmful things that they have said {to others} happen to them.* |

ULT **let the mischief of their lips cover them**
UST let the harmful things that they have said {to others} happen to them
(עֲמַל שְׂפָתֵימוֹ יְכַסֵּמוֹ)

David is saying what he wants to happen to his enemies. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants to happen. Alternate translation: [I desire that the mischief of their lips cover them]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **let the mischief of their lips cover them**
UST let the harmful things that they have said {to others} happen to them
(עֲמַל שְׂפָתֵימוֹ יְכַסֵּמוֹ)

David is speaking of the harmful things his enemies have said as if those words could physically **cover them** like a burden. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [let the trouble they have caused by their words overwhelm them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the mischief of their lips**
UST the harmful things that they have said {to others}
(עֲמַל שְׂפָתֵימוֹ)

Here, **their lips** represents what they say. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the mischief of their words]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

> ULT **the mischief of their lips**
> UST the harmful things that they have said {to others}
> (עֲמַל שְׂפָתֵימוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **mischief**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the troublesome things they have spoken]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

# Psalms 140:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let burning coals fall on them; let him cast them into the fire, into pits, let them not rise up.* | *Pour burning coals on them! Throw them into a fire! Throw them into deep holes from which they will never get out!* |

**ULT Let burning coals fall on them**
**UST** Pour burning coals on them
(יִמּ֣וֹט עֲלֵיהֶ֣ם גֶּחָלִ֑ים)

David is saying what he wants to happen to his enemies. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants to happen. Alternate translation: [I desire that burning coals fall on them]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

**ULT let him cast them into the fire**
**UST** Throw them into a fire
(בָּאֵ֥שׁ יַפְּלֵ֑ם)

David is saying what he wants God to do to his enemies. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants God to do. Alternate translation: [may he cast them into fire]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

**ULT let him cast them**
**UST** Throw them
(יַפְּלֵ֑ם)

The pronoun **him** most likely refers to God and **them** refers to David’s enemies. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [let God cast the enemies]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| into pits | Throw them into deep holes |

# Psalms 140:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let not a man of tongue be established in the land; a man of violence—let evil hunt him with blows.* | *Yahweh, please do not allow people who slander others to prosper in this land; Cause evil things to continually happen to violent people and destroy them.* |

ULT **Let not a man of tongue be established in the land**
UST Yahweh, please do not allow people who slander others to prosper in this land
(אִישׁ לָשׁוֹן֮ בַּל־יִכּ֪וֹן בָּאָ֫רֶץ)

The expression **be established** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [May God not establish a man of tongue in the land]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **tongue**
UST who slander others
(לָשׁוֹן֮)

Here, **tongue** represents slanderous speech. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [slanderous words]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **a man of tongue**
UST people who slander others
(אִישׁ לָשׁוֹן֮)

David is using the possessive form to describe **a man** who is characterized by his **tongue**, that is, by his slanderous speech. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a man who speaks slander]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **a man of violence**
UST to violent people
(אִישׁ־חָמָס)

David is using the possessive form to describe **a man** who is characterized by **violence**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a violent man]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **a man of violence**
UST to violent people
(אִישׁ־חָמָס)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **violence**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [a man who acts violently]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **let evil hunt him with blows**
UST Cause evil things to continually happen … and destroy them
(רָעָה יְצוּדֶנּוּ לְמַדְחֵפוֹת)

David speaks of **evil** as if it were a living thing that could **hunt** a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [let him experience one disaster after another]

**Support Reference:** Personification

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let … be established | Yahweh, please do … allow … to prosper |
| tongue | who slander others |
| in the land | in this land |
| evil | evil things |

# Psalms 140:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I know that Yahweh will do the cause of the poor, the justice of the needy.* | *Yahweh, I know that you do what is just and right for poor people.* |

**ULT Yahweh will do the cause of the poor, the justice of the needy**
UST Yahweh … you do what is just and right for poor people
(יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה דִּין עָנִי מִשְׁפַּט אֶבְיוֹנִים)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [will defend poor and needy people and bring them justice]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT Yahweh will do the cause of the poor, the justice of the needy**
UST Yahweh … you do what is just and right for poor people
(יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה דִּין עָנִי מִשְׁפַּט אֶבְיוֹנִים)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **cause** and **justice**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will defend the poor and judge fairly for the needy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT the poor**
UST for poor people
(עָנִי)

David is using the adjective **poor** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. He does the same thing with the word **needy** later in the verse. 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 poor]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I know | I know |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the justice of | and right |

# Psalms 140:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Surely the righteous will praise your name; the upright will dwell before your face.* | *People who do what is right will surely thank you, and they will live with you.* |

ULT **the righteous will praise your name; the upright will dwell before your face**
UST People who do what is right will … thank you, and they will live with you
(צַדִּיקִים יוֹדוּ לִשְׁמֶךָ יֵשְׁבוּ יְשָׁרִים אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [righteous and upright people will give you thanks and live in your presence]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the righteous**
UST People who do what is right
(צַדִּיקִים)

David is using the adjective **righteous** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. He does the same thing with the word **upright** later in the verse. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [those who are righteous]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **will praise your name**
UST will … thank you
(יוֹדוּ לִשְׁמֶךָ)

David is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [will thank you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the upright will dwell before your face**
UST and they will live with you
(יֵשְׁבוּ יְשָׁרִים אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ)

Here, **your face** represents Yahweh's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the upright will live before you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the righteous | People who do what is right |
| will praise | will … thank |
| the upright | and they |

# Psalms 141

## Psalm 141 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 141 is a “lament.”

1. Ask Yahweh to hear and accept the prayer (1–2)
2. Pray for purity in speech and actions (3–5)
3. Trust Yahweh for protection and deliverance (6–10)

# Psalms 141:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A psalm of David Yahweh, I cry out to you, "Hurry to me! Give ear to my voice when I cry out to you."* | *This is a psalm of David. Yahweh, I call out to you; please help me quickly! Please listen to me when I am calling out to you.* |

**ULT A psalm of David**
**UST** This is a psalm of David
(מִזְמ֥וֹר לְדָוִֽד)

This is poetic language. If your language has a way to indicate poetry, you could use it here.

**Support Reference:** Poetry

**ULT Hurry to me**
**UST** please help me quickly
(חֽוּשָׁה לִּ֑י)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please hurry to me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Give ear to my voice**
**UST** Please listen to me
(הַאֲזִ֥ינָה קוֹלִ֗י)

David is using **Give ear to my voice** as a common expression of the culture to mean "listen attentively to what I am saying." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Pay attention to what I say] or [Listen closely to my words]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm | This is a psalm |
| of David | of David |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| I cry out to you | I call out to you |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| when I cry out | when I am calling out to |

# Psalms 141:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *May my prayer be established {like} incense to your face, a raising of my palms {like} the evening sacrifice.* | *Please accept my prayer {as though it were} an offering of incense to you. Please accept me while I lift up my hands {to pray to you}, just as you accept the sacrifices that people offer to you each evening.* |

ULT **May my prayer be established**
UST Please accept my prayer
(תִּכּוֹן תְּפִלָּתִי)

The expression **May my prayer be established** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [May you establish my prayer]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **{like} incense to your face**
UST {as though it were} an offering of incense to you … to pray to you
(קְטֹרֶת לְפָנֶיךָ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **incense** rises up as a pleasing aroma before God, so David wants his prayer to rise up and be acceptable to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [as a pleasing offering before you]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **to your face**
UST to you … to pray to you
(לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here, **to your face** represents "in your presence." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [before you] or [in your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **May my prayer be established {like} incense to your face, a raising of my palms {like} the evening sacrifice**
UST Please accept my prayer {as though it were} an offering of incense to you. Please accept me while I lift up my hands {to pray to you}, just as you accept the sacrifices that people offer to you each evening
(תִּכּוֹן תְּפִלָּתִי קְטֹרֶת לְפָנֶיךָ מַשְׂאַת כַּפַּי מִנְחַת־עָרֶב)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [May my prayer and my uplifted hands be truly acceptable to you, like a pleasing offering]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **a raising of my palms {like} the evening sacrifice**
UST Please accept me while I lift up my hands … just as you accept the sacrifices that people offer to you each evening
(מַשְׂאַת כַּפַּי מִנְחַת־עָרֶב)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the evening sacrifice** is an acceptable offering to God, so David wants his raised hands in prayer to be equally acceptable. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [my lifted hands as an acceptable offering to you]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **{like} the evening sacrifice**
UST just as you accept the sacrifices that people offer to you each evening
(מִנְחַת־עָרֶב)

The **evening sacrifice** is a kind of grain offering that the Israelites presented to God at twilight each day. If your readers would not be familiar with what the evening sacrifice is, you could use the name of a similar thing that your readers would recognize, or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [the offering presented at twilight] or [the daily evening offering]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| May … be established | Please accept |
| my prayer | my prayer |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {like} incense | {as though it were} an offering of incense |
| {like} the … sacrifice | just as you accept the sacrifices that people offer to you |

# Psalms 141:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, place a guard over my mouth; guard the door of my lips.* | *Yahweh, do not allow me to say things that are bad or wrong. Do not allow me to say those things as a sentry does not allow the wrong people to go through a doorway.* |

ULT **Yahweh, place a guard over my mouth; guard the door of my lips**
UST Yahweh, do not allow me to say things that are bad or wrong. Do not allow me to say those things as a sentry does not allow the wrong people to go through a doorway
(שִׁיתָ֣ה יְהוָ֣ה שָׁמְרָ֣ה לְפִ֑י נִצְּרָ֥ה עַל־דַּ֝֗לֶת שְׂפָתָֽי׃)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, carefully watch over everything I say]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Yahweh, place a guard over my mouth**
UST Yahweh, do not allow me to say things that are bad or wrong
(שִׁיתָ֣ה יְהוָ֣ה שָׁמְרָ֣ה לְפִ֑י)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Yahweh, please place a guard over my mouth]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **a guard over my mouth**
UST me to say things that are bad or wrong
(שָׁמְרָ֣ה לְפִ֑י)

Here David is speaking as if his mouth were an opening that needed **a guard** posted over it to control what comes out. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [someone to watch over what I say] or [restraint on my speech]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the door of my lips**
UST me to say those things … the wrong people to go through a doorway
(עַל־דֶּ֥לֶת שְׂפָתָֽי)

Here David is speaking as if his lips were **the door** of a building that needed to be guarded. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the opening of my lips] or [what my lips let pass through]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| a guard | things that are bad or wrong |
| guard | Do not allow … as a sentry does not allow |

# Psalms 141:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not turn my heart toward an evil thing to wantonly act in activities in wickedness with men, doers of evil. And may I not dine on their delicacies.* | *Prevent me from wanting to do anything that is wrong and from joining with wicked men when they want to do evil deeds. Do not even allow me to share in eating their delightful food!* |

ULT **Do not turn my heart toward an evil thing**
UST Prevent me from wanting to do anything that is wrong
(אַל־תַּט־לִבִּי לְדָבָר ׀ רָֽע)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please do not turn my heart toward an evil thing]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Do not turn my heart toward an evil thing**
UST Prevent me from wanting to do anything that is wrong
(אַל־תַּט־לִבִּי לְדָבָר ׀ רָֽע)

Here the **heart** represents where a person's desires and inclinations exist. David is speaking as if someone could **turn** his heart in a direction toward evil, meaning his desires could be directed toward wrongdoing. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Do not cause me to desire an evil thing] or [Do not direct my desires toward an evil thing]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in wickedness**
UST wicked … evil deeds
(בְּרָשָֽׁע)

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: [in wicked ways]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **with men, doers of evil**
UST with wicked men when they want to do evil deeds
(אֶת־אִישִׁים פֹּעֲלֵי־אָוֶן)

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: [with people, doers of evil]

**Support Reference:** When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **doers of evil**
UST wicked … when they want to do evil deeds
(פֹּעֲלֵי־אָוֶן)

David is using the participial phrase **doers of evil** 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: [people who do evil things]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **And may I not dine on their delicacies**
UST Do not even allow me to share in eating their delightful food
(וּבַל־אֶלְחַם בְּמַנְעַמֵּיהֶם)

David is expressing what he desires for himself. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he desires. Alternate translation: [I desire that I not dine on their delicacies] or [I should not dine on their delicacies]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **And may I not dine on their delicacies**
UST Do not even allow me to share in eating their delightful food
(וּבַל־אֶלְחַם בְּמַנְעַמֵּיהֶם)

Here David is speaking as if sharing in the pleasures and rewards of the wicked were dining on **their delicacies**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And may I not partake of their pleasures] or [And may I not share in their rewards]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **on their delicacies**
UST their delightful food
(בְּמַנְעַמֵּיהֶם)

The pronoun **their** refers to the men, doers of evil, mentioned earlier in the verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [on the delicacies of the doers of evil]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| evil | that is wrong |
| in wickedness | wicked … evil deeds |
| evil | wicked … evil deeds |

# Psalms 141:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let the righteous hit me—covenant faithfulness, and he is correcting me! Oil for the head may my head not refuse. For my prayer {is} continually against their wickedness.* | *It is all right if righteous people strike me because they are acting faithfully and kindly toward me to correct me. {If they do that, it will be as if they have honored me by} anointing my head with {olive} oil, and may I never refuse to accept it. but I am always praying that you will punish the wicked because of the wicked deeds that they do.* |

**ULT Let the righteous hit me**
**UST** It is all right if righteous people strike me
(יְהַלְמֵנִי־צַדִּיק)

David is saying what he wants the righteous to do. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [I desire that the righteous hit me] or [The righteous should hit me]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

**ULT the righteous**
**UST** righteous people
(צַדִּיק)

David 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [a righteous person]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT covenant faithfulness**
**UST** because they are acting faithfully and kindly toward me
(חֶסֶד)

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: [because he is being faithfully loyal to me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and he is correcting me**
UST to correct me
(וְיוֹכִיחֵנִי)

The pronoun **he** refers to the righteous person mentioned at the beginning of the verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Oil for the head may my head not refuse**
UST {If they do that, it will be as if they have honored me by} anointing my head with {olive} oil, and may I never refuse to accept it
(שֶׁמֶן רֹאשׁ אַל־יָנִי רֹאשִׁי)

David assumes that readers will know that anointing someone's head with oil was a way of honoring or blessing that person. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [May my head not refuse oil for the head, which would be a sign of such honor]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **For my prayer {is} continually against their wickedness**
UST but I am always praying that you will punish the wicked because of the wicked deeds that they do
(כִּי־עוֹד וּתְפִלָּתִי בְּרָעוֹתֵיהֶם)

The pronoun **their** refers to the doers of evil mentioned in verse 4. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [For my prayer is continually against the wickedness of the doers of evil]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **For my prayer {is} continually against their wickedness**
UST but I am always praying that you will punish the wicked because of the wicked deeds that they do
(כִּי־עוֹד וּתְפִלָּתִי בְּרָעוֹתֵיהֶם)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because my prayer is continually against their wickedness]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **For my prayer {is} continually against their wickedness**
UST but I am always praying that you will punish the wicked because of the wicked deeds that they do
(כִּי־עוֹד֥ וּתְפִלָּתִ֗י בָּרָעוֹתֵיהֶֽם)

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 my prayer is continually against the wicked things they do]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **continually**
UST always
(עוֹד)

David is saying **continually** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [again and again]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the righteous | righteous people |
| covenant faithfulness | because they are acting faithfully and kindly toward me |
| Oil for | {If they do that, it will be as if they have honored me by} anointing … with {olive} oil |
| my prayer | I am … praying that you will punish the wicked |
| is … against their wickedness | because of the wicked deeds that they do |

# Psalms 141:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Their judges are thrown down beside a cliff; and they hear my words, that they are pleasant.* | *When their rulers are thrown down from the top of rocky cliffs, the wicked will hear what I am saying, and will know that what I am saying is right and good.* |

**ULT Their judges are thrown down beside a cliff**
**UST** When their rulers are thrown down from the top of rocky cliffs
(נִשְׁמְטוּ בִידֵי־סֶלַע שֹׁפְטֵיהֶם)

The expression **Their judges are thrown down** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Someone throws their judges down]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT Their judges**
**UST** their rulers
(שֹׁפְטֵיהֶם)

The pronoun **Their** refers to the wicked people described in verse 4. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The judges of the wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and they hear my words, that they are pleasant**
**UST** the wicked will hear what I am saying, and will know that what I am saying is right and good
(וְשָׁמְעוּ אִמָרַי כִּי נָעֲמוּ)

In the phrase **and they hear my words, that they are pleasant**, the first **they** could refer to the wicked people or to their judges, and the second **they** refers to David's words. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. [and the wicked people hear my words, that my words are pleasant]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Their judges | their rulers |
| they are pleasant | is right and good |

# Psalms 141:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *“Just as splitting and breaking up in the ground, our bones are scattered at the mouth of Sheol.”* | *{They will say,} “Just as one scatters {clods of earth} when he breaks up the ground, {soon} our bodies will lie scattered on the way to the place where dead people are.”* |

ULT **Just as splitting and breaking up in the ground**
UST {They will say,} “Just as one scatters {clods of earth} when he breaks up the ground
(כְּמוֹ פֹלֵחַ וּבֹקֵעַ בָּאָרֶץ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **splitting and breaking up** the ground scatters clods of earth everywhere, so their bones lie scattered about near death. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [Just as clods of earth are scattered when one breaks up the ground]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **Just as splitting and breaking up in the ground, our bones are scattered at the mouth of Sheol**
UST {They will say,} “Just as one scatters {clods of earth} when he breaks up the ground, {soon} our bodies will lie scattered on the way to the place where dead people are
(כְּמוֹ פֹלֵחַ וּבֹקֵעַ בָּאָרֶץ נִפְזְרוּ עַצְמֵינוּ לְפִי שְׁאוֹל)

The words of this verse may be (1) the words of the wicked. See the UST for how you could mark this as a direct quote of the wicked. Or this may be (2) the words of the psalmist, describing the danger that he feels from his wicked oppressors. In this case, there would be no quote marks around the verse.

**Support Reference:** Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **splitting and breaking up**
UST one scatters {clods of earth} when he breaks up
(פֹלֵחַ וּבֹקֵעַ)

The terms **splitting** and **breaking up** mean similar things. David 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: [breaking apart]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **our bones are scattered**
UST {soon} our bodies will lie scattered
(נְפֻזְרוּ עַצְמֵינוּ)

The expression **our bones are scattered** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [death scatters our bones]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **our bones**
UST our bodies
(עַצְמֵינוּ)

The pronoun **our** represents a shift from the singular "I" that David has been using to a plural form. Here David is speaking on behalf of himself and his companions, or he is quoting what the persecuted righteous say together. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers.

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **at the mouth of Sheol**
UST on the way to the place where dead people are
(לְפִי שְׁאוֹל)

David is speaking of **Sheol** as if it were a living creature that could swallow the dead with its **mouth**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the entrance to Sheol] or [the opening of the grave]

**Support Reference:** Personification

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Just as | {They will say,} "Just as |
| are scattered | soon … will lie scattered |
| Sheol | the place where dead people are |

# Psalms 141:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yet my eyes are on you, Yahweh, Lord; in you I take refuge; do not uncover my soul.* | *But Lord Yahweh, I continue to rely on you. I ask you to protect me; please do not stop protecting my life!* |

ULT **Yet my eyes are on you, Yahweh, Lord**
UST But Lord Yahweh, I continue to rely on you
(כִּי אֵלֶיךָ ׀ יְהוִה אֲדֹנָי עֵינָי)

David uses the word **Yet** here to indicate a contrast between his desperate situation described in the previous verse and his continued trust in God. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [But despite all of this, my eyes are on you, Yahweh, Lord]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **my eyes are on you, Yahweh, Lord**
UST Lord Yahweh, I continue to rely on you
(אֵלֶיךָ ׀ יְהוִה אֲדֹנָי עֵינָי)

Here, **my eyes are on you** represents "I look to you with trust and dependence." If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [I put my trust in you] or [I look to you for help]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in you I take refuge**
UST I ask you to protect me
(בְּךָ חָסִיתִי)

Here David is speaking as if God were a physical shelter where he could **take refuge** from danger. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in you I find safety] or [you are my protection]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **do not uncover my soul**
UST please do not stop protecting my life
(אַל־תְּעַר נַפְשִׁי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please do not uncover my soul] or [please do not leave my soul unprotected]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Lord | Lord |
| I take refuge | to protect me |
| my soul | my life |

# Psalms 141:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Keep me from the hands of the snare they have laid for me, and the traps of the workers of evil.* | *People who do evil things are trying to trick me and destroy me. It is as though they have laid out snares and set traps for me. Please keep me safe from what they are trying to do to me.* |

ULT **Keep me from the hands of the snare they have laid for me**
UST are trying to trick me and destroy me. It is as though they have laid out snares … for me. Please keep me safe from what they are trying to do to me
(שָׁמְרֵ֤נִי מִיְּדֵי־פַח֙ יָקְשׁוּ־לִ֔י)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please keep me from the hands of the snare they have laid for me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **the snare they have laid for me, and the traps of the workers of evil**
UST People who do evil things are trying to trick me and destroy me. It is as though they have laid out snares and set traps for me … what they are trying to do to me
(פַּח֙ יָקְשׁוּ־לִ֣י וּמֹקְשׁ֔וֹת פֻּעֲלֵ֖י אָֽוֶן)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [all the traps that evildoers have set to catch me]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **from the hands of the snare**
UST snares … from what they are trying to do to me
(מִיְּדֵי־פַח)

Here David is speaking as if the snare had **hands** that could grab and hold him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the grip of the snare] or [the power of the snare]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT they have laid for me**
**UST** are trying to trick me and destroy me. It is as though they have laid out … for me
(יָקְשׁוּ לִי)

The pronoun **they** refers to the doers of evil mentioned later in the verse as "the workers of evil." It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [the workers of evil have laid for me]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and the traps of the workers of evil**
**UST** People who do evil things … and set traps
(וּמֹקְשׁוֹת פֹּעֲלֵי אָוֶן)

David 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 keep me from the traps of the workers of evil]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Keep me | Please keep me safe |
| the snare | snares … what they are trying to do to me |
| and the traps of | and set traps |
| evil | evil things |

# Psalms 141:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let the wicked fall into his nets together, I, while I cross over.* | *I desire that wicked people fall together into the traps that they have set {to catch me}, while, for my part, I escape {from them}.* |

**ULT the wicked**
**UST** wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

David 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]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT Let the wicked fall into his nets together**
**UST** I desire that wicked people fall together into the traps that they have set {to catch me}
(יִפְּלוּ בְמַכְמֹרֶיו רְשָׁעִים יַחַד׃)

Here David is speaking as if the punishment that the wicked deserve were nets that they would **fall into**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Let the wicked be caught in their own schemes together] or [Let the wicked be ensnared by their own plans altogether]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT into his nets**
**UST** into the traps that they have set {to catch me}
(בְמַכְמֹרֶיו)

The singular pronoun **his** is used to refer collectively to each of the wicked people. David uses a singular form even though he is speaking of the wicked as a group. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [together into the nets of the wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **I, while I cross over**
UST while, for my part, I escape {from them}
(אָנֹכִי עַד־אֶעֱבֹור)

David is stating the pronoun **I** separately, even though the verb translated as **I will cross over** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that he himself will do something different than wht the wicked will do. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [while I myself cross over]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the wicked | wicked people |

# Psalms 142

## Psalm 142 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 142 is a psalm of deliverance from his enemies. (See: deliver, deliverer, deliverance, delivered)

1. Pour out complaint and trouble to Yahweh (1–4)
2. Declare Yahweh as refuge and portion (5–7)

# Psalms 142:front

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A maskil of David; when he was in the cave; a prayer.* | *This is a psalm that David prayed when he was hiding in a cave.* |

> ULT **A maskil**
> UST This is a psalm
> (מַשְׂכִּיל)

The superscription to this psalm identifies it as a **maskil**. Since the meaning of this word is not certain, you may wish to represent it in its Hebrew form and spell it the way it sounds in your language. See the discussion of that term in the Introduction to Psalms.

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of David | that David |
| a prayer | prayed |

# Psalms 142:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My voice to Yahweh—I cry out; my voice to Yahweh—I plead for favor.* | *Yahweh, I cry out to you; I plead for you to help me.* |

**ULT My voice to Yahweh—I cry out; my voice to Yahweh—I plead for favor**
UST Yahweh, I cry out to you; I plead for you to help me
(קוֹלִי אֶל־יְהוָה אֶזְעָק קוֹלִי אֶל־יְהוָה אֶתְחַנָּן)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [I earnestly cry out to Yahweh for favor]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT My voice to Yahweh**
UST Yahweh, I … to you
(קוֹלִי אֶל־יְהוָה)

David is using **My voice** to represent his prayer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [My prayer to Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh … you |
| I cry out | cry out |
| I plead for favor | plead … to help me |
| I plead for favor | plead … to help me |

# Psalms 142:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I pour out my lament to his face; my distress to his face I declare.* | *I am complaining to you about {all of} my problems; I am telling you {all of} my troubles.* |

**ULT I pour out my lament to his face**
**UST** I am complaining to you about {all of} my problems
(אֲשַׁפֵּךְ לְפָנָיו שִׂיחִי)

David is speaking of his lament as if it were a liquid that he **pours out** before Yahweh. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I express my lament to his face]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT my lament**
**UST** {all of} my problems
(שִׂיחִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **lament**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what I lament]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT to his face**
**UST** to you
(לְפָנָיו)

Here, **to his face** represents being in the presence of Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in his presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT my distress**
**UST** {all of} my troubles
(צָרָתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distress**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what distresses me]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my lament | {all of} my problems |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my distress | {all of} my troubles |
| I declare | I am telling |

# Psalms 142:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *When my spirit faints within me, then you, you know my path. Along this path I walk they have hidden a trap for me.* | *When I am very discouraged, you are the one who knows what I must do. As I go about my activities, {it is as though} my enemies have hidden traps along my path for me {to fall into}.* |

ULT **When my spirit faints within me**
UST When I am very discouraged
(בְּהִתְעַטֵּף עָלַי רוּחִי)

David is using the word **spirit** to represent his whole self. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [When I grow faint]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **then you, you know**
UST you are the one who knows
(וְאַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ)

The word **you** is repeated for emphasis. David is emphasizing that Yahweh is the one who truly knows his path. If your language does not use repetition for emphasis, you could express this in another way. Alternate translation: [then you alone know]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **my path**
UST what I must do
(נְתִיבָתִי)

David is speaking of how he lives and what he does as if that were a **path** that he was walking along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my situation]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **they have hidden a trap for me**
UST {it is as though} my enemies have hidden traps … for me {to fall into}
(טָמְנוּ פַּח לִי)

David is speaking of his enemies' schemes as if they were a **trap** that **they** had **hidden** for him to fall into. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they have secretly planned to harm me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **they have hidden**
UST {it is as though} my enemies have hidden
(טָמְנוּ)

David is using the pronoun **they** in a general sense to refer to his enemies without specifying who they are. Use an expression for this that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [others have hidden] or [people have hidden]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my spirit | I |
| you know | who knows |
| a trap | traps |

# Psalms 142:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Look right and see and there is no one who recognizes me. A refuge has become lost from me; there is no one caring for my soul.* | *If you look to my right you will see that there is no one who watches over me. There is nowhere I can go to be safe, and no one cares what happens to me.* |

**ULT Look right and see**
**UST** If you look to my right you will see
(הַבֵּיט יָמִין ו וּרְאֵה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please look right and see]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Look right**
**UST** If you look to my right
(הַבֵּיט יָמִין)

Looking to the right was a symbolic action by which a person looked for his defender, since the right side was the position where a protector would stand. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in the text of your translation or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Look for my defender]

**Support Reference:** Symbolic Action

**ULT for my soul**
**UST** what happens to me
(לְנַפְשִׁי)

David is using the word **soul** to represent his whole self. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A refuge | to be safe |
| caring | cares |
| for my soul | what happens to me |

# Psalms 142:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I cried out to you, Yahweh; I said, "You {are} my shelter, my portion in the land of the living."* | *So Yahweh, I called out to you {to help me}; I said, "You are the one who protects me; you are all that I need while I am alive."* |

ULT **my shelter**
UST are the one who protects me
(מַחְסִי)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **shelter** that could protect him from danger. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [my protection]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my portion**
UST you are all that I need
(חֶלְקִי)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **portion** of inherited land. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all that matters to me]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in the land of the living**
UST while I am alive
(בְּאֶרֶץ הַחַיִּים)

The expression **the land of the living** was a common expression meaning "among those who are alive on earth." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [during my life on earth]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **the living**
UST I am alive
(הַחַיִּים)

David is using the adjective **living** as a noun to mean people who are alive. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [those who are alive]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | So Yahweh |
| my shelter | are the one who protects me |

# Psalms 142:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Listen to my cry, for I am very low; rescue me from my pursuers, for they are stronger than I.* | *Please listen to me while I call out to you {to help me} because I am very distressed. Save me from those who are making me suffer, because they are stronger than I am.* |

**ULT for I am very low**
**UST** because I am very distressed
(כִּי־דַלֹּותִי מְאֹד)

The word **for** indicates that what follows is the reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because I am very low]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT I am very low**
**UST** I am very distressed
(דַלֹּותִי מְאֹד)

David is speaking of his distress as if he were physically in a **low** position. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am very weak]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT for they are stronger than I**
**UST** because they are stronger than I am
(כִּי אָמְצוּ מִמֶּנִּי)

The word **for** indicates that what follows is the reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [since they are stronger than I]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my cry | I call out to you {to help me} |
| rescue me | Save me |

# Psalms 142:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Bring out my soul from prison to praise your name. The righteous will gather around me because you will fulfill for me.* | *Please free me from those who are distressing me so that I may thank you. When you do that, the other righteous people will gather with me {to praise you together} because you will have fulfilled my request.* |

ULT **Bring out my soul from prison**
UST Please free me from those who are distressing me
(הוֹצִיאָה מִמַּסְגֵּר ׀ נַפְשִׁי)

David is speaking of his trouble as if it were a **prison** from which he needs to be brought out. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Free me from my troubles]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **my soul**
UST me
(נַפְשִׁי)

David is using the word **soul** to represent his whole self. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [me]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **to praise your name**
UST so that I may thank you
(לְהוֹדוֹת אֶת־שְׁמֶךָ)

Here, **to** marks **praise your name** as the purpose for which David asks Yahweh to bring him out of trouble. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that I may praise your name]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **your name**
UST you
(אֶת־שְׁמֶךָ)

David is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is and his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **The righteous**
UST the other righteous people
(צַדִּיקִים)

David is using the adjective **righteous** as a noun to mean righteous people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [Righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **because you will fulfill for me**
UST because you will have fulfilled my request
(כִּי תִגְמֹל עָלָי)

The word **because** indicates that what follows is the reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [for you will fulfill for me]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **you will fulfill for me**
UST you will have fulfilled my request
(תִגְמֹל עָלָי)

The implication is that Yahweh will fulfill David's request or his promise. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [you will fulfill your promise to me] or [you will answer my prayer]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my soul | me |
| to praise | so that I may thank |
| The righteous | the other righteous people |
| will gather around | When you do that … will gather … to praise you together |
| you will fulfill | you will have fulfilled |

# Psalms 143

## Psalm 143 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 143 is a deliverance psalm. The psalmist prays for deliverance from his enemies. (See: deliver, deliverer, deliverance, delivered)

1. Plead for Yahweh's mercy and not judgment (1–2)
2. Describe distress and longing for Yahweh (3–6)
3. Ask Yahweh for guidance, deliverance, and renewal (7–12)

# Psalms 143:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A psalm of David Hear my prayer, Yahweh; listen to my pleas! On account of your faithfulness answer me in your righteousness!* | *This is a psalm of David. Yahweh, please listen to me as I pray to you, pleading for you to help me! Because you are righteous and because you faithfully do what you have promised, please do what I am asking you to do for me!* |

ULT **Hear my prayer … listen to my pleas**
UST please listen to me as I pray to you, pleading for you to help me
(שְׁמַ֣ע תְּפִלָּתִ֑י הַאֲזִינָ֥ה אֶל־תַּחֲנוּנָ֗י)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Hear my prayer, Yahweh; yes, listen to my pleas]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Hear my prayer**
UST please listen to me as I pray to you
(שְׁמַ֣ע תְּפִלָּתִ֑י)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please hear my prayer]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **listen to my pleas**
UST please listen to me … pleading for you to help me
(הַאֲזִינָ֥ה אֶל־תַּחֲנוּנָ֗י)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please listen to my supplications]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **On account of your faithfulness answer me in your righteousness**
UST Because you are righteous and because you faithfully do what you have promised, please do what I am asking you to do for me
(בֶּאֱמֻנָתֶךָ עֲנֵנִי בְּצִדְקָתֶךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **faithfulness** and **righteousness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Because you are faithful, answer me, because you are righteous]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **answer me**
UST please do what I am asking you to do for me
(עֲנֵנִי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [please answer me]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| A psalm | This is a psalm |
| of David | of David |
| my prayer | as I pray to you |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my pleas | pleading for you to help me |
| On account of your faithfulness | and because you faithfully do what you have promised |
| in your righteousness | Because you are righteous |

# Psalms 143:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And do not enter into judgment with your servant, for everyone living is not righteous to your face.* | *Please do not judge me, your servant, because you know that there is no one alive who is completely innocent.* |

ULT **And do not enter into judgment**
UST Please do not judge
(וְאַל־תָּבֹוא בַמִּשְׁפָּט)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please do not enter into judgment]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **And do not enter into judgment with your servant**
UST Please do not judge me, your servant
(וְאַל־תָּבֹוא בַמִּשְׁפָּט אֶת־עַבְדֶּךָ)

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: [And do not judge your servant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to your face**
UST you know
(לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here, **to your face** represents being in the presence of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [in your presence]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **for**
UST because
(כִּי)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **everyone living is not righteous to your face**
UST you know that there is no one alive who is completely innocent
(לֹֽא־יִצְדַּ֣ק לְפָנֶ֣יךָ כָל־חָֽי׃)

David is saying **everyone living is not righteous** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [no living person is truly righteous]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| into judgment | judge |
| your servant | me, your servant |
| is … righteous | who is completely innocent |

# Psalms 143:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For the enemy has pursued my soul; he has crushed my life to the ground; he has made me to live in dark places like the dead of ages.* | *Please help me because my enemies have pursued me; they have completely defeated me. {It is as though} they have already put me in a grave like people who are dead for eternity.* |

ULT **For**
UST Please help me because
(כִּ֤י)

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **the enemy has pursued my soul**
UST my enemies have pursued me
(רָדַ֣ף אוֹיֵ֣ב ׀ נַפְשִׁ֑י)

Here, **my soul** represents David himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the enemy has pursued me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **he has crushed my life to the ground**
UST they have completely defeated me
(דִּכָּ֣א לָאָ֣רֶץ חַיָּתִ֑י)

Here David is speaking as if his enemy had physically **crushed** his **life to the ground**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he has completely defeated me] or [he has brought me very low]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in dark places**
UST in a grave
(בְּמַחֲשַׁכִּים)

Here David is speaking as if his suffering were being in **dark places**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in places of despair] or [in places where it is as if I were dead]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **like the dead of ages**
UST like people who are dead for eternity
(כְּמֵתֵי עוֹלָם)

The point of this comparison is that just as **the dead of ages** are unable to help themselves, so is David in his suffering. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [like people who have been dead for a long time]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **like the dead of ages**
UST like people who are dead for eternity
(כְּמֵתֵי עוֹלָם)

David is using the adjective **dead** 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: [like those who died long ago]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the enemy | my enemies |
| my soul | me |
| ages | for eternity |

# Psalms 143:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *So my spirit faints within me; my heart despairs inside me.* | *So I am very discouraged; I feel very dismayed.* |

> ULT **So my spirit faints within me; my heart despairs inside me**
> UST So I am very discouraged; I feel very dismayed
> (וַתִּתְעַטֵּף עָלַי רוּחִי בְּתוֹכִי יִשְׁתּוֹמֵם לִבִּי)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [So my spirit and my heart lose hope within me]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

> ULT **So my spirit faints within me**
> UST So I am very discouraged
> (וַתִּתְעַטֵּף עָלַי רוּחִי)

Here David is speaking as if his **spirit** were a person who could **faint**. He means that he is losing his strength and vitality. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am growing weak inside]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

> ULT **my heart despairs inside me**
> UST I feel very dismayed
> (בְּתוֹכִי יִשְׁתּוֹמֵם לִבִּי)

Here the **heart** represents where David's feelings exist. He is saying that deep inside himself he feels dismay. You may have a comparable expression in your language, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I feel hopeless]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my spirit | I |

# Psalms 143:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I remember days from before; I meditate on all your works; I reflect on the works of your hands.* | *I remember what has happened previously; I think about all the things that you have done; I consider the {great} deeds that you have performed.* |

ULT **I meditate on all your works; I reflect on the works of your hands**
UST I think about all the things that you have done; I consider the {great} deeds that you have performed
(הָגִיתִי בְכָל־פָּעָלֶךָ בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ אֲשׂוֹחֵחַ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [In my mind I review all that you have done] or [I meditate on all your works; indeed, I reflect on the works of your hands]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **on the works of your hands**
UST the {great} deeds that you have performed
(בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ)

Here, **your hands** represents God's power and agency. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [on what you have accomplished]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I meditate | I think about |

# Psalms 143:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I spread out my hands to you; my soul, as a thirsty land, to you. Selah* | *I lift up my hands to you {as I pray}; I need you, just as much as a very dry land needs water. Selah* |

**ULT I spread out my hands to you**
**UST** I lift up my hands to you {as I pray}
(פֵּרַשְׂתִּי יָדַי אֵלֶיךָ)

Here David is speaking as if to **spread out** his **hands** were the act of praying itself. He means that he is praying to God. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I lift my hands in prayer to you] or [I pray earnestly to you]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT my soul, as a thirsty land, to you**
**UST** I need you, just as much as a very dry land needs water
(נַפְשִׁי ׀ כְּאֶרֶץ־עֲיֵפָה לָךְ)

David 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 soul longs for you as a weary land longs for water]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT my soul, as a thirsty land, to you**
**UST** I need you, just as much as a very dry land needs water
(נַפְשִׁי ׀ כְּאֶרֶץ־עֲיֵפָה לָךְ)

The point of this comparison is that just as **a weary land** desperately needs water, so David desperately needs God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [I need you the way a weary land needs rain]

**Support Reference:** Simile

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| my soul | I need |
| as a … land | just as much as a … land needs |
| Selah | Selah |

# Psalms 143:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hurry! Answer me, Yahweh; my spirit is expiring! Do not hide your face from me, or I will become equal with those going down to the pit.* | *Yahweh, I am absolutely despairing, so please answer me right now! Do not keep away from me because if you do that, I will {soon} be among those who descend to where the dead people are.* |

ULT **Hurry! Answer me, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh … so please answer me right now
(מַֽהֵר עֲנֵ֣נִי ׀ יְהוָ֗ה)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please hurry and answer me, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **my spirit is expiring**
UST I am absolutely despairing
(כָּלְתָ֥ה רוּחִ֑י)

Here David is speaking as if his **spirit** were something that could be **expiring** or used up. He means that he is losing all hope and strength. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I am losing all strength] or [I have no more endurance]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **Do not hide your face from me**
UST Do not keep away from me
(אַל־תַּסְתֵּ֣ר פָּנֶ֣יךָ מִמֶּ֑נִּי)

Here, **your face** represents God's attention and favor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Do not hide your favor from me] or [Do not ignore me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **or I will become equal with those going down to the pit**
UST because if you do that, I will {soon} be among those who descend to where the dead people are
(וְנִמְשַׁלְתִּי עִם־יֹרְדֵי בוֹר)

The word translated as **or** indicates that what follows is a negative consequence that will happen if the previous request is not fulfilled. Use a connector in your language that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [otherwise]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **those going down to the pit**
UST those who descend to where the dead people are
(יֹרְדֵי בוֹר)

David is referring to death in a polite way by using the phrase **the descenders of the pit**. Depending on what is helpful for your readers, you could use a polite way of referring to this in your language, or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [those who descend to their death] or [those who die]

**Support Reference:** Euphemism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my spirit | I am absolutely despairing |
| the pit | where the dead people are |

# Psalms 143:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let me hear your covenant faithfulness in the morning, for I trust in you. Make known to me this way I should walk, for I lift up my soul to you.* | *Every morning cause me to remember that you faithfully love me because I trust in you. show me the things that I should do because I depend on you for my life.* |

ULT **Let me hear your covenant faithfulness in the morning**
UST Every morning cause me to remember that you faithfully love me
(הַשְׁמִיעֵנִי בַבֹּקֶר ׀ חַסְדֶּךָ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please cause me to hear your covenant faithfulness]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **your covenant faithfulness**
UST that you faithfully love me
(חַסְדֶּךָ)

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: [how you are faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Make known to me this way I should walk**
UST show me the things that I should do
(הוֹדִיעֵנִי דֶּרֶךְ־זוּ אֵלֵךְ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please make known to me the way that I should walk]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **this way I should walk**
UST the things that I should do
(דֶּרֶךְ־זֶ֥ה אֵלֵ֑ךְ)

David is speaking of how he should live as if that were a **way** that he was walking along. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [how I should live]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **for I lift up my soul to you**
UST because I depend on you for my life
(כִּֽי־אֵלֶ֥יךָ נָשָׂ֗אתִי נַפְשִׁ֫י)

David is using **I lift up my soul to** as a common expression of his culture to mean "I completely depend on." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for I completely depend on you]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| your covenant faithfulness | that you faithfully love me |
| I trust | I trust |
| Make known to me | show me |
| my soul | I depend on you for my life |

# Psalms 143:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Rescue me from my enemies, Yahweh; I hide in you.* | *Yahweh, please save me from my enemies; I rely on you to protect me.* |

**ULT Rescue me from my enemies**
UST please save me from my enemies
(הַצִּילֵנִי מֵאֹיְבַי)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please rescue me from my enemies]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Rescue me | please save me |
| from my enemies | from my enemies |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

# Psalms 143:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Teach me to do your will, for you {are} my God. May your good Spirit lead me in a level land.* | *You are the God to whom I belong, so teach me to do what pleases you. I want your good Spirit to show me the best way to live.* |

**ULT Teach me to do your will**
**UST** teach me to do what pleases you
(לַמְּדֵנִי ׀ לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנֶךָ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please teach me to do your will]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT your will**
**UST** what pleases you
(רְצוֹנֶךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **will**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what you want me to do]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT my God**
**UST** the God to whom I belong
(אֱלֹוהַּי)

David is not using this possessive form **my God** to indicate that he possesses or controls God. Rather David is using these words to indicate that Yahweh is the God whom he worships. Alternate translation: [the God whom I worship]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **in a level land**
UST the best way to live
(בְּאֶרֶץ מִישֹׁר)

Here David is speaking as if God's guidance were leading him on **level land** that is good to walk upon. He means that God gives him a life free from obstacles and difficulties. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [along a safe path] or [help me live in a way that righteous]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **for you {are} my God**
UST You are the God to whom I belong, so
(כִּי־אַתָּה אֱלֹוהָי)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [This is because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Teach me | teach me |
| my God | the God to whom I belong |
| good Spirit | good |
| good Spirit | good |
| in a … land | the best way to live |

# Psalms 143:11

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Yahweh, for the sake of your name, may you preserve my life; in your righteousness may you bring my soul out of distress.* | *Yahweh, please keep me alive because of who you are; because you are righteous, please rescue me from {the people who are} oppressing me!* |

ULT **for the sake of your name**
UST because of who you are
(לְמַעַן־שִׁמְךָ)

Here, **your name** represents God's reputation and character. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [for the sake of your reputation] or [to bring honor to who you are]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **in your righteousness may you bring my soul out of distress**
UST because you are righteous, please rescue me from {the people who are} oppressing me
(בְּצִדְקָתְךָ תּוֹצִיא מִצָּרָה נַפְשִׁי)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **righteousness** and **distress**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [because you are righteous, please bring me out of my distressing situation]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **my soul**
UST me
(נַפְשִׁי)

Here, **my soul** represents David himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [me]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| in your righteousness | because you are righteous |
| my soul | me |
| out of distress | from {the people who are} oppressing me |

# Psalms 143:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And in your covenant faithfulness may you destroy my enemies and exterminate all the adversaries of my soul, for I am your servant.* | *I am one who serves you; so because you faithfully love me as you promised to do, please kill all of my enemies who want to kill me.* |

ULT **And in your covenant faithfulness**
UST because you faithfully love me as you promised to do
(וְבְחַסְדְּךָ֣)

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: [And because you are faithful to your covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **may you destroy my enemies and exterminate all the adversaries of my soul**
UST please kill all of my enemies who want to kill me
(תַּצְמִ֣ית אֹיְבָ֑י וְהַאֲבַדְתָּ֥ כָּל־צֹרְרֵ֖י נַפְשִׁ֣י)

The terms **destroy my enemies** and **exterminate all of the adversaries of my soul** mean similar things. David 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: [please completely eliminate all who oppose me]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the adversaries of my soul**
UST who want to kill me
(צֹרְרֵ֖י נַפְשִׁ֣י)

Here, **my soul** represents David himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [my adversaries]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **for**
UST so
(כִּ֣י)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And in your covenant faithfulness | because you faithfully love me as you promised to do |
| may you destroy | please kill |
| my enemies | my enemies |
| and exterminate | please kill |
| the adversaries of | who want to kill |
| my soul | me |
| your servant | am one who serves you |

# Psalms 144

## Psalm 144 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 144 is a specific type of psalm of supplication, a psalm of trust. (See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.) The psalmist does not cry out urgently for help. Instead, he begins by saying how reliable and trustworthy Yahweh is. In the rest of the psalm, the psalmist asks for deliverance from his enemies, but this petition is punctuated by confident expressions of praise for Yahweh as the deliverer.

1. Statement of trust (1–4)
2. Petition (5–8)
3. Expression of praise (9–10)
4. Petition (11–14)
5. Expression of praise (15)

# Psalms 144:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Of David. Blessed {be} Yahweh, my rock, the one teaching my hands for war, my fingers for battle,* | *This is a psalm of David. I praise Yahweh, who protects me! He equips me to fight well in wars.* |

ULT **Blessed {be} Yahweh**
UST I praise Yahweh
(בָּר֣וּךְ יְהוָ֣ה)

The expression **Blessed be** is a passive verbal form. The psalmist is expressing his desire to praise Yahweh. If it would be unnatural to use that form for this purpose, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I bless Yahweh] or [Let me praise Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **my rock**
UST who protects me
(צוּרִ֑י)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a high **rock** that David could climb up to reach safety from danger. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [my protector]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the one teaching my hands for war, my fingers for battle**
UST He equips me to fight well in wars
(הַמְלַמֵּ֣ד יָדַ֣י לַקְרָ֑ב אֶצְבְּעוֹתַ֖י לַמִּלְחָמָֽה)

The psalmist 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 one teaching my hands for war, the one training my fingers for battle]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Of David | This is a psalm of David |
| Blessed {be} | I praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the one teaching | He equips |

# Psalms 144:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *my covenant faithfulness and my fortress, my stronghold and the one rescuing me, my shield, and in whom I take refuge, the one subduing my people under me.* | *He is always faithful and kind to me. He keeps me safe and helps me escape from danger, as if he were my shield or a place where I could go to be safe. He enables me to rule other peoples.* |

ULT **my covenant faithfulness**
UST He is always faithful and kind to me
(חַסְדִּי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the one who is faithfully committed to me by covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and my fortress, my stronghold and the one rescuing me, my shield**
UST He keeps me safe and helps me escape from danger, as if he were my shield or a place where I could go to be safe
(וּמְצוּדָתִי֮ מִשְׂגַּבִּי וּמְפַלְטִי לִי מָגִנִּי)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were **my fortress** and **my stronghold**, strong places where he could go for safety, and as if he were **my shield**, a defensive weapon that protects from attack. If these images communicate well in your language, please use them. If not, you could express them in a different way. Alternate translation: [and my protector, my safe place and the one rescuing me, my defender]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **and my fortress, my stronghold**
UST or a place where I could go to be safe
(וּמְצוּדָתִי֮ מִשְׂגַּבִּי)

The terms **fortress** and **stronghold** mean similar things. David 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: [my strong fortress]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **and in whom I take refuge**
UST or a place where I could go to be safe
(וּבֹו֥ חָסְיִֽתִי)

David is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a place of **refuge** where he could go to hide from danger. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [and in whom I find safety]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| my covenant faithfulness | He is always faithful and kind to me |
| and my fortress | or a place where I could go to be safe |
| my stronghold | or a place where I could go to be safe |
| and the one rescuing | and helps … escape from danger |
| my shield | He keeps me safe … as if he were my shield |
| I take refuge | or a place where I could go to be safe |

# Psalms 144:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, what {is} man, that you know him, the son of man, that you consider him?* | *Yahweh, people are so insignificant; it is amazing that you pay any attention to them!* |

ULT **what {is} man, that you know him, the son of man, that you consider him**
UST people are so insignificant; it is amazing that you pay any attention to them
(מָה־אָדָם וַתֵּדָעֵהוּ בֶּן־אֱנוֹשׁ וַתְּחַשְּׁבֵהוּ)

David is not asking for information about **man**. He is using the question form to emphasize how small and insignificant people are compared to God. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [people are so insignificant that you should not pay attention to them, and the son of man is not worth considering.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **what {is} man, that you know him, the son of man, that you consider him**
UST people are so insignificant; it is amazing that you pay any attention to them
(מָה־אָדָם וַתֵּדָעֵהוּ בֶּן־אֱנוֹשׁ וַתְּחַשְּׁבֵהוּ)

David 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: [what is man, that you know him; indeed, what is the son of man, that you consider him]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **what {is} man**
UST people are so insignificant; it is amazing that
(מָה־אָדָם)

The psalmist is not referring to a specific **man**. He means people in general. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [what is a human being]

**Support Reference:** Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **the son of man**
UST people
(בֶּן־אֱנוֹשׁ)

Although the term **son of man** is masculine, David is using the phrase in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: [the child of humanity] or [a human being]

**Support Reference:** When Masculine Words Include Women

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| that you know him | you pay any attention to them |
| the son of man | people |

# Psalms 144:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Man compares to vapor; his days {are} like a passing shadow.* | *People live for only a very short time, just as a mist or a shadow quickly disappears.* |

**ULT Man compares to vapor**
**UST** People … just as a mist
(אָדָם לַהֶבֶל דָּמָה)

David is speaking of **Man** as if he were **vapor**, something that appears briefly and then is gone. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [A person is like a puff of smoke]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT Man**
**UST** People
(אָדָם)

Although the term **Man** is masculine, David is using the word in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: [A person]

**Support Reference:** When Masculine Words Include Women

**ULT his days {are} like a passing shadow**
**UST** live for only a very short time … or a shadow quickly disappears
(יָמָיו כְּצֵל עוֹבֵר)

David uses a comparison to express how quickly a person's **days** pass. He says they are **like a passing shadow**, something that quickly moves and vanishes. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent comparison or express this meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his days pass quickly]

**Support Reference:** Simile

# Psalms 144:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh, bow your heavens and come down; touch the mountains, that they may smoke.* | *Yahweh, please come down from the sky and split open the mountains so that smoke pours from them.* |

**ULT bow your heavens and come down**
**UST** please come down from the sky
(הַט־שָׁמַיִךְ וְתֵרֵד)

These are imperatives, but they communicate polite requests rather than commands. Use forms in your language that communicate polite requests. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [please bow your heavens and come down]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT touch the mountains, that they may smoke**
**UST** and split open the mountains so that smoke pours from them
(גַּע בֶּהָרִים וְיֶעֱשָׁנוּ)

The phrase **that they may smoke** communicates the purpose for which David asks God to touch the mountains. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that the second phrase describes the purpose for the first phrase. Alternate translation: [touch the mountains so that they smoke]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

**ULT touch the mountains, that they may smoke**
**UST** and split open the mountains so that smoke pours from them
(גַּע בֶּהָרִים וְיֶעֱשָׁנוּ)

The psalmist is saying what he wants **Yahweh** to do. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [please touch the mountains, that they may smoke]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| bow | from |
| your heavens | the sky |

# Psalms 144:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Light lightning and scatter them; send your arrows and rout them.* | *Please send lightning bolts like arrows against my enemies to make them run away.* |

ULT **Light lightning and scatter them; send your arrows and rout them**
UST Please send lightning bolts like arrows against my enemies to make them run away
(בְּרוֹק בָּרָק וּתְפִיצֵם שְׁלַח חִצֶּיךָ וּתְהֻמֵּם)

These two clauses mean basically the same thing. Hebrew poetry was based on this kind of repetition. It would be good to show this to your readers by including both phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if it would be unclear in your language, you could connect the phrases in a way that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Light lightning and scatter them; yes, send your arrows and rout them]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Light lightning**
UST Please … lightning bolts
(בְּרוֹק בָּרָק)

David is repeating forms of the word **lighten** in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [Flash your lightening]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

ULT **and scatter them**
UST to make them run away
(וּתְפִיצֵם)

The pronoun **them** refers to David's enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state this explicitly. Alternate translation: [and scatter my enemies]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **send your arrows**
UST send … like arrows against my enemies
(שְׁלַח חִצֶּיךָ)

David is speaking of lightning bolts as if they were **arrows** that God shoots at his enemies. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [send your lightning bolts]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and scatter them | to make them run away |

# Psalms 144:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Send your hands from above; break me free and deliver me from many waters, from the hand of sons of a foreigner,* | *Reach down from heaven and rescue me from my enemies who are surrounding me like a dangerous flood. Save me from the power of these foreign people.* |

ULT **Send your hands from above**
UST Reach down from heaven
(שְׁלַח יָדֶיךָ מִמָּרוֹם)

Here, **hands** represents Yahweh's power and action. David speaks of God acting on his behalf as if God were reaching out his **hands from above**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Use your power from above]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **break me free and deliver me**
UST and rescue me … Save me
(פְּצֵנִי וְהַצִּילֵנִי)

The phrases **break me free** and **deliver me** mean similar things. David 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: [deliver me to freedom]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **from many waters**
UST from my enemies who are surrounding me like a dangerous flood
(מִמַּיִם רַבִּים)

David is speaking of his troubles as if they were **many waters** that could overwhelm him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from great troubles]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **from the hand of sons of a foreigner**
UST from the power of these foreign people
(מִיַּד בְּנֵי נֵכָר)

Here, **the hand** represents the power or control that the foreigners have. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the power of sons of a foreigner]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **sons of a foreigner**
UST these foreign people
(בְּנֵי נֵכָר)

David is using the possessive form to describe **sons** or people who are characterized by being a **foreigner**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [foreigners]

**Support Reference:** Possession

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| break me free | and rescue me … Save me |
| and deliver me | and rescue me … Save me |
| a foreigner | foreign |

# Psalms 144:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *who, their mouth speaks worthlessness, and their right hand {is} a right hand of falsehood.* | *They say things that are not true and raise their right hands to swear oaths that are false.* |

ULT **their mouth speaks worthlessness**
UST They say things that are not true
(פִּיהֶם דִּבֶּר־שָׁוְא)

Here, **their mouth** represents the foreigners themselves speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they speak worthlessness]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **who, their mouth speaks worthlessness, and their right hand {is} a right hand of falsehood**
UST They say things that are not true and raise their right hands to swear oaths that are false
(אֲשֶׁר פִּיהֶם דִּבֶּר־שָׁוְא וִֽימִינָם יְמִין שָׁקֶר)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **worthlessness** and **falsehood**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [who, their mouth speaks what is worthless, and their right hand is a right hand of what is false]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and their right hand {is} a right hand of falsehood**
UST and raise their right hands to swear oaths that are false
(וִֽימִינָם יְמִין שָׁקֶר)

Here, **their right hand** represents the oath that a person swears by raising the right hand. David says their oath is **a right hand of falsehood**, meaning they swear falsely. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and they swear false oaths]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

# Psalms 144:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *God, I will sing a new song to you; with a lyre of ten {strings} I will make music to you,* | *God, I will sing a new song to you and play my ten-stringed harp to praise you,* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| God | God |
| with a lyre of | my … harp |

# Psalms 144:10

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *the one giving salvation to kings, the one breaking free David his servant from the evil sword.* | *because you are the one who saves kings and who rescues me, your servant David, from danger in battle.* |

**ULT the one giving salvation**
**UST** because you are the one who saves
(הַנּוֹתֵן תְּשׁוּעָה)

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: [who provides salvation] or [who grants deliverance]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT David his servant**
**UST** me, your servant David
(אֶת־דָּוִד עַבְדּוֹ)

David 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: [me, David, your servant] or [me, who serves you]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

**ULT from the evil sword**
**UST** from danger in battle
(מֵחֶרֶב רָעָה)

Here, **the evil sword** represents violence and warfare. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from violent warfare]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| salvation | because you are the one who saves |
| to kings | kings |
| the one breaking free | and who rescues |
| David | me … David |
| his servant | your servant |
| from the … sword | in battle |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| evil | from danger |

# Psalms 144:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Break me free and deliver me from the hand of the sons of a foreigner, who, their mouth speaks worthlessness, and their right hand {is} a right hand of falsehood,* | *Save me from the power of these foreign people. They say things that are not true and raise their right hands to swear oaths that are false.* |

ULT **from the hand of the sons of a foreigner**
UST from the power of these foreign people
(מִיַּד בְּנֵי־נֵכָר)

Here, **the hand** represents the power or control that the foreigners have. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the power of the sons of a foreigner]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **their mouth speaks worthlessness**
UST They say things that are not true
(אֲשֶׁר־פִּיהֶם דִּבֶּר־שָׁוְא)

Here, **their mouth** represents the foreigners themselves in the act of speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [they speak worthlessness]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **speaks worthlessness, and their right hand {is} a right hand of falsehood**
UST say things that are not true and raise their right hands to swear oaths that are false
(דִּבֶּר־שָׁוְא וִֽימִינָם יְמִין שָׁקֶר)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **worthlessness** and **falsehood**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [what is worthless and they swear to what is false]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and their right hand {is} a right hand of falsehood**
UST and raise their right hands to swear oaths that are false
(וִֽימִינָ֥ם יְמִ֗ין שָֽׁקֶר)

Here, **their right hand** represents the oath that a person swears by raising the right hand. David says their oath is **a right hand of falsehood**, meaning they swear falsely. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and they swear false oaths]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Break me free | Save me |
| and deliver me | Save me |
| a foreigner | foreign |

# Psalms 144:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *that our sons {may be} like plants having been enlarged in their youth, our daughters, like corner pillars carved {in} the pattern of a palace.* | *Then our sons will be like strong plants that grow tall when they are young, and our daughters will be as beautiful and stately as pillars that craftsmen carve to decorate a palace.* |

ULT **that our sons {may be} like plants**
UST Then our sons will be like … plants
(אֲשֶׁר בָּנֵינוּ ׀ כִּנְטִעִים)

The word **that** introduces the purpose for which David has been asking God to rescue him and his people. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows describes the purpose for the previous actions. Alternate translation: [so that our sons may be like plants]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **our sons {may be} like plants having been enlarged in their youth**
UST our sons will be like strong plants that grow tall when they are young
(בָּנֵינוּ ׀ כִּנְטִעִים ׀ מְגֻדָּלִים בִּנְעוּרֵיהֶם)

Here David compares **sons** to **plants** that are well-established and growing. This means the sons are strong and healthy. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent comparison or express this meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [our sons may be strong and healthy]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **having been enlarged**
UST strong
(מְגֻדָּלִים)

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [that grow large]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **our daughters, like corner pillars carved {in} the pattern of a palace**
UST and our daughters will be as beautiful and stately as pillars that craftsmen carve to decorate a palace
(בְּנוֹתֵינוּ כְּזָוִיֹּת מְחֻטָּבוֹת תַּבְנִית הֵיכָל)

Here David compares **daughters** to **corner pillars** that are carved beautifully. This means the daughters are beautiful and strong. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent comparison or express this meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [our daughters may be beautiful and strong]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **our daughters, like corner pillars carved {in} the pattern of a palace**
UST and our daughters will be as beautiful and stately as pillars that craftsmen carve to decorate a palace
(בְּנוֹתֵינוּ כְּזָוִיֹּת מְחֻטָּבוֹת תַּבְנִית הֵיכָל)

The psalmist 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: [that our daughters may be like corner pillars carved in the pattern of a palace]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **carved {in} the pattern of a palace**
UST that craftsmen carve to decorate a palace
(מְחֻטָּבוֹת תַּבְנִית הֵיכָל)

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [that someone carved to decorate a palace]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {may be} like plants | will be like … plants |
| like corner pillars | will be as beautiful and stately as pillars |
| a palace | a palace |

# Psalms 144:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{May} our granaries {be} full, furnishing from kind to kind; may our flocks be thousanding, may they be myriading in our fields.* | *May our barns overflow with many kinds of crops. May our sheep give birth to great numbers of lambs, yes, very great numbers as they graze in our pastures.* |

ULT **furnishing from kind to kind**
UST with many kinds of crops
(מְפִיקִים מִזָּן אֶל־זָן)

The implication is that the storehouses are full of many different **kind** of food. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express that explicitly. Alternate translation: [providing many different kinds of food]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **may our flocks be thousanding**
UST May our sheep give birth to great numbers of lambs
(צֹאנֵנוּ מַאֲלִיפוֹת)

In keeping with the conventions of his language, David is using the numbers “thousand” and “myriad” as verbs. He does not mean those exact numbers. He is using them to mean great quantities. Translate these numbers according to the conventions of your own language and culture. Alternate translation: [may our flocks multiply by the thousands and ten thousands in our fields] or [may our flocks multiply in very great numbers in our fields]

**Support Reference:** Numbers

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| may … be thousanding | give birth to great numbers of lambs |
| our granaries | May our barns |
| our flocks | May our sheep |
| may they be myriading | yes, very great numbers |

# Psalms 144:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{May} our oxen {be} burdened; no breach and no going out and no cry in our squares.* | *May our oxen be strong to pull plows. May no one break through our walls, may no one go into exile, and may no one cry out {in distress} in our city squares.* |

**ULT {May} our oxen {be} burdened**
UST May our oxen be strong to pull plows
(אַלּוּפֵינוּ מְסֻבָּלִים)

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [May our oxen carry heavy burdens]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT no breach and no going out and no cry**
UST May no one break through our walls, may no one go into exile, and may no one cry out {in distress … }
(אֵין־פֶּרֶץ וְאֵין יוֹצֵאת וְאֵין צְוָחָה)

The implication is that there will be **no breach** in the city walls, **no going out** to war, and **no cry** of distress in the streets. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express that explicitly. Alternate translation: [no enemy breaks through our walls, and no one goes out to war, and no one cries of distress]

**Support Reference:** Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| cry | cry out {in distress} |

# Psalms 144:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The happinesses of the people for whom {it is} thus to it! The happinesses of the people for whom Yahweh {is} its God!* | *What a good life people have when these things happen for them! What a good life people have who worship Yahweh as their God!* |

**ULT The happinesses of the people for whom {it is} thus to it! The happinesses of**
**UST** What a good life have when these things happen for them! What a good life … have
(אַשְׁרֵי הָעָם שֶׁכָּכָה לּוֹ אַשְׁרֵי)

David is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of joy or blessing. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy is the people for whom it is thus to it! How happy is]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

**ULT for whom {it is} thus to it**
**UST** when these things happen for them
(שֶׁכָּכָה לּוֹ)

Here, **it** refers back to **the people**, which is a singular noun which refers to a group. David is saying the people have the blessings he has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make the referent explicit. Alternate translation: [who has all of these blessings]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT for whom Yahweh {is} its God**
**UST** who worship Yahweh as their God
(שֶׁיְּהוָה אֱלֹהָיו)

Here, **its** refers back to **the people**, which is a singular noun which refers to a group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make the referent explicit or use a plural pronoun. Alternate translation: [whose God is Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| for whom Yahweh | who worship Yahweh |
| {is} its God | as their God |

# Psalms 145

## Psalm 145 Introduction

## Psalm 145 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 145 is a psalm of praise. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms. But instead of issuing the usual calls to worship, the psalmist states that he and future generations always will worship Yahweh. He makes this statement repeatedly, interspersing it with reasons to worship.

1. Statement of worship (1–7)
2. Reason to worship: Yahweh is compassionate (8–9)
3. Statement of worship (10–13)
4. Reason to worship; Yahweh provides and help and support (14–20)
5. Statement of worship (21)

# Psalms 145:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *A psalm of David. I will exalt you, my God, the King, and I will bless your name forever and ever.* | *This is a psalm of David. My God and king, I will proclaim that you are very great; I will praise you now and always.* |

ULT **I will exalt you, my God, the King, and I will bless your name forever and ever**
UST My God and king, I will proclaim that you are very great; I will praise you now and always
(אֲרוֹמִמְךָ אֱלוֹהַי הַמֶּלֶךְ וַאֲבָרְכָה שִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [I will exalt you, my God, the King, yes, I will bless your name forever and ever]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **your name**
UST you
(שִׁמְךָ)

David is using the term **name** to represent who God is or to refer to God's reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [who you are]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **forever and ever**
UST now and always
(לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד)

The terms **forever** and **ever** mean similar things. David 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: [continually]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| A psalm | This is a psalm |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| of David | of David |
| I will exalt you | I will proclaim that you are very great |
| my God | My God |
| the King | and king |
| and I will bless | I will praise |
| forever | now |

# Psalms 145:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *I will bless you every day, and I will praise your name forever and ever.* | *I will bless you every day; I will praise you forever.* |

**ULT your name**

**UST** you

(שִׁמְךָ)

David is using the term **name** to represent who God is or to refer to God's reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [who you are]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT forever and ever**

**UST** forever

(לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד)

The terms **forever** and **ever** mean similar things. David 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: [for all time]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| I will bless you | I will bless you |
| and I will praise | I will praise |
| forever | forever |

# Psalms 145:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh {is} great and being much praised, and there is no searching of his greatness.* | *Yahweh, you are great, and people should praise you very much; no one can fully understand how great you are.* |

**ULT and being much praised**
**UST** and people should praise you very much
(וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד)

The expression **being much praised** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is people. Alternate translation: [people praise him very much]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT and … of his greatness**
**UST** how great you are
(וְלִגְדֻלָּתוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **greatness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [how great he is]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and being … praised | and people should praise you |
| searching | fully understand |

# Psalms 145:4

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Generation to generation will proclaim your works, and they will declare your mighty acts.* | *People of every generation will tell the next generation about what you have done; they will tell about your mighty deeds.* |

**ULT Generation to generation will proclaim your works, and they will declare your mighty acts**

**UST** People of every generation will tell the next generation about what you have done; they will tell about your mighty deeds

(דּוֹר לְדוֹר יְשַׁבַּח מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וּגְבוּרֹתֶיךָ יַגִּידוּ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Generation to generation will proclaim your works; indeed, they will declare your mighty acts]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT Generation to generation will proclaim your works, and they will declare your mighty acts**

**UST** People of every generation will tell the next generation about what you have done; they will tell about your mighty deeds

(דּוֹר לְדוֹר יְשַׁבַּח מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וּגְבוּרֹתֶיךָ יַגִּידוּ)

The pronoun **your** refers to Yahweh. The pronoun **they** refers to the generations mentioned in the first part of the verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Generation to generation will proclaim your works, Yahweh, and the generations will declare your mighty acts, Yahweh.]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Generation | People of every generation |
| to generation | the next generation |
| will proclaim | will tell |
| and … your mighty acts | your mighty deeds |
| they will declare | they will tell about |

# Psalms 145:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{On} the splendor of the glory of your majesty and {on} the deeds of your making wonderful, let me meditate.* | *I will think about how very glorious and majestic you are, and I will think about your wonderful deeds.* |

**ULT {On} the splendor of the glory of your majesty**
**UST** how very glorious and majestic you are
(הַדַּר כְּבוֹד הוֹדֶךָ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **splendor**, **glory**, and **majesty**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [how splendidly glorious and majestic you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT {On} the splendor of the glory of your majesty**
**UST** how very glorious and majestic you are
(הַדַּר כְּבוֹד הוֹדֶךָ)

The terms **splendor**, **glory**, and **majesty** mean similar things. David is using these terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [your very great majesty]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {On} the splendor of | how very … you are |
| the glory of | glorious |
| your majesty | and majestic |
| your making wonderful | wonderful |
| let me meditate | I will think about … and I will think about |

# Psalms 145:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And they will tell the strength of your making fearful, and let me recount it, your greatness.* | *People will talk about how powerful your awesome deeds are, and I will proclaim how great you are.* |

**ULT And they will tell**
**UST** People will talk about
(יֹאמֵרוּ)

The pronoun **they** refers to the people and generations mentioned in 145:4. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [generations of people will tell]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

**ULT and … your greatness**
**UST** how great you are
(וּגְדוּלָּתְךָ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **greatness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [that you are great]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And they will tell | People will talk about |
| the strength of | how powerful … are |
| your making fearful | your awesome deeds |
| let me recount it | and I will proclaim |

# Psalms 145:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They will pour forth the remembrance of the abundance of your goodness, and they will sing joyfully {about} your righteousness.* | *People will celebrate how very good you are, and they will sing joyfully about how righteous you are.* |

ULT **They will pour forth the remembrance of the abundance of your goodness, and they will sing joyfully {about} your righteousness**
UST People will celebrate how very good you are, and they will sing joyfully about how righteous you are
(זֵכֶר רַב־טוּבְךָ יַבִּיעוּ וְצִדְקָתְךָ יְרַנֵּנוּ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [They will pour forth the remembrance of the abundance of your goodness; indeed, they will sing joyfully about your righteousness]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **They will pour forth the remembrance of the abundance of your goodness, and they will sing joyfully {about} your righteousness**
UST People will celebrate how very good you are, and they will sing joyfully about how righteous you are
(זֵכֶר רַב־טוּבְךָ יַבִּיעוּ וְצִדְקָתְךָ יְרַנֵּנוּ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **remembrance**, **abundance**, **goodness**, and **righteousness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [They will remember your abundant good ways, and they will sing joyfully, celebrating your righteous acts]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **They will pour forth**
UST People will celebrate
(יַבִּיעוּ)

Here David is speaking as if speech about God's goodness were a liquid that people **pour forth**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They will eagerly tell their]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| your goodness | good |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and … your righteousness | about how righteous you are |
| they will sing joyfully {about} | and they will sing joyfully |

# Psalms 145:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh {is} gracious and compassionate, long of nostrils and great of covenant faithfulness.* | *Yahweh acts kindly and mercifully; he does not quickly become angry, and he faithfully loves us very much.* |

**ULT long of nostrils**
**UST** he does not quickly become angry
(אֶֽרֶךְ אַפַּ֗יִם)

David is using **long of nostrils** as a common expression of the culture to mean "slow to become angry." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [slow to anger]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT covenant faithfulness**
**UST** he faithfully loves us
(חָסֶד)

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: [faithfully keeping his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} gracious | acts kindly |
| and compassionate | and mercifully |
| covenant faithfulness | he faithfully loves us |

# Psalms 145:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh {is} good to all, and his compassions {are} over all of his works.* | *Yahweh is good to everyone, and he acts mercifully toward everything that he has made.* |

**ULT and his compassions**
UST and he acts mercifully
(וְרַחֲמָ֗יו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **compassions**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [his compassionate acts]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} good | is good |
| and his compassions | and he acts mercifully |

# Psalms 145:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *All your works will thank you, Yahweh, and your faithful will bless you.* | *Yahweh, all the creatures that you have made will praise you, and the people who are faithful to you will bless you.* |

ULT **All your works will thank you, Yahweh, and your faithful will bless you**
UST Yahweh, all the creatures that you have made will praise you, and the people who are faithful to you will bless you
(יוֹדֻךָ֣ יְהוָ֣ה כָּל־מַעֲשֶׂ֑יךָ וַחֲסִידֶ֥יךָ יְבָרְכוּכָֽה)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [All your works will thank you, Yahweh; indeed, your faithful will bless you]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **All your works will thank you, Yahweh**
UST Yahweh, all the creatures that you have made will praise you
(יוֹדֻךָ֣ יְהוָ֣ה כָּל־מַעֲשֶׂ֑יךָ)

David is speaking of **all your works** as if they were living things that could **thank** God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Everything you have made shows how good you are, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **and your faithful**
UST and the people who are faithful to you
(וַחֲסִידֶ֥יךָ)

David is using the adjective **faithful** 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: [your faithful people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and your faithful | and the people who are faithful to you |
| will bless you | will bless you |

# Psalms 145:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *They will tell the glory of your kingdom, and they will speak {of} your power,* | *They will tell others about how gloriously you rule as king and about how powerful you are,* |

ULT **They will tell the glory of your kingdom, and they will speak {of} your power**
UST They will tell others about how gloriously you rule as king and about how powerful you are
(כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתְךָ יֹאמֵרוּ וּגְבוּרָתְךָ יְדַבֵּרוּ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [They will tell the glory of your kingdom; yes, they will speak of your power]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **They will tell the glory of your kingdom, and they will speak {of} your power**
UST They will tell others about how gloriously you rule as king and about how powerful you are
(כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתְךָ יֹאמֵרוּ וּגְבוּרָתְךָ יְדַבֵּרוּ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **glory**, **kingdom**, and **power**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [how gloriously you rule, and they will speak of how powerful you are]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| They will tell | They will tell others |
| the glory of | about how gloriously |
| your kingdom | you rule as king |

# Psalms 145:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to make known to the sons of man his mighty acts and the glory of the splendor of his kingdom.* | *so that all people will know about your mighty deeds and about how gloriously and majestically you rule.* |

**ULT to make known to the sons of man his mighty acts and the glory of the splendor of his kingdom**

UST so that all people will know about your mighty deeds and about how gloriously and majestically you rule

(לְהוֹדִיעַ ׀ לִבְנֵי הָאָדָם גְּבוּרֹתָיו וְכִבְוֹד הֲדַר מַלְכוּתוֹ)

Here, **to make known** marks the following phrases as the goal or purpose of telling about God's kingdom and power in the previous verse. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [so that the sons of man will know his mighty acts and the glory of the splendor of his kingdom]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

**ULT to the sons of man**

UST all people

(לִבְנֵי הָאָדָם)

The psalmist is using **sons of man** as a common expression of his culture to mean "human beings." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to people everywhere]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT and the glory of the splendor of his kingdom**

UST and about how gloriously and majestically you rule

(וְכִבְוֹד הֲדַר מַלְכוּתוֹ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **glory**, **splendor**, and **kingdom**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [how gloriously and splendidly he rules]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and the glory of the splendor of**
UST gloriously and majestically
(וְכְבוֹד הֲדָרֶ֑ר)

The terms **glory** and **splendor** mean similar things. David 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 glorious splendor]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **his mighty acts and the glory of the splendor of his kingdom**
UST about your mighty deeds and about how gloriously and majestically you rule
(גְּבוּרֹתֶ֥יו וְכְבוֹד הֲדַר מַלְכוּתֽוֹ)

David has been addressing Yahweh directly in the second person, saying **your kingdom** and **your power** in the previous verse, but here he speaks of Yahweh in the third person, saying **his mighty acts** and **his kingdom**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the second person to be consistent. Alternate translation: [your mighty acts and the glory of the splendor of your kingdom]

**Support Reference:** First, Second or Third Person

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| to make known | so that … will know |
| his mighty acts | about your mighty deeds |
| and the glory of | gloriously |
| the splendor of | and majestically |
| his kingdom | and about how … you rule |

# Psalms 145:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Your kingdom {is} a kingdom of all of eternities, and your dominion {is} in every generation and generation.* | *You will never stop ruling as king; you will rule throughout every generation.* |

**ULT Your kingdom {is} a kingdom of all of eternities, and your dominion {is} in every generation and generation**
UST You will never stop ruling as king; you will rule throughout every generation
(מַלְכוּתְךָ מַלְכוּת כָּל־עֹלָמִים וּמֶמְשַׁלְתְּךָ בְּכָל־דֹּר וָדֹר)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Your kingdom is a kingdom of all of eternities; indeed, your dominion is in every generation and generation]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT generation and generation**
UST generation
(דֹּר וָדֹר)

The psalmist is repeating the word **generation** in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. 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 intensification. Alternate translation: [succeeding generation]

**Support Reference:** Reduplication

**ULT Your kingdom {is} a kingdom of all of eternities, and your dominion {is} in every generation and generation**
UST You will never stop ruling as king; you will rule throughout every generation
(מַלְכוּתְךָ מַלְכוּת כָּל־עֹלָמִים וּמֶמְשַׁלְתְּךָ בְּכָל־דֹּר וָדֹר)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **kingdom** and **dominion**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [You rule as king over everything for all of eternities, and you reign supremely over every generation and generation]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Your kingdom | You will … ruling as king |
| {is} a kingdom of | You will … ruling as king |
| of eternities | never stop |
| and your dominion | you will rule |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| generation | generation |
| and generation | generation |

# Psalms 145:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh is supporting all of the ones falling and raising up all of the ones being bowed down.* | *Yahweh sustains people who are in difficult circumstances, and he helps those who are struggling.* |

ULT **the ones being bowed down**
UST who are struggling
(הַכְּפוּפִים)

Here David is speaking as if those of God's people who are afflicted were **the ones being bowed down**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the ones experiencing hardships]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the ones being bowed down | who are struggling |

# Psalms 145:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The eyes of all wait for you, and you, you are giving their food to them in its time,* | *All creatures look to you expectantly, and you give them food when they need it.* |

ULT **The eyes of all**
UST All creatures look
(עֵינֵי־כֹל)

Here, **the eyes of all** represents all creatures looking to God. David is using one part of the body to represent the whole creature's action of waiting expectantly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [All created beings]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

ULT **and you, you are giving**
UST and you give
(וְאַתָּה נֹותֵן)

David is stating the pronoun **you** separately, even though the verb translated as **you are giving** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that it is Yahweh himself who provides food. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [you yourself are giving]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| in its time | when they need it |

# Psalms 145:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *opening your hand and satisfying every living {thing} {with respect to} desire.* | *You give generously and satisfy the desire of every living thing.* |

ULT **opening your hand**
UST You give generously
(פּוֹתֵחַ אֶת־יָדֶךָ)

David is using **opening your hand** as a common expression of the culture to mean "giving generously." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [giving generously]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **{with respect to} desire**
UST the desire of
(רָצוֹן)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **desire**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with what they desire]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

# Psalms 145:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh {is} righteous in all of his ways and faithful in all of his works.* | *Yahweh does everything rightly; indeed, he acts faithfully in all that he does.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| {is} righteous | rightly |
| and faithful | indeed, he acts faithfully |

# Psalms 145:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh {is} near to all of the ones calling on him, to all who call on him in truth.* | *Yahweh is ready to help everyone who asks him for help when they do that sincerely.* |

**ULT in truth**
**UST** sincerely
(בֶּאֱמֶת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **truth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [truthfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the ones calling on him | who asks him for help |
| call on him | they do that |

# Psalms 145:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He does the desire of the ones fearing him, and he hears their cry, and he saves them.* | *He gives those who deeply respect him what they need. He responds to them when they call for help, and he rescues them.* |

**ULT the desire of the ones fearing him**
**UST** those who deeply respect him what they need
(רְצוֹן־יְרֵאָיו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **desire**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what the ones fearing him desire]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and he hears their cry, and he saves them**
**UST** He responds to them when they call for help, and he rescues them
(וְאֶת־שַׁוְעָתָם יִשְׁמַע וְיוֹשִׁיעֵם)

The pronouns **their** and **them** refer to the ones who fear Yahweh, mentioned earlier in the verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [he hears the cry of those who fear him, and he saves those who fear him]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the ones fearing him | those who deeply respect him |
| and … their cry | when they call for help |
| and he saves them | and he rescues them |

# Psalms 145:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh is keeping all of the ones loving him, but he destroys all of the wicked.* | *Yahweh protects all those who love him, but he destroys wicked people.* |

**ULT but he destroys all of the wicked**
UST but he destroys wicked people
(וְאֵת כָּל־הָרְשָׁעִים יַשְׁמִיד)

David is drawing a contrast between how Yahweh treats those who love him and how he treats the wicked. Use a connector in your language that indicates this contrast. Alternate translation: [however, he destroys all of the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

**ULT the wicked**
UST wicked people
(הָרְשָׁעִים)

David 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: [the wicked people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| is keeping | protects |
| the ones loving him | those who love him |
| he destroys | he destroys |
| the wicked | wicked people |

# Psalms 145:21

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *My mouth will speak the praise of Yahweh, and all flesh will bless the name of his holiness forever and ever.* | *I will always say things to praise Yahweh; I want all people always to praise him because he is so holy.* |

**ULT My mouth**
**UST** I
(פִּי)

Here, **my mouth** represents David himself in the act of speaking. David is using one part of the body to represent his whole person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I myself]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT all flesh**
**UST** all people
(כָּל־בָּשָׂר)

Here, **all flesh** represents all living people and creatures. David is using one aspect of the body to represent all living beings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all living creatures]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT the name of his holiness**
**UST** him because he is so holy
(שֵׁם קָדְשׁוֹ)

David is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is or to refer to his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [him, the one who is holy,]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT forever and ever**
**UST** always … always
(לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד)

The terms **forever** and **ever** mean similar things. David 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: [for all time]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **My mouth will speak the praise of Yahweh, and all flesh will bless the name of his holiness**

UST I will … say things to praise Yahweh; I want all people … to praise him because he is so holy

(תְּהִלַּ֣ת יְהוָ֣ה יְדַבֶּר־פִּ֑י וִיבָרֵךְ כָּל־בָּשָׂר֮ שֵׁ֤ם קָדְשׁ֗וֹ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **praise** and **holiness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [My mouthwill speak words that praise Yahweh, and all flesh will bless the name of the one who is holy]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the praise of | to praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and … will bless | I want … to praise |
| his holiness | because he is so holy |
| forever | always … always |

# Psalms 146

## Psalm 146 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 146 is a psalm of praise. The psalmist begins by calling himself to worship Yahweh, and he then gives reasons others to worship him. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Call to worship (1–2)
2. Reason to worship: Yahweh is eternal and powerful (3–6)
3. Reason to worship: Yahweh helps people in need and in trouble (7–9)
4. Reason to worship: Yahweh reigns forever (10)

# Psalms 146:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hallelu Yah! Praise Yahweh, my soul!* | *Praise Yahweh! I will praise Yahweh with my whole being.* |

**ULT Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ־יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

**ULT Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

**ULT Praise Yahweh, my soul**
UST I will praise Yahweh with my whole being
(הַלְלִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה)

The psalmist is speaking to his own soul, which cannot hear him. He is doing this to express how strongly he feels about praising Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about himself. Alternate translation: [I will praise Yahweh with all of my being]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

**ULT Praise Yahweh, my soul**
UST I will praise Yahweh with my whole being
(הַלְלִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה)

The psalmist is using one part of himself, his **soul**, to mean all of himself in the act of praising. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I myself will praise Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yah | Yahweh |
| Praise | I will praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| my soul | with my whole being |

# Psalms 146:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let me praise Yahweh in my life; let me make music to my God while I yet {am}.* | *I will praise Yahweh for as long as I am alive; Yes, I will sing to praise my God for the rest of my life.* |

ULT **Let me praise Yahweh in my life; let me make music to my God while I yet {am … }**

UST I will praise Yahweh for as long as I am alive; Yes, I will sing to praise my God for the rest of my life

(אֲהַלְלָה יְהוָה בְּחַיָּי אֲזַמְּרָה לֵאלֹהַי בְּעוֹדִי)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Let me praise Yahweh my God with music for as long as I live]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Let me praise | I will praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| to my God | my God |

# Psalms 146:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Do not trust in nobles, in the son of man, in whom there is no salvation.* | *Since no human being can save you, do not rely on your leaders.* |

**ULT in the son of man**
**UST** Since … human being
(בְּבֶן־אָדָם)

The psalmist is using the phrase **the son of man** as a common expression of the culture to mean a human being. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in any human being]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT salvation**
**UST** can save you
(תְּשׁוּעָה)

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: [ability to save]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Do … trust | do … rely |
| in nobles | on your leaders |
| in the son of man | Since … human being |
| salvation | can save you |

# Psalms 146:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *His breath goes out, he returns to his ground; on that day, his thoughts perish.* | *When they die, their bodies decay and become soil again. When that happens, they can no longer carry out their plans.* |

ULT **His breath goes out, he returns to his ground**
UST When they die, their bodies decay and become soil again
(תֵּצֵא רוּחוֹ יָשֻׁב לְאַדְמָתוֹ)

The pronouns **His** and **he** refer to the mortal person described in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [That person's breath goes out, that person returns to his ground]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **His breath goes out**
UST When they die
(תֵּצֵא רוּחוֹ)

The psalmist is referring to dying in a polite way by using the phrase **His breath goes out**. Depending on what is helpful for your readers, you could use a polite way of referring to this in your language, or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [He dies]

**Support Reference:** Euphemism

ULT **he returns to his ground**
UST their bodies decay and become soil again
(יָשֻׁב לְאַדְמָתוֹ)

The psalmist is referring to the burial of a dead body in a polite way by using the phrase **he returns to his ground**. This alludes to the account in Genesis where God formed man from the ground. Depending on what is helpful for your readers, you could use a polite way of referring to this in your language, or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [his body decays and becomes dust again]

**Support Reference:** Euphemism

ULT **his thoughts perish**
UST they can no longer carry out their plans
(אָבְדוּ עֶשְׁתֹּנֹתָיו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **thoughts**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what he was planning comes to nothing]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| His breath | When they die |
| he returns | their bodies decay and become soil again |
| perish | they can no longer |

# Psalms 146:5

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *The happinesses of {the one} who {has} the God of Jacob for his help; his hope {is} in Yahweh his God,* | *Some people confidently expect Yahweh their God to help them. He is the God whom Jacob worshiped. He does help them, and they have a very good life.* |

ULT **The happinesses of**
UST and they have a very good life
(אַשְׁרֵי)

The psalmist is using a phrase that expresses a strong feeling of joy. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. If not, you could say what the psalmist was feeling. Alternate translation: [Oh, how happy is]

**Support Reference:** Exclamations

ULT **{the one} who {has} the God of Jacob for his help**
UST to help them. He is the God whom Jacob worshiped. He does help them
(שֶׁאֵל יַעֲקֹב בְּעֶזְרוֹ)

The psalmist is not using the possessive form **the God of Jacob** to indicate that Jacob possesses or controls God. Rather the psalmist is using these words to indicate that God is the one whom Jacob worshiped. Alternate translation: [the one who has the God whom Jacob worshiped for his help]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **for his help; his hope {is} in Yahweh his God**
UST Some people confidently expect Yahweh their God to help them … He does help them
(בְּעֶזְרוֹ שִׂבְרוֹ עַל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **help** and **hope**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [to help him; he confidently waits for Yahweh his God]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| {the one} who {has} the God of | He is the God |
| Jacob | whom Jacob worshiped |
| his hope | Some people confidently expect |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his God | their God |

# Psalms 146:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the one having made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that {is} in them, the one keeping faithfulness forever,* | *He is the one who created the sky and the land. He also created the oceans and all the creatures that are in them. He always does what he has promised to do.* |

ULT **the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that {is} in them**
UST the sky and the land … the oceans and all the creatures that are in them
(שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ אֶת־הַיָּם וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־בָּם)

The psalmist is referring to all of creation by naming its major components, **the heavens** and **the earth**, and then adding **the sea and all that is in them**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [everything that exists]

**Support Reference:** Merism

ULT **faithfulness**
UST what he has promised to do
(אֱמֶת)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [faithful to his promises]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the heavens | the sky |
| and the earth | and the land |
| faithfulness | what he has promised to do |
| forever | always |

# Psalms 146:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *doing justice for the oppressed, giving bread to the hungry. Yahweh is releasing the bound ones.* | *He defends people whom others oppress, and he provides food for people who are hungry. Yahweh frees people who are in prison.* |

**ULT doing justice**
**UST** He defends
(עֹשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט)

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: [judging fairly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT for the oppressed**
**UST** people whom others oppress
(לָעֲשׁוּקִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **oppressed** 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: [for those whom others oppress]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT bread**
**UST** food
(לֶחֶם)

The psalmist 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: [nourishment]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

**ULT to the hungry**
**UST** for people who are hungry
(לְרְעֵבִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **hungry** 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: [to hungry people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| justice | defends |
| bread | food |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| is releasing | frees |
| the bound ones | people who are in prison |

# Psalms 146:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh is opening the blind; Yahweh is raising up the one bowed down; Yahweh is loving the righteous.* | *Yahweh enables people who are blind to see again; Yahweh helps people who are struggling; Yahweh loves people who do what is right.* |

**ULT is opening the blind**
**UST** enables people who are blind to see again
(פֹּקֵחַ עִוְרִים)

Here, **opening** represents giving sight to. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [giving sight to the blind]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT is opening the blind**
**UST** enables people who are blind to see again
(פֹּקֵחַ עִוְרִים)

The psalmist 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: [Yahweh is opening the eyes of the blind]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT blind**
**UST** people who are blind
(עִוְרִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **blind** 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: [blind people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **is raising up the one bowed down**
UST helps people who are struggling
(זֹקֵף כְּפוּפִים)

The psalmist is speaking of those who are discouraged or oppressed as if they were people who were physically **bowed down**. If this image does not communicate well in your language, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [is lifting up those who are discouraged]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **righteous**
UST people who do what is right
(צַדִּיקִים)

The psalmist 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 adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [righteous people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the one bowed down | people who are struggling |
| is loving the | loves |
| righteous | people who do what is right |

# Psalms 146:9

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Yahweh is guarding the sojourners; he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked, he overturns.* | *Yahweh protects foreigners; he preserves the property of orphans and widows, but he makes the plans of wicked people fail.* |

ULT **but the way of the wicked, he overturns**
UST but he makes the plans of wicked people fail
(וְדֶרֶךְ רְשָׁעִים יְעַוֵּת)

The word **but** introduces a contrast between how Yahweh treats the vulnerable and how he treats the wicked. Yahweh protects the sojourners, the orphan, and the widow, **but** he overturns the way of the wicked. Use a natural way in your language to indicate this contrast. Alternate translation: [however, the way of the wicked, he overturns]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **but the way of the wicked**
UST but … the plans of wicked people
(וְדֶרֶךְ רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist is speaking of how a person lives and behaves as if it were a **way** or path that the person walks on. If this image does not communicate well in your language, you could express this as a comparison or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but the plans of the wicked]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist 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: [those who are wicked]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| is guarding | protects |
| the sojourners | foreigners |
| the wicked | wicked people |

# Psalms 146:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh reigns forever; your God, Zion, to generation and generation. Hallelu Yah!* | *Yahweh will be the king forever; yes, the God of the people of Jerusalem will always reign. Praise Yahweh!* |

**ULT your God, Zion, to generation and generation**
**UST** yes, the God of the people of Jerusalem will always reign
(אֱלֹהַיִךְ צִיּוֹן לְדֹר וָדֹר)

The psalmist is leaving out the verb that would naturally appear in this phrase. The reader can supply it from the first part of the verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could supply this verb explicitly. Alternate translation: [your God, Zion, reigns to generation and generation]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

**ULT your God, Zion**
**UST** yes, the God of the people of Jerusalem
(אֱלֹהַיִךְ צִיּוֹן)

The psalmist is speaking to the city of Zion, which cannot hear him. He is doing this to express how strongly he feels about Yahweh's eternal reign. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about Zion. Alternate translation: [the God of Zion]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

**ULT to generation and generation**
**UST** will always reign
(לְדֹר וָדֹר)

The psalmist is using the phrase **to generation and generation** as a common expression of the culture to mean "forever". If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for all time]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ־יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Yah | Yahweh |
| reigns | will be the king |
| forever | forever |
| your God | yes, the God of |
| Zion | the people of Jerusalem |
| to … and generation | will always reign |
| generation | will always reign |

# Psalms 147

## Psalm 147 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 147 is a psalm of praise. It presents alternating calls to worship and reasons to worship. These reasons include God's greatness in creating the world, the way he protects his people and provides for them, and the way he gave his people his laws. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Call to worship Yahweh (1a)
2. Reason to worship Yahweh (1b–6)
3. Call to worship Yahweh (7)
4. Reason to worship Yahweh (8–11)
5. Call to worship Yahweh (12)
6. Reason to worship Yahweh (13–20)

# Psalms 147:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hallelu Yah! For {it is} good to make music {to} our God, for praise {is} pleasant and suitable.* | *Praise Yahweh! Singing praises to our God is a good thing to do. He deserves it, and it makes us happy.* |

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **For {it is} good to make music {to} our God**
UST Singing praises to our God is a good thing to do
(כִּי־טוֹב זַמְּרָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

The psalmist uses **For** to introduce the reason for the preceding exhortation. Use a connector that is natural in your language for introducing a reason. Alternate translation: [Because it is good to make music to our God]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **praise**
UST He deserves it
(תְּהִלָּה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [praising him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{is} pleasant and suitable**
UST Singing praises … and it makes us happy
(נָּעִים נָאְוָה)

The terms **pleasant** and **suitable** mean similar things. The psalmist 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 pleasant]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yah | Yahweh |
| {it is} good | is a good thing to do |
| {to} our God | to our God |
| praise | He deserves it |
| {is} pleasant | Singing praises |

# Psalms 147:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the scattered of Israel,* | *Yahweh is rebuilding Jerusalem and bringing back the Israelites whom our enemies had scattered.* |

**ULT the scattered of Israel**
**UST** the Israelites whom our enemies had scattered
(נִדְחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The expression **the scattered of Israel** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is their enemies. Alternate translation: [the Israelites whom enemies scattered]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Jerusalem | Jerusalem |
| he gathers | and bringing back |
| the scattered of | whom our enemies had scattered |
| Israel | the Israelites |

# Psalms 147:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *healing the broken of heart and binding up their wounds;* | *He comforts people who are very sad and heals their pain.* |

**ULT healing the broken of heart and binding up their wounds**
**UST** He comforts people who are very sad and heals their pain
(הָרֹפֵא לִשְׁבוּרֵי לֵב וּמְחַבֵּשׁ לְעַצְּבוֹתָם)

The psalmist is speaking of **healing** emotional distress and **binding up their wounds** as if people's sadness were physical injuries. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [comforting those who are very sad and relieving their pain]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the broken of heart**
**UST** people who are very sad
(לִשְׁבוּרֵי לֵב)

The psalmist is using **the broken of heart** as a common expression of the culture to mean "people who have suffered emotional wounds." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [those who are deeply grieving]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and binding up | and heals |

# Psalms 147:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *counting the number of the stars, he calls names to all of them.* | *He knows how many stars there are, and he has given each one its name.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| he calls | he has given |

# Psalms 147:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Great is our Lord, and abundant of power, his understanding {is} without number.* | *Our Lord is great and very powerful; no one can measure how much he understands.* |

**ULT Great is our Lord**
**UST** Our Lord is great
(גָּדוֹל אֲדוֹנֵינוּ)

The psalmist places the adjective **Great** before the subject for emphasis. If it would be more natural in your language, you could use standard word order. Alternate translation: [Yahweh our Lord is great]

**Support Reference:** Information Structure

**ULT and abundant of power**
**UST** and very powerful
(וְרַב־כֹּחַ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **power**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [abundantly powerful]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT his understanding {is} without number**
**UST** no one can measure how much he understands
(לִתְבוּנָתוֹ אֵין מִסְפָּר)

The psalmist is using an extreme statement to emphasize how great God's understanding is. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: [greater than anyone can measure] or [beyond anyone's ability to assess]

**Support Reference:** Hyperbole

**ULT his understanding**
**UST** how much he understands
(לִתְבוּנָתוֹ)

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: [what he understands] or [how much he comprehends]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| our Lord | Our Lord |
| and abundant of power | and very powerful |
| his understanding | how much he understands |

# Psalms 147:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh is lifting up the poor, bringing down the wicked to the ground.* | *Yahweh helps humble people, but he makes wicked people fail in what they want to do.* |

ULT **the poor**
UST humble people
(עֲנָוִים)

The psalmist uses the adjective **poor** as a noun to describe a group of people. Your language may use adjectives similarly. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [those who are humble] or [people who are poor]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **bringing down the wicked to the ground**
UST but he makes wicked people fail in what they want to do
(מַשְׁפִּיל רְשָׁעִים עֲדֵי־אָרֶץ)

The psalmist is speaking of God humiliating **the wicked** as if he were physically **bringing** them **downto the ground**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [humbling the wicked] or [making the wicked fail]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people
(רְשָׁעִים)

The psalmist uses the adjective **wicked** as a noun to describe a group of people. Your language may use adjectives similarly. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [those who are wicked] or [people who do wicked things]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the wicked | wicked people |

# Psalms 147:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Sing to Yahweh with thanksgiving; make music to our God with the harp,* | *Thank Yahweh, our God, for all he has done for us as you play the harp and sing to him.* |

**ULT Sing to Yahweh with thanksgiving; make music to our God with the harp**
UST Thank Yahweh, our God, for all he has done for us as you play the harp and sing to him
(עֱנּוּ לַיהוָה בְּתוֹדָה זַמְּרוּ לֵאלֹהֵינוּ בְכִנּוֹר)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Make music to Yahweh our God with grateful singing and the harp]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT Sing to Yahweh with thanksgiving**
UST Thank Yahweh … for all he has done for us … and sing to him
(עֱנּוּ לַיהוָה בְּתוֹדָה)

The psalmist uses the imperative form here as an exhortation to worship. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this exhortation in a way that is natural for your language. Alternate translation: [Let us sing to Yahweh and give him thanks]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT with thanksgiving**
UST Thank … for all he has done for us
(בְּתוֹדָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **thanksgiving**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [giving thanks] or [thankfully]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to Yahweh | Yahweh |
| to our God | our God |
| with the harp | the harp |

# Psalms 147:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the one covering the heavens with clouds; the one preparing rain for the earth, the one making the mountains sprout with grass.* | *He makes the sky form rain clouds so that they will rain on the earth and make grass grow on the mountains.* |

(There are no notes for this verse)

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the heavens | the sky |
| for the earth | on the earth |

# Psalms 147:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He gives its food to the beast, to the sons of the raven when they call.* | *He provides food for wild animals. He even feeds young ravens when they cry out for food.* |

**ULT to the sons of the raven**
**UST** young ravens
(לִבְנֵי עֹרֵב)

The expression **the sons of the raven** is an idiom that means young ravens. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the young ravens]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT He gives its food to the beast, to the sons of the raven when they call**
**UST** He provides food for wild animals. He even feeds young ravens when they cry out for food
(נוֹתֵן לִבְהֵמָה לַחְמָהּ לִבְנֵי עֹרֵב אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאוּ)

The psalmist 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 gives its food to the beast, and he gives food to the sons of the raven when they call]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| its food | food |
| to the beast | for wild animals |
| they call | they cry out for food |

# Psalms 147:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He does not delight in the strength of a horse; he does not take pleasure {in} the legs of a man.* | *He does not value the strength of a horse or the speed of a human runner.* |

ULT **He does not delight in the strength of a horse; he does not take pleasure {in} the legs of a man**
UST He does not value the strength of a horse or the speed of a human runner
(לֹא בִגְבוּרַת הַסּוּס יֶחְפָּץ לֹא־בְשׁוֹקֵי הָאִישׁ יִרְצֶה)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [He does not value the strength of a horse or the physical ability of a person]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **in the strength of a horse**
UST the strength of a horse
(בִּגְבוּרַת הַסּוּס)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in how strong a horse is]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **{in} the legs of a man**
UST the speed of a human runner
(בְּשׁוֹקֵי הָאִישׁ)

Although the term **man** is masculine, the psalmist is using it in a generic sense to refer to any person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a phrase that makes this clear. Alternate translation: [the legs of a person]

**Support Reference:** When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **{in} the legs of a man**
UST the speed of a human runner
(בְּשׁוֹקֵי הָאִישׁ)

The psalmist is using one part of the body, **the legs**, to represent physical ability in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a person's physical ability] or [how fast a person can run]

**Support Reference:** Synecdoche

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| He does … delight | He does … value |
| he does … take pleasure | He does … value |
| in the strength of | the strength of |
| a horse | a horse |

# Psalms 147:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Yahweh takes pleasure {in} the ones fearing him, the ones hoping for his covenant faithfulness.* | *Instead, Yahweh values people who deeply respect him. He values people who confidently expect him to be faithful to his covenant promises.* |

**ULT for his covenant faithfulness**
UST him to be faithful to his covenant promises
(לְחַסְדּוֹ)

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: [for him to keep his covenant promises] or [for him to show them kindness because of his covenant]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh … He |
| takes pleasure | Instead … values … values |
| {in} the ones fearing him | people who deeply respect him |
| the ones hoping | people who confidently expect |
| for his covenant faithfulness | him to be faithful to his covenant promises |

# Psalms 147:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Extol Yahweh, Jerusalem; praise your God, Zion.* | *Praise Yahweh our God, you people of Jerusalem who live on Mount Zion!* |

**ULT Extol Yahweh, Jerusalem; praise your God, Zion**
UST Praise Yahweh our God, you people of Jerusalem who live on Mount Zion
(שַׁבְּחִי יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם אֶת־יְהוָה הַלְלִי אֱלֹהַיִךְ צִיּוֹן)

The psalmist uses the imperative form here as an exhortation to worship. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this exhortation in a way that is natural for your language. Alternate translation: [You people of Jerusalem should praise Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

**ULT Extol Yahweh, Jerusalem; praise your God, Zion**
UST Praise Yahweh our God, you people of Jerusalem who live on Mount Zion
(שַׁבְּחִי יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם אֶת־יְהוָה הַלְלִי אֱלֹהַיִךְ צִיּוֹן)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Praise Yahweh, you people of Jerusalem]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT Yahweh, Jerusalem; praise your God, Zion**
UST Praise Yahweh our God, you people of Jerusalem who live on Mount Zion
(יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם אֶת־יְהוָה הַלְלִי אֱלֹהַיִךְ צִיּוֹן)

The psalmist is speaking to the city of **Jerusalem**, also called **Zion**, as if it could hear, but he is really addressing the people of that city. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, people of Jerusalem; praise your God, people of Zion]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Extol | Praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| Jerusalem | you people of Jerusalem |
| praise | Praise |
| your God | our God |
| Zion | who live on Mount Zion |

# Psalms 147:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For he strengthens the bars of your gates; he blesses your sons in your midst.* | *He has made the defenses of your city strong, and he has blessed the people who live among you.* |

**ULT For he strengthens the bars of your gates**
UST He has made the defenses of your city strong
(כִּי־חִזַּק בְּרִיחֵי שְׁעָרֶיךָ)

The psalmist uses **For** to introduce the reason for the preceding exhortation. Use a connector that is natural in your language for introducing a reason. Alternate translation: [Because he strengthens the bars of your gates]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| For he strengthens | He has made … strong |
| your gates | your city |
| he blesses | and he has blessed |

# Psalms 147:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one putting peace {at} your borders, he satisfies you {with} the fat of wheat.* | *He keeps your borders safe, and gives you plenty of wheat to eat.* |

**ULT The one putting peace {at} your borders**
**UST** He keeps your borders safe
(הַשָּׂם־גְּבוּלֵךְ שָׁלֹום)

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: [The one making your borders safe and secure]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT {with} the fat of wheat**
**UST** plenty of wheat to eat
(חֵלֶב חִטִּים)

The psalmist is speaking of the best quality of **wheat** as if it were **the fat** part. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [with the finest wheat] or [with the best wheat]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| peace | safe |
| wheat | wheat to eat |

# Psalms 147:15

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one sending his command {to} the earth, his word runs to swiftness.* | *He gives commands about what will happen on the earth, and these things happen right away.* |

**ULT his word runs to swiftness**
**UST** and these things happen right away
(עַד־מְהֵרָה יָרוּץ דְּבָרוֹ)

The psalmist speaks of God's **word** as if it were a person who could **run**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his word goes out very quickly] or [what he commands happens immediately]

**Support Reference:** Personification

**ULT runs to swiftness**
**UST** and … right away
(עַד־מְהֵרָה יָרוּץ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **swiftness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [goes out very quickly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {to} the earth | about what will happen on the earth |

# Psalms 147:16

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one making snow like wool, he scatters frost like ashes.* | *He makes snow that covers the ground like a white wool blanket, and he scatters frost on the ground like ashes.* |

**ULT snow like wool**
UST snow that covers the ground like a white wool blanket
(שֶׁלֶג כַּצֶּמֶר)

The psalmist compares **snow** to **wool** to emphasize how the snow covers the ground in a white, soft layer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make the point of comparison explicit. Alternate translation: [snow that is white like wool]

**Support Reference:** Simile

**ULT frost like ashes**
UST frost … like ashes
(כְּפֹור כָּאֵפֶר)

The psalmist compares **frost** to **ashes** to emphasize how the frost is spread across the ground lightly and in fine particles. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make the point of comparison explicit. Alternate translation: [frost like gray ashes]

**Support Reference:** Simile

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| snow | snow |
| he scatters | and he scatters … on the ground |

# Psalms 147:17

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *The one sending his hail like crumbs, who can stand to the face of his cold?* | *He hurls down hail like small stones. When he makes it cold, no one can stand outside.* |

ULT **his hail like crumbs**
UST hail like small stones
(קִרְחֹו כְּפִתִּים)

The psalmist compares **hail** to **crumbs** to emphasize that the hailstones are small pieces. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make the point of comparison explicit. Alternate translation: [his hailstones like small crumbs]

**Support Reference:** Simile

ULT **who can stand to the face of his cold**
UST When he makes it cold, no one can stand outside
(לִפְנֵי קָרָתֹו מִי יַעֲמֹד)

The psalmist uses a rhetorical question to emphasize that no one can endure God's cold. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [no one can stand in such cold!] or [no one can endure when he makes it so cold.]

**Support Reference:** Rhetorical Question

ULT **to the face of his cold**
UST When he makes it cold
(לִפְנֵי קָרָתֹו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **cold**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in his freezing weather] or [when he makes it freeze]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to the face of his cold**
UST When he makes it cold
(לִפְנֵי קָרָתֹו)

Here, **the face of** represents the presence or force of something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when he sends his cold] or [outside in his freezing cold]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| his hail | hail |

# Psalms 147:18

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He sends his word, and he makes them melt; he makes his wind blow, and the waters flow.* | *But then he gives a command, and the snow and ice melt. He sends a warm wind, and the water flows again.* |

ULT **He sends his word, and he makes them melt**
UST But then he gives a command, and the snow and ice melt
(יְשַׁלַּח דְּבָרוֹ וְיַמְסֵם)

The psalmist is speaking of God's **word** as if it were a messenger that God could **send**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He gives a command, and he makes them melt]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **his wind**
UST a warm wind
(רוּחוֹ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe the **wind** that comes from God. If your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express the idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the wind he sends]

**Support Reference:** Possession

# Psalms 147:19

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He declared his word to Jacob, his statutes and his judgments to Israel.* | *He told the descendants of Jacob how he wanted them to live. Yes, he gave decrees and laws to the Israelites.* |

ULT **his statutes and his judgments**
UST decrees and laws
(חֻקָּיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו)

The terms **statutes** and **judgments** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [all his laws]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

ULT **He declared his word to Jacob, his statutes and his judgments to Israel**
UST He told the descendants of Jacob how he wanted them to live. Yes, he gave decrees and laws to the Israelites
(מַגִּיד דברו לְיַעֲקֹב חֻקָּיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו לְיִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist 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. A resulting parallelism is modeled in the UST. Alternate translation: [He declared his word to Jacob; indeed, he declared his statutes and judgments to Israel]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **his statutes**
UST decrees
(חֻקָּיו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **statutes**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the rules he has set]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **and his judgments**
UST and laws
(וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **judgments**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the decisions he has judged]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT to Jacob … to Israel**
**UST** the descendants of Jacob … to the Israelites
(לְיַעֲקֹב & לְיִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **Jacob** and **Israel** represent the descendants of Jacob, who was also called Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to Jacob's descendants] or [to the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| He declared | He told … Yes, he gave |
| to Jacob | the descendants of Jacob |
| his statutes | decrees |
| and his judgments | and laws |
| to Israel | to the Israelites |

# Psalms 147:20

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *He has not done this for any {other} nation, and his judgments, they do not know them. Hallelu Yah!* | *He has not done this for any other nation; they do not know his laws. Praise Yahweh!* |

**ULT Hallelu Yah**
**UST** Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּיָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

**ULT Yah**
**UST** Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| nation | nation |
| and his judgments | his laws |
| they do … know them | they do … know |
| Yah | Yahweh |

# Psalms 148

## Psalm 148 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 148 is a psalm of praise. It presents alternating calls to worship and reasons to worship. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Call to worship Yahweh from the heavens (1–4)
2. Reason to worship Yahweh from the heavens (5–6)
3. Call to worship Yahweh from the earth (7–12)
4. Reason to worship Yahweh from the earth (13–14)

# Psalms 148:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hallelu Yah! Praise Yahweh from the heavens; praise him in the heights.* | *Praise Yahweh! You who are in heaven, praise Yahweh; yes, you who are in the highest places, praise him.* |

**ULT Praise Yahweh from the heavens; praise him in the heights**
**UST** You who are in heaven, praise Yahweh; yes, you who are in the highest places, praise him
(הַֽלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם הַֽלְלוּהוּ בַּמְּרוֹמִים)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Praise Yahweh, all of you who are in the heavens above]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT Hallelu Yah**
**UST** Praise Yahweh
(הַֽלְלוּ יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

**ULT Yah**
**UST** Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name “Yahweh,” the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yah | Yahweh |
| Praise | praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the heavens | heaven |
| praise him | praise him |

# Psalms 148:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Praise him, all of his angels; praise him, all of his armies.* | *All you angels, praise him; all you heavenly armies, praise him.* |

**ULT Praise him, all of his angels; praise him, all of his armies**
UST All you angels, praise him; all you heavenly armies, praise him
(הַֽלְל֥וּהוּ כָל־מַלְאָכָ֑יו הַֽלְל֥וּהוּ כָּל־צְבָאָֽיו)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Praise him, all of his heavenly beings]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Praise him | praise him |
| his angels | you angels |

# Psalms 148:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all of the stars of light.* | *Sun and moon, praise him; all you shining stars, praise him.* |

**ULT Praise him, sun and moon**
**UST** Sun and moon, praise him
(הַֽלְל֣וּהוּ שֶׁ֭מֶשׁ וְיָרֵ֑חַ)

The psalmist is speaking to the **sun and moon** as if they could hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about all of creation praising Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about the sun and moon. Alternate translation: [Let the sun and moon praise him]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

**ULT the stars of light**
**UST** you shining stars
(כָּל־כּוֹכְבֵ֖י אֽוֹר)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **stars** that are characterized by **light**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the glowing stars]

**Support Reference:** Possession

**ULT Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all of the stars of light**
**UST** Sun and moon, praise him; all you shining stars, praise him
(הַֽלְל֣וּהוּ שֶׁ֭מֶשׁ וְיָרֵ֑חַ הַֽלְל֥וּהוּ כָּל־כּוֹכְבֵ֖י אֽוֹר)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Praise him, all you lights in the sky]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Praise him | praise him |

# Psalms 148:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Praise him, heavens of the heavens, and the waters that {are} above the heavens.* | *You highest heavens, praise him, and you waters above the sky, praise him.* |

**ULT heavens of the heavens, and the waters that {are} above the heavens**
UST You highest heavens … and you waters above the sky
(שְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר ו מֵעַל הַשָּׁמָיִם)

The psalmist is speaking to the **heavens** and the **waters** as if they could hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about all of creation praising Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about these things. Alternate translation: [for the highest heavens and the waters above the heavens should praise him]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

**ULT heavens of the heavens**
UST You highest heavens
(שְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמָיִם)

The psalmist is using **heavens of the heavens** as a common expression in the original language to mean "the highest heavens." If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the most exalted heavens]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Praise him | praise him … praise him |
| heavens of | highest |
| the heavens | You … heavens |

# Psalms 148:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let them praise the name of Yahweh, for he, he commanded, and they were created.* | *Let all of these praise Yahweh, because he created them by his own command.* |

**ULT Let them praise the name of Yahweh**
**UST** Let all of these praise Yahweh
(יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה)

The psalmist is saying what he wants all the things he has just mentioned to do. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about “let” and “may” and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [They should praise the name of Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

**ULT the name of Yahweh**
**UST** Yahweh
(אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה)

The psalmist is using the term **name** to represent who Yahweh is, referring to his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh himself]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT for he, he commanded, and they were created**
**UST** because he created them by his own command
(כִּי הוּא צִוָּה וְנִבְרָאוּ)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because he, he commanded, and they were created]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **he, he commanded**
UST he … by his own command
(הוּא צִוָּה)

The psalmist is stating the pronoun **he** separately, even though the verb translated as **commanded** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize that Yahweh alone is the one who created all things. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [he himself commanded]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and they were created**
UST created them
(וְנִבְרָאוּ)

The expression **they were created** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is Yahweh. Alternate translation: [and he caused them to exist]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let them praise | Let all of these praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| and they were created | created them |

# Psalms 148:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he established them forever and ever; he gave a decree, and it will not pass away.* | *He set them in their places permanently; {to do that,} he made a decree that will always be in effect.* |

ULT **And he established them forever and ever; he gave a decree, and it will not pass away**

UST { … He set them in their places permanently; to do that,} he made a decree that will always be in effect

(וַיַּעֲמִידֵם לָעַד לְעוֹלָם חָק־נָתַן וְלֹא יַעֲבוֹר)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [And he established them permanently by an unchanging decree]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **forever and ever**

UST permanently

(לָעַד לְעוֹלָם)

The terms **forever** and **ever** mean similar things. The psalmist 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 last permanently]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| And he established them | He set them in their places |
| forever | permanently |
| a decree | a decree |

# Psalms 148:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Praise Yahweh from the earth, sea creatures and all depths,* | *You who are on the earth, praise Yahweh! You great sea creatures and everything deep in the ocean,* |

**ULT sea creatures and all depths**
**UST** You great sea creatures and everything deep in the ocean
(תַּנִּינִים וְכָל־תְּהֹמוֹת)

The psalmist is speaking to **sea creatures** and **all depths** as if they could hear him. He is doing this here and in following verses to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about all of creation praising Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about these things. Alternate translation: [creatures of the sea and all that lives below the waters]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Praise | praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| sea creatures | You great sea creatures |

# Psalms 148:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *fire and hail, snow and vapor, wind of tempest, doing his word,* | *lightning and hail, snow and clouds, and strong winds that obey what he commands,* |

ULT **doing his word**
UST that obey what he commands
(עֹשֶׂה דְּבָרוֹ)

The psalmist is speaking of the **wind of tempest** as if it were a living thing that could obey commands. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that goes where he sends it]

**Support Reference:** Personification

ULT **doing his word**
UST that obey what he commands
(עֹשֶׂה דְּבָרוֹ)

The pronoun **his** refers to Yahweh. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [doing Yahweh's word]

**Support Reference:** Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **wind of tempest**
UST and strong winds
(רוּחַ סְעָרָה)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **wind** that is characterized by **tempest** or violence. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [violent wind]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| and hail | and hail |
| snow | snow |

# Psalms 148:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *mountains and all hills, tree of fruit and all cedars,* | *all you mountains and hills, all you fruit trees and cedar trees,* |

ULT **mountains and all hills, tree of fruit and all cedars**
UST all you mountains and hills, all you fruit trees and cedar trees
(הָהָרִים וְכָל־גְּבָעוֹת עֵץ פְּרִי וְכָל־אֲרָזִים)

Again, the psalmist is speaking inanimate objects, now to **mountains and all hills, tree of fruit and all cedars**, as if they could hear him. He is doing this to communicate to the people listening to him that he feels very strongly about all of creation praising Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words as if he were speaking directly to the people about them. Alternate translation: [let the mountains and all of the hills, the fruit trees and all the cedars praise Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** Apostrophe

ULT **tree of fruit**
UST you fruit trees … trees
(עֵץ פְּרִי)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **tree** that is characterized by bearing **fruit**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [fruit-bearing trees]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| fruit | fruit |
| cedars | and cedar |

# Psalms 148:10

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *the living {creature} and every beast, the creeper and the bird of wing,* | *all you wild animals and livestock, all you creatures that crawl on the ground and all you birds that fly in the sky,* |

**ULT the creeper and the bird of wing**
**UST** you creatures that crawl on the ground and … you birds that fly in the sky
(רֶמֶשׂ וְצִפּוֹר כָּנָף)

The psalmist is referring to all kinds of small creatures by naming two extremes, **the creeper** on the ground and **bird of wing** in the sky. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [every kind of small creature]

**Support Reference:** Merism

**ULT and the bird of wing**
**UST** and … you birds that fly in the sky
(וְצִפּוֹר כָּנָף)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe a **bird** that is characterized by having wings. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and the bird with wings]

**Support Reference:** Possession

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| the living {creature} | you wild animals |
| beast | livestock |

# Psalms 148:11

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all judges of the earth,* | *you kings of the earth and all your peoples, you rulers and all you judges,* |

ULT **kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all judges of the earth**
UST you kings of the earth and all your peoples, you rulers and all you judges
(מַלְכֵי־אֶרֶץ וְכָל־לְאֻמִּים שָׂרִים וְכָל־שֹׁפְטֵי אָרֶץ)

The psalmist is referring to all of human society by naming two major components, **kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all judges of the earth** who represent both rulers and those who are ruled. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [everyone on earth, both rulers and ordinary people]

**Support Reference:** Merism

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| kings of | you kings |
| the earth | of the earth |
| princes | you rulers |
| judges of | you judges |

# Psalms 148:12

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *young men and also young women, old men with youths.* | *you young men and young women, you old people and children,* |

> **ULT young men and also young women**
> **UST** you young men and young women
> (בַּחוּרִים וְגַם־בְּתוּלֹות)

The psalmist is referring to all young people by naming two major components, **young men** and **young women**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all the young people]

**Support Reference:** Merism

> **ULT old men with youths**
> **UST** you old people and children
> (זְקֵנִים עִם־נְעָרִים)

The psalmist is referring to people of every age by naming two extremes, **old men** and **youths**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [people of every age]

**Support Reference:** Merism

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| old men | you old people |

# Psalms 148:13

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let them praise the name of Yahweh, for his name alone is exalted; his splendor {is} over the earth and the heavens.* | *you should all praise Yahweh, because he alone is truly great. He is more glorious than everything on earth and in heaven.* |

ULT **for his name alone is exalted**
UST because he alone is truly great
(כִּי־נִשְׂגָּב שְׁמוֹ לְבַדּוֹ)

The word translated as **for** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. Alternate translation: [because his name alone is exalted]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **his name alone is exalted**
UST he alone is truly great
(נִשְׂגָּב שְׁמוֹ לְבַדּוֹ)

The expression **his name alone is exalted** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [his name alone surpasses all others]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

ULT **his splendor {is} over the earth and the heavens**
UST He is more glorious than everything on earth and in heaven
(הוֹדוֹ עַל־אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמָיִם)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract noun **splendor** with an adjective. Alternate translation: [he is splendid over the earth and the heavens]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the name of Yahweh, for his name alone is exalted**
UST Yahweh, because he alone is truly great
(אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי־נִשְׂגָּב שְׁמוֹ לְבַדּוֹ)

Here the psalmist is using the term **name** twice to represent who Yahweh is and to refer to his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Yahweh himself; for he alone is high above all]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **the earth and the heavens**
UST everything on earth and in heaven
(אֶ֣רֶץ וְשָׁמַ֑יִם)

The psalmist is referring to all of creation by naming two major components, **earth** and **heavens**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all of creation]

**Support Reference:** Merism

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let them praise | you should all praise |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| is exalted | is truly great |
| his splendor | He is more glorious |
| the earth | everything on earth |
| and the heavens | and in heaven |

# Psalms 148:14

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *And he has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all of his faithful, for the sons of Israel, a people near to him. Hallelu Yah!* | *He has made his people strong, and other nations respect them. His people are the Israelite people, who are close to him. Praise Yahweh!* |

ULT **And he has raised up a horn for his people**
UST He has made his people strong
(וַיָּרֶם קֶרֶן ׀ לְעַמּוֹ)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if Yahweh had given his people a **horn**, which is an animal's horn that represents strength and power. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [and he has given strength to his people]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **praise for all of his faithful**
UST and other nations respect them
(תְּהִלָּה לְכָל־חֲסִידָיו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [honoring his faithful people]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **his faithful**
UST them
(חֲסִידָיו)

The psalmist is using the adjective **faithful** 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: [his faithful people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **for the sons of Israel**
UST His people are the Israelite people
(לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The psalmist is using **the sons of Israel** as a common expression in the original language to mean “the people of Israel” or “the descendants of Israel.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the people of Israel]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ־יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name “Yahweh,” the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| a horn | He has made … strong |
| praise | and other nations respect |
| his faithful | them |
| Israel | Israelite |
| Yah | Yahweh |

# Psalms 149

## Psalm 149 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 149 is a psalm of praise. It first presents a call to worship and a reason for worship. It then presents a call to worship and a purpose for worship, specifically, to help fight his enemies. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Call to worship Yahweh (1–3)
2. Reason to worship Yahweh (4)
3. Call to worship Yahweh (5–6a)
4. Purpose for worshiping Yahweh (6b–9)

# Psalms 149:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hallelu Yah! Sing to Yahweh a new song, his praise in the assembly of the faithful.* | *Praise Yahweh! Sing a new song to Yahweh! Let his faithful people praise him when they gather together.* |

**ULT Hallelu Yah**
**UST** Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

**ULT Yah**
**UST** Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name Yahweh. You could use the full form of the name in your translation, as the UST does, or you could represent the shortened form in the way that is most natural in your language.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

**ULT Sing to Yahweh a new song**
**UST** Sing a new song to Yahweh
(שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חָדָשׁ)

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then 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: [Please sing to Yahweh a new song]

**Support Reference:** Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **his praise in the assembly of the faithful**
UST Let his faithful people praise him when they gather together
(תְּהִלָּתוֹ בִּקְהַל חֲסִידִים)

The psalmist 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: [sing his praise in the assembly of the faithful]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **his praise**
UST Let … praise him
(תְּהִלָּתוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **praise**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [songs praising him]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **the faithful**
UST his faithful people
(חֲסִידִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **faithful** 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: [the faithful ones]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yah | Yahweh |
| to Yahweh | to Yahweh |
| his praise | Let … praise him |
| in the assembly of | when they gather together |
| the faithful | his faithful people |

# Psalms 149:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let Israel rejoice in his Maker; let the sons of Zion be glad in their king.* | *You Israelite people, God made you. Be happy because of what he has done for you. You people of Jerusalem, rejoice because God is your king.* |

ULT **Let Israel rejoice in his Maker; let the sons of Zion be glad in their king**
UST You Israelite people, God made you. Be happy because of what he has done for you. You people of Jerusalem, rejoice because God is your king
(יִשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֹשָׂיו בְּנֵי־צִיּוֹן יָגִילוּ בְמַלְכָּם)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Let all of God's people rejoice greatly in their Maker and King]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **Let Israel rejoice in his Maker; let the sons of Zion be glad in their king**
UST You Israelite people, God made you. Be happy because of what he has done for you. You people of Jerusalem, rejoice because God is your king
(יִשְׂמַח יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֹשָׂיו בְּנֵי־צִיּוֹן יָגִילוּ בְמַלְכָּם)

The psalmist is saying what he wants Israel and the sons of Zion to do. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about "let" and "may" and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [Israel should rejoice in his Maker; the sons of Zion should be glad in their King]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **the sons of Zion**
UST You people of Jerusalem
(בְּנֵי־צִיּוֹן)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if the people of Zion were actually the **sons** of Zion. He means the people who live in Zion. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the people of Zion]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

ULT **in their king**
UST because God is your king
(בְּמַלְכָּם)

Here the psalmist is speaking of God as if he were a **king** who rules over his people. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one who rules over them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let … rejoice | Be happy because of what he has done for you |
| let … be glad | rejoice |
| Israel | You Israelite people |
| in his Maker | God made you |
| Zion | Jerusalem |
| in their king | because God is your king |

# Psalms 149:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let them praise his name in the dance; let them make music to him with the tambourine and the harp.* | *Praise Yahweh by dancing. Play tambourines and harps to honor him.* |

ULT **Let them praise his name in the dance; let them make music to him with the tambourine and the harp**

UST Praise Yahweh by dancing. Play tambourines and harps to honor him

(יְהַלְלוּ שְׁמוֹ בְמָחוֹל בְּתֹף וְכִנּוֹר יְזַמְּרוּ־לוֹ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Let them joyfully praise his name with dancing and music from tambourines and harps]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **his name**

UST Yahweh

(שְׁמוֹ)

Here, **name** represents who Yahweh is and his reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [Yahweh himself]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Let them praise | Praise |
| and the harp | and harps |

# Psalms 149:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *For Yahweh is taking pleasure in his people; he beautifies the humble with salvation.* | *Do that because Yahweh loves his people; he honors poor people by rescuing them.* |

**ULT For Yahweh is taking pleasure in his people**
UST Do that because Yahweh loves his people
(כִּֽי־רוֹצֶ֣ה יְהוָ֣ה בְּעַמּ֑וֹ)

Here, **For** introduces the reason why the psalmist has been calling on God's people to praise him and rejoice. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a word or phrase that introduces a reason. Alternate translation: [Because Yahweh is pleased with his people]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

**ULT he beautifies the humble with salvation**
UST he honors poor people by rescuing them
(יְפַאֵ֖ר עֲנָוִ֣ים בִּישׁוּעָֽה)

Here the psalmist is speaking as if Yahweh **beautifies** the humble with salvation the way one adorns people with fine clothing. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he honors the humble by saving them]

**Support Reference:** Metaphor

**ULT the humble**
UST poor people
(עֲנָוִ֣ים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **humble** 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: [humble people]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT with salvation**
UST by rescuing them
(בִּישׁוּעָֽה)

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: [by saving them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Yahweh | Yahweh |
| the humble | poor people |
| with salvation | by rescuing them |

# Psalms 149:5

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| *Let the faithful exult in glory; let them sing joyfully on their beds.* | *God's faithful people should celebrate because he has honored them. Even on their beds at night, they should praise him with joyful songs.* |

ULT **Let the faithful exult in glory; let them sing joyfully on their beds**
UST God's faithful people should celebrate because he has honored them. Even on their beds at night, they should praise him with joyful songs
(יַעֲלְזוּ חֲסִידִים בְּכָבוֹד יְרַנְּנוּ עַל־מִשְׁכְּבוֹתָם)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Let the faithful celebrate joyfully, singing even on their beds]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **the faithful**
UST God's faithful people
(חֲסִידִים)

The psalmist is using the adjective **faithful** 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: [those who are faithful]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

ULT **in glory**
UST because he has honored them
(בְּכָבוֹד)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [because God has glorified them]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Let … exult | should celebrate |
| the faithful | God's faithful people |
| in glory | because he has honored them |
| let them sing joyfully | they should praise him with joyful songs |

# Psalms 149:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *{Let} the exaltations of God {be} in their throat, and a sword of mouths in their hand,* | *They should also shout loudly to praise God when they go into battle holding swords that have two sharp edges.* |

**ULT {Let} the exaltations of God {be} in their throat**
**UST** They should also shout loudly to praise God
(רוֹמְמוֹת אֵל בִּגְרוֹנָם)

Here, **throat** represents the voice and the act of singing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the exaltations of God be on their lips]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

**ULT {Let} the exaltations of God**
**UST** They should also shout loudly to praise God
(רוֹמְמוֹת אֵל)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **exaltations**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [words exalting God]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

**ULT and a sword of mouths**
**UST** swords that have two sharp edges
(וְחֶרֶב פִּיפִיּוֹת)

The psalmist is using **a sword of mouths** as a common expression of the culture to mean a sword with two sharp edges. If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a double-edged sword]

**Support Reference:** Idiom

**ULT in their hand**
**UST** when they go into battle holding
(בְּיָדָם)

Here, **hand** represents possession or the act of holding something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [in their grasp]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| {Let} the exaltations of | to praise God |
| God | They should also shout loudly |
| and a sword of | swords that have |

# Psalms 149:7

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to execute vengeance on the nations, punishments on the peoples,* | *{They should be ready} to punish the people of other nations for the sins they have committed against God.* |

ULT **vengeance on the nations, punishments on the peoples**
UST { … They should be ready} to punish the people of other nations for the sins they have committed against God
(נָקָמָה בַּגּוֹיִם תּוֹכֵחֹת בַּל־אֻמִּים)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [deserved punishment on all the foreign nations]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **to execute vengeance on the nations**
UST {They should be ready} to punish … of other nations for the sins they have committed against God
(לַעֲשׂוֹת נָקָמָה בַּגּוֹיִם)

Here, **to execute vengeance on the nations** marks the purpose of the activities described in the previous verses. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [in order to execute vengeance on the nations]

**Support Reference:** Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **punishments on the peoples**
UST {They should be ready} to punish the people … for the sins they have committed against God
(תּוֹכֵחֹת בַּל־אֻמִּים)

The psalmist 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 execute punishments on the peoples]

**Support Reference:** Ellipsis

ULT **vengeance on the nations, punishments**
UST {They should be ready} to punish … of other nations for the sins they have committed against God
(נָקָמָה בַּגּוֹיִם תּוֹכֵחֹת)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **vengeance** and **punishments**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [to avenge on the nations, to punish the peoples]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **to execute vengeance on the nations, punishments on the peoples**
UST { … They should be ready} to punish the people of other nations for the sins they have committed against God
(לַעֲשׂוֹת נָקָמָה בַּגּוֹיִם תּוֹכֵחֹת בַּל־אֻמִּים)

The terms **nations** and **peoples** mean similar things. The psalmist 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 execute vengeance and punishment on all the foreign nations]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

**UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS**

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| vengeance | {They should be ready} to punish … for the sins they have committed against God |
| on the nations | of other nations |
| punishments | {They should be ready} to punish … for the sins they have committed against God |

# Psalms 149:8

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with shackles of iron,* | *They should bind their kings with chains and put iron shackles on their leaders.* |

**ULT to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with shackles of iron**
UST They should bind their kings with chains and put iron shackles on their leaders
(לֶאְסֹר מַלְכֵיהֶם בְּזִקִּים וְנִכְבְּדֵיהֶם בְּכַבְלֵי בַרְזֶל)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [to imprison all of their leaders in iron chains]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

**ULT their kings with chains and their nobles**
UST their kings with chains … on their leaders
(מַלְכֵיהֶם בְּזִקִּים וְנִכְבְּדֵיהֶם)

The terms **kings** and **nobles** mean similar things. The psalmist 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: [all of their leaders]

**Support Reference:** Doublet

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| to bind | They should bind |
| their kings | their kings |
| and their nobles | on their leaders |
| iron | iron |

# Psalms 149:9

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *to execute on them the judgment written. It {is} honor to all of his faithful. Hallelu Yah!* | *In that way, they will carry out the judgment that God has decreed against them. God will give his faithful people the honor {of doing that for him}. Praise Yahweh!* |

**ULT the judgment written**
**UST** the judgment that God has decreed
(מִשְׁפָּט כָּתוּב)

The expression **the judgment written** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that 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 indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: [the judgment that God wrote]

**Support Reference:** Active or Passive

**ULT his faithful**
**UST** God will give his faithful people
(חֲסִידָיו)

The psalmist is using the adjective **faithful** 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: [his faithful ones]

**Support Reference:** Nominal Adjectives

**ULT the judgment written … honor**
**UST** the judgment that God has decreed … the honor {of doing that for him}
(מִשְׁפָּט כָּתוּב הֲדָר)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **judgment** and **honor**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [to judge them as God has decreed … God will honor]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ־יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way that they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Halleluia] or [Praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name Yahweh. You could use the full form of the name in your translation, as the UST does, or you could represent the shortened form in the way that is most natural in your language.

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| the judgment | the judgment |
| honor | the honor {of doing that for him} |
| his faithful | God will give his faithful people |
| Yah | Yahweh |

# Psalms 150

## Psalm 150 Introduction

### Structure and Formatting

Psalm 150 is a psalm of praise, but instead of presenting calls to worship and reasons to worship as such psalms typically do, it presents a single call to worship. See the discussion of the types of psalms in the introduction to the book of Psalms.

1. Call to worship (1–6)

# Psalms 150:1

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Hallelu Yah! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in the expanse of his strength.* | *Praise Yahweh! Praise God in his temple here on earth, and praise him in the heavens that he created by his power!* |

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Praise Yah, all people]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Yah**
UST Yahweh
(יָהּ)

**Yah** is a shortened form of the name "Yahweh," the God of Israel. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

ULT **Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in the expanse of his strength**
UST Praise God in his temple here on earth, and praise him in the heavens that he created by his power
(הַלְלוּ־אֵל בְּקָדְשׁוֹ הַלְלוּהוּ בִּרְקִיעַ עֻזּוֹ)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Praise God in his sanctuary and in his mighty heavens]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

> ULT **in the expanse of his strength**
> UST in the heavens that he created by his power
> (בִּרְקִיעַ עֻזּוֹ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe an **expanse** that is characterized by **strength**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in his mighty expanse]

**Support Reference:** Possession

> ULT **in the expanse of his strength**
> UST in the heavens that he created by his power
> (בִּרְקִיעַ עֻזּוֹ)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **strength**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [in the expanse where he is mighty]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
|---|---|
| Yah | Yahweh |
| Praise | Praise |
| God | God |
| in his sanctuary | in his temple here on earth |
| praise him | and praise him |
| his strength | that he created by his power |

# Psalms 150:2

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to the abundance of his greatness.* | *Praise him for the mighty things he has done! Praise him because he is so very great!* |

ULT **Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to the abundance of his greatness**
UST Praise him for the mighty things he has done! Praise him because he is so very great
(הַלְלוּהוּ בִגְבוּרֹתָיו הַלְלוּהוּ כְּרֹב גֻּדְלוֹ)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Praise him for his mighty deeds; yes, praise him because he is so abundantly great]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **for his mighty deeds**
UST for the mighty things he has done
(בִגְבוּרֹתָיו)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **deeds**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [for all the mighty things he does]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **according to the abundance of his greatness**
UST because he is so very great
(כְּרֹב גֻּדְלוֹ)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **greatness** that is characterized by **abundance**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [according to how abundantly great he is]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **according to the abundance of his greatness**
UST because he is so very great
(כְּרֹב גֻּדְלוֹ)

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **abundance** and **greatness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [because he is greater than any other thing]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Praise him | Praise him |
| for his mighty deeds | for the mighty things he has done |

# Psalms 150:3

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Praise him with the blast of a shofar; praise him with the lyre and the harp.* | *Praise him by blowing horns loudly! Praise him by playing lyres and harps!* |

> ULT **a shofar**
> UST horns
> (שׁוֹפָר)

A **shofar** is a musical instrument made from a ram's horn. If your readers would not be familiar with what a **shofar** is, you could use the name of a similar thing that your readers would recognize, or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [a ram's-horn trumpet] or [a horn]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Praise him | Praise him |
| a shofar | horns |
| with the lyre | by playing lyres |
| and the harp | and harps |

# Psalms 150:4

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Praise him with the tambourine and the dance; praise him with stringed instruments and the flute.* | *Praise him by beating tambourines and by dancing! Praise him by playing stringed instruments and flutes!* |

**ULT with the tambourine**
**UST** by beating tambourines
(בְּתֹף)

A tambourine is a musical instrument, a percussion instrument with a head like a drum that can be hit. It has pieces of metal around the side edges; they make a rattling sound when the instrument is shaken. Alternate translation: [with the sound of the tambourine]

**Support Reference:** Translate Unknowns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Praise him | Praise him |
| and the flute | and flutes |

# Psalms 150:5

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Praise him with cymbals of hearing; praise him with cymbals of a shout.* | *Praise him by playing loud cymbals and cymbals that make high notes!* |

ULT **Praise him with cymbals of hearing; praise him with cymbals of a shout**
UST Praise him by playing loud cymbals and cymbals that make high notes
(הַלְלוּהוּ בְצִלְצְלֵי־שָׁמַע הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי תְרוּעָה)

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of phrases in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Praise him with all kinds of cymbals]

**Support Reference:** Parallelism

ULT **with cymbals of hearing**
UST by playing loud cymbals
(בְצִלְצְלֵי־שָׁמַע)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **cymbals** that are characterized by **hearing**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with cymbals that ring out clearly]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **with cymbals of hearing**
UST by playing loud cymbals
(בְצִלְצְלֵי־שָׁמַע)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **hearing**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with cymbals that can be clearly heard]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

ULT **with cymbals of a shout**
UST and cymbals that make high notes
(בְּצִלְצְלֵי תְרוּעָה)

The psalmist is using the possessive form to describe **cymbals** that are characterized by **a shout**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with cymbals that sound like a shout]

**Support Reference:** Possession

ULT **of a shout**
UST that make high notes
(תְּרוּעָה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **a shout**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [that ring out loudly]

**Support Reference:** Abstract Nouns

## UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Praise him | Praise him |
| of a shout | that make high notes |

# Psalms 150:6

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| *Let all of the breath praise Yah! Hallelu Yah!* | *Let everything that breathes praise Yahweh! Praise Yahweh!* |

ULT **Let all of the breath praise Yah**
UST Let everything that breathes praise Yahweh
(כֹּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תְּהַלֵּל יָהּ)

The psalmist is saying what he wants **all of the breath** to do. See the discussion in the introduction to this book about "let" and "may" and follow the decision of your team of how a speaker will express in this context what he wants someone to do. Alternate translation: [I desire that all of the breath praise Yah]

**Support Reference:** Third-Person Imperatives

ULT **all of the breath**
UST everything that breathes
(כֹּל הַנְּשָׁמָה)

Here, **all of the breath** represents all living creatures. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [all living creatures]

**Support Reference:** Metonymy

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּ־יָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** are Hebrew words, containing a plural command to praise Yahweh. You will need to decide if you will use these words in their Hebrew form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. If you use the Hebrew words, you could spell them the way they sound in your language and then put the translation in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Praise Yah, all people]

**Support Reference:** Copy or Borrow Words

ULT **Hallelu Yah**
UST Praise Yahweh
(הַלְלוּיָהּ)

The words **Hallelu Yah** mean “praise Yahweh.” The word **Yah** is a shortened form of the name Yahweh. You could use the full name if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Praise Yah, that is, Yahweh]

**Support Reference:** How to Translate Names

### UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

| ULT | UST |
| --- | --- |
| Let … praise | Let … praise |
| breath | breathes |

# unfoldingWord® Translation Academy - Psalms

**v89**

# 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.

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**.

## Psalms References:

1:2; 1:5; 2:5; 2:8; 2:11; 3:2; 3:8; 3:8; 4:1; 4:1; 4:2; 4:2; 4:5; 4:7; 4:8; 5:1; 5:4; 5:5; 5:7; 5:7; 5:7; 5:9; 5:10; 6:1; 6:4; 6:5; 6:5; 6:6; 6:9; 7:3; 7:4; 7:4; 7:8; 7:9; 7:16; 7:17; 8:1; 8:5; 9:1; 9:4; 9:6; 9:6; 9:7; 9:8; 9:9; 9:10; 9:11; 9:12; 9:13; 9:14; 9:16; 9:16; 10:1; 10:2; 10:2; 10:3; 10:6; 10:7; 10:8; 10:10; 10:14; 11:7; 12:2; 12:5; 12:8; 13:2; 13:5; 13:5; 14:7; 15:2; 15:2; 16:2; 16:3; 16:4; 16:9; 17:1; 17:1; 17:2; 17:7; 17:14; 18:1; 18:6; 18:18; 18:20; 18:24; 18:35; 18:46; 18:50; 18:50; 19:1; 19:13; 20:5; 20:6; 21:1; 21:2; 21:4; 21:5; 21:6; 21:7; 21:13; 22:1; 23:6; 24:5; 25:5; 25:5; 25:6; 25:7; 25:7; 25:7; 25:9; 25:10; 25:11; 25:13; 25:17; 25:18; 25:19; 25:21; 26:1; 26:3; 26:3; 26:4; 26:5; 26:6; 27:1; 27:5; 27:12; 27:13; 28:3; 28:7; 28:8; 29:1; 29:2; 29:2; 29:4; 29:9; 29:11; 30:4; 30:5; 30:6; 30:7; 30:8; 30:9; 30:11; 31:1; 31:5; 31:7; 31:9; 31:10; 31:10; 31:11; 31:11; 31:13; 31:16; 31:18; 31:19; 31:21; 31:22; 32:1; 32:2; 32:5; 32:5; 32:5; 32:7; 32:10; 32:11; 33:1; 33:1; 33:4; 33:5; 33:5; 33:10; 33:10; 33:11; 33:16; 33:17; 33:18; 33:22; 34:1; 34:4; 34:6; 34:9; 34:12; 34:13; 34:14; 34:15; 34:16; 34:19; 35:3; 35:8; 35:12; 35:12; 35:13; 35:14; 35:17; 35:20; 35:20; 35:23; 35:23; 35:24; 35:26; 35:26; 35:27; 35:27; 35:28; 35:28; 36:1; 36:1; 36:2; 36:3; 36:4; 36:4; 36:5; 36:5; 36:6; 36:6; 36:7; 36:8; 36:9; 36:10; 36:10; 36:11; 36:12; 37:3; 37:3; 37:6; 37:6; 37:7; 37:8; 37:11; 37:18; 37:19; 37:19; 37:19; 37:21; 37:26; 37:26; 37:27; 37:28; 37:30; 37:30; 37:37; 37:39; 37:39; 38:1; 38:1; 38:3; 38:3; 38:4; 38:5; 38:7; 38:9; 38:10; 38:12; 38:16; 38:18; 38:18; 38:20; 38:20; 38:22; 39:2; 39:2; 39:3; 39:7; 39:8; 39:8; 39:11; 39:11; 39:12; 40:1; 40:3; 40:4; 40:4; 40:5; 40:8; 40:9; 40:10; 40:10; 40:10; 40:11; 40:11; 40:12; 40:12; 40:13; 40:14; 40:14; 40:15; 40:16; 40:17; 41:1; 41:3; 41:3; 41:5; 41:6; 41:6; 41:7; 41:8; 41:12; 42:5; 42:8; 42:9; 44:1; 44:4; 44:13; 44:26; 45:4; 45:4; 45:7; 45:7; 46:8; 47:4; 48:2; 48:9; 48:10; 49:3; 50:2; 50:6; 50:12; 51:1; 51:1; 51:4; 51:6; 51:12; 51:14; 52:1; 52:2; 52:3; 52:4; 53:6; 54:5; 55:3; 55:18; 57:3; 57:10; 58:1; 58:2; 58:2; 58:3; 58:9; 58:10; 59:2; 59:3; 59:3; 59:4; 59:9; 59:10; 59:11; 59:12; 59:12; 59:12; 59:12; 59:13; 59:16; 59:16; 59:16; 59:17; 59:17; 60:6; 60:11; 60:11; 61:1; 61:5; 61:7; 62:1; 62:5; 62:7; 62:7; 62:7; 62:10; 62:10; 62:10; 62:11; 62:12; 62:12; 63:2; 63:2; 63:3; 63:7; 63:9; 63:11; 64:1; 64:1; 64:2; 64:6; 65:1; 65:2; 65:3; 65:3; 65:4; 65:4; 65:5; 65:5; 65:5; 65:6; 65:6; 65:11; 65:12; 66:2; 66:2; 66:3; 66:5; 66:7; 66:8; 66:10; 66:12; 66:18; 66:19; 66:20; 66:20; 67:2; 67:4; 68:3; 68:5; 68:9; 68:10; 68:18; 68:19; 68:20; 68:21; 68:28; 68:33; 68:34; 68:34; 68:34; 68:35; 69:1; 69:2; 69:4; 69:5; 69:6; 69:7; 69:9; 69:10; 69:13; 69:13; 69:13; 69:16; 69:16;

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# 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.

### 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.

## Psalms References:

1:3; 2:10; 8:1; 9:16; 9:18; 9:19; 10:6; 10:16; 13:4; 15:4; 15:5; 18:3; 18:3; 18:15; 18:26; 18:30; 18:46; 18:46; 18:50; 19:3; 19:6; 19:11; 20:6; 22:5; 22:6; 22:10; 22:14; 22:15; 22:30; 24:7; 25:16; 26:7; 28:6; 30:6; 31:12; 31:18; 31:21; 31:21; 32:1; 32:4; 33:6; 33:16; 33:16; 34:20; 35:4; 35:4; 35:26; 36:8; 36:12; 37:9; 37:15; 37:17; 37:22; 37:23; 37:24; 37:25; 37:28; 37:28; 37:33; 37:34; 37:36; 37:38; 37:38; 38:6; 38:8; 38:9; 39:2; 40:7; 40:14; 41:2; 41:8; 41:13; 44:22; 44:22; 45:2; 45:4; 45:9; 45:14; 45:14; 46:1; 46:5; 47:2; 47:9; 48:1; 48:3; 48:5; 49:12; 50:3; 51:5; 51:6; 51:10; 51:17; 51:17; 52:2; 55:21; 57:7; 58:5; 58:7; 58:7; 59:12; 60:5; 62:2; 62:3; 62:6; 63:11; 65:1; 65:6; 66:8; 66:20; 68:2; 68:9; 68:13; 68:19; 68:35; 69:5; 69:6; 69:14; 69:25; 69:28; 69:28; 70:2; 71:8; 72:17; 72:18; 72:19; 72:20; 73:2; 73:5; 73:10; 73:14; 73:19; 74:5; 74:21; 75:10; 76:1; 76:5; 76:6; 76:7; 76:8; 76:12; 77:19; 78:21; 78:63; 79:10; 79:10; 80:3; 80:7; 80:10; 80:16; 80:19; 82:5; 83:4; 83:10; 83:17; 87:3; 87:4; 87:5; 87:5; 87:6; 88:4; 88:5; 88:8; 88:11; 88:12; 89:2; 89:7; 89:21; 89:37; 89:52; 90:7; 90:8; 90:16; 92:7; 92:8; 92:9; 92:13; 93:1; 93:1; 93:2; 94:13; 96:4; 96:4; 96:10; 96:10; 97:11; 101:7; 102:3; 102:4; 102:13; 102:18; 102:18; 102:28; 103:6; 104:1; 104:5; 104:29; 104:30; 106:8; 106:11; 106:23; 106:30; 106:31; 106:42; 106:48; 107:2; 108:1; 108:6; 109:7; 109:13; 109:14; 109:14; 109:23; 109:23; 111:2; 111:8; 111:8; 112:2; 112:6; 113:2; 113:2; 113:3; 115:15; 118:12; 118:26; 119:5; 119:31; 119:31; 119:67; 119:89; 119:107; 119:117; 119:140; 119:141; 120:4; 122:3; 124:6; 124:7; 125:1; 126:2; 128:4; 130:4; 131:1; 135:21; 139:14; 139:15; 139:15; 139:15; 139:16; 139:16; 140:11; 141:2; 141:6; 141:7; 144:1; 144:12; 144:12; 144:14; 145:3; 147:2; 147:3; 148:5; 148:13; 149:9

# Alternative Readings

### Description

In some places in the traditional Hebrew text of the Bible as we have it today, there are words or phrases that some scribes or translators have thought to be incorrect or unacceptable in some way. Their proposals for what the text was originally can be put into three groups.

1. Corrections of the scribes

Sometimes it seems that the earlier scribe made an error while copying the text, and so a later scribe recommended a correction. In other cases, a later scribe wanted to update the spelling, grammar, or vocabulary, or he wanted to replace objectionable words with something more acceptable. In many cases, the later scribes put notes in the margin that tell people who are reading the Scriptures out loud to say something different from what is in the written text. Scribes developed this system both to preserve wording that they thought might be original and to encourage readers to speak a more acceptable or understandable word or phrase.

1. Readings from ancient translations

Sometimes there are words or phrases in the Hebrew text that do not seem to make sense or it seems that there are words missing. In these cases, we can look to ancient translations of the Hebrew that may have been made before the problem entered the Hebrew text, such as the ancient Greek and Syriac translations. It may be that these translations preserve the original reading in these places.

1. Proposals of modern scholars

Some of the words or phrases that do not seem to make sense in the Hebrew text as we have it today are equally problematic in the ancient translations. This may mean that the problem entered the Hebrew text before the ancient translation was made. In some of these cases, scholars have proposed that the scribe mistook one word for a different word that has a very similar spelling. Also, the original Hebrew text contained only the consonants of the words and the vowels were added hundreds of years later. In some cases, it seems that the later scribe added the vowels of the wrong word. In these cases, scholars have proposed that a simple correction would be to change the vowels.

### Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

In order to make the best translation possible, translators need to know what is the best source text for their translation. Wherever there may be errors or problems in the source text, they need to know what both ancient scribes and modern scholars consider to be the most likely solution to that problem that best represents what the original text said.

### Examples from the Bible

> **when** they spoke to him day after day, he did not listen to them. (Esther 3:4 text)

In the margin of the Hebrew text, a scribe has suggested a different word:

> **as** they spoke to him day after day, he did not listen to them. (Esther 3:4 margin)

In the following examples of the Hebrew text from Ruth, Naomi is speaking to Ruth about visiting Boaz at the threshing floor. In the Hebrew text, Naomi speaks as though she were doing these actions herself. This may be because the child that will be born to Ruth and Boaz will be considered to belong to Naomi (Ruth 4:16-17). But to avoid confusion, a scribe made a note in the margin to read the text as instructions to Ruth:

> **I will go down** to the threshing floor (Ruth 3:3 text)

> **go down** to the threshing floor (Ruth 3:3 margin)

> Then go and uncover his feet **and I will lie down** (Ruth 3:4 text)

> Then go and uncover his feet **and lie down** (Ruth 3:4 margin)

In the following examples, it seems that the Hebrew scribe skipped over the numbers. They can be supplied, however, from some manuscripts of the ancient Greek translation:

> Saul {was} a son of **a year** in his becoming king, and he reigned over Israel **two years**. (1 Sam 13:1 ULT)

> Saul {was} a son of **thirty years** in his becoming king, and he reigned over Israel **forty-two years**. (ancient Greek translation)

In Psalm 103:5, the word “ornaments” does not seem to make any sense. It seems that the scribe mistook it for a similar word that means “existence.” Modern scholars propose using that other word instead:

> The one satisfying your **ornaments** with good; (Psalm 103:5 ULT)

> The one satisfying your **existence** with good; (proposed alternate reading)

### Translation Strategies

• Decide which reading to follow: Discuss as a team whether you will translate the written text or translate the reading that marginal notes or modern scholars suggest. It may be best to decide this on a case-by-case basis. If a translation of the Bible already exists in your region and the readers of your translation will be familiar with it, consider using the readings that it translates.

• Use footnotes for significant differences: If the written text and the marginal or suggested text have different meanings or implications that could affect readers’ understanding of the text, provide a footnote to explain both readings.

• Consider how your translation will sound when read aloud: Even if you decide generally to translate the written text, you may wish to follow the marginal instructions and substitute

different language when the written text uses words that might not be appropriate for public reading. You can put the reading of the written text in a footnote.

• Consult church communities and leaders for difficult cases: For readings that may be controversial or theologically sensitive, discuss options with church communities and leaders as part of the translation-checking process.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(Ruth 3:4) Then go and uncover his feet and lie down^1^

^1^From the marginal reading. The Hebrew says, "…and I will lie down."

(1 Samuel 13:1) Saul {was} a son of thirty years in his becoming king, and he reigned over Israel forty-two years.^2^

^2^From the ancient Greek translation. The Hebrew says, "Saul {was} a son of a year in his becoming king, and he reigned over Israel two years."

(Psalm 103:5) The one satisfying your ornaments with good;^3^

^3^The original reading may have been, "The one satisfying your existence with good;"

### This page answers the question:

Why does the ULT have some different readings from other Bible translations?

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

• Textual Variants (How to handle differences between manuscripts)

• Create Accurate Translations (Ensuring the meaning is faithfully communicated)

• Create Church-Approved Translations (Involving church networks in the translation process)

### Next we recommend you learn about:

• Create Authoritative Translations

## Psalms References:

35:7; 35:15; 35:16; 36:1; 37:7; 42:5-6; 42:6; 49:11; 55:15; 55:19; 103:5; 108:1; 137:8; 138:2; 140:2

# 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.

### 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**.

## Psalms References:

52:1; 53:5; 55:13; 60:8; 62:5; 68:16; 68:32; 87:3; 103:22; 114:5; 114:5; 114:6; 114:6; 114:7; 116:19; 118:13; 122:2; 122:6; 135:9; 137:8; 146:1; 146:10; 147:12; 148:3; 148:4; 148:7; 148:9

# 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.

### 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.”**

## Psalms References:

97:7

# 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.

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.

## Psalms References:

2:7; 2:12; 3:4; 4:2; 4:4; 4:4; 5:3; 6:7; 7:4; 7:8; 7:11; 8:3; 9:12; 9:13; 9:18; 10:17; 10:18; 12:3; 12:4; 12:7; 12:8; 12:8; 13:1; 13:2; 13:2; 14:5; 14:5; 14:7; 15:1; 15:1; 15:1; 15:3; 15:3; 15:4; 15:4; 15:4; 15:5; 15:5; 16:2; 16:3; 16:4; 16:7; 16:8; 16:10; 17:3; 17:6; 17:7; 17:11; 17:11; 17:13; 17:15; 18:6; 18:7; 18:12; 18:29; 18:35; 18:38; 18:41; 18:43; 18:44; 18:44; 18:44; 19:2; 19:4; 19:6; 19:10; 19:13; 20:2; 20:2; 20:3; 20:4; 20:6; 20:7; 20:7; 20:8; 21:3; 21:3; 21:3; 21:4; 21:5; 21:6; 21:6; 21:13; 22:2; 22:6; 22:9; 22:9; 22:11; 22:17; 22:19; 22:24; 22:27; 22:27; 22:28; 22:29; 22:30; 22:31; 23:2; 23:5; 23:6; 24:2; 24:3; 24:4; 24:5; 24:5; 24:7; 25:3; 25:5; 25:6; 25:6; 25:7; 25:13; 25:13; 25:14; 25:18; 25:20; 25:21; 26:1; 26:4; 26:9; 26:12; 27:5; 27:6; 27:6; 27:12; 27:14; 28:2; 28:2; 28:4; 28:4; 28:5; 28:9; 29:1; 29:3; 29:6; 29:7; 29:10; 29:10; 30:3; 30:9; 30:11; 30:12; 31:3; 31:10; 31:15; 31:17; 31:24; 32:3; 32:7; 32:9; 33:9; 34:6; 34:17; 39:6; 40:1; 40:4; 41:3; 42:2; 42:3; 42:5; 44:2; 44:10; 44:10; 44:12; 44:13; 44:26; 45:1; 45:1; 45:3; 45:13; 45:13; 46:front; 46:1; 46:8; 47:5; 48:2; 48:9; 49:4; 49:8; 49:9; 49:17; 49:18; 49:19; 50:4; 50:5; 50:9; 50:9; 50:11; 50:11; 50:19; 50:21; 50:21; 51:5; 51:8; 51:15; 51:16; 51:18; 52:front; 52:front; 52:7; 52:8; 53:6; 54:3; 54:7; 55:2; 55:3; 55:6; 55:6; 55:9; 55:9; 55:13; 55:13; 55:15; 55:17; 55:19; 55:20; 56:front; 56:front; 56:5; 56:7; 56:9; 56:9; 57:front; 57:2; 57:3; 57:4; 58:10; 58:11; 59:front; 59:5; 59:6; 60:4; 60:6; 60:7; 60:9; 62:3; 63:11; 65:1; 66:6; 66:15; 68:13; 71:17; 73:4; 73:8; 73:11; 73:18; 73:19; 73:22; 73:22; 73:25; 74:3; 74:9; 75:1; 75:7; 75:8; 76:11; 76:11; 77:17; 78:14; 78:25; 82:1; 82:6; 90:16; 91:10; 91:14; 91:15; 92:11; 93:3; 93:4; 94:7; 94:7; 94:15; 94:18; 94:23; 94:23; 95:3; 96:11; 97:4; 97:9; 98:3; 98:6; 98:7; 99:1; 99:2; 99:4; 99:6; 99:8; 99:8; 99:9; 101:2; 101:6; 101:7; 101:8; 101:8; 102:7; 102:8; 102:9; 102:11; 102:12; 102:15; 102:19; 102:20; 102:28; 103:9; 103:9; 103:10; 103:14; 103:17; 103:18; 103:20; 104:6; 104:19; 104:25; 104:25; 104:30; 105:8; 105:17; 105:18; 105:31; 105:33; 105:34; 105:36; 105:37; 105:42; 106:4; 106:4; 106:5; 106:14; 106:17; 106:19; 106:19; 106:20; 106:21; 106:22; 106:23; 106:25; 106:28; 106:29; 106:30; 106:38; 106:43; 106:44; 106:45; 106:45; 107:3; 107:3; 107:4; 107:10; 107:16; 107:17; 107:17; 107:22; 107:23; 107:23; 107:24; 107:26; 107:32; 107:34; 107:37; 108:7; 108:7; 108:7; 108:10; 109:6; 109:10; 109:11; 109:12; 109:16; 109:21; 109:24; 109:26; 109:28; 109:31; 110:5; 110:6; 110:6; 110:6; 111:2; 111:5; 111:6; 111:6; 111:7; 112:4; 112:5; 112:8; 112:10; 113:2; 113:9; 114:2; 115:8; 115:14; 116:2; 116:7; 116:10; 116:11; 116:12; 116:13; 116:14; 116:15; 116:16; 118:19; 118:22; 119:122; 127:5; 127:5; 133:2; 135:5; 136:2; 138:8; 140:8; 141:5; 142:7; 144:13; 144:14

# 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.

**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 a section of background information about Jesus' age and ancestors (Luke 3:23-38). 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. A set of parentheses is also a way to mark background information. Here, “as it was assumed” gives background information to the phrase, “He was the son.” People assumed that Joseph was Jesus‘ father, although his true father was God.

> 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.”

## Psalms References:

60:front; 79:3; 90:front

# Biblical Imagery — Extended Metaphors

An **extended metaphor** is an explicit metaphor that uses multiple images and multiple ideas at the same time. This is in contrast to a **simple metaphor**, which uses only a single Image and a single Idea. The difference between an extended metaphor and a **complex metaphor** is that an extended metaphor is explicitly stated by a writer/speaker, but a complex metaphor is not.

### Explanation of an Extended Metaphor

When using a metaphor, a writer/speaker uses a physical Image in order to express an abstract Idea about some immediate Topic, with at least one point of comparison between the Topic and the Image. In an extended metaphor, the writer/speaker explicitly states the Topic, and then describes multiple images and communicates multiple ideas.

In Isaiah 5:1b-7, the prophet Isaiah uses a vineyard (the **Image**) to express God's disappointment (the **Idea**) with the nation of Israel (the **Topic**) for their unfaithfulness to God and his covenant with them as his people. Farmers care for their gardens, and a farmer would feel disappointed if his vineyard produced bad fruit. If a vineyard produced only bad fruit for a long enough time, the farmer would eventually stop caring for it. We call this an extended metaphor because the prophet describes in detail multiple images relating to a vineyard as well as multiple aspects of God's disappointment.

> 1b My well beloved had a **vineyard** on a very fertile hill. 2 He **spaded it,removed the stones**, and **planted it** with an excellent kind of vine. He **built a tower** in the middle of it, and also **built a winepress**. **He waited for it to produce grapes, but it produced wild grapes**. 3 So now, inhabitant of Jerusalem and man of Judah; judge between me and my vineyard. 4 What more could have been done for my vineyard, that I have not done for it? **When I looked for it to produce grapes, why did it produce wild grapes**? 5 Now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; I will remove the hedge; I will turn it into a pasture; I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled down. 6 I will lay it waste, and it will not be pruned nor hoed. Instead, briers and thorns will spring up. I will also command the clouds not to rain on it. 7 For **the vineyard of Yahweh of hosts is the house of Israel**, and the man of Judah his pleasant planting; **he waited for justice, but instead,**

> **there was killing**; **for righteousness, but, instead, a shout for help**.
> (Isa 5:1b-7 ULT)

### Other Examples From the Bible

In Psalm 23, the psalmist uses the physical **Image** of a shepherd to describe the way that God (the **Topic**) shows great concern and care (the **Idea**) for his people. The psalmist describes multiple aspects of what shepherds do for sheep (leads them to pasture and to water, protects them, etc.). The psalmist also describes multiple aspects of how God takes care of him (gives him life, righteousness, comfort, etc.). Shepherds give sheep what they need, take them to safe places, rescue them, guide them, and protect them. What God does for his people is like these actions.

> 1 Yahweh is my shepherd; I will lack nothing.
> 2 He **makes me** to lie down in green pastures;
> he **leads me** beside tranquil water.
> 3 He **brings back** my life;
> he **guides me** along right paths for his name's sake.
> 4 Even though I walk through a valley of darkest shadow,
> I will not fear harm since you are with me;
> your rod and your staff comfort me. (Psalm 23:1-4 ULT)

### Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- People may not realize that the images represent other things.
- People may not be familiar with the things that are used as images.
- Extended metaphors are often so profound that it would be impossible for a translator to show all of the meaning generated by the metaphor.

### Translation Principles

- Make the meaning of the extended metaphor as clear to the target audience as it was to the original audience.
- Do not make the meaning more clear to the target audience than it was to the original audience.
- When someone uses an extended metaphor, the images are an important part of what he is trying to say.
- If the target audience is not familiar with some of the images, you will need to find some way of helping them understand the images so that they can understand the whole extended metaphor.

### Translation Strategies

Consider using the same extended metaphor if your readers will understand it in the same way the original readers would have understood it. If not, here are some other strategies:

(1) If the target audience would think that the images should be understood literally, translate the metaphor as a simile by using words such as “like” or “as.” It may be enough to to do this in just the first sentence or two.
(2) If the target audience would not know the image, find a way of translating it so they can understand what the image is.
(3) If the target audience still would not understand, then state it clearly.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the target audience would think that the images should be understood literally, translate the metaphor as a simile by using words such as “like” or “as.” It may be enough to to do this in just the first sentence or two. See Psalm 23:1-2 as an example:

> Yahweh is **my shepherd**; I will lack nothing.
> He makes **me** to lie down in green pastures;
> **he leads me** beside tranquil water. (ULT)

Can be translated as:

> “Yahweh is **like** a shepherd to me, so I will lack nothing.
> **Like** a shepherd who makes his sheep lie down in green pastures and leads them by peaceful waters, Yahweh helps me to rest peacefully.”

(2) If the target audience would not know the image, find a way of translating it so they can understand what the image is.

> My well beloved had a **vineyard** on a very fertile hill.
> He **spaded** it, removed the stones, and planted it with **an excellent kind of vine**.
> He built **a tower** in the middle of it, and also built a **winepress**.

> He waited for it to produce grapes, but it only produced **wild grapes.** (Isaiah 5:1b-2 ULT)

May be translated as:

> My well beloved had a **grapevine garden** on a very fertile hill.
> He **dug up the ground** and removed the stones, and planted it with **the best grapevines**.
> He built a **watchtower** in the middle of it, and also built **a tank where he could crush the juice out of the grapes**.
> He waited for it to produce grapes, but it produced **wild grapes that were not good for making wine**.

(3) If the target audience still would not understand, then state it clearly.

> Yahweh is **my shepherd**; I will lack nothing. (Psalm 23:1 ULT)
>
> > "Yahweh **cares for me** like a shepherd that cares
> > for his sheep, so I will lack nothing."
>
> For the vineyard of Yahweh of hosts **is** the house of Israel,
> and the men of Judah his pleasant planting;
> he waited for justice, but instead, there was killing;
> for righteousness, but, instead, a shout for help. (Isaiah 5:7 ULT)

Can be translated as:

> > For the vineyard of Yahweh of hosts **represents**
> > the house of Israel,
> > and the men of Judah **are like** his pleasant
> > planting;

> he waited for justice, but instead, there was
> killing;
> for righteousness, but, instead, a cry for help.

or as:

> **So asa farmer stops**
> **caringforagrapevinegarden that produces bad**
> **fruit**,
> **Yahweh will stop protecting** Israel and Judah,
> **because they do not do what is right.**
> He waited for justice, but instead, there was
> killing;
> for righteousness, but, instead, a cry for help.

## Psalms References:

1:intro; 1:1; 1:1; 1:1; 1:1; 19:2; 23:intro; 23:2; 23:4; 77:16; 80:13; 80:15

# Blessings

### Description

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

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

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

### Examples From the Bible

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Translation Strategies

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

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

1. Add a verb if that is natural in your language.
2. Mention God as the subject of a blessing if that is natural in your language.
3. Translate the blessing in a form that is natural and clear in your language.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Psalms References:

36:11; 72:17; 72:19; 122:7; 125:5; 128:6; 129:8

# Collective Nouns

## Description

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:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.

## Psalms References:

9:6; 18:40; 22:29; 27:3; 35:8; 44:18; 44:25; 45:5; 49:8; 49:14; 55:6; 55:9; 55:15; 57:4; 72:14; 78:28; 79:2

# Connect — Background Information

### Time Relationship

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

### Background Clause

### Description

A background clause is one that describes something that is ongoing. Then, in the same sentence, another clause indicates an event that begins to happen during that time. These events are also simultaneous events, but they have the further relationship of background event and main event because the event that is already happening serves as the background for the other event, the one that is in focus. The background event simply provides the time frame or other context for the main event or events.

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Languages indicate a shift in time in different ways. You (the translator) need to understand how these shifts in time are indicated in the original languages in order to communicate them clearly in your own language. Background clauses often indicate a time that began long before the event that is in focus. Translators need to understand how both the source language and the target language communicate background events. Some English words that indicate background events are “now,” “when,” “while,” and “during.” Those words can also indicate simultaneous events. To tell the difference, ask yourself if all of the events seem to be equal in importance and started at about the same time. If so, they are probably simultaneous events. But if an event(s) is ongoing and another event(s) just started, then the ongoing event(s) is probably background to the other event(s). Some common phrases that indicate background events are “in those days” and “at that time.”

### Examples From OBS and the Bible

> **When** Solomon was old, he also worshiped their gods. (OBS Story 18 Frame 3)

Solomon began to worship foreign gods at a time when he was old. Being old is the background event. Worshiping other gods is the main event.

> And his parents went **every year** to Jerusalem to the Feast of the Passover. And when he was 12 years old, they went up according to the custom of the feast. (Luke 2:41-42 ULT)

The first event—going to Jerusalem—is ongoing and started long ago. We know this because of the words "every year." Going to Jerusalem is the background event. Then an event begins that started during the time "when he was twelve years old." So the main event is the specific time Jesus and his family traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover festival **when he was twelve years old.**

> And it came about that, **while** they were there, the days were fulfilled for her to give birth. (Luke 2:6 ULT)

Being in Bethlehem is the background event. The birth of the baby is the main event.

> And in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—**while** Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, **during** the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas—the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. (Luke 3:1-2 ULT)

This example begins with five background clauses (marked by commas), signalled as background by the words "while" and "during." Then the main event happens: "the word of God came to John."

### Translation Strategies

If the way that the Background Clauses are marked is also clear in your language, then translate the Background Clauses as they are.

(1) If the connecting word does not make it clear that what follows is a Background Clause, use a connecting word that communicates this more clearly.
(2) If your language marks Background Clauses in a different way than using connecting words (such as by using different verb forms), then use that way.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

> And in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—**while** Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, **during** the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas—the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. (Luke 3:1-2 ULT)

(1) If the connecting word does not make it clear that what follows is a background clause, use a connecting word that communicates this more clearly.

> **It happened during the time that** Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, **and during the time that** Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, **and during the time that** his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, **and during the time that** Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, **and also during the time that** Annas and Caiaphas were high priests—**that** the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

(2) If your language marks background clauses in a different way than using connecting words, such as with different verb forms, then use that way.

> Pontius Pilate **was governing** Judea, and Herod **was ruling over** Galilee, and his brother Philip **was ruling over** the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias **was ruling over** Abilene, and Annas and Caiaphas **were being** high priests—the word of God **came** to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

### Example of Differences in Time Relationship Connecting Words:

| Category | Example |
|---|---|
| Background setting | Yahweh's word was rare **in those days**; |
| Background repeated | there was no frequent prophetic vision. |
| Introduction of main event | **At that time**, **when** Eli |
| Background | **whose** eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see well, |
| Simultaneous background | was lying down in his own bed. |
| Simultaneous background | The lamp of God **had not yet** gone out, |
| Simultaneous background | **and** Samuel was lying down to sleep in the temple of Yahweh, |
| Simultaneous background | where the ark of God was. |
| Main event | **Yahweh called to Samuel**, |
| Sequential event | who said, "Here I am." (1 Sam 3:1-4 ULT) |

In the above example, the first two lines talk about a condition that was going on for a long time. This is the general, long-term background. We know this from the phrase "in those days." After the introduction of the main event ("At that time,"), there are several lines of simultaneous background. The first one is introduced by "when," and then three more follow, with the last connected by "and." The background clause introduced by "where" explains a little more about the background clause before it. Then the main event happens, followed by more events. Translators will need to think about the best way to show these relationships in their language.

## Psalms References:

68:7

# Connect — Contrary to Fact Conditions

### Conditional Relationships

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.

### Contrary-to-Fact Conditions

### Description

A Contrary-to-Fact Condition is a condition that sounds hypothetical, but the speaker is already certain that it is NOT true.

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Usually there are no special words that indicate a Contrary-to-Fact Condition. The writer assumes that the reader knows that it is NOT a true condition. For this reason it often requires knowledge of implied information to know that it is not true. If this kind of condition is difficult for translators to communicate, they may want to consider using the same strategies that they used for Rhetorical Questions or Implied Information.

### Examples From OBS and the Bible

> But **if Baal is God**, worship him! (Story 19 Frame 6 OBS)

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

Baal is not God. Elijah is not suggesting that Baal might be God, and he does not want the people to follow Baal. But Elijah used a conditional statement to show them that what they were doing was wrong. In the example above, we see two conditions that have the same construction. The first one, “If Yahweh is God,” is a Factual Condition because Elijah is

certain that it is true. The second one, “if Baal is God,” is a Contrary-to-Fact Condition because Elijah is certain that it is not true. You will need to consider if people would say both of these in the same way in your language or if they would say them in different ways.

> But his wife replied to him, “**If Yahweh had desired to kill us**, he would not have taken from our hand the whole burnt offering and the offering. He would not have shown us all these things, and at this time would he have not allowed us to hear about this.” (Judges 13:23 ULT)

Manoah’s wife thinks that the second part of her conditional statement is not true, therefore the first part is also not true. God received their burnt offering; therefore, He does not want to kill them.

> 

> “**If only we had died** by Yahweh’s hand in the land of Egypt, sitting by a pot of meat and eating bread to the full.” (Exodus 16b:3 ULT)

Of course the people speaking here did not die in Egypt, and so this is a Contrary-to-Fact condition that is used to express a wish.

> “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)

The English reader knows that these last two examples are Contrary-to-Fact conditions because of the past-tense verbs used in the first part (they are not things that might happen). The last example also has a second part that uses “would have.” These words also signal something that did not happen.

### Translation Strategies

If Contrary-to-Fact conditions are clear in your language, then use them as they are.

(1) If the condition leads the reader to think that the speaker believes something that is false, then restate the condition as something that others believe.
(2) If the condition leads the reader to think that the speaker is suggesting that the first part is true, then restate it as a statement that it is not true.
(3) If the condition is expressing something that did not happen but the speaker wanted it to happen, restate it as a wish.
(4) If the condition is expressing something that did not happen, restate it as a negative statement.
(5) Often Factual and Contrary-to-Fact conditions are used to make reasoned arguments for a change in behavior. If translators are struggling to know the best way to translate them, it could be helpful to discuss how this is done in their language community. If someone is trying to convince people to change their behavior, how do they do that? It may be possible to adapt similar strategies when translating these conditions.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the condition leads the reader to think that the speaker believes something that is false, then restate the condition as something that others believe.

> But **if Baal is God**, worship him! (Story 19 Frame 6 OBS)

> > If you believe that Baal is God, then worship him!

(2) If the condition leads the reader to think that the speaker is suggesting that the first part is true, then restate it as a statement that it is not true.

> > If Baal is not God, then you should not worship him!

But his wife replied to him, "**If Yahweh had desired to kill us**, he would not have taken from our hand the whole burnt offering and the offering. He would not have shown us all these things, and at this time would he have not allowed us to hear about this." (Judges 13:23 ULT)

> > "**Yahweh does not want to kill us**, or he would not have received the burnt offering and the offering we gave him."

(3) If the condition is expressing something that did not happen but the speaker wanted it to happen, restate it as a wish.

> "**If only we had died** by Yahweh's hand in the land of Egypt, sitting by a pot of meat and eating bread to the full." (Exodus 16b:3 ULT)
>
> > "**I wish we had died** by Yahweh's hand in the land of Egypt…"

(4) If the condition is expressing something that did not happen, restate it as a negative statement.

> "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)

> > “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! The mighty deeds which were done in you **were not done** in Tyre and Sidon. But **if they had been done there, those people would have repented** long ago in sackcloth and ashes.”

(5) Often Factual and Contrary-to-Fact Conditions are used to make reasoned arguments for a change in behavior. If translators are struggling to know the best way to translate them, it could be helpful to discuss how this is done in their language community. If someone is trying to convince people to change their behavior, how do they do that? It may be possible to adapt similar strategies when translating these conditions.

> But **if Baal is God**, worship him! (Story 19 Frame 6 OBS)

> > Is Baal the one who is truly God? Should you worship him?

> “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)

> > “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! You think that you are better than Tyre and Sidon, but you are not! **They would have repented** long ago in sackcloth and ashes at seeing the mighty deeds that you have seen! **You should be like them**!”

## Psalms References:

7:3-5; 66:18; 119:6; 119:92; 124:1

# Connect — Contrast Relationship

### Logical Relationships

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

### 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.

## Psalms References:

1:2; 9:6; 10:14; 13:5; 20:7; 22:19; 31:14; 31:22; 35:9; 35:13; 35:15; 37:20; 38:13; 39:2; 59:8; 59:16; 64:7; 66:19; 68:6; 69:10; 69:11; 69:13; 69:20; 69:21; 69:29; 70:5; 74:12;

78:17; 78:23; 78:56; 78:65; 78:68; 81:11; 82:7; 86:15; 88:13; 89:33; 89:38; 118:17; 119:95; 119:161; 120:7; 129:2; 131:2; 132:18; 138:6; 138:7; 141:8; 145:20; 146:9

# Connect — Factual Conditions

### Conditional Relationships

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

### Factual Conditions

### Description

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

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

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

### Examples From OBS and the Bible

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

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

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

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

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

### Translation Strategies

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

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

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

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

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

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

## Psalms References:

59:15

# Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

### Logical Relationships

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

### Goal (or Purpose) Relationship

### Description

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

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

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

### Examples From OBS and the Bible

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Translation Strategies

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

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

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

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

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

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

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

> “… if you want **to enter into life**, keep the commandments.” (Matthew 19:17bULT)
>
> > “… keep the commandments if you want **to enter into life**.” or: “… keep the commandments **so that you can enter into life**.”

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

(1) and (2)

> But when the vine growers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him **and take over his inheritance**.’

> So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. (Matt 21:38-39 ULT)

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

## Psalms References:

8:2; 13:3; 13:4; 30:12; 37:14; 38:16; 39:13; 41:10; 50:22; 59:11; 59:13; 59:13; 61:8; 67:2; 68:18; 68:23; 71:18; 73:28; 78:6; 78:71; 79:9; 79:9; 80:3; 80:7; 80:19; 83:16; 85:9; 86:11; 86:17; 91:12; 94:13; 102:20; 103:18; 104:14; 106:8; 106:9; 106:47; 107:25; 107:38; 107:38; 109:27; 118:13; 119:4; 119:11; 119:27; 119:45; 119:106; 119:115; 119:117; 119:148; 122:4; 122:8; 122:9; 125:3; 128:6; 130:4; 142:7; 144:5; 144:12; 145:12; 149:7

# Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

### Conditional Relationships

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;

## Psalms References:

28:1; 37:24; 49:20; 73:15; 81:8; 89:30; 89:32; 89:35; 124:3; 127:1; 127:1; 130:3; 137:5; 137:6; 139:8; 139:9

# Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

### Logical Relationships

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

### 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.

## Psalms References:

1:6; 3:5; 3:6; 4:8; 7:6; 8:2; 9:3-4; 9:15-16; 12:8; 13:6; 16:8-9; 17:4; 17:6; 18:7; 18:9; 18:15; 18:17; 18:19; 23:4; 24:2; 25:8; 25:15; 25:16; 27:11; 27:12; 28:6; 30:1; 30:4-5; 31:17; 31:21; 31:22; 32:3; 35:14; 35:20; 35:28; 36:2; 37:2; 37:9; 39:9; 41:4; 43:2; 44:3; 44:25; 44:26; 47:2; 47:9; 48:4; 48:5; 48:14; 50:8; 50:10; 50:12; 50:21; 52:9; 52:9; 54:6; 55:15; 56:1; 56:2; 56:9; 56:9; 61:3; 61:5; 63:2; 63:3; 63:4; 63:7; 67:4; 68:29; 69:7; 69:9; 69:17; 69:18; 69:26; 69:33; 69:35; 71:3; 71:5; 71:10; 71:11; 71:15; 71:24; 72:12; 73:3; 73:6; 73:10; 74:20; 78:18; 78:22; 78:59; 78:60; 79:7; 79:8; 80:12; 81:4; 81:12; 82:8; 83:2; 84:10; 84:11; 85:8; 86:1; 86:2; 86:3; 86:4; 86:5; 86:7; 86:10; 86:13; 86:17; 88:3; 89:2; 94:14; 96:4; 100:5; 102:3; 104:20; 104:22; 104:28; 104:29; 104:29; 104:30; 104:32; 104:32; 105:29; 105:42; 107:16; 107:39; 109:24; 110:7; 112:6; 119:22; 119:33; 119:34; 119:39; 119:42; 119:53; 119:62; 119:74; 119:90; 119:93; 119:98; 119:99; 119:100; 119:104; 119:119; 119:120; 119:126; 119:127; 119:128; 119:131; 119:153; 119:154; 119:155; 119:168; 119:173; 122:5; 123:3; 130:7; 132:14; 135:14; 139:4; 139:13; 141:5; 142:6; 142:6; 142:7; 143:2; 143:3; 143:7; 143:10; 143:12; 147:1; 147:13; 148:5; 148:13; 149:4

# Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

### Time Relationships

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

### 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.

## Psalms References:

78:34; 80:8; 80:9; 119:59; 119:67

# Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

### Time Relationships

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

### Simultaneous Clause

### Description

A simultaneous clause is a time relationship that connects two or more events that occur at the same time.

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Languages indicate in many different ways that events occur simultaneously. These ways may vary based on whether or not something is causing the events to occur simultaneously. Connecting words that may indicate simultaneous events are words such as “while,” “as,” and “during.” Often the Bible does not state a relationship between the events but simply says they occurred at the same time. It is important that you (the translator) know when a time relationship is implied and when it is not implied so that you can communicate it clearly. A simultaneous clause communicates that events happened at the same time but it does not indicate that one event caused the other. That would be a reason-and-result relationship.

### Examples From OBS and the Bible

> Joseph served his master well, **and** God blessed Joseph. (OBS Story 8 Frame 4)

Two events happened while Joseph was a slave to a wealthy government official: Joseph served well, and God blessed Joseph. There is no indication of a reason-and-result (cause and effect) relationship between the two, or that the first event happened, and then the second event happened.

> But in truth I say to you that there were many widows in Israel **during** the days of Elijah. (Luke 4:25b ULT)

The connecting word "**during**" tells us clearly that two things happened at the same time, but one event did not cause the other.

> And the people were waiting for Zechariah, **and** they were wondering at his delaying in the temple. (Luke 1:21 ULT)

The people were both waiting and wondering at the same time. The general connector "**and**" indicates this.

> **While** they were looking intensely into heaven **as** he was going up, suddenly, two men stood by them in white clothing. (Acts 1:10 ULT)

Three events happened at the same time — the disciples looking, Jesus going up, and two men standing. The connector words "**while**" and "**as**" tell us this.

### Translation Strategies

If the way that the simultaneous clauses are marked also is clear in your language, then translate the simultaneous clauses as they are.

(1) If the connecting word does not make it clear that the simultaneous clauses are happening at the same time, use a connecting word that communicates this more clearly.
(2) If it is not clear which clause the simultaneous clause is connected to, and that they are happening at the same time, mark all of the clauses with a connecting word.
(3) If your language marks events as simultaneous in a different way than using connecting words, then use that way.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

Below, each Bible verse will be restated in three different ways, according to the translation strategies in the list above. Each restatement will have the same number as the translation strategy that it is using.

> And the people were waiting for Zechariah, **and** they were wondering at his delaying in the temple. (Luke 1:21 ULT)

(1) Now **while** the people were waiting for Zechariah, they were wondering at his delaying in the temple.

(2) Now **while** the people were waiting for Zechariah, they were **also** wondering at his delaying in the temple.

(3) Now the people were waiting for Zechariah, wondering at his delaying in the temple.

> **While** they were looking intently into heaven **as** he was going up, suddenly, two men stood by them in white clothing. (Acts 1:10 ULT)

(1) And **during the time** they were looking intently into heaven **while** he was going up, suddenly, two men stood by them in white clothing.

(2) And **while** they were looking intently into heaven **as** he was going up, suddenly, **at that same time** two men stood by them in white clothing.

(3) They were looking intently into heaven; he was going up **when** they saw two men standing by them in white clothing.

## Psalms References:

61:2; 63:6; 68:14; 71:9; 89:4; 119:7

# Connecting Words and Phrases

### Description

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.

## Psalms References:

1:4; 1:5; 9:17; 18:21; 18:22; 39:7; 42:5; 44:3; 44:6; 45:2; 49:10; 49:15; 51:3; 51:16; 54:3; 54:7; 55:3; 55:9; 55:12; 56:13; 57:1; 57:10; 72:11; 73:3; 74:6; 74:16; 74:18; 74:22; 80:18; 83:5; 83:15; 88:10; 90:4; 92:15; 94:15; 96:5; 97:9; 102:4; 102:10; 102:14; 102:16; 102:19; 103:11; 103:14; 103:16; 106:33; 108:12; 109:25; 113:8; 115:1; 115:3; 116:5; 116:8; 116:16; 119:83; 119:96; 125:3; 132:13; 135:5

# Copy or Borrow Words

### Description

Sometimes the Bible includes things that are not part of your culture and for which your language may not have a word. The Bible also includes people and places for which you may not have names.

When that happens you can “borrow” the word from the Bible in a familiar language and use it in your translation in your own language. This means that you basically copy it from the other language. This page tells how to “borrow” words. (There are also other ways to translate words for things that are not in your language. See Translate Unknowns.)

### Examples From the Bible

> Seeing one fig tree along the roadside, he went to it. (Matthew 21:19a ULT)

If there are no fig trees where your language is spoken, there might not be a name for this kind of tree in your language.

> Above him were the **seraphim**; each one had six wings; with two each covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. (Isaiah 6:2 ULT)

Your language might not have a name for this kind of creature.

> The declaration of the word of Yahweh to Israel by the hand of **Malachi**. (Malachi 1:1 ULT)

Malachi might not be a name that people who speak your language use.

### Translation Strategies

There are several things to be aware of when borrowing words from another language.

- Different languages use different scripts, such as the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Cyrillic, Devanagari, and Korean scripts. These scripts use different shapes to represent the letters in their alphabets.
- Languages that use the same script might pronounce the letters in that script differently. For example, when speaking German, people pronounce the letter “j” the same way that people pronounce the letter “y” when speaking English.
- Languages do not all have the same sounds or combinations of sounds. For example, many languages do not have the soft “th” sound in the English word “think,” and some languages cannot start a word with a combination of sounds like “st” as in “stop.”

There are several ways to borrow a word.

(1) If your language uses a different script from the language you are translating from, you can simply substitute each letter shape with the corresponding letter shape of the script of your language.
(2) You can spell the word as the Other Language spells it, and pronounce it the way your language normally pronounces those letters.
(3) You can pronounce the word similarly to the way the Other Language does, and adjust the spelling to fit the rules of your language.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If your language uses a different script from the language you are translating from, you can simply substitute each letter shape with the corresponding letter shape of the script of your language.

> צְפַנְיָה — A man’s name in Hebrew letters.
>
> > “Zephaniah” — The same name in Roman letters

(2) You can spell the word as the Other Language spells it, and pronounce it the way your language normally pronounces those letters.

> Zephaniah — This is a man's name.
>
> > "Zephaniah" — The name as it is spelled in English, but you can pronounce it according to the rules of your language.

(3) You can pronounce the word similarly to the way the Other Language does, and adjust the spelling to fit the rules of your language.

> Zephaniah — If your language does not have the "z," you could use "s." If your writing system does not use "ph" you could use "f." Depending on how you pronounce the "i" you could spell it with "i" or "ai" or "ay."
>
> > "Sefania"
> >
> > "Sefanaia"
> >
> > "Sefanaya"

## Psalms References:

3:2; 16:1; 32:1; 42:front; 44:front; 44:8; 45:front; 46:3; 47:4; 47:7; 48:8; 49:13; 50:6; 52:front; 52:3; 53:front; 54:front; 54:3; 55:front; 55:7; 56:front; 57:front; 57:3; 58:front; 59:front; 59:5; 59:13; 60:4; 62:4; 62:8; 74:1; 88:front; 89:front; 104:35; 105:45; 106:1; 106:48; 111:1; 112:1; 113:1; 113:9; 115:18; 116:19; 117:2; 135:1; 135:3; 135:21; 142:front; 146:1; 146:10; 147:1; 147:20; 148:1; 148:14; 149:1; 149:9; 150:1; 150:6

# 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!**’

### 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.

## Psalms References:

35:25; 35:27; 79:10; 89:3; 89:19; 89:26; 139:11

# Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

## Description

In some languages, phrases that modify a noun can be used with the noun for two different purposes. They can either (1) distinguish the noun from other similar items, or (2) they can give more information about the noun. That information could be new to the reader, or a reminder about something the reader might already know. Other languages use modifying phrases with a noun only for distinguishing the noun from other similar things. When people who speak these languages hear a modifying phrase along with a noun, they assume that its function is to distinguish one item from another similar item.

When the phrase that modifies a noun is a relative clause (a phrase that starts with a word such as “who” or“which”), some languages use a comma to mark the difference between (1) making a distinction between similar items and (2) giving more information about an item. Without the comma, the sentence below communicates that the added phrase is making a distinction:

- Mary gave some of the food to **her sister who was very thankful**.
    - If her sister was usually thankful, the phrase “who was thankful” could distinguish this sister of Mary’s from another sister who was not usually thankful.

With the comma, the phrase is giving more information:

- Mary gave some of the food to **her sister, who was very thankful**.
    - This same phrase can be used to give us more information about Mary’s sister. It tells us about how Mary’s sister responded when Mary gave her the food. In this case it does not distinguish one sister from another sister.

## Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Many source languages of the Bible use phrases that modify a noun both for distinguishing the noun from another similar item and also for giving more information about the noun. You (the translator) must be careful to understand which meaning the author intended in each case.
- Some languages use phrases that modify a noun only for distinguishing the noun from another similar item. When translating a phrase that is used for giving more information, translators who speak these languages will need to separate the phrase from the noun. Otherwise, people who read it or hear it will think that the phrase is meant to distinguish the noun from other similar items.

### Examples From the Bible

#### Examples of words and phrases that are used to distinguish one item from other possible items:

(These usually do not cause any problem in translation.)

> The curtain is to separate **the holy place** from **the most holy place**. (Exodus 26:33b ULT)

The words “holy” and “most holy” distinguish two different places from each other and from any other place.

> A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to **the woman who bore him**. (Proverbs 17:25 ULT)

The phrase “who bore him” distinguishes which woman the son is bitterness to. He is not bitterness to all women, but to his mother.

#### Examples of words and phrases that are used to give added information or a reminder about an item:

(These are a translation issue for languages that do not use these.)

> … for **your righteous judgments** are good. (Psalm 119:39b ULT)

The word “righteous” simply reminds us that God’s judgments are righteous. It does not distinguish his righteous judgments from his unrighteous judgments, because all of his judgments are righteous.

> You must surely open your hand to your brother, **to your needy and to your poor** in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 ULT)

The phrases “to your needy and to your poor” give further information about “your brother.” They do not refer to a separate group of people.

> How can Sarah, **who is 90 years old**, bear a son? (Genesis 17:17b ULT)

The phrase “who is 90 years old” is a reminder of Sarah’s age. It tells why Abraham was asking the question. He did not expect that a woman who was that old could bear a child. He was not distinguishing one woman named Sarah from another woman named Sarah who was a different age.

> I will wipe away mankind **whom I have created** from the surface of the earth. (Genesis 6:7 ULT)

The phrase “whom I have created” is a reminder of the relationship between God and mankind. It is the reason God had the right to wipe away mankind. There is not another mankind that God did not create.

> I hate those who serve **worthless** idols (Psalm 31:6 ULT)

By saying “worthless idols,” David was commenting about all idols and giving his reason for hating those who serve them. He was not distinguishing worthless idols from valuable idols.

### Translation Strategies

If readers would understand the purpose of a phrase with a noun, then consider keeping the phrase and the noun together. For languages that use words or phrases with a noun only to distinguish one item from another, here are some strategies for translating phrases that are used to inform or remind.

(1) Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose. (2) Use one of your language’s ways for expressing that this is just added information. It may be by adding a small word, or by changing the way the voice sounds. Sometimes changes in the voice can be shown with punctuation marks, such as parentheses or commas.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose.

> I hate those who serve **worthless** idols (Psalm 31:6 ULT)

> > **Becauseidols are worthless**, I hate those who serve them.
>
> … for your **righteous** judgments are good. (Psalm 119:39b ULT)
>
> > … for your judgments are good **because they are righteous**.
>
> Can Sarah, **who is 90 years old**, bear a son? (Genesis 17:17b ULT)
>
> > Can Sarah bear a son **even whenshe is 90 years old**?
>
> > You must surely open your hand to your brother, **to your needy and to your poor** in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 ULT)

> > You must surely open your hand to any of **your needy and poor brothers** in your land.

(2) Use one of your language's ways for expressing that this is just added information.

> You are my Son, **whom I love**. I am pleased with you. (Luke 3:22 ULT)
>
> > You are my Son. **I love you** and I am pleased with you.

> > **Receiving my love**, you are my Son. I am pleased with you.

> You must surely open your hand to your brother, **to your needy and to your poor** in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 ULT)

> > You must surely open your hand to your brother **who is needy and poor** in your land.

## Psalms References:

11:4; 22:12; 69:31; 78:11

# 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.

### Description

Negative words are words that have in them the meaning "not." Examples in English are "no," "not," "none," "no one," "nothing," "nowhere," "never," "nor," "neither," and "without." Also, some words have prefixes or suffixes that mean "not," such as the bolded parts of these words: "**un**happy," "**im**possible," and "use**less**." Some other kinds of words also have a negative meaning, such as "lack" or "reject," or even "fight" or "evil."

A double negative occurs when a clause has two words that each have a negative meaning.

> We did this **not** because we have **no** authority … (2 Thessalonians 3:9a ULT)
>
> And this was **not** done **without** an oath! (Hebrews 7:20a ULT)
>
> Be sure of this—the wicked person will **not** go **un**punished. (Proverbs 11:21a ULT)

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Double negatives mean very different things in different languages.

- In some languages, such as English, a second negative in a clause cancels the first one, creating a positive sentence. So, "He is not unintelligent" means "He is intelligent."
- In some languages, such as French and Spanish, two negative words in a clause do not cancel each other to become a positive. The Spanish sentence, "No vi a nadie," literally says "I did not see no one." It has both the word 'no' next to the verb and 'nadie,' which means "no one." The two negatives are seen as in agreement with each other, and the sentence means, "I did not see anyone."
- In some languages, a double negative creates a stronger negative statement.
- In some languages, a double negative creates a positive sentence, but it is a weak statement. So, "He is not unintelligent" means, "He is somewhat intelligent."
- In some languages, including the languages of the Bible, a double negative can produce a stronger positive meaning than a simple positive statement. So, "He is not

unintelligent" can mean "He is very intelligent." In this case, the double negative is actually the figure of speech called litotes.

Biblical Greek can do all of the above. So to translate sentences with double negatives accurately and clearly in your language, you need to know what each double negative means in the Bible and how to express the same idea in your language.

### Examples From the Bible

The Greek of John 15:5 says:

> χωρὶς ἐμοῦ **οὐ** δύνασθε ποιεῖν **οὐδέν**
>
> Without me **not** you can do **nothing**

We cannot reproduce this double negative in the English ULT because in English, a second negative in a clause cancels the first one. In English, and perhaps in your language, we need to choose only one of the negatives and say either:

Without me, you can do **nothing**.
or:
Without me, you **cannot** do anything.

> … in order **not** to be **unfruitful**. (Titus 3:14b ULT)

This means "in order to be fruitful."

> A prophet is **not without** honor (Mark 6:4 ULT)

This means "a prophet is honored."

> I do **not** want you to be **ignorant**. (1 Corinthians 12:1)

This means "I want you to be knowledgeable."

### Translation Strategies

If the way that the double negative is used in the Bible is natural and has the same meaning as in your language, consider using it in the same way. Otherwise, you could consider these strategies:

(1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.
(2) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives.
(3) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a stronger negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives and add a strengthening word.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.

> For we do **not** have a high priest who **cannot** feel sympathy for our weaknesses. (Hebrews 4:15a ULT)
>
> > "For we have a high priest who can feel sympathy for our weaknesses."

> … in order **not** to be **unfruitful**. (Titus 3:14b ULT)
>
> > "… so that they may be fruitful."

(2) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives.

> χωρὶς ἐμοῦ **οὐ** δύνασθε ποιεῖν **οὐδέν**
>
> Without me **not** you can do **nothing** (John 15:5)

> > Without me, you can do **nothing**.
> >
> > or:
> > Without me, you **cannot** do anything.

(3) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a stronger negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives and add a strengthening word.

> …ἰῶτα ἓν ἢ μία κεραία **οὐ μὴ** παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου (Matthew 5:18)
>
> …iota one or one serif **not not** may pass away from the law

> > …**not even** one iota or one serif may pass away from the law
> >
> > or:
> > …**certainly no** iota or serif may pass away from the law

## Psalms References:

9:12; 15:5; 16:8; 25:3; 34:9; 34:10; 38:9; 39:12; 50:3; 66:20; 69:33; 92:15; 102:17; 103:2; 105:28; 119:16; 119:61; 119:83; 119:93; 119:109; 119:141; 119:176

# Doublet

### Description

We are using the word “doublet” to refer to two words or phrases that are used together and either mean the same thing or mean very close to the same thing. Often they are joined with the word “and.” Unlike Hendiadys, in which one of the words modifies the other, in a doublet the two words or phrases are equal and are used to emphasize or intensify the one idea that is expressed by the two words or phrases.

A very similar issue is the repetition of the same word or phrase for emphasis, usually with no other words between them. Because these figures of speech are so similar and have the same effect, we will treat them here together.

### 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!"

## Psalms References:

8:5; 9:5; 10:15; 12:2; 18:7; 18:7; 21:5; 22:8; 24:8; 25:5; 25:21; 27:2; 27:9; 27:14; 31:3; 31:7; 31:15; 31:18; 32:8; 33:20; 34:14; 35:3; 35:4; 35:9; 35:23; 35:23; 35:26; 35:26; 35:27; 36:3; 36:3; 37:8; 37:14; 40:5; 40:14; 40:16; 40:17; 40:17; 42:7; 44:3; 45:15; 51:8; 51:17; 55:8; 55:9; 57:7; 63:1; 63:2; 63:5; 64:2; 64:6; 64:9; 65:3; 65:4; 65:6; 65:7; 65:13; 68:12; 68:19; 68:35; 69:18; 69:22; 70:4; 70:5; 70:5; 71:2; 71:13; 72:14; 73:19; 76:4; 77:18; 78:3; 78:8; 78:49; 78:56; 79:4; 82:5; 83:1; 84:2; 86:1; 86:15; 89:38; 90:2; 90:6; 90:14; 91:2; 93:1; 94:6; 95:9; 96:13; 101:5; 104:1; 104:23; 104:25; 106:3; 106:6; 107:10; 107:14; 109:22; 111:8; 112:3; 112:9; 115:14; 118:11; 118:24; 119:22; 119:44; 119:66; 119:114; 119:143; 119:157; 119:163; 131:2; 132:12; 133:1; 135:9; 136:12; 138:2; 141:7; 144:2; 144:7; 145:1; 145:2; 145:5; 145:12; 145:21; 147:1; 147:19; 148:6; 149:7; 149:8

# Ellipsis

## Description

An ellipsis[^1] occurs when a speaker or writer leaves out one or more words that normally should be in the sentence. The speaker or writer does this because he knows that the hearer or reader will understand the meaning of the sentence and supply the words in his mind when he hears or reads the words that are there. For example:

> So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, **nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous**. (Psalm 1:5 ULT)

There is ellipsis in the second part because “nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous” is not a complete sentence. The speaker assumes that the hearer will understand what it is that sinners will not do in the assembly of the righteous by filling in the action from the previous clause. With the action filled in, the complete sentence would read:

> > So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor **will** sinners **stand** in the assembly of the righteous.

[^1]: English has a punctuation symbol which is also called an ellipsis. It is a series of three dots (…) used to indicate an intentional omission of a word, phrase, sentence or more from text without altering its original meaning. This translationAcademy article is not about the punctuation mark, but about the concept of omission of words that normally should be in the sentence.

## Two Types of Ellipsis

1. 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.

2. An Absolute Ellipsis happens when the omitted word or words are not in the context, but the phrases are common enough in the language that the reader is expected to supply what is missing from this common usage or from the nature of the situation.

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Readers who see incomplete sentences or phrases may not know that there is information missing that the writer expects them to fill in. Or readers may understand that there is information missing, but they may not know what information is missing because they do not know the original biblical language, culture, or situation as the original readers did. In this case, they may fill in the wrong information. Or readers may misunderstand the ellipsis if they do not use ellipsis in the same way in their language.

### Examples From the Bible

#### Relative Ellipsis

> He makes Lebanon skip like a calf **and Sirion like a young ox**. (Psalm 29:6 ULT)

The writer wants his words to be few and to make good poetry. The full sentence with the information filled in would be:

> He makes Lebanon skip like a calf and **he makes**
> Sirion **skip** like a young ox.
>
> Watch carefully, therefore, how you walk—**not as unwise but as wise**. (Ephesians 5:15b ULT)

The information that the reader must understand in the second parts of these sentences can be filled in from the first parts:

> > Watch carefully, therefore, how you walk—**walk** not as unwise but **walk** as wise,

### Absolute Ellipsis

> Then when he had come near, he asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And so he said, “Lord, **that I might recover my sight**.” (Luke 18:40b-41 ULT)

It seems that the man answered in an incomplete sentence because he wanted to be polite and not directly ask Jesus for healing. He knew that Jesus would understand that the only way he could receive his sight would be for Jesus to heal him. The complete sentence would be:

> > “Lord, **I want you to heal me so** that I might receive my sight.”
>
> To Titus, a true son in our common faith. Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. (Titus 1:4 ULT)

The writer assumes that the reader will recognize this common form of a blessing or wish, so he does not need to include the full sentence, which would be:

> > To Titus, a true son in our common faith. **May you receive** grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

### Translation Strategies

If ellipsis would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

(1) Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

> So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor **sinners in the assembly** of the righteous. (Psalm 1:5 ULT)
>
> > So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, and **sinners will not stand in the assembly** of the righteous.
>
> Then when he had come near, he asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And so he said, “Lord, **that I might recover my sight**.” (Luke 18:40b-41 ULT)
>
> > Then when the man was near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, **I want you to heal me** that I might receive my sight.”

> He makes Lebanon skip like a calf **and Sirion like a young ox**. (Psalm 29:6 ULT)
>
> > He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and **he makes** Sirion **skip** like a young ox.

## Psalms References:

1:5; 10:4; 10:9; 10:11; 10:13; 10:18; 11:4; 11:6; 12:3; 12:4; 12:6; 13:2; 13:3; 13:4; 14:1; 14:3; 15:2; 16:4; 17:3; 17:3; 17:7; 17:12; 17:14; 18:13; 18:14; 18:16; 18:21; 18:33; 18:40; 18:41; 19:12; 20:7; 20:9; 21:9; 21:11; 21:12; 22:2; 22:4; 22:16; 22:20; 22:26; 22:30; 27:8; 27:13; 28:3; 29:1; 29:3; 29:7; 30:7; 31:9; 31:11; 31:13; 32:9; 33:2; 33:6; 33:11; 34:13; 35:10; 35:14; 35:17; 36:3; 36:5; 36:6; 37:10; 39:2; 39:4; 40:3; 40:12; 44:2; 44:3; 44:13; 44:24; 45:5; 45:12; 48:6; 49:3; 49:10; 50:7; 50:9; 50:10; 52:1; 52:3; 53:1; 53:6; 56:13; 57:10; 58:4; 58:7; 58:8; 59:3; 61:3; 64:4; 65:10; 66:20; 67:2; 68:4; 68:8; 68:13; 68:21; 68:22; 68:23; 68:25; 68:25; 68:26; 68:27; 69:2; 69:3; 69:13; 69:31; 69:34; 70:1; 70:5; 71:5; 71:8; 71:15; 71:18; 71:23; 72:1; 72:3; 72:18; 74:2; 78:6; 78:14; 78:27; 78:33; 78:35; 78:45; 78:61; 79:2; 79:4; 79:6; 80:6; 80:11; 81:3; 83:6; 83:7; 84:3; 87:4; 87:7; 88:11; 88:12; 89:11; 89:18; 89:36; 90:8; 90:11; 90:13; 90:15; 90:16; 91:3; 91:5; 91:6; 91:7; 92:2; 94:22; 96:3; 96:13; 97:4; 97:7; 97:8; 97:8; 97:11; 98:7; 98:7; 98:9; 100:3; 100:5; 101:5; 102:15; 102:21; 103:1; 103:6; 103:7; 103:9; 103:12; 103:13; 104:4; 104:14; 104:15; 104:15; 104:15; 104:16; 104:17; 104:18; 104:18; 104:25; 104:26; 104:35; 105:8; 105:9; 105:9; 105:10; 105:20; 105:20; 105:22; 105:25; 105:26; 105:27; 105:30; 105:31; 105:32; 105:34; 105:39; 105:41; 105:42; 105:43; 106:1; 106:2; 106:16; 106:32; 107:3; 107:5; 107:34; 107:35; 107:42; 108:4; 108:5; 108:8; 109:4; 109:4; 109:5; 109:9; 109:10; 109:14; 109:18; 109:19; 109:20; 109:20; 111:10; 112:1; 112:4; 113:4; 114:1; 114:2; 114:4; 114:5; 114:6; 114:6; 114:7; 114:8; 115:7; 115:7; 115:8; 115:12; 115:17; 116:1; 116:10; 118:1; 118:2; 118:25; 118:25; 118:29; 119:41; 119:45; 119:68; 120:4; 120:7; 120:7; 121:6; 122:5; 122:7; 123:4; 126:2; 130:6; 130:6; 132:4; 132:5; 132:15; 135:2; 135:4; 135:5; 135:11; 136:4; 136:5; 136:6; 136:7; 136:8; 136:9; 136:10; 136:13; 136:16; 136:17; 136:19; 136:20; 137:3; 139:8; 139:9; 139:11; 141:9; 143:6; 144:1; 144:3; 144:12; 146:8; 146:10; 147:9; 147:19; 149:1; 149:7

# End of Story

## Description

There are different types of information that may be given at the end of a story. Often this is background information. This background information is different from the actions that make up the main part of the story. A book of the Bible is often made up of many smaller stories that are part of the larger story of the book itself. For example, the story of Jesus' birth is a smaller story in the larger story of the book of Luke. Each of these stories, whether large or small, can have background information at the end of it.

### The following are purposes for end of story information:

- to summarize the story
- to give a conclusion about what the story means or what is important about it
- to connect a smaller story to the larger story it is a part of
- to tell the reader what happens to a specific character after the main part of the story ends
- to tell on-going action that continues after the main part of the story ends
- to tell what happens after the story as a result of the events that happened in the story itself

## Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages have different ways of presenting these kinds of information. If you (the translator) do not use your language's ways of doing this, readers may not know:

- that this information is ending the story
- what the purpose of the information is
- how the information is related to the story

## Translation Strategies

- Translate the particular kind of information at the end of a story the way your language expresses that kind of information.
- Translate it so that people will understand how it relates to the story it is part of.
- If possible, translate the end of the story in a way that people will know where that story ends and the next begins.

## Examples From the Bible

- To summarize the story

> Then the rest of the men should follow, some on planks, and some on other things from the ship. **In this way it happened that all of us were brought safely to the land.** (Acts 27:44 ULT)

- To give a conclusion about what the story means or what is important about it

> Many of those who practiced magical arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of everyone. Then they counted the value of them, and found it was 50,000 pieces of silver. **So the word of the Lord was spreading and prevailing with power.** (Acts 19:19-20 ULT)

- To tell the reader what happens to a specific character after the main part of the story ends

> And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoiced in God my savior." **And Mary stayed with her about three months and then returned to her house.** (Luke 1:46-47, 56 ULT)

- To tell on-going action that continues after the main part of the story ends

> All who those who heard it were amazed concerning the things that were spoken to them by the shepherds. **But Mary kept all the things, pondering them in her heart.** (Luke 2:18-19 ULT)

- To tell what happens after the story as a result of the events that happened in the story itself

> "Woe to you, experts in the Jewish law, because you have taken away the key of knowledge; you do not enter in yourselves, and you hinder those who are entering." **After he went from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to fiercely oppose him and argued against him**

> **about many things, lying in wait to trap him in something from his mouth.** (Luke 11:52-54 ULT)

## Psalms References:

79:13

# 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.

### 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.”

## Psalms References:

13:3; 39:13; 41:8; 51:front; 58:8; 63:9; 76:5; 78:33; 90:3; 90:10; 94:17; 143:7; 146:4; 146:4

# 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.

> 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!”

## Psalms References:

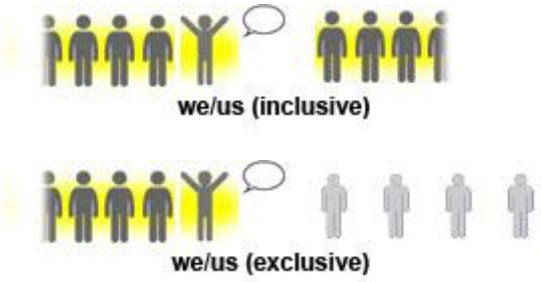
1:1; 2:12; 3:1; 18:46; 21:1; 32:1; 32:2; 33:12; 34:8; 35:21; 35:25; 40:4; 40:15; 41:1; 65:4; 70:3; 70:4; 73:1; 73:13; 73:18; 73:19; 79:1; 81:8; 81:13; 84:1; 84:4; 84:5; 84:12; 89:15; 89:47; 112:1; 119:1; 119:2; 119:5; 120:5; 127:5; 128:1; 137:8; 137:9; 139:17; 144:15; 146:5

# 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.

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.

## Psalms References:

44:1; 48:9; 50:3; 55:14

# 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.

### 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.

## Psalms References:

5:6; 16:10; 19:11; 19:13; 21:intro; 23:intro; 31:16; 41:2; 41:3; 43:4; 45:5; 45:14; 45:15; 50:14; 50:22; 50:23; 68:35; 74:18; 78:20; 90:13; 91:2; 93:1; 99:3; 102:14; 108:13; 109:28; 115:9; 115:10; 115:11; 116:7; 116:16; 118:21; 119:17; 119:23; 119:38; 119:49; 119:57; 119:65; 119:76; 119:84; 119:122; 119:124; 119:126; 119:135; 119:140; 119:176; 144:10; 145:12

# 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.

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.

## Psalms References:

22:26; 25:intro; 27:8; 27:14; 31:24; 45:2; 48:7; 48:12; 49:1; 49:18; 50:5; 50:7; 50:16; 50:22; 53:5; 55:22; 90:1; 91:3; 98:1; 99:5; 100:1; 105:11; 115:14; 115:15; 118:26

# 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.

> 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.”

## Psalms References:

1:1; 7:14; 8:4; 8:6; 9:intro; 10:intro; 12:2; 14:1; 14:1; 15:2; 17:4; 18:44; 18:48; 19:2; 19:8; 25:12; 31:20; 32:1; 32:2; 32:6; 34:8; 34:12; 37:23; 37:37; 39:6; 39:11; 40:4; 42:8; 42:9; 43:1; 46:9; 48:13; 49:10; 50:11; 51:19; 53:1; 55:3; 56:1; 56:11; 58:11; 60:11; 62:12; 68:18; 73:5; 78:25; 78:42; 78:45; 84:5; 84:12; 89:48; 90:3; 91:3; 91:13; 94:6; 94:12; 94:21; 98:5;

101:5; 101:5; 101:5; 101:6; 101:7; 101:7; 103:15; 104:15; 104:17; 104:23; 105:13; 105:34; 106:10; 106:10; 107:2; 107:9; 107:9; 107:43; 108:12; 109:16; 110:6; 112:1; 112:5; 113:9; 118:8; 119:42; 124:2; 127:5; 128:4; 140:4; 144:3

# Go and Come

### Description

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 am coming,” while Spanish speakers say “I am 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?

## Psalms References:

24:7; 49:19

# 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 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 mouthand 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 mouthand 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**.

## Psalms References:

8:2; 8:2; 9:2; 9:4; 18:10; 42:4; 44:16; 45:3; 45:4; 46:1; 51:2; 51:19; 55:7; 56:1; 61:7; 71:18; 78:4; 94:4; 97:2; 102:10; 102:22; 106:13; 107:10; 111:1; 118:15

# 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.

## 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.

## Psalms References:

6:front; 12:front; 29:6; 29:8; 39:front; 42:6; 45:9; 46:front; 49:9; 53:front; 56:front; 60:front; 60:front; 60:front; 60:front; 60:front; 62:front; 65:1; 72:10; 76:2; 76:2; 77:front; 78:12; 78:41; 78:43; 80:front; 81:front; 81:7; 84:front; 88:front; 88:10; 89:8; 91:1; 91:1; 95:8; 102:18; 104:35; 105:45; 106:7; 106:17; 106:32; 106:48; 111:1; 112:1; 113:1; 113:9; 115:17; 115:18; 116:19; 117:2; 118:5; 118:14; 118:17; 118:18; 118:19; 122:4; 135:1; 135:3; 135:4; 135:21; 146:1; 146:10; 147:1; 147:20; 148:1; 148:14; 149:1; 149:9; 150:1; 150:6

# 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.

1. The speaker means this as literally true if he means that it really does rain here every night.
2. The speaker means this as a **generalization** if he means that it rains here most nights.
3. 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.

### 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

1. Readers need to be able to understand whether or not a statement is literally true.
2. 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.

## Psalms References:

6:6; 10:6; 10:11; 14:3; 22:14; 22:17; 31:9; 32:3; 35:28; 39:5; 40:5; 40:12; 40:12; 42:3; 44:8; 44:15; 44:22; 45:2; 45:16; 48:2; 51:4; 53:3; 56:5; 59:5; 62:9; 63:3; 64:8; 64:9; 66:4; 68:17; 69:4; 71:15; 71:24; 72:11; 72:15; 72:17; 78:15; 78:27; 79:5; 79:12; 79:13; 79:13; 80:5; 80:12; 84:10; 86:3; 86:9; 88:15; 88:17; 90:6; 90:14; 91:7; 102:14; 104:25; 105:15; 105:34; 107:26; 107:35; 116:18; 118:10; 119:72; 119:164; 138:4; 139:18; 140:2; 141:5; 143:2; 147:5

# Hypothetical Situations

Consider these phrases: “If the sun stopped shining …” “What if the sun stopped shining …” “Suppose the sun stopped shining …” and “If only the sun had not stopped shining.” We use such expressions to set up hypothetical situations, imagining what might have happened or what could happen in the future but probably will not. We also use them to express regret or wishes. Hypothetical expressions occur often in the Bible. You (the translator) need to translate them in a way that people will know that the event did not actually happen and so that they will understand why the event was imagined.

### 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.

## Psalms References:

91:7; 91:13; 94:17; 95:7; 106:23

# 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.”)

### 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**

## Psalms References:

1:5; 1:6; 3:1; 3:3; 5:1; 5:5; 7:6; 9:17; 10:4; 10:11; 10:11; 11:4; 12:1; 12:2; 12:2; 12:3; 12:5; 12:8; 14:2; 14:5; 14:7; 15:4; 16:8; 17:1; 17:7; 17:9; 18:20; 18:24; 18:39; 18:44; 18:45; 20:3; 20:7; 21:8; 21:9; 21:10; 21:12; 22:8; 22:20; 22:24; 22:26; 26:3; 27:3; 27:6; 27:9; 27:12; 27:12; 27:13; 28:1; 28:1; 30:5; 31:12; 31:13; 31:16; 31:19; 31:24; 32:3; 32:4; 32:8; 33:11; 33:13; 34:4; 34:5; 34:16; 34:18; 35:2; 35:4; 35:11; 35:13; 35:17; 35:25; 35:26; 36:7; 37:5; 37:7; 37:9; 37:18; 37:22; 37:28; 37:34; 37:38; 38:2; 38:3; 38:3; 38:5; 38:12; 38:16; 39:10; 40:6; 40:14; 41:9; 41:9; 45:2; 46:1; 46:5; 46:6; 46:7; 48:7; 48:13; 49:2; 49:11; 49:19; 50:5; 50:10; 50:16; 50:20; 50:23; 53:2; 53:6; 54:4; 55:3; 55:6; 55:20; 55:23; 56:3; 56:9; 56:12; 57:4; 57:10; 58:1; 58:3; 58:3; 58:5; 58:9; 58:11; 59:7; 59:7; 59:8; 59:10; 59:13; 59:16; 60:4; 60:4; 60:10; 60:12; 61:2; 61:3; 61:6; 61:6; 61:8; 62:8; 62:9; 62:11; 63:10; 64:5; 65:3; 65:5; 65:8; 65:8; 66:5; 68:15; 68:18; 68:31; 69:17; 69:22; 69:27; 70:2; 71:2; 71:6; 71:10; 71:16; 71:20; 72:4; 72:5; 72:9; 72:14; 73:14; 74:1; 74:8; 74:11; 76:5; 76:5; 76:7; 76:7; 76:9; 77:7; 77:8; 78:2; 78:6; 78:9; 78:41; 78:49; 78:51; 79:11; 79:12; 80:9; 80:17; 82:1; 82:2; 83:2; 83:5; 84:7; 85:3; 85:5; 86:7; 86:14; 86:14; 86:15; 86:16; 87:5; 88:5; 89:22; 89:47; 90:1; 90:3; 90:4; 90:9; 90:10; 90:11; 91:16; 93:5; 94:21; 94:21; 95:4; 95:4; 95:5; 95:8; 95:10; 95:11; 96:2; 96:9; 97:11; 97:12; 98:8; 100:5; 101:2; 101:3; 101:4; 101:5; 101:5; 101:8; 102:2; 102:2; 102:10; 102:12; 102:13; 102:20; 102:24; 103:8; 103:17; 104:11; 104:12; 104:25; 104:28; 104:29; 104:29; 105:8; 105:9; 105:16; 105:22; 106:1; 106:15; 106:23; 106:23; 106:26; 106:29; 106:31; 106:40; 106:44; 106:46; 106:48; 107:1; 107:5; 107:8; 107:15; 107:18; 107:21; 107:29; 107:31; 107:42; 108:4; 108:8; 109:7; 109:8; 109:11; 109:12; 109:13; 109:14; 109:15; 110:1; 110:5; 110:5; 110:7; 112:9; 113:5; 113:6; 113:8; 114:4; 114:5; 114:6; 114:7; 115:5; 115:5; 115:6; 115:6; 115:12; 115:16; 115:16; 115:16; 116:2; 116:9; 116:9; 116:15; 118:1; 118:2; 118:5; 118:5; 118:6; 118:7; 118:16; 118:21; 118:23; 118:29; 119:69; 119:87; 119:90; 119:109; 119:147; 121:1; 121:5; 122:8; 123:1; 124:3; 126:2; 126:3; 127:3; 128:6; 130:3; 132:8; 132:10; 133:2; 135:7; 135:13; 135:13; 135:16; 135:17; 136:1; 136:2; 137:5; 137:6; 137:6; 137:7; 139:17; 139:19; 139:20; 139:21; 140:7; 140:8; 141:1; 142:5; 143:8; 145:8; 145:12; 145:16; 146:3; 146:10; 147:9; 148:4; 148:14; 149:6

# 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.

### 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)

### Imperatives that function as good results

An imperative sentence can also describe a desirable result. In Proverbs 3:3-4, several imperatives give instructions, then the final imperative describes the good outcome of following those instructions.

> Do not let covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness leave you;
> tie them on your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart,
> and **find favor** and good insight in the eyes of God and man!
> (Proverbs 3:3-4 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."

> Do not let covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness leave you;
> tie them on your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart,
> **and find favor** and good insight in the eyes of God and man!
> (Proverbs 3:3-4 ULT)
>
> > Do not let covenant faithfulness and
> > trustworthiness leave you;
> > tie them on your neck, write them on the tablet of
> > your heart,
> > **then you will find favor** and good insight in the
> > eyes of God and man!

(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.”

## Psalms References:

17:1; 17:2; 17:6; 17:13; 19:12; 19:13; 19:14; 20:9; 22:11; 22:19; 22:20; 22:21; 25:2; 25:4; 25:5; 25:6; 25:16; 25:18; 25:19; 25:20; 25:22; 26:1; 26:2; 26:9; 26:11; 27:7; 27:9; 27:11; 27:12; 28:1; 28:2; 28:3; 28:4; 28:9; 30:10; 31:1; 31:2; 31:9; 31:15; 31:16; 33:1; 33:3; 33:22; 34:3; 34:14; 35:1; 38:22; 39:1; 39:4; 39:10; 40:13; 40:17; 41:4; 44:4; 44:23; 44:26; 45:3; 50:5; 54:1; 55:1; 56:1; 57:1; 57:5; 58:6; 58:6; 59:1; 59:2; 59:2; 59:4; 59:4; 59:5; 59:5; 59:11; 59:11; 59:11; 59:13; 60:1; 60:2; 60:5; 60:5; 60:11; 61:1; 61:2; 61:7; 62:8; 64:1; 64:1; 64:2; 66:1; 66:2; 66:2; 66:3; 66:5; 66:6; 66:8; 66:16; 68:28; 68:30; 69:1; 69:6; 69:13; 69:14; 69:15; 69:17; 69:18; 69:22; 69:23; 69:24; 69:25; 69:27; 69:28; 69:29; 69:32; 69:34; 70:1; 70:5; 71:1; 71:2; 71:2; 71:3; 71:4; 71:9; 71:12; 71:12; 71:18; 71:20; 71:20; 71:21; 71:21; 72:1; 74:2; 79:6; 80:1; 81:1; 81:10; 82:8; 83:1; 83:9; 83:11; 83:13; 83:15; 83:16; 85:4; 85:4; 85:6; 85:7; 85:7; 86:1; 86:1; 86:2; 86:2; 86:3; 86:4; 86:6; 86:6; 86:11; 86:11; 86:16; 86:16; 86:16; 86:17; 88:2; 89:47; 89:50; 90:13; 100:3; 102:1; 108:6; 109:1; 109:6; 109:26; 110:2; 115:1; 116:4; 119:8; 119:26; 119:29; 119:33; 119:37; 119:122; 119:146; 120:2; 123:3; 125:4; 126:4; 132:1; 132:8; 132:10; 138:8; 139:19; 139:19; 139:23; 139:23; 139:24; 139:24; 140:1; 140:1; 140:4; 140:4; 140:6; 140:8; 140:8; 141:1; 141:3; 141:4; 141:8; 141:9; 142:4; 143:1; 143:1; 143:1; 143:2; 143:7; 143:8; 143:8; 143:9; 143:10; 144:5; 147:7; 147:12; 149:1

# 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.

> 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!

## Psalms References:

1:1; 5:7; 7:9; 16:5; 30:1; 31:13; 42:4; 45:5; 46:front; 47:2; 56:4; 61:2; 66:14; 79:12; 79:13; 89:2; 93:4; 99:1; 107:14; 108:6; 108:10; 139:5; 139:16; 139:20; 147:5

# 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.

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 thePharisees 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 thePharisees 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**.

## Psalms References:

89:19

# 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)

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 is 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.

## Psalms References:

79:1; 79:4

# 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.

> 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!**

## Psalms References:

35:8; 52:1; 60:8; 64:7; 88:5

# Irregular Use of Tenses

### Description

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,

## Psalms References:

13:6; 42:4; 42:9; 43:2; 45:1; 45:13; 48:1; 49:6; 52:5; 52:9; 55:2; 57:7; 90:2

# Kinship

### Description

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. (Exodus3:1a 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.

## Psalms References:

50:20

# 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."

### 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."

## Psalms References:

1:3; 9:18; 22:19; 22:24; 23:1; 78:4; 78:38; 80:18; 107:38; 109:17; 119:46

# 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.

### 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.

## Psalms References:

12:5; 17:10; 41:9; 44:1; 45:17; 46:9; 47:1; 56:9; 56:13; 78:27; 88:5; 91:8; 104:17; 105:26; 106:33; 107:2; 109:19

# 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)

**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**.

## Psalms References:

1:2; 2:8; 22:29; 31:9; 32:4; 41:13; 42:3; 42:8; 50:1; 55:10; 55:17; 57:5; 65:5; 65:8; 66:12; 68:22; 72:5; 72:8; 74:16; 74:16; 74:17; 75:6; 78:63; 79:2; 80:11; 84:2; 88:1; 89:12; 90:2; 91:5; 91:6; 95:4; 98:3; 102:14; 104:25; 107:3; 113:3; 115:13; 121:2; 121:8; 121:8; 124:8; 127:2; 131:3; 134:3; 135:6; 135:8; 139:2; 139:5; 139:8; 139:9; 139:12; 146:6; 148:10; 148:11; 148:12; 148:12; 148:13

# 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.

## 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**.

## Psalms References:

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# 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.

> … 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**.

## Psalms References:

1:3; 2:1; 2:4; 3:3; 3:3; 3:7; 4:7; 5:9; 5:9; 5:11; 6:1; 6:5; 6:7; 6:7; 7:5; 7:5; 7:5; 7:6; 7:6; 7:6; 7:9; 7:10; 7:17; 8:1; 8:1; 8:2; 8:2; 8:3; 8:6; 9:2; 9:3; 9:4; 9:7; 9:7; 9:8; 9:10; 9:11; 9:17; 9:19; 9:19; 9:19; 10:7; 10:7; 10:11; 10:12; 10:13; 10:14; 10:15; 10:17; 11:4; 11:4; 11:6; 12:3; 12:4; 12:5; 13:1; 13:2; 13:2; 13:5; 14:7; 14:7; 15:1; 15:3; 16:4; 16:9; 16:9; 16:11; 16:11; 17:1; 17:2; 17:2; 17:3; 17:4; 17:6; 17:7; 17:9; 17:10; 17:13; 17:13; 17:14; 18:front; 18:5; 18:6; 18:6; 18:6; 18:7; 18:12; 18:16; 18:16; 18:27; 18:30; 18:35; 18:36; 18:49; 19:1; 19:7; 19:8; 19:9; 19:14; 19:14; 20:1; 20:1; 20:5; 20:6; 20:7; 20:8; 20:9; 21:2; 21:6; 21:9; 22:3; 22:7; 22:15; 22:20; 22:20; 22:22; 22:25; 22:27; 22:27; 22:29; 22:29; 22:29; 23:3; 23:3; 23:4; 23:5; 24:4; 24:4; 24:6; 24:6; 24:6; 25:11; 25:13; 25:15; 25:22; 26:2; 26:4; 26:5; 26:9; 26:10; 26:10; 27:2; 27:5; 27:7; 27:8; 28:2; 28:4; 28:6; 29:2; 29:3; 29:5; 29:7; 29:8; 29:9; 29:10; 30:7; 30:9; 30:9; 30:10; 30:11; 31:2; 31:3; 31:5; 31:5; 31:6; 31:7; 31:8; 31:9; 31:15; 31:18; 31:20; 31:22; 31:22; 32:2; 33:4; 33:6; 33:6; 33:8; 33:10; 33:12; 33:18; 33:21; 34:front; 34:1; 34:2; 34:3; 34:12; 34:15; 34:15; 34:16; 34:16; 34:22; 35:3; 35:9; 35:12; 35:13; 35:17; 35:21; 35:21; 36:1; 36:11; 36:11; 37:8; 37:25; 37:33; 38:14; 39:1; 39:3; 39:9; 39:12; 40:9; 40:10; 41:2; 41:4; 41:5; 41:11; 41:12; 42:2; 42:4; 44:1; 44:1; 44:2; 44:3; 44:3; 44:4; 44:5; 44:8; 44:15; 44:16; 44:19; 44:20; 44:20; 45:2; 45:4; 45:5; 45:6; 45:6; 45:8; 45:9; 45:10; 45:12; 45:14; 45:17; 46:4; 46:5; 46:7; 47:4; 47:5; 47:9; 48:2; 48:10; 48:10; 48:11; 48:12; 49:5; 49:5; 49:11; 49:13; 49:15; 49:16; 49:17; 50:1; 50:3; 50:7; 50:9; 50:15; 50:17; 50:21; 51:4; 51:8; 51:11; 51:14; 51:15; 51:18; 52:1; 52:4; 52:5; 52:9; 52:9; 53:5; 53:6; 53:6; 54:1; 54:2; 54:6; 55:3; 55:3; 55:8; 55:9; 55:17; 55:19; 55:23; 55:23; 56:1; 56:4; 56:4; 56:6; 56:6; 56:7; 56:8; 56:13; 56:13; 57:1; 57:4; 57:6; 57:6; 57:8; 58:2; 58:7; 59:2; 59:3; 59:7; 59:12; 59:13; 60:5; 60:7; 61:5; 61:6; 61:7; 61:8; 62:4; 62:8; 62:10; 63:4; 63:8; 64:1; 64:3; 64:3; 64:6; 64:6; 64:8; 64:10; 65:2; 65:4; 65:8; 65:11; 65:11; 66:3; 66:4; 66:9; 66:14; 66:16; 66:18; 67:7; 68:1; 68:2; 68:2; 68:3; 68:4; 68:4; 68:7; 68:8; 68:8; 68:11; 68:27; 68:29; 68:31; 68:34; 68:35; 69:3; 69:3; 69:7; 69:12; 69:15; 69:17; 69:18; 69:20; 69:21; 69:22; 69:23; 69:23; 69:24; 69:30; 69:32; 69:35; 69:36; 71:4; 71:4; 71:8; 71:15; 71:18; 71:23; 71:24; 72:5; 72:7; 72:9; 72:14; 72:16; 72:17; 72:17; 72:19; 73:1; 73:1; 73:2; 73:7; 73:9; 73:9; 73:13; 73:16; 73:21; 73:21; 73:24; 73:26; 74:7; 74:10; 74:11; 74:11; 74:18; 74:23; 75:1; 75:5; 75:9; 76:1; 76:8; 76:8; 76:11; 76:12; 77:1; 77:2; 77:3; 77:5; 77:9; 77:10; 77:11; 77:15; 77:20; 78:1; 78:5; 78:9; 78:18; 78:21; 78:21; 78:31; 78:33; 78:36; 78:37; 78:38; 78:39; 78:42; 78:42; 78:46; 78:51; 78:54; 78:61; 78:61; 78:62; 78:64; 78:68; 78:72; 79:3; 79:6; 79:7; 79:9; 79:9; 79:10; 79:10; 79:11; 79:11; 80:1; 80:1; 80:2; 80:15; 80:16; 80:17; 80:17; 80:18; 81:5; 81:5; 81:6; 81:11; 81:12; 81:14; 81:15; 82:4; 83:4; 83:5; 83:6; 83:8; 83:13; 83:16; 83:16; 83:18; 84:2; 84:5; 84:9; 84:10; 85:1; 85:5; 85:9; 86:1; 86:6; 86:9; 86:9; 86:11; 86:11; 86:12; 86:12; 87:2; 88:2; 88:2; 88:3; 88:5; 88:9; 88:9; 88:14; 88:14; 89:1; 89:4; 89:10; 89:12; 89:13; 89:13; 89:14; 89:14; 89:15; 89:16; 89:21; 89:21; 89:23; 89:24; 89:25; 89:29; 89:32; 89:34; 89:41; 89:42; 89:43; 89:44; 89:45; 89:48; 89:50; 89:51; 90:14; 90:15; 90:17; 91:6; 91:6; 91:7; 91:13; 91:14; 92:1; 92:4; 92:10; 93:2; 94:2; 94:10; 94:15; 94:20; 95:2; 95:5; 95:6; 95:7; 96:1; 96:2; 96:6; 96:8; 96:9; 96:11; 96:13; 96:13; 96:13; 97:1; 97:1; 97:2; 97:3; 97:4; 97:5; 97:8; 97:10; 98:1; 98:2; 98:2; 98:4; 98:6; 98:9; 98:9; 98:9; 99:3; 99:6; 100:1; 100:2; 100:4; 101:6; 101:7; 102:2; 102:9; 102:13; 102:15; 102:15; 102:19; 102:21; 102:23; 102:24; 102:25; 102:27; 102:28; 103:1; 103:1; 103:1; 103:2; 103:4; 103:4; 103:15; 103:19; 103:19; 103:20; 103:22; 104:1; 104:13; 104:14; 104:30; 104:35; 105:1; 105:3; 105:4; 105:5; 105:8; 105:19; 105:21; 105:28; 105:38; 105:42; 105:44; 106:2; 106:8; 106:10; 106:12; 106:12; 106:23; 106:24; 106:25; 106:27; 106:33; 106:35; 106:38; 106:38; 106:41; 106:42; 106:46; 106:47; 107:2; 107:9; 107:9; 107:11; 107:12; 107:18; 107:34; 107:42; 108:6; 108:6; 108:7; 109:2; 109:2; 109:3; 109:15; 109:20; 109:21; 109:24; 109:27; 109:30; 110:2; 110:6; 111:9; 112:3; 113:1; 113:2; 113:3; 114:1; 114:1; 114:7; 115:1; 115:4; 115:9; 116:1; 116:2; 116:4; 116:4; 116:7; 116:8; 116:13; 116:17; 117:1; 118:2; 118:10; 118:14; 118:15; 118:24; 118:26; 119:13; 119:13; 119:37; 119:48; 119:55; 119:58; 119:72; 119:88; 119:132; 119:135; 119:148; 119:149; 119:169; 119:170; 119:171; 119:172; 120:5; 122:4; 122:5; 122:6; 123:2; 124:4; 124:5;

124:7; 124:8; 125:3; 125:3; 125:3; 128:2; 129:5; 129:8; 130:5; 130:5; 130:6; 131:2; 132:8; 132:11; 132:12; 134:3; 135:1; 135:3; 135:4; 135:8; 135:10; 135:13; 135:15; 136:10; 136:10; 136:11; 136:12; 136:14; 136:17; 136:22; 137:1; 138:2; 138:2; 138:7; 138:7; 138:7; 138:8; 139:4; 139:5; 139:7; 139:10; 139:10; 139:13; 139:16; 139:19; 139:20; 139:23; 140:2; 140:3; 140:3; 140:4; 140:6; 140:6; 140:9; 140:11; 140:13; 140:13; 141:2; 141:8; 142:1; 142:2; 142:7; 143:2; 143:3; 143:5; 143:7; 143:11; 143:11; 143:12; 144:7; 144:7; 144:8; 144:8; 144:10; 144:11; 144:11; 144:11; 145:1; 145:2; 145:21; 146:8; 147:17; 147:19; 148:5; 148:13; 149:3; 149:6; 149:6; 150:6

# Nominal Adjectives

### Description

In some languages an adjective can be used to refer to a class of things that the adjective describes. When it does, it acts like a noun. For example, the word “rich” is an adjective. Here are two sentences that show that “rich” is an adjective.

> **The rich man** had huge numbers of flocks and herds. (2 Samuel 12:2 ULT)

The adjective “rich” comes before the word “man” and describes “man.”

> **He will not be rich**; his wealth will not last. (Job 15:29a ULT)

The adjective “rich” comes after the verb “be” and describes “He.”

Here is a sentence that shows that “rich” can also function as a noun.

> **The rich** must not give more than the half shekel, and **the poor** must not give less. (Exodus 30:15b ULT)

In Exodus 30:15, the word “rich” acts as a noun in the phrase “the rich,” and it refers to rich people. The word “poor” also acts as a noun and refers to poor people.

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Many times in the Bible adjectives are used as nouns to describe a group of people.
- Some languages do not use adjectives in this way.
- Readers of these languages may think that the text is talking about one particular person when it is really talking about the group of people whom the adjective describes.

### Examples From the Bible

> The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **the righteous**. (Psalms 125:3a ULT)

"The righteous" here are people who are righteous, not one particular righteous person.

> Blessed are **the meek**. (Matthew 5:5a ULT)

"The meek" here are all people who are meek, not one particular meek person.

### Translation Strategies

If your language uses adjectives as nouns to refer to a class of people, consider using the adjectives in this way. If it would sound strange, or if the meaning would be unclear or wrong, here is another option:

(1) Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

> 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**.

## Psalms References:

1:1; 1:1; 1:4; 1:5; 1:5; 1:5; 1:6; 3:7; 4:3; 5:12; 7:9; 7:9; 9:intro; 9:5; 9:12; 9:16; 10:intro; 10:2; 10:3; 10:15; 10:15; 11:2; 11:3; 11:5; 11:5; 11:6; 11:7; 12:1; 12:5; 12:8; 14:3; 14:5; 14:6; 15:3; 15:5; 16:3; 17:4; 17:9; 17:13; 17:15; 18:25; 19:7; 19:13; 21:11; 22:24; 22:26; 22:29; 22:31; 23:4; 25:8; 25:9; 26:5; 26:9; 28:3; 28:3; 28:8; 31:17; 31:18; 31:23; 32:10; 32:11; 33:1; 33:1; 34:2; 34:6; 34:9; 34:15; 34:19; 34:21; 35:10; 35:20; 36:1; 36:10; 36:11; 37:10; 37:11; 37:12; 37:14; 37:14; 37:17; 37:17; 37:18; 37:20; 37:20; 37:21; 37:21; 37:25; 37:28; 37:28; 37:29; 37:30; 37:32; 37:34; 37:37; 37:38; 37:38; 37:39; 37:40; 40:3; 40:4; 41:1; 42:4; 45:9; 45:12; 46:4; 49:2; 49:10; 49:14; 50:5; 50:16; 51:6; 51:19; 52:5; 52:6; 52:9; 53:1; 54:3; 55:3; 55:22; 56:13; 58:3; 58:10; 58:10; 58:11; 59:3; 60:3; 64:4; 64:10; 64:10; 68:2; 68:3; 68:6; 68:10; 68:27; 68:30; 69:28; 69:32; 69:33; 71:4; 71:7; 72:2; 72:4; 72:4; 72:4; 72:7; 72:12; 72:12; 72:13; 73:3; 73:12; 74:19; 74:21; 74:21; 75:4; 75:4; 75:8; 75:10; 75:10; 79:2; 82:2; 82:3; 82:4; 83:11; 83:11; 84:9; 84:11; 85:9; 86:14; 86:14; 91:8; 92:6; 92:7; 92:12; 94:2; 94:3; 97:10; 97:10; 97:11; 97:12; 101:8; 103:5; 104:25; 104:28; 104:35; 105:6; 105:43; 106:5; 106:5; 106:5; 106:6; 106:16; 106:18; 106:28; 106:41; 107:6; 107:9; 107:13; 107:19; 107:27; 107:28; 107:36; 107:41; 107:42; 109:6; 109:16; 109:30; 109:31; 111:1; 111:2; 111:5; 111:8; 112:6; 112:9; 112:10; 113:7; 115:13; 115:13; 115:17; 116:6; 116:15; 118:15; 118:20; 119:1; 119:21; 119:51; 119:53; 119:61; 119:69; 119:74; 119:78; 119:79; 119:85; 119:95; 119:110; 119:113; 119:115; 119:119; 119:122; 119:130; 119:155; 119:158; 121:7; 122:9; 123:4; 123:4; 125:3; 125:4; 125:4; 129:4; 132:9; 132:15; 132:16; 138:6; 138:6; 140:4; 140:5; 140:8; 140:12; 140:13; 141:4; 141:5; 141:10; 142:5; 142:7; 143:3; 145:10; 145:20; 146:7; 146:7; 146:8; 146:8; 146:9; 147:6; 147:6; 148:14; 149:1; 149:4; 149:5; 149:9

# Numbers

### Description

There are many numbers in the Bible. They can be written as words (“five”) or as numerals (“5”). Some numbers are very large, such as “two hundred” (200), “twenty-two thousand” (22,000), or “one hundred million” (100,000,000). Some languages do not have words for all of these numbers. Translators need to decide how to translate numbers and whether to write them as words or numerals.

Some numbers are exact and others are rounded.

> Abram was **86** years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:16 ULT)

Eighty-six (86) is an exact number.

> That day about **3,000** of the people died. (Exodus 32:28b ULT)

Here the number three thousand (3,000) is a round number. It may have been a little more than that or a little less than that. The word “about” shows that it is not an exact number.

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not have words for some of these numbers.

### Translation Principles

- Exact numbers should be translated as closely and specifically as they can be.
- Rounded numbers can be translated more generally.

### Examples From the Bible

> When Jared had lived **162** years, he became the father of Enoch. After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived **800** years. He became the

> father of more sons and daughters. Jared lived **962** years, and then he died. (Genesis 5:18-20 ULT)

The numbers 162, 800, and 962 are exact numbers and should be translated with something as close to those numbers as possible.

> Our sister, may you be the mother of **thousands of ten thousands.** (Genesis 24:60b ULT)

This is a rounded number. It does not say exactly how many descendants she should have, but it was a huge number of them.

### Translation Strategies

(1) Write numbers using numerals.
(2) Write numbers using your language's words or the Gateway Language words for those numbers.
(3) Write numbers using words, and put the numerals in parentheses after them.
(4) Combine words for large numbers.
(5) Use a very general expression for very large rounded numbers and write the numeral in parentheses afterward.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

We will use the following verse in our examples:

> Now, see, at great effort I have prepared for Yahweh's house **100,000** talents of gold, **1,000,000** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities. (1 Chronicles 22:14a ULT)

(1) Write numbers using numerals.

> > I have prepared for Yahweh's house **100,000** talents of gold, **1,000,000** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(2) Write numbers using your language's words or the Gateway Language words for those numbers.

> > I have prepared for Yahweh's house **one hundred thousand** talents of gold, **one million** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(3) Write numbers using words, and put the numerals in parenthesis after them.

> > I have prepared for Yahweh's house one **hundred thousand (100,000)** talents of gold, **one million (1,000,000)** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(4) Combine words for large numbers.

> > I have prepared for Yahweh's house **one hundred thousand** talents of gold, **a thousand thousand**

> > talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(5) Use a very general expression for very large rounded numbers and write the numeral in parentheses afterward.

> I have prepared for Yahweh's house **a great amount of gold (100,000 talents)**, **ten times that amount of silver (1,000,000 talents)**, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

### Consistency

Be consistent in your translations. Decide how the numbers will be translated, using numbers or numerals. There are different ways of being consistent.

- Use words to represent numbers all of the time. (You might have very long words.)
- Use numerals to represent numbers all of the time.
- Use words to represent the numbers that your language has words for and use numerals for the numbers that your language does not have words for.
- Use words for low numbers and numerals for high numbers.
- Use words for numbers that require few words and numerals for numbers that require more than a few words.
- Use words to represent numbers, and write the numerals in parentheses after them.

### Consistency in the ULT and UST

The *unfoldingWord® Literal Text* (ULT) and the *unfoldingWord® Simplified Text* (UST) use words for the numbers one through ten and use numerals for all numbers above ten.

> When Adam had lived **130** years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and he called his name Seth. After Adam became the father of Seth, he lived **800** years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. Adam lived **930** years, and then he died. (Genesis 5:3-5 ULT)

## Psalms References:

60:front; 95:10; 144:13

# 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. The oath includes the idea that a bad thing will happen if the person making the oath does not do the thing promised or if what the person says is not true.

### Description

There are two types of oath in the Bible. We can call the first type a “Promise” oath, and the second type a “Truth” oath.

### Promise Oath

In this type of oath, the person saying it is promising to do something. As a guarantee that the person taking the oath will do what he promises, the person calls on God to witness the oath and to punish him severely if he does not do the thing promised. A complete Promise oath has four parts, but some of them are often left unspoken and only 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 (often implied)

### Truth Oath

In this type of oath, the person saying it is affirming that what he is saying is true, and he guarantees that it is true by naming the life of God. Sometimes the person will not name God directly but will instead name something holy that is associated with God, such as the temple. In some situations, a person might name a revered person, such as a king. The implication is that if the person’s statement proves to be false, that person will lose any relationship to God or to the revered person. These oaths have three parts, but the third part is implied and not stated:

1. Naming something holy, usually the life of God or of someone who is revered.
2. Making the statement.
3. Implied: The speaker and hearers of the oath understand that the speaker forfeits his relationship to God or to the revered person if his statement is false.

### 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 would happen 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

#### Promise 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)

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.

### Truth Oath

> But indeed, the life of Yahweh and the life of yourself, that between me and between death is like a step!” (1 Samuel 20:3)

Here David uses a truth oath to convince Jonathan that Saul does indeed want to kill David. David says this because Jonathan had been trying to assure David that he had nothing to fear from Saul. But Jonathan knows that David holds both Yahweh’s and Jonathan’s life as sacred, and so this oath convinces Jonathan that David truly believes what he is saying.

> The life of your soul, my lord, I {am} the woman having stationed herself with you in this {place} to pray to Yahweh. (1 Samuel 1:26 ULT)

Hannah is speaking to the priest Eli. She demonstrates that she holds the priest’s life as sacred by swearing by it that what she is saying is true.

And Elijah said, “The life of Yahweh of armies, before whom I stand, that I will appear before him today.” (1 Kings 18:15 ULT)

Elijah uses this oath to convince Obadiah to announce his arrival to Ahab. Obadiah knows that Elijah would never break his relationship to Yahweh.

### Combination oath

> The life of Pharaoh, if you leave from this {place} without your youngest brother coming here. (Genesis 42:15)

Joseph is speaking to his brothers as an Egyptian official, and so he swears by the life of Pharaoh rather than by the life of the God of the Hebrews. Joseph combines the two types of oaths here by using a conditional "if" statement (part 3 of the "Promise" oath). He leaves unstated the "then" part of the oath which would be either a punishment from Pharoah (as with a Promise oath) or a breaking of relationship with Pharaoh (as with a "Truth" oath) if this conditional statement proves true.

### 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."

> But indeed, the life of Yahweh and the life of yourself, that between me and between death is like a step! (1 Samuel 20:3)

But indeed, **I swear by** Yahweh's life and **by** the life of yourself that **it is true that** between me and death is like a step!

> The life of Pharaoh, if you leave from this {place} without your youngest brother coming here. (Genesis 42:15)

**I swear by** the life of Pharaoh, if you leave from this {place} without your youngest brother coming here, **may Pharaoh punish me severely**.

(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."

> But indeed, the life of Yahweh and the life of yourself, that between me and between death is like a step! (1 Samuel 20:3)

**Then David made a statement to Jonathan to convince him that he truly believed that he was in danger:** "But indeed, **I forfeit my relationship to** Yahweh and **to you** yourself **if it is not true** that between me and death is like a step!"

(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.

> But indeed, the life of Yahweh and the life of yourself, that between me and between death is like a step! (1 Samuel 20:3)

But indeed, **before** Yahweh and **before you** yourself, **I swear** that between me and death is like a step!

## Psalms References:

95:11; 132:3; 132:5

# Order of Events

### Description

In the Bible, events are not always told in the order in which they occurred. Sometimes the author wanted to discuss something that happened at an earlier time than the event that he just talked about. This can be confusing to the reader.

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Readers might think that the events happened in the order that they are told. It is important to help them understand the correct order of events.

### Examples From the Bible

> He even added this to them all: he locked John up in prison. Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)

This could sound like John baptized Jesus after John was locked up in prison, but John baptized Jesus before John was locked up in prison.

> Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of Yahweh followed after them. But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

This could sound like Joshua gave the order not to shout after the army had already started their march, but he had given that order before they started marching.

> Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

This sounds like a person must first open the scroll and then break its seals, but the seals that lock the scroll must be broken before the scroll can be unrolled.

### Translation Strategies

(1) If your language uses phrases or time words to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using one of them.
(2) If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that. (See the section on "Aspect" of Verbs.)
(3) If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occurred, consider reordering the events so they they are in that order. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6). (See Verse Bridges.)

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If your language uses phrases, time words or tenses to show that an event happened before the one just mentioned, consider using one of them.

> 20 he even added this to them all: he locked John up in prison. Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)
>
> > 20 But then Herod … had John locked up in prison. 21 **Before John was put in prison,** while all the people were being baptized by John, Jesus also was baptized.
>
> Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)
>
> > Who is worthy to open the scroll **after** breaking its seals?

(2) If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that.

> Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)
>
> > 8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets 10 But Joshua **had commanded** the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout."

(3) If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occur, consider reordering the events. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6).

> 8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)
>
> > 8,10 Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout." Then just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of

> > rams horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets…
>
> Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)
>
> > Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_events.

## Psalms References:

18:38; 52:5; 90:3; 90:7

# 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)

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.

## Psalms References:

2:2; 2:3; 2:4; 3:7; 6:intro; 6:1; 6:6; 7:14; 8:4; 8:6; 9:8; 9:15; 11:4; 11:4; 12:5; 12:7; 14:1; 14:3; 14:7; 15:1; 16:9; 16:10; 18:11; 18:14; 18:20; 19:1; 20:2; 21:8; 21:9; 22:29; 24:6; 24:7; 25:4; 26:2; 27:3; 27:4; 27:5; 28:3; 28:4; 28:5; 29:4; 29:5; 29:6; 30:3; 30:9; 31:10; 31:20; 32:1; 32:5; 32:7; 33:6; 33:8; 33:9; 33:10; 33:11; 33:13; 33:17; 34:1; 34:3; 34:13; 35:1; 37:1; 38:1; 38:11; 45:10; 46:10; 47:3; 47:5; 48:11; 48:12; 49:1; 49:7; 51:2; 53:6; 54:1; 55:1; 57:1; 57:9; 58:3; 58:6; 59:8; 61:1; 61:3; 61:4; 62:4; 62:9; 63:1; 63:5; 63:6; 64:3; 64:10; 65:7; 65:7; 66:14; 66:15; 67:3; 67:4; 68:1; 68:3; 68:4; 68:7; 68:20; 68:24; 68:32; 69:8; 69:20; 69:24; 69:25; 70:1; 70:2; 70:4; 71:4; 71:9; 71:12; 71:13; 71:18; 71:20; 71:21; 71:22; 71:24; 72:1; 72:10; 72:11; 72:13; 73:2; 73:11; 73:21; 74:7; 76:1; 76:2; 77:3; 77:5; 77:9; 77:12; 77:16; 77:19; 78:1; 78:2; 78:10; 78:35; 78:57; 78:69; 79:1; 79:4; 79:5; 80:5; 80:13; 80:17; 81:1; 83:1; 83:2; 83:3; 83:8; 83:14; 83:15; 83:17; 85:1; 85:2; 85:3; 85:10; 86:6; 86:8; 88:2; 88:7; 88:8; 88:8; 88:9; 88:11; 88:12; 88:13; 88:14; 88:16; 88:17; 88:18; 89:1; 89:11; 89:23; 89:30; 89:48; 90:2; 90:8; 91:4; 91:10; 92:6; 94:3; 94:7; 94:8; 94:14; 94:16; 94:23; 96:7; 96:13; 97:5; 98:5; 98:9; 101:7; 102:1; 102:17; 102:19; 102:21; 103:1; 103:10; 103:18; 104:7; 105:8; 105:10; 105:13; 105:20; 105:23; 105:27; 105:35; 105:43;

105:44; 105:45; 106:10; 106:14; 106:18; 106:19; 106:27; 106:39; 106:42; 107:11; 107:35; 108:3; 108:4; 109:29; 113:7; 114:1; 114:7; 114:8; 116:3; 117:1; 119:15; 119:60; 119:105; 119:137; 120:2; 120:3; 120:5; 121:4; 121:7; 122:7; 123:2; 123:4; 124:5; 125:4; 126:2; 127:3; 130:2; 130:5; 131:1; 132:2; 135:13; 139:2; 139:3; 139:7; 139:8; 139:9; 139:10; 139:12; 139:21; 139:22; 139:23; 140:1; 140:4; 140:12; 140:13; 141:2; 141:3; 141:9; 142:1; 143:1; 143:4; 143:5; 143:12; 144:6; 145:1; 145:4; 145:7; 145:10; 145:11; 145:13; 146:2; 147:7; 147:10; 147:12; 148:1; 148:2; 148:3; 148:6; 149:2; 149:3; 149:5; 149:7; 149:8; 150:1; 150:2; 150:5

# 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.

### 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.

## Psalms References:

10:15; 10:17; 16:7; 18:7; 19:1; 19:2; 19:3; 19:4; 24:7; 24:9; 25:21; 30:5; 32:10; 34:21; 35:8; 35:10; 36:1; 37:13; 38:10; 42:8; 43:3; 44:4; 44:6; 44:17; 44:17; 45:4; 45:15; 48:6; 49:4; 49:5; 49:14; 49:14; 50:6; 50:19; 50:19; 52:2; 55:5; 55:10; 55:10; 55:11; 55:15; 55:15; 57:1; 57:3; 57:8; 57:8; 61:7; 63:10; 65:8; 65:12; 65:12; 65:13; 65:13; 65:13; 66:4; 67:6; 68:8; 68:8; 68:16; 68:31; 69:7; 69:9; 69:9; 69:15; 69:15; 69:20; 69:34; 72:3; 74:3; 76:10; 77:9; 77:16; 77:19; 78:23; 78:49; 78:63; 79:8; 84:2; 85:10; 85:10; 85:11; 85:11; 85:12; 85:13; 88:7; 88:13; 88:16; 88:16; 89:5; 89:12; 89:14; 91:5; 91:6; 93:3; 96:12; 97:6; 98:7; 98:8; 98:8; 102:1; 103:16; 104:6; 104:7; 104:16; 104:19; 108:2; 108:2; 114:3; 114:3; 114:4; 114:6; 114:6; 119:24; 119:41; 119:53; 119:64; 119:77; 119:91; 119:133; 119:143; 119:169; 119:170; 121:6; 136:8; 136:9; 137:8; 139:9; 139:11; 140:11; 141:7; 145:10; 147:15; 148:8

# Poetry

### Description

Poetry is one of the ways that people use the words and sounds of their language to make their speech and writing more beautiful and to express strong emotion. Through poetry, people can communicate deeper emotion than they can through simple non-poetic forms. Poetry gives more weight and elegance to statements of truth, such as proverbs, and is also easier to remember than ordinary speech.

### In poetry we commonly find:

- many figures of speech such as Apostrophe
- arrangements of clauses into particular patterns such as:
  - parallel lines (See Parallelism)
  - acrostics (beginning lines with successive letters of the alphabet)
  - chiasms (in which the first line relates to the last line, the second to the next-to-last line, etc.):

> You should not give what is holy to the dogs,
>
> > and should not throw your pearls in front of the
> > pigs.
> >
> > Otherwise they will trample them under their feet,
>
> and having turned, they might tear you to pieces. (Matt 7:6 ULT)

- repetition of some or all of a line:

> Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts. Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars. (Psalm 148:2-3 ULT)

- lines of similar length:

> Listen to my call to you,
>
> Yahweh; think about my groanings.
>
> Listen to the sound of my call, my King and my God,
>
> for it is to you that I pray. (Psalm 5:1-2 ULT)

- the same sound used at the end or at the beginning of two or more lines:

> "Twinkle, twinkle little **star**. How I wonder what you **are**." (from an English rhyme)

- the same sound repeated many times:

> "Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater" (from an English rhyme)

- The same root word used as both a verb and as a noun:

> Your old men will **dream dreams** (Joel 2:28 ULT)

> Yahweh,…**light lightning** and scatter them (Psalm 144:5-6 ULT)

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

1. Songs, particularly old songs or songs used in children's games
2. Religious ceremony or chants of priests or witch doctors

3. Prayers, blessings, and curses
4. 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 co
>
> (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.

## Psalms References:

1:intro; 2:intro; 2:9; 3:intro; 4:intro; 4:4; 4:5; 4:7; 5:intro; 5:1,3,8,12; 5:2-3; 6:intro; 7:intro; 7:3-5; 7:8; 8:intro; 8:2; 9:intro; 9:17-18; 10:intro; 14:5; 21:3; 21:6; 35:1; 42:10; 42:11; 43:1; 43:2; 43:5; 44:1; 46:11; 49:20; 53:5; 56:10-11; 57:11; 58:5; 59:14; 63:front; 67:5; 72:19; 75:intro; 76:intro; 77:intro; 78:33; 79:13; 89:26; 89:52; 94:1; 106:14; 107:22; 115:1; 116:17; 118:13; 119:154; 122:6; 130:6; 137:7; 141:1

# Politeness

### Description

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 describes 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. Abraham also uses a word translated as "please" to make his request more polite.

> Then he brought him outside and said, "**Please** look at the heavens and count the stars…" (Genesis 15:5)

In the above example, God is speaking to Abram, inviting him to look at the stars. He also uses the word translated as "please." God has no need to be polite, but this communicates respect for Abram.

### 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

> "**Please** look at the heavens and count the stars…" (Genesis 15:5)

"Look up at the heavens, **if you will**, and count the stars…"

> **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.

## Psalms References:

45:2; 45:6; 45:10

# 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.

> The younger son … wasted his wealth by living recklessly. (Luke 15:13b)

**Social Relationship** — In the example below, the disciples were people who learned from John.

> Then **the disciples of John** came to him. (Matthew 9:14a ULT)

**Association** — In the example below, the gospel is the message associated with Paul because he preaches it.

> Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, from the seed of David, according to **my gospel**, (2 Timothy 2:8 ULT)

**Material** — In the example below, the material used for making the crowns was gold.

> On their heads were something like **crowns of gold.** (Revelation 9:7b)

**Contents** — In the example below, the cup has water in it.

> For whoever gives you **a cup of water** to drink … will not lose his reward. (Mark 9:41 ULT)

**Part of a whole** — In the example below, the door was a part of the palace.

> But Uriah slept at **the door of the king's palace.** (2 Samuel 11:9a ULT)

**Part of a group** — In the example below, "us" refers to the whole group and "each one" refers to the individual members.

> Now to **each one of us** grace has been given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (Ephesians 4:7 ULT)

### Events and Possession

Sometimes one or both of the nouns is an abstract noun that refers to an event or action. In the examples below, the abstract nouns are in **bold** print. These are just some of the relationships that are possible between two nouns when one of them refers to an event.

**Subject** — Sometimes the word after "of" tells who would do the action named by the first noun. In the example below, **John baptized people**.

> The **baptism of John**, was it from heaven or from men? Answer me. (Mark 11:30)

In the example below, **Christ loves us**.

> Who will separate us from the **love of Christ**? (Romans 8:35)

**Object** — Sometimes the word after "of" tells who or what something would happen to. In the example below, **people love money**.

> For the **love of money** is a root of all kinds of evil. (1 Timothy 6:10a ULT)

**Instrument** — Sometimes the word after "of" tells how something would happen. In the example below, God would **punish people by sending enemies to attack them with swords**.

> Then be afraid of the sword, because wrath brings **the punishment of the sword**. (Job 19:29a ULT)

**Representation** — In the example below, John was baptizing people who were repenting of their sins. They were being baptized to show that they were repenting. Their **baptism represented their repentance**.

> John came, baptizing in the wilderness and preaching **a baptism of repentance** for the forgiveness of sins. (Mark 1:4 ULT)

### Strategies for learning what the relationship is between the two nouns

(1) Read the surrounding verses to see if they help you to understand the relationship between the two nouns.
(2) Read the verse in the UST. Sometimes it shows the relationship clearly.
(3) See what the notes say about it.

### Translation Strategies

If possession would be a natural way to show a particular relationship between two nouns, consider using it. If it would be strange or hard to understand, consider these.

(1) Use an adjective to show that one noun describes the other.
(2) Use a verb to show how the two are related.
(3) If one of the nouns refers to an event, translate it as a verb.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use an adjective to show that one noun describes the other.

> On their heads were something like **crowns of gold.** (Revelation 9:7b)
>
> > "On their heads were **gold crowns**"

(2) Use a verb to show how the two are related.

> Whoever gives you **a cup of water** to drink … will not lose his reward. (Mark 9:41 ULT)

> > Whoever gives you a **cup that has water in it** to drink … will not lose his reward.
>
> Wealth is worthless on **the day of wrath.** (Proverbs 11:4a ULT)
>
> > Wealth is worthless on **the day when God shows his wrath**.
> > or:
> > Wealth is worthless on the **day when God punishes people because of his wrath**.

(3) If one of the nouns refers to an event, translate it as a verb. (In the example below, there are two possession relationships, “punishment of Yahweh” and “your God.”)

> Notice that I am not speaking to your children, who have not known or seen **the punishment of Yahweh your God.** (Deuteronomy 11:2a ULT)
>
> > Notice that I am not speaking to your children who have not known or seen **how Yahweh, the God whom you worship, punished the people of Egypt**.
>
> You will only observe and see the **punishment of the wicked**. (Psalms 91:8 ULT)
>
> > You will only observe and see **how Yahweh punishes the wicked**.
>
> You will receive **the gift of the Holy Spirit**. (Acts 2:38b ULT)

> You will receive the **Holy Spirit, whom God will give to you**.

## Psalms References:

3:7; 4:1; 5:2; 7:1; 7:3; 14:6; 18:2; 18:23; 18:33; 18:46; 22:1; 22:1; 23:2; 24:4; 24:5; 24:7; 24:8; 24:10; 25:2; 25:5; 25:7; 25:19; 26:4; 26:8; 26:9; 27:9; 27:12; 28:2; 28:8; 29:2; 29:2; 29:3; 30:2; 30:12; 31:2; 31:6; 31:14; 33:5; 34:7; 35:11; 37:16; 37:18; 37:28; 37:31; 37:34; 37:37; 37:38; 37:39; 38:15; 38:19; 38:20; 38:21; 40:2; 40:3; 40:5; 40:8; 40:17; 41:1; 41:13; 42:8; 43:2; 43:3; 43:4; 44:11; 47:8; 48:1; 49:13; 50:1; 50:11; 51:11; 51:17; 51:19; 56:12; 59:2; 59:2; 59:5; 59:5; 59:10; 59:12; 61:4; 61:5; 67:6; 68:5; 68:5; 68:8; 68:9; 68:12; 68:15; 68:19; 68:22; 68:26; 68:30; 68:30; 68:33; 68:35; 69:6; 69:22; 69:26; 69:27; 69:32; 69:33; 70:4; 71:3; 71:7; 71:22; 72:1; 72:4; 72:8; 72:10; 72:10; 72:15; 72:18; 72:20; 74:1; 74:2; 74:7; 74:8; 74:17; 74:19; 74:20; 74:20; 74:22; 74:22; 74:23; 74:23; 76:6; 78:1; 78:10; 78:27; 78:41; 78:54; 78:55; 78:57; 78:72; 79:2; 79:2; 79:13; 80:4; 80:7; 80:10; 80:12; 80:14; 80:19; 81:7; 81:16; 83:12; 85:2; 85:4; 85:7; 87:1; 87:3; 87:6; 89:5; 89:7; 89:10; 89:14; 89:15; 89:18; 89:20; 89:32; 89:34; 89:39; 89:43; 89:45; 89:50; 89:51; 90:11; 91:3; 91:5; 91:8; 94:13; 94:22; 94:23; 95:7; 96:7; 98:3; 98:5; 99:8; 99:9; 99:9; 102:5; 102:6; 102:17; 102:19; 102:21; 104:7; 104:33; 105:3; 105:7; 105:32; 105:42; 106:28; 106:47; 106:48; 107:7; 107:10; 107:16; 107:16; 107:36; 107:37; 107:39; 107:40; 108:12; 109:1; 109:26; 110:2; 110:3; 110:3; 111:6; 111:10; 112:2; 118:20; 119:1; 119:7; 119:7; 119:13; 119:27; 119:29; 119:30; 119:33; 119:35; 119:62; 119:72; 119:88; 119:104; 119:106; 119:123; 119:128; 119:134; 119:144; 119:160; 119:164; 121:3; 121:4; 122:4; 125:3; 125:3; 125:5; 126:6; 127:2; 127:4; 135:2; 136:3; 138:2; 140:1; 140:4; 140:11; 140:11; 143:10; 144:7; 146:5; 147:18; 148:3; 148:8; 148:9; 148:10; 150:1; 150:2; 150:5; 150:5

# 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.

> Now there was **a man from thePharisees 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.

## Psalms References:

1:2; 1:2; 1:3; 6:8-9; 7:12; 7:13; 7:14; 10:2; 10:3; 12:7; 12:7; 14:1; 14:2; 14:6; 16:2; 17:12; 18:14; 19:3; 19:4; 19:5; 19:6; 19:10; 19:11; 20:8; 21:intro; 21:8; 21:9; 21:10; 21:11; 21:13; 22:8; 22:17; 33:9; 33:9; 34:front; 34:5; 34:17; 34:19; 34:20; 35:15; 36:1; 36:2; 36:8; 37:5; 37:7; 37:9; 37:10; 37:12; 37:13; 37:19; 37:22; 37:23; 37:24; 37:26; 37:32; 37:33; 37:36; 37:40; 38:15; 39:6; 39:6; 39:9; 39:10; 40:5; 40:5; 40:9; 40:14; 41:4; 41:6; 41:12; 43:3; 44:2; 44:2; 44:4; 44:4; 44:6; 44:15; 45:16; 46:3; 46:5; 47:8; 48:1; 48:5; 48:14; 49:14; 49:14; 49:18; 50:6; 50:17; 51:3; 51:4; 51:19; 52:6; 53:1; 53:2; 53:3; 53:5; 55:15; 55:16; 55:18; 55:19; 55:20; 55:22; 55:23; 56:3; 56:6; 56:8; 57:6; 59:1; 59:6; 59:9; 59:11; 59:15; 59:16; 60:5; 60:12; 61:6; 61:6; 61:7; 62:4; 62:12; 63:9; 63:9; 63:10; 63:11; 64:5; 64:8; 65:3; 65:3; 65:9; 66:6; 67:2; 67:7; 68:9; 68:10; 68:11; 68:12; 68:13; 68:14; 68:16; 68:17; 68:21; 68:23; 68:24; 68:27; 68:28; 68:28; 68:30; 68:31; 69:35; 70:3; 71:10; 71:11; 71:13; 71:14; 71:22; 71:24; 72:5; 72:7; 72:9; 72:12; 72:14; 72:15; 72:15; 72:16; 72:16; 72:17; 74:6; 74:7; 74:8; 74:12; 74:13; 75:1; 75:2; 75:3; 75:9; 76:7; 78:15; 78:17; 78:28; 78:54; 78:55; 79:7; 79:7; 79:7; 79:10; 80:5; 80:6; 80:9; 80:13; 80:16; 81:5; 81:6; 81:15; 81:16; 81:16; 82:6; 82:8; 83:2; 83:3; 83:3; 83:4; 83:5; 83:8; 83:10; 83:12; 83:18; 84:5; 84:7; 85:6; 85:6; 85:8; 85:8; 85:9; 85:13; 86:2; 86:9; 86:14; 86:17; 87:1; 87:4; 87:4; 87:5; 88:5; 88:8; 88:13; 88:17; 89:9; 89:10; 89:11; 89:12; 89:27; 89:38; 89:50; 90:5; 90:5; 90:10; 91:7; 91:11; 92:6; 92:7; 92:12; 92:13; 92:14; 94:7; 94:21; 94:23; 95:5; 95:10; 97:7; 99:4; 99:4; 99:6; 99:7; 99:7; 99:8; 99:8; 100:3; 100:3; 101:3; 102:13; 102:26; 102:26; 102:26; 102:27; 103:3; 103:14; 103:16; 103:18; 104:8; 104:9; 104:10; 104:11; 104:12; 104:13; 104:14; 104:19; 104:20; 104:27; 104:32; 104:34; 105:6; 105:12; 105:12; 105:14; 105:17; 105:17; 105:18; 105:21; 105:24; 105:24; 105:27; 105:28; 105:31; 105:40; 105:40; 105:41; 105:41; 105:42; 105:43; 105:44; 106:16; 106:32; 106:33; 106:33; 106:36; 106:37; 106:43; 107:4;

107:24; 107:30; 107:30; 107:34; 107:36; 107:39; 107:43; 108:13; 109:15; 109:15; 109:16; 109:19; 109:20; 109:25; 109:27; 109:27; 109:27; 109:28; 109:28; 110:4; 110:7; 111:2; 111:10; 112:3; 112:3; 113:8; 113:8; 114:2; 115:4; 115:5; 115:8; 115:18; 116:10; 116:11; 118:7; 118:23; 119:2; 119:2; 119:4; 119:10; 119:56; 119:69; 119:70; 119:78; 119:87; 119:91; 119:102; 119:136; 120:3; 120:7; 121:3; 123:1; 123:4; 124:3; 124:6; 124:7; 125:1; 126:2; 127:2; 127:5; 129:1; 129:1; 130:8; 130:8; 131:2; 132:1; 132:6; 132:7; 132:11; 132:15; 132:17; 132:18; 133:3; 134:3; 135:5; 135:7; 135:8; 135:10; 135:12; 135:21; 136:11; 136:14; 136:21; 136:22; 136:23; 136:23; 136:25; 137:5; 137:7; 139:2; 139:4; 139:6; 139:13; 139:16; 139:20; 140:2; 140:2; 140:4; 140:8; 140:10; 141:4; 141:5; 141:5; 141:6; 141:6; 141:7; 141:9; 141:10; 141:10; 142:3; 142:3; 144:6; 144:15; 144:15; 145:4; 145:6; 145:15; 145:19; 146:4; 148:5; 148:8

# 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)

### 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.

## Psalms References:

118:22; 119:96

# Quotations and Quote Margins

### Description

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**.

## Psalms References:

2:6; 11:1-3; 22:8; 30:9-10; 39:1; 39:3; 41:8; 46:10; 50:5; 50:7; 52:front; 52:7; 60:6; 71:11; 73:11; 74:8; 75:2; 75:9; 75:10; 87:4; 87:5; 87:6; 87:7; 91:14; 118:15; 118:20; 118:23; 118:27; 126:2; 132:2; 132:7; 132:11; 132:14; 137:3; 141:7

# 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: , ‘ ’ „ “ ” ‹ › « » ׳ — .

### 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 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.”””

## Psalms References:

81:6; 102:24; 105:11; 105:15

# 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.

## Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.'"

## Psalms References:

82:6

# Reduplication

### Description

Writers and speakers in the Bible sometimes repeat the same word or forms of the same word. This is to increase the intensity, completeness, or certainty of the action that the word describes, or to otherwise increase the emotional impact of the word.

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages may not repeat words to increase the intensity, completeness, or certainty of an action, or they may not repeat words to increase the level of emotion that they communicate. In these cases, repeated words may appear to be a mistake or may indicate that the speaker is unable to speak correctly.

### Examples From the Bible

To the woman he said, “To multiply I will multiply your pain and your childbearing…” (Genesis 3:16 ULT)

The speaker is repeating forms of the verb “multiply” in order to intensify the idea of multiplying.

To be circumcised he must be circumcised (Genesis 17:13)

The speaker is repeating forms of the verb “circumcise” in order to increase the certainty that this must happen.

Begin, possess, to possess his land (Deuteronomy 2:31 ULT)

Moses repeats the word “possess” to emphasize the completeness of the action of possessing the land.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Psalm 22:1 ULT)

The writer repeats “my God” to increase the level of emotion that he wants to communicate; he is crying out desperately to God.

“Fallen, fallen has Babylon the Great…” (Revelation 14:8 ULT)

The angel repeats the word “fallen” in order to show deep emotion in this lament for the ruined city of Babylon.

### Translation Strategies

If repeating words would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, then do the same in your translation. If not, here are some other options:

(1) If your language would not repeat words to increase the intensity, completeness, or certainty of an action, then use a different word or phrase to add that meaning.
(2) If your language would not repeat words to increase emotional intensity, then use an emotional word to do that.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If your language would not repeat words to increase the intensity, completeness, or certainty of an action, then use a different word or phrase to add that meaning.

> To the woman he said, “To multiply I will multiply your pain and your childbearing…” (Genesis 3:16 ULT)

> > To the woman he said, “I will greatly multiply
> > your pain and your childbearing…”

> To be circumcised he must be circumcised (Genesis 17:13 ULT)

> > He certainly must be circumcised
> > Or By all means, he must be circumcised

> Begin, possess, to possess his land (Deuteronomy 2:31 ULT)

> > Begin to completely possess his land
> > Or Enter his land until you completely possess it

(2) If your language would not repeat words to increase emotional intensity, then use an emotional word to do that.

> My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Psalm 22:1 ULT)

> > You are my God! Why, then, have you forsaken me?
> > Or My God, oh, why have you forsaken me?

> “Fallen, fallen has Babylon the Great…” (Revelation 14:8 ULT)

> > “Alas, Babylon the Great has fallen!

## Psalms References:

40:1; 45:2; 47:6; 49:7; 51:14; 57:1; 57:7; 59:13; 61:8; 68:33; 75:1; 77:1; 77:16; 102:26; 109:10; 118:18; 126:6; 126:6; 132:15; 132:16; 144:6; 145:13

# Reflexive Pronouns

### Description

All languages have ways of showing that the same person fills two different roles in a sentence. English does this by using reflexive pronouns. These are pronouns that refer to someone or something that has already been mentioned in a sentence. In English the reflexive pronouns are: “myself,” “yourself,” “himself,” “herself,” “itself,” “ourselves,” “yourselves,” and “themselves.” In English, these pronouns can also be used to emphasize the person to whom they refer. Other languages may have other ways to do both of these things.

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Languages have different ways of showing that the same person fills two different roles in a sentence. For those languages, translators will need to know how to translate the English reflexive pronouns.
- The reflexive pronouns in English also have other functions.

### Uses of Reflexive Pronouns

- To show that the same person or things fills two different roles in a sentence
- To emphasize a person or thing in the sentence
- To show that someone or something did something alone or was alone

### Examples From the Bible

#### To show that the same person or thing fills two different roles in a sentence

> If **I** testify about **myself**, my testimony is not true. (John 5:31 ULT)

> Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and **many** went up to Jerusalem from the country before the Passover in order to purify **themselves**. (John 11:55 ULT)

### To emphasize a person or thing in the sentence

> **Jesus himself** was not baptizing, but his disciples were. (John 4:2 ULT)

> So they left the crowd, taking Jesus with them, just as he was, in the boat. There also were other boats with him. Then a violent windstorm arose and the waves were breaking into the boat so that the boat was already full of water. But **Jesus himself** was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. (Mark 4:36-38a ULT)

> Then Festus answered that Paul was being held at Caesarea but that **he himself** was about to depart soon. (Acts 25:4 ULT)

### To show that someone did something alone, or that something was alone

> When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again up the mountain **by himself**. (John 6:15 ULT)

> He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. **It** was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a place **by itself**. (John 20:6b-7 ULT)

### Translation Strategies

If a reflexive pronoun would have the same function in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other strategies.

(1) In some languages people put something on the verb to show that the object of the verb is the same as the subject.
(2) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by referring to it in a

special place in the sentence.
(3) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by adding something to that word or putting another word with it.
(4) In some languages people show that someone did something alone by using a word like "alone."
(5) In some languages people show that something was alone by using a phrase that tells about where it was.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) In some languages people modify the verb to show that the object of the verb is the same as the subject.

> If I testify about **myself**, my testimony is not true. (John 5:31)
>
> > "If I **self-testify**, my testimony is not true."

> Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem from the country before the Passover in order to **purify themselves**. (John 11:55)
>
> > "Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem out from country before the Passover in order to **self-purify**."

(2) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by referring to it in a special place in the sentence.

> **He himself** took our sickness and bore our diseases. (Matthew 8:17 ULT)

> > "**The one who** took our sickness and bore our diseases **was Jesus**."

> **Jesus himself** was not baptizing, but his disciples were. (John 4:2)
>
> > "**It was not Jesus who** was baptizing, but his disciples."

(3) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by adding something to that word or putting another word with it.

> But Jesus said this to test Philip, for he **himself** knew what he was going to do. (John 6:6)
>
> > But Jesus said this to test Philip, for, **as for him, he** knew what he was going to do.

> Then Festus answered that Paul was being held at Caesarea but that **he himself** was about to depart soon. (Acts 25:4 ULT)
>
> > Then Festus answered that Paul was being held at Caesarea but that, **for his part, he** was about to depart soon.

(4) In some languages people show that someone did something alone by using a word like "alone."

> When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again up the mountain **by himself**. (John 6:15)
>
> > "When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again **alone** up the mountain."

(5) In some languages people show that something was alone by using a phrase that tells about where it was.

> He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a place **by itself**. (John 20:6b-7 ULT)
>
> > "He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up and lying **in it's own place**."

## Psalms References:

2:6; 9:16; 102:2; 103:5

# 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.

### 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 orignal 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?

## Psalms References:

2:1; 4:2; 4:6; 6:3; 6:5; 8:4; 10:1; 11:1; 11:3; 11:3; 12:4; 14:4; 15:1; 18:31; 19:12; 24:intro; 24:3; 24:8; 24:10; 25:12; 27:1; 30:9; 34:12; 35:10; 35:17; 39:7; 41:5; 42:2; 42:3; 42:5; 42:9; 43:2; 44:21; 44:23; 44:24; 50:13; 50:16; 52:1; 53:4; 54:front; 56:4; 56:7; 56:8; 56:13; 58:1; 59:7; 60:9; 60:9; 60:10; 62:3; 64:5; 66:3; 68:16; 71:19; 73:11; 73:25; 74:1; 74:10; 74:11; 76:7; 77:7; 77:8; 77:9; 77:13; 78:19; 78:20; 79:5; 79:5; 79:5; 79:10; 79:10; 80:4;

80:12; 82:2; 85:5; 85:5; 85:6; 88:10; 88:10; 88:10; 88:11; 88:12; 88:14; 88:14; 89:6; 89:8; 89:46; 89:46; 89:48; 89:49; 90:11; 90:13; 94:3; 94:8; 94:9; 94:9; 94:10; 94:10; 94:16; 94:16; 94:20; 101:2; 106:2; 107:43; 108:10; 108:10; 108:11; 113:5; 113:6; 114:5; 114:5; 114:6; 114:6; 115:2; 115:2; 116:12; 118:6; 119:9; 119:82; 119:84; 119:84; 120:3; 121:1; 130:3; 137:4; 139:7; 139:7; 139:21; 139:21; 144:3; 147:17

# 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."

> 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!

## Psalms References:

1:3; 5:12; 7:2; 10:9; 14:4; 17:8; 17:12; 18:42; 18:42; 19:5; 19:5; 19:10; 21:9; 22:14; 22:14; 22:15; 29:6; 31:12; 31:12; 32:4; 32:9; 33:7; 35:5; 35:14; 35:14; 36:6; 36:6; 37:2; 37:2; 37:6; 37:6; 37:20; 37:35; 38:13; 38:13; 38:14; 39:5; 39:6; 39:11; 42:1; 44:11; 48:6; 49:14; 52:2; 52:8; 53:4; 55:21; 57:4; 58:4; 58:4; 58:7; 58:7; 58:8; 58:8; 59:6; 59:14; 61:6; 62:3; 63:5; 64:3; 66:10; 68:2; 68:2; 71:7; 72:6; 72:6; 72:16; 72:16; 73:20; 74:5; 77:20; 78:13; 78:15; 78:16; 78:52; 78:57; 78:57; 78:65; 78:65; 78:69; 78:69; 79:3; 79:5; 80:1; 82:7; 82:7; 83:11; 83:11; 83:13; 83:13; 83:14; 87:7; 88:4; 88:5; 88:17; 89:10; 89:29; 89:36; 89:37; 89:46; 90:4; 90:5; 90:9; 92:7; 92:12; 92:12; 97:5; 102:3; 102:3; 102:4; 102:6; 102:7; 102:11; 102:11; 103:5; 103:11; 103:12; 103:13; 103:15; 103:15; 104:2; 104:2; 104:6; 106:9; 107:41; 109:18; 109:18; 109:19; 109:19; 109:23; 109:23; 109:29; 118:12; 118:12; 119:14; 119:70; 119:83; 119:119; 119:162; 119:176; 122:3; 123:2; 124:7; 125:1; 126:1; 126:4; 127:4; 128:3; 128:3; 129:6; 129:7; 130:6; 131:2; 133:3; 139:12; 139:18; 140:3; 141:2; 141:2; 141:7; 143:3; 143:6; 144:4; 144:12; 144:12; 147:16; 147:16; 147:17

# 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.

### 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.

## Psalms References:

2:12; 3:7; 10:5; 18:39; 18:40; 20:5; 21:3; 22:7; 22:27; 22:29; 22:29; 23:5; 23:5; 26:6; 28:2; 29:2; 35:13; 35:14; 35:16; 35:19; 37:12; 44:14; 45:9; 45:11; 47:5; 60:8; 63:4; 69:11; 74:4; 77:2; 95:6; 96:9; 96:9; 97:7; 106:26; 109:25; 112:10; 132:7; 134:2; 142:4

# 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 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)
>
> > **Arepresentative 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

## Psalms References:

6:2; 6:3-4; 7:11; 8:2; 9:1; 10:8; 11:1; 11:5; 11:7; 16:10; 17:13; 17:15; 18:34; 18:44; 21:12; 30:3; 31:10; 33:5; 33:17; 33:19; 33:20; 34:13; 34:13; 34:20; 35:10; 35:28; 37:30; 37:30; 38:3; 38:3; 38:7; 42:1; 42:2; 42:3; 42:5; 44:3; 44:6; 44:15; 44:18; 44:18; 44:25; 45:3; 45:11; 45:12; 46:9; 49:3; 49:18; 51:8; 51:14; 51:15; 52:4; 53:5; 54:7; 57:front; 57:1; 57:4; 57:6; 57:8; 62:1; 62:4; 62:5; 63:1; 63:1; 63:3; 63:5; 63:5; 63:5; 63:8; 63:9; 63:11; 68:13; 68:21; 68:23; 71:23; 76:3; 76:6; 77:2; 77:6; 78:24; 78:25; 84:2; 86:2; 86:4; 86:13; 87:2; 90:9; 90:9; 91:4; 91:5; 91:10; 91:12; 92:11; 94:17; 94:19; 102:4; 102:4; 102:5; 102:9; 105:16; 105:35; 116:8; 116:8; 119:20; 119:25; 119:28; 119:81; 119:82; 119:101; 119:120; 119:123; 119:129; 119:167; 119:173; 119:175; 120:2; 120:2; 120:3; 120:6; 121:7; 122:2; 122:2; 123:4; 126:2; 126:2; 132:15; 136:25; 136:25; 138:3; 138:4; 139:14; 142:3; 142:4; 142:7; 145:15; 145:21; 145:21; 146:1; 146:7; 147:10

# Textual Variants

### Description

Thousands of years ago, people wrote the books of the Bible. Other people then copied them by hand and translated them. They did this work very carefully, and over the years many people made thousands of copies. However, people who looked at them later saw that there were small differences between them. Some copiers accidentally left out some words, or some mistook one word for another that looked like it. Occasionally, they added words or even whole sentences, either by accident or because they wanted to explain something. Modern Bibles are translations of the old copies. Some modern Bibles include some of these sentences that were added. In the ULT, these added sentences are usually written in footnotes.

Bible scholars have read many old copies and compared them with each other. For each place in the Bible where there was a difference, they have figured out which wordings are most likely correct. The translators of the ULT based the ULT New Testament on wordings that scholars say are most likely correct. The ULT Old Testament is based on the Westminster Leningrad Codex, which is considered to be the best representative of the ancient copies. Because people who use the ULT may have access to Bibles that are based on other copies, the ULT translators have sometimes included information about some of the differences between them, either in the ULT footnotes or in the unfoldingWord® Translation Notes.

Translators are encouraged to translate the text in the ULT and to write about added sentences in footnotes, as is done in the ULT. However, if the local church really wants those sentences to be included in the main text, translators may put them in the text and include a footnote about them.

### Examples From the Bible

Matthew 18:10-11 ULT has a footnote about verse 11.

> 10 See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I say to you
> that in heaven their angels always look on the face of my Father who is
> in heaven. 11 [1]

> [1] Many authorities, some ancient, insert v. 11: **For the Son of Man came to save that which was lost.**

John 7:53-8:11 is not in the best earliest copies. It has been included in the ULT, but it is marked off with square brackets ([ ]) at the beginning and end, and there is a footnote after verse 11.

> 53 [Then everyone went to his own house … 11 She said, “No one, Lord.” Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.”] [2]
>
> [2] Some ancient manuscripts include John 7:53-8:11

Psalm 100:3 ULT follows the Westminster Leningrad Codex. It says:

> Know that Yahweh, he {is} God; he, he made us, **and not we**,

There are some other ancient copies that say:

> Know that Yahweh, he {is} God; he, he made us, **and we are his**,

There is an unfoldingWord® Translation Note at that place to tell the translator about this other reading and that either one is an acceptable choice.

### Translation Strategies

When there is a textual variant, you may choose to follow the ULT or another version that you have access to.

(1) Translate the verses as they are in the ULT and include a footnote about the alternate reading such as the one that the ULT provides or one in the unfoldingWord® Translation Notes.

(2) Translate the verses as another version has them, and change the footnote so that it fits this situation.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

The translation strategies are applied to Mark 7:14-16 ULT, which has a footnote about verse 16.

> 14 He called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand. 15 There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man.” 16 [1]

> [1] Some ancient manuscripts include verse 16: **If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.**

(1) Translate the verses as they are in the ULT and include the footnote that the ULT provides.

> 14 He called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand. 15 There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man.” 16 [1]
>
> > [1] Some ancient manuscripts include verse 16: **If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.**

(2) Translate the verses as another version has them, and change the footnote so that it fits this situation.

> 14 He called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand. 15There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the

> man are the things that defile the man. 16 If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.” [1]
>
> > [1] Some ancient manuscripts do not include verse 16.

## Psalms References:

8:2; 17:11; 18:13; 19:4; 22:16; 28:8; 100:3; 106:29; 106:33; 119:79

# Third-Person Imperatives

### Description

The languages of the Bible have verb forms that can give commands, instructions or other directive speech in the third person. In other words, these directives address “he,” “she,” “it,” or “they” rather than “you.”

### Reasons This Is a Translation Issue:

Many languages, including English, do not have these verb forms and so they must communicate this kind of directive speech in other ways. In English, we normally represent these third-person imperatives by putting “let” before the subject or verb. This is actually one of the translation strategies, since English does not have third-person imperatives.

### Examples From the Bible

> **Let your kingdom come, let your will be done** as in heaven also on earth. (Matthew 6:9 ULT)

In this prayer, Jesus uses two third–person imperatives. The first one tells God’s kingdom to come, and the second one tells God’s will to be done. Of course, a kingdom and a will cannot hear Jesus, so Jesus is using these verb forms to communicate to God that Jesus desires that these things happen.

> **Let no one deceive himself**. If anyone among you thinks he is wise in this age, **let him become a “fool,”** that he may become wise. (1 Corinthians 3:18 ULT)

In this verse, Paul uses third–person imperatives to give a warning and an instruction. It may be that using this third–person form was more polite than if he had used second–person imperatives.

> But because of immorality, **let each man have** his own wife, and **let each woman have** her own husband. (1 Corinthians 7:2 ULT)

Here again Paul uses two third–person imperatives to instruct the Corinthian church. Since he had just recommended a celibate life in the previous verse, these imperatives have the sense of giving advice rather than command.

> Then God said, **"Let there be light."** And there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

The Biblical Hebrew verb form used here is equivalent to the third–person imperative in Greek. Here, God commands in the third person that light come into existence, so it does.

> **…let him do to me** just as {is} good in his eyes. (2 Samuel 15:26 ULT)

David uses the third-person form to express his willingness for God to do to him whatever God wants to do.

### Translation Strategies

If your language has third-person imperative forms and would use them in the way that the biblical languages do, then please use them. If not, then consider these strategies.

(1) Use a form that your language has that indicates that this is the will or wish of the speaker.
(2) If appropriate, use a second-person imperative.
(3) Use an explicit reference to the function of the imperative.

### Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use a form that your language has that indicates that this is the will or wish of the speaker.

> Let your kingdom come, let your will be done as in heaven also on earth. (Matthew 6:9 ULT)

(Since English does not have third-person imperatives, it follows this strategy and uses "let" to indicate that this is the will or wish of the speaker.)

> > May your kingdom come, may your will be done as in heaven also on earth.

> Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks he is wise in this age, let him become a "fool," that he may become wise. (1 Corinthians 3:18 ULT)

(Since English does not have third-person imperatives, it follows this strategy and uses "let" to indicate that this is the will or wish of the speaker.)

> > No one should deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks he is wise in this age, he should become a "fool," that he may become wise.

> …let him do to me just as {is} good in his eyes. (2 Samuel 15:26 ULT)

(Since English does not have third-person imperatives, it follows this strategy and uses "let" to indicate that this is the will or wish of the speaker.)

> > …he may do to me just as {is} good in his eyes.
> > (2 Samuel 15:26 ULT)

(2) If appropriate, use a second-person imperative.

> Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks he is wise in this age, let him become a “fool,” that he may become wise. (1 Corinthians 3:18 ULT)

> > Do not deceive yourselves. If you think you are wise in this age, then become a “fool,” that you may become wise.

> Then God said, “Let there be light.” And there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

> > Then God said, “Light, come into being.” And there was light.

> …let him do to me just as {is} good in his eyes. (2 Samuel 15:26 ULT)

> > …Yahweh, do to me just as {is} good in your eyes.

(3) Use an explicit reference to the function of the imperative.

> Let your kingdom come, let your will be done as in heaven also on earth. (Matthew 6:9 ULT)

> > We pray that your kingdom come, we pray that your will be done as in heaven also on earth.

> Then God said, “Let there be light.” And there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

> > Then God said, “I command light to be.” And there was light.

> But because of immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. (1 Corinthians 7:2 ULT)

> > But because of immorality, I advise each man to have his own wife, and I advise each woman to have her own husband.

> …let him do to me just as {is} good in his eyes. (2 Samuel 15:26 ULT)

> > …he has my permission to do to me just as {is} good in his eyes.

See also Imperatives – Other Uses

## Psalms References:

31:17; 33:8; 35:4; 40:14; 57:3; 66:7; 68:1; 68:2; 70:2; 71:13; 72:2; 72:8; 85:8; 96:11; 107:2; 107:8; 118:2; 119:169; 121:3; 122:6; 124:1; 129:1; 132:9; 137:5; 140:9; 140:10; 140:10; 141:4; 141:5; 144:5; 148:5; 149:2; 150:6

# 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?”

### 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**

## Psalms References:

1:4; 2:9; 4:front; 5:front; 6:front; 8:front; 8:front; 9:front; 9:12; 9:14; 11:1; 12:front; 13:front; 14:1; 18:front; 18:8; 19:front; 20:front; 20:5; 21:front; 22:front; 22:14; 22:15; 31:front; 32:9; 33:2; 36:front; 39:front; 40:front; 41:front; 42:front; 44:front; 44:19; 45:front; 45:8; 45:14; 46:front; 46:front; 47:front; 49:front; 51:front; 51:7; 52:front; 53:front; 54:front; 55:front; 56:front; 57:front; 58:front; 59:front; 60:front; 61:front; 61:front; 62:front; 63:6; 63:10; 64:front; 65:front; 66:1; 66:13; 66:15; 67:front; 69:front; 70:front; 73:6; 75:front; 76:front; 77:front; 78:1; 78:2; 80:front; 81:front; 84:front; 85:front; 88:front; 92:3; 102:6; 104:18; 105:18; 105:40; 109:1; 127:5; 137:2; 139:1; 140:front; 141:2; 150:3; 150:4

# Unusual Uses of the Plural

The biblical languages sometimes use plural forms to refer to single objects, ideas, or people.

### 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**

## Psalms References:

42:6; 43:3; 45:front; 45:1; 45:8; 46:2; 46:4; 47:1; 55:4; 56:12; 73:17

# 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.

> 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)

## Psalms References:

44:20-21; 49:5-6; 49:8-9; 50:16-17; 102:10; 105:6; 107:16

# When Masculine Words Include Women

In the Bible, sometimes the words “men,” “brothers,” and “sons” refer only to men. At other times, those words include both men and women. In those places where the writer meant both men and women, you (the translator) need to translate it in a way that does not limit the meaning to men.

### Description

In some languages a word that normally refers to men can also be used in a more general way to refer to both men and women. For example, the Bible sometimes says “brothers” when it refers to both brothers and sisters.

Also in some languages, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can be used in a more general way for any person if it is not important whether the person is a man or a woman. In the example below, the pronoun is “his,” but it is not limited to males.

> A wise son makes **his** father rejoice
> but a foolish son brings grief to **his** mother. (Proverbs 10:1 ULT)

### Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- In some cultures words like “man,” “brother,” and “son” can only be used to refer to men. If those words are used in a translation in a more general way, people will think that what is being said does not apply to women.
- In some cultures, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can only refer to men. If a masculine pronoun is used, people will think that what is said does not apply to women.

### Translation Principles

When a statement applies to both men and women, translate it in such a way that people will be able to understand that it applies to both.

### Examples From the Bible

> Now we want you to know, **brothers**, the grace of God that has been given to the churches of Macedonia. (2 Corinthians 8:1 ULT)

This verse is addressing the believers in Corinth, not only men, but **men and women**.

> Then said Jesus to his disciples, “If anyone wants to follow me, **he** must deny **himself**, take up **his** cross, and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24 ULT)

Jesus was not speaking only of men, but of **men and women**.

**Caution**: Sometimes masculine words are used specifically to refer to men. Do not use words that would lead people to think that they include women. The words below are specifically about men.

> Moses said, ‘If **someone** dies, not having children, **hisbrother** must marry **his** wife and have children for **hisbrother**.’ (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."

## Psalms References:

17:14; 34:11; 49:16; 128:3; 128:6; 141:4; 144:3; 144:4; 147:10

# 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.

## 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.

## Psalms References:

2:1; 8:5; 13:1; 16:10; 17:15; 20:6; 21:1; 21:4; 21:7; 27:10; 29:3

# unfoldingWord® Translation Words - Psalms

**v89**

# Aaron

### Definition:

Aaron was Moses' older brother. God chose Aaron to be the first high priest for the people of Israel.

- Aaron helped Moses speak to Pharaoh about letting the Israelites go free.
- While the Israelites were traveling through the desert, Aaron sinned by making an idol for the people to worship.
- God also appointed Aaron and his descendants to be the priest priests for the people of Israel.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: priest, Moses, Israel)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 23:14
- Acts 7:38-40
- Exodus 28:1-3
- Luke 1:5
- Numbers 16:45

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 9:15 God warned Moses and **Aaron** that Pharaoh would be stubborn.
- 10:5 Pharaoh called Moses and **Aaron** and told them that if they stopped the plague, the Israelites could leave Egypt.
- 13:9 God chose Moses' brother, **Aaron**, and Aaron's descendants to be his priests.
- 13:11 So they (the Israelites) brought gold to **Aaron** and asked him to form it into an idol for them!
- 14:7 They (the Israelites) became angry with Moses and **Aaron** and said, "Oh, why did you bring us to this horrible place?"

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0175, G00020

## Psalms References:

77:20; 99:6; 105:26; 106:16; 115:10; 115:12; 118:3; 133:2; 135:19

# Abimelech

**Definition:**

Abimelech was a Philistine king over the region of Gerar during the time when Abraham and Isaac were living in the land of Canaan.

- Abraham deceived King Abimelech by telling him that Sarah was his sister rather than his wife.
- Abraham and Abimelech made an agreement regarding ownership of wells at Beersheba.
- Many years later, Isaac also deceived Abimelech and the other men of Gerar by saying that Rebekah was his sister, not his wife.
- King Abimelech rebuked Abraham, and later Isaac, for lying to him.
- Another man by the name of Abimelech was a son of Gideon and a brother of Jotham. While some translations use a slightly different spelling of his name to make it clear that he is a different person from King Abimelech, we recommend translating the same Hebrew name consistently for each person who had that name.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Beersheba, Gerar, Gideon, Jotham, Philistines)

**Bible References:**

- 2 Samuel 11:21
- Genesis 20:3
- Genesis 20:5
- Genesis 21:22
- Genesis 26:11
- Judges 9:54

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0040

## Psalms References:

34:front

# abomination, abominable

### Definition:

The term “abomination” is used to refer to something that causes disgust or extreme dislike.

- The Egyptians considered the Hebrew people to be an “abomination.” This means that the Egyptians disliked the Hebrews and did not want to associate with them or be near them.
- Some of the things that the Bible calls “an abomination to Yahweh” include lying, pride, sacrificing humans, worship of idols, murder, and sexual sins such as adultery and homosexual acts.
- In teaching his disciples about the end times, Jesus referred to a prophecy by the prophet Daniel about an “abomination of desolation” that would be set up as a rebellion against God, defiling his place of worship.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “abomination” could also be translated by “something God hates” or “something disgusting” or “disgusting practice” or “very evil action.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate the phrase “is an abomination to” could include “is greatly hated by” or “is disgusting to” or “is totally unacceptable to” or “causes deep disgust.”
- The phrase “abomination of desolation” could be translated as “defiling object that causes people to be greatly harmed” or “disgusting thing that causes great sorrow.”

(See also: adultery, desecrate, desolate, false god, sacrifice)

### Bible References:

- Ezra 9:1-2
- Genesis 46:34
- Isaiah 1:13
- Matthew 24:15
- Proverbs 26:25

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0887, H6292, H8251, H8262, H8263, H8441, G09460

## Psalms References:

5:6; 88:8

# Abraham, Abram

### Definition:

Abram was a Chaldean man from the city of Ur who was chosen by God to be the forefather of the Israelites. God changed his name to “Abraham.”

- The name “Abram” means “exalted father.”
- “Abraham” means “father of many.”
- God promised Abraham that he would have many descendants, who would become a great nation.
- Abraham believed God and obeyed him. God led Abraham to move from Chaldea to the land of Canaan.
- Abraham and his wife Sarah, when they were very old and living in the land of Canaan, had a son, Isaac.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Canaan, Chaldea, Sarah, Isaac)

### Bible References:

- Galatians 3:8
- Genesis 11:29-30
- Genesis 21:4
- Genesis 22:2
- James 2:23
- Matthew 1:2

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 4:6 When **Abram** arrived in Canaan, God said, “Look all around you. I will give to you and your descendants all the land that you can see as an inheritance.”
- 5:4 Then God changed **Abram**’s name to **Abraham**, which means “father of many.”
- 5:5 About a year later, when **Abraham** was 100 years old and Sarah was 90, Sarah gave birth to Abraham’s son.
- 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.”

- 6:1 When **Abraham** was very old and his son, Isaac, had grown to be a man, **Abraham** sent one of his servants back to the land where his relatives lived to find a wife for his son, Isaac.
- 6:4 After a long time, **Abraham** died and all of the promises that God had made to him in the covenant were passed on to Isaac.
- 21:2 God promised **Abraham** that through him all people groups of the world would receive a blessing.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0087, H0085, G00110

## Psalms References:

47:9; 105:6; 105:9; 105:42

# Absalom

**Definition:**

Absalom was the third son of King David. He was known for his handsome appearance and fiery temperament.

- When Absalom's sister Tamar was raped by their half-brother, Amnon, Absalom made a plan to have Amnon killed.
- After the murder of Amnon, Absalom fled to the region of Geshur (where his mother Maacah was from) and stayed there three years. Then King David sent for him to come back to Jerusalem, but did not allow Absalom to come into his presence for two years.
- Absalom turned some of the people against King David and led a revolt against him.
- David's army fought against Absalom and killed him. David was very grieved when this happened.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Geshur, Amnon)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 3:1-3
- 1 Kings 1:6
- 2 Samuel 15:2
- 2 Samuel 17:1-4
- 2 Samuel 18:18
- Psalm 3:1-2

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0053

## Psalms References:

3:front

# acknowledge, admit, admitted

### Definition:

The term “acknowledge” means to give proper recognition to something or someone.

- To acknowledge God also involves acting in a way that shows that what he says is true.
- People who acknowledge God will show it by obeying him, which brings glory to his name.
- To acknowledge something means to believe that it is true, with actions and words that confirm that.

### Translation Suggestions:

- In the context of acknowledging that something is true, “acknowledge” could be translated as “admit” or “declare” or “confess to be true” or “believe.”
- When referring to acknowledging a person, this term could be translated as “accept” or “recognize the value of” or “tell others that (the person) is faithful.”
- In the context of acknowledging God, this could be translated as “believe and obey God” or “declare who God is” or “tell other people about how great God is” or “confess that what God says and does is true.”

(See also: obey, glory, save)

### Bible References:

- Daniel 11:38-39
- Jeremiah 9:4-6
- Job 34:26-28
- Leviticus 22:32
- Psalm 29:1-2

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3045, H3046, H5046, H5234, H6942, G14920, G19210, G36700

## Psalms References:

32:5; 103:16

# admonish, warned, aware

### Definition:

The term “admonish” means to firmly warn or advise someone.

- Usually “admonish” means to advise someone not to do something.
- In the body of Christ, believers are taught to admonish each other to avoid sin and to live holy lives.
- The word “admonish” could be translated as “encourage not to sin” or “urge someone to not sin.”

### Bible References:

- Nehemiah 9:32-34

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2094, H5749, G35600, G38670, G55370

## Psalms References:

2:10; 19:11

# adultery, adulterous, adulterer, adulteress

### Definition:

The term “adultery” refers to a sin that occurs when a married person has sexual relations with someone who is not that person’s spouse. Both of them are guilty of adultery. The term “adulterous” describes this kind of behavior or any person who commits this sin.

- The term “adulterer” refers generally to any person who commits adultery.
- Sometimes the term “adulteress” is used to specify that it was a woman who committed adultery.
- Adultery breaks the promises that a husband and wife made to each other in their covenant of marriage.
- God commanded the Israelites to not commit adultery.

### Translation Suggestions:

- If the target language does not have one word that means “adultery,” this term could be translated with a phrase such as “having sexual relations with someone else’s wife” or “being intimate with another person’s spouse.”
- Some languages may have an indirect way of talking about adultery, such as “sleeping with someone else’s spouse” or “being unfaithful to one’s wife.” (See: euphemism)

(See also: commit, covenant, sexual immorality, faithful)

### Bible References:

- Exodus 20:14
- Hosea 4:1-2
- Luke 16:18
- Matthew 5:28
- Matthew 12:39
- Revelation 2:22

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 13:6 “Do not commit **adultery**.”
- 28:2 Do not commit **adultery**.
- 34:7 “The religious leader prayed like this, ‘Thank you, God, that I am not a sinner like other men-such as robbers, unjust men, **adulterers**, or even like that tax collector.’”

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H5003, H5004, G34280, G34290, G34300, G34310, G34320

## Psalms References:

50:18

# adversary, enemy

### Definition:

An “adversary” is a person (or group of people) who is opposed to someone else. The term “enemy” has a similar meaning.

- Your adversary can be a person who tries to oppose or harm another person.
- When two nations fight, each can be called an “adversary” of the other.
- In the Bible, the devil is referred to as an “adversary” and an “enemy.”
- The term “adversary” may be translated as “opponent” or “enemy,” but it suggests a stronger form of opposition.

(See also: Satan)

### Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 5:14
- Isaiah 9:11
- Job 6:23
- Lamentations 4:12
- Luke 12:59
- Matthew 13:25

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0341, H6146, H6887, H6862, H6965, H7790, H7854, H8130, H8324, G04760, G04800, G21890, G21900, G52270

## Psalms References:

3:7; 6:7; 6:10; 7:4; 7:5; 7:6; 8:2; 9:3; 9:6; 9:13; 10:5; 13:2; 13:4; 17:9; 18:front; 18:3; 18:17; 18:37; 18:40; 18:48; 21:8; 23:5; 25:2; 25:19; 27:2; 27:6; 27:11; 27:12; 30:1; 31:8; 31:11; 31:15; 35:19; 37:20; 38:19; 41:2; 41:5; 41:6; 41:11; 42:9; 43:2; 44:5; 44:7; 44:10; 44:16; 45:5; 54:5; 54:7; 55:3; 55:12; 56:2; 56:9; 59:1; 59:10; 60:11; 60:12; 61:3; 64:1; 66:3; 68:1; 68:21; 68:23; 69:4; 69:18; 69:19; 71:10; 71:13; 72:9; 74:3; 74:4; 74:10; 74:18; 74:23; 78:42; 78:53; 78:61; 78:66; 80:6; 81:14; 83:2; 89:10; 89:22; 89:23; 89:42; 89:51; 92:9; 92:11; 97:3; 102:8; 105:24; 106:10; 106:11; 106:42; 107:2; 108:12; 108:13; 110:1; 110:2; 112:8; 119:98; 119:139; 119:157; 127:5; 129:1; 132:18; 136:24; 138:7; 139:20; 139:22; 143:3; 143:9; 143:12

# advice, advise, advisor, counsel, counselor, counsels

**Definition:**

The terms “counsel” and “advice” have the same meaning and refer to helping someone decide wisely about what to do in a certain situation. A wise “counselor” or “advisor” is someone who gives advice or counsel that will help a person make right choices.

- Kings often have official advisors or counselors to help them decide important matters that affect the people they are ruling.
- Sometimes the advice or counsel that is given is not good. Evil advisors may urge a king to take action or make a decree that will harm him or his people.
- Depending on the context, “advice” or “counsel” could also be translated as “help in deciding” or “warnings” or “exhortations” or “guidance.”
- The action, to “counsel” could be translated as to “advise” or to “make suggestions” or to “exhort.”
- Note that “counsel” is a different word than “council,” which refers to a group of people.

(See also: exhort, Holy Spirit, wise)

**Bible References:**

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1697, H1847, H1875, H1884, H1907, H3272, H3289, H3982, H4156, H4431, H5475, H5779, H6440, H6963, H6098, H7592, H8458, G10110, G10120, G11060, G48230, G48250

## Psalms References:

1:1; 13:2; 14:6; 16:7; 32:8; 33:10; 33:11; 55:14; 62:4; 71:10; 73:24; 81:12; 83:3; 106:43; 107:11; 119:24

# afflict, affliction, distress

### Definition:

The term “afflict” means to cause someone distress or suffering. An “affliction” is the disease, emotional grief, or other disaster that results from this.

- Sometimes God afflicted his people with sickness or other hardships with the intention for them to repent of their sins and turn back to him.
- God caused afflictions or plagues to come on the people of Egypt because their king refused to obey God.
- To “be afflicted with” means to suffer from some kind of distress, such as a disease, persecution, or emotional grief.
- In some Old Testament contexts, the idea of “afflicting oneself” or “afflicting one’s soul” means to abstain from eating food.

### Translation Suggestions:

- To “afflict” someone could be translated as “cause someone to experience troubles” or “cause someone to suffer” or “cause suffering to come.”
- A phrase like “afflict someone with leprosy” could be translated as “cause someone to be sick with leprosy.”
- When a disease or disaster is sent to “afflict” people or animals, this could be translated as “cause suffering to.”
- Depending on the context, the term “affliction” could be translated as “calamity” or “sickness” or “suffering” or “great distress.”
- The phrase “afflicted with” could also be translated as “suffering from” or “sick with.”

(See also: leprosy, plague, suffer)

### Bible References:

- 2 Thessalonians 1:6
- Amos 5:12
- Colossians 1:24
- Exodus 22:22-24
- Genesis 12:17-20
- Genesis 15:12-13
- Genesis 29:32

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H3013, H3905, H3906, H6031, H6039, H6040, H6041, H6862, H6869, H6887, H7451, H7489, G23460, G23470, G38040

## Psalms References:

9:13; 9:18; 10:2; 10:9; 10:12; 10:17; 14:6; 22:24; 25:16; 25:18; 31:7; 34:6; 35:13; 42:10; 44:2; 44:24; 73:5; 88:front; 88:9; 90:15; 94:5; 107:10; 107:17; 107:41; 119:50; 119:67; 119:92; 119:107; 119:153; 120:1; 129:2; 132:1

# age, aged, old, old age, years old

### Definition:

In this sense, the term “age” refers to the number of years a person has lived. In the Bible the terms “aged” and “old” are both used to describe someone who has lived a for many years.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The phrase “at a very old age” could be translated as “at many years old” or “when he was very old” or “when he had lived a very long time.”
- The term “aged” could also be translated as “old” or “very old” depending on context.

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: G01650, G01660

## Psalms References:

37:25; 71:9; 71:18; 92:14; 148:12

# age, era, time

### Definition:

Used in this sense the term “age” refers to a time period.

- Other words used to express an extended period of time include “era” and “season.”
- Jesus refers to “this age” as the present time when evil, sin, and disobedience toward God fill the earth.
- There will be a future age when righteousness will reign in a new heaven and a new earth.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “age” could be translated as “era” or “time period” or “time.”
- The phrase “this present evil age” means “during this time right now when people are very evil.”
- The phrase “end of the age” (used in Jesus’ words in Matthew 28:20) means “end of this period of history” or “end of this present age” and refers to the end of this present age at Jesus’ second coming.

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2165, H6256, H6471, G21190, G21210, G22350, G25400, G35680, G41830, G42180, G44550, G51190, G55500, G55510, G56100

## Psalms References:

9:9; 10:5; 25:6; 31:15; 32:6; 37:19; 37:39; 69:13; 71:9; 72:7; 75:2; 76:7; 78:38; 81:15; 102:13; 104:19; 104:27; 105:19; 106:3; 119:52; 119:126; 119:164; 143:3; 145:15

# alarm, alarmed

### Definition:

An alarm is something that warns people about something that could harm them. To “be alarmed” is to be very worried and frightened about something dangerous or threatening.

- King Jehoshapat was alarmed when he heard that the Moabites were planning to attack the kingdom of Judah.
- Jesus told his disciples not to be alarmed when they hear about disasters happening in the last days.
- The expression “sound an alarm” means to give a warning. In ancient times, a person could sound an alarm by making a noise.

### Translation Suggestions

- To “alarm someone” means to “cause someone to worry” or to “worry someone.”
- To “be alarmed” could be translated as “be worried” or “be frightened” or “be very concerned.”
- The expression “sound an alarm” could be translated by “publicly warn” or “announce that danger is coming” or “blow a trumpet to warn about danger.”

(See also: Jehoshaphat, Moab)

### Bible References:

- Daniel 11:44-45
- Jeremiah 4:19-20
- Numbers 10:9

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7321, H8643

## Psalms References:

31:22

# alien, foreigner, sojourn

**Definition:**

The term “foreigner” refers to a person living in a country that is not his own. Another name for a foreigner is an “alien.” To sojourn is to live temporarily as a foreigner.

- In the Old Testament, this term especially refers to anyone who came from a different people group than the people he was living among.
- A foreigner is also a person whose language and culture is different from those of a particular region.
- For example, when Naomi and her family moved to Moab, they were foreigners there. When Naomi and her daughter-in-law Ruth later moved to Israel, Ruth was called a “foreigner” there because she was not originally from Israel.
- A sojourner is another word for a temporary foreign resident.
- The apostle Paul told the Ephesians that before they knew Christ, they were “foreigners” to God’s covenant.
- Sometimes “foreigner” is translated as “stranger,” but it should not refer only to someone who is unfamiliar or unknown.

**Bible References:**

- 2 Chronicles 2:17
- Acts 7:29-30
- Deuteronomy 1:15-16
- Genesis 15:12-13
- Genesis 17:27
- Luke 17:18
- Matthew 17:24-25

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0312, H0628, H0776, H1471, H1481, H1616, H2114, H3937, H4033, H5236, H5237, H6154, H8453, G02410, G02450, G05260, G09150, G18540, G35810, G39270, G39410

## Psalms References:

5:4; 15:1; 18:44; 18:45; 39:12; 44:20; 54:3; 61:4; 69:8; 81:9; 105:23; 119:54; 120:5; 137:4; 144:7; 144:11; 146:9

# altar

### Definition:

An altar was a raised structure on which the Israelites burned animals and grains as offerings to God.

- During Bible times, simple altars were often made by forming a mound of packed-down dirt or by carefully placing large stones to form a stable pile.
- Some special box-shaped altars were made of wood overlaid with metals such as gold, brass, or bronze.
- Other people groups living near the Israelites also built altars to offer sacrifices to their gods.

(See also: altar of incense, false god, grain offering, sacrifice)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 8:20
- Genesis 22:9
- James 2:21
- Luke 11:49-51
- Matthew 5:23
- Matthew 23:19

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 3:14 After Noah got off the boat, he built an **altar** and sacrificed some of each kind of animal which could be used for a sacrifice.
- 5:8 When they reached the place of sacrifice, Abraham tied up his son Isaac and laid him on an **altar**.
- 13:9 A priest would kill the animal and burn it on the **altar**.
- 16:6 He (Gideon) built a new altar dedicated to God near where the **altar** to the idol used to be and made a sacrifice to God on it.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0741, H2025, H4056, H4196, G10410, G23790

## Psalms References:

26:6; 43:4; 51:19; 84:3; 118:27

# Amalek, Amalekite

**Definition:**

The Amalekites were a nomadic people group who lived throughout the southern part of Canaan, from the Negev desert to the country of Arabia. This people group was descended from Amalek, the grandson of Esau.

- The Amalekites were bitter enemies of Israel from the time when Israel first came to live in Canaan.
- Sometimes the term “Amalek” is used figuratively to refer to all the Amalekites. (See: synecdoche)
- In one battle against the Amalekites, when Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning. When he got tired and his hands came down, they started losing. So Aaron and Hur helped Moses keep his hands up until the Israelite army had defeated the Amalekites.
- Both King Saul and King David led military expeditions against the Amalekites.
- After one victory over the Amalekites, Saul disobeyed God by keeping some of the plunder and by not killing the Amalekite king as God had commanded him to do.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Arabia, David, Esau, Negev, Saul (OT))

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 4:43
- 2 Samuel 1:8
- Exodus 17:10
- Numbers 14:23-25

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H6002, H6003

## Psalms References:

83:7

# amen, truly

### Definition:

The term “amen” is a word used to emphasize or call attention to what a person has said. It is often used at the end of a prayer. Sometimes it is translated as “truly.”

- When used at the end of a prayer, “amen” communicates agreement with the prayer or expresses a desire that the prayer be fulfilled.
- In his teaching, Jesus used “amen” to emphasize the truth of what he said. He often followed that by “and I say to you” to introduce another teaching that related to the previous teaching.
- When Jesus uses “amen” this way, some English versions (and the ULT) translate this as “verily” or “truly.”
- Another word meaning “truly” is sometimes translated as “surely” or “certainly” and is also used to emphasize what the speaker is saying.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Consider whether the target language has a special word or phrase that is used to emphasize something that has been said.
- When used at the end of a prayer or to confirm something, “amen” could be translated as “let it be so” or “may this happen” or “that is true.”
- When Jesus says, “truly I tell you,” this could also be translated as “Yes, I tell you sincerely” or “That is true, and I also tell you.”
- The phrase “truly, truly I tell you” could be translated as “I tell you this very sincerely” or “I tell you this very earnestly” or “what I am telling you is true.”

(See also: fulfill, true)

### Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 27:15
- John 5:19
- Jude 1:24-25
- Matthew 26:33-35
- Philemon 1:23-25
- Revelation 22:20-21

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0543, G02810

## Psalms References:

41:13; 58:1; 58:11; 62:1; 72:19; 89:52; 106:48

# Ammon, Ammonite

### Definition:

The “people of Ammon” or the “Ammonites” were a people group that lived on the east side of the Jordan River across from the Israelites.

- The book of Genesis reports that the Ammonite nation was descended from Ben-ammi, who was the son of Lot by his younger daughter.
- The term “Ammonitess” refers specifically to a female Ammonite. This could also be translated as “Ammonite woman.”
- At one point, the Ammonites hired a prophet named Balaam to curse Israel, but God did not allow him to do it.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: curse, Jordan River, Lot)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 19:1-3
- Ezekiel 25:2
- Genesis 19:38
- Joshua 12:1-2
- Judges 11:27
- Zephaniah 2:8

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5983, H5984, H5985

## Psalms References:

83:7

# Amorite

### Definition:

The Amorites were a powerful group of people who inhabited the land of Canaan and lived on both sides of the Jordan River.

- Their name means “high one,” which may refer to the mountainous regions where they lived or to the fact that they were known to be very tall.
- The book of Genesis reports that the Amorites were descended from Canaan, the grandson of Noah.
- The city of Ai was inhabited by Amorites.
- God refers to the “sin of the Amorites,” which included their worship of false gods and the sinful practices associated.
- Joshua led the Israelites in destroying the Amorites, as God had commanded them to do.

### Bible References:

- Amos 2:9
- Ezekiel 16:3
- Genesis 10:16
- Genesis 15:14-16
- Joshua 9:10

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 15:7 Sometime later, the kings of another people group in Canaan, the **Amorites**, heard that the Gibeonites had made a peace treaty with the Israelites, so they combined their armies into one large army and attacked Gibeon.
- 15:8 In the early morning they surprised the **Amorite** armies and attacked them.
- 15:9 God fought for Israel that day. He caused the **Amorites** to be confused and he sent large hailstones that killed many of the **Amorites**.
- 15:10 God also caused the sun to stay in one place in the sky so that Israel would have enough time to completely defeat the **Amorites**.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0567

## Psalms References:

135:11; 136:19

# angel, archangel

### Definition:

An angel is a powerful spirit being whom God created. Angels exist to serve God by doing whatever he tells them to do. The term “archangel” refers to the angel who rules or leads all the other angels.

- The word “angel” literally means “messenger.”
- The term “archangel” literally means “chief messenger.” The only angel referred to in the Bible as an “archangel” is Michael.
- In the Bible, angels gave messages to people from God. These messages included instructions about what God wanted the people to do.
- Angels also told people about events that were going to happen in the future or events that had already happened.
- Angels have God’s authority as his representatives and sometimes in the Bible they spoke as if God himself was speaking.
- Other ways that angels serve God are by protecting and strengthening people.
- A special phrase, “angel of Yahweh,” has more than one possible meaning: (1) It may mean “angel who represents Yahweh” or “messenger who serves Yahweh.” (2) It may refer to Yahweh himself, who looked like an angel as he talked to a person. Either one of these meanings would explain the angel’s use of “I” as if Yahweh himself was talking.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “angel” could include “messenger from God” or “God’s heavenly servant” or “God’s spirit messenger.”
- The term “archangel” could be translated as “chief angel” or “head ruling angel” or “leader of the angels.”
- Also consider how these terms are translated in a national language or another local language.
- The phrase “angel of Yahweh” should be translated using the words for “angel” and “Yahweh.” This will allow for different interpretations of that phrase. Possible translations could include “angel from Yahweh” or “angel sent by Yahweh” or “Yahweh, who looked like an angel.”

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: chief, head, messenger, Michael, ruler, servant)

### Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 24:16

- Acts 10:3-6
- Acts 12:23
- Colossians 2:18-19
- Genesis 48:16
- Luke 2:13
- Mark 8:38
- Matthew 13:50
- Revelation 1:20
- Zechariah 1:9

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 2:12 God placed large, powerful **angels** at the entrance to the garden to keep anyone from eating the fruit of the tree of life.
- 22:3 The **angel** responded to Zechariah, “I was sent by God to bring you this good news.”
- 23:6 Suddenly, a shining **angel** appeared to them (the shepherds), and they were terrified. The **angel** said, “Do not be afraid, because I have some good news for you.”
- 23:7 Suddenly, the skies were filled with **angels** praising God.
- 25:8 Then **angels** came and took care of Jesus.
- 38:12 Jesus was very troubled and his sweat was like drops of blood. God sent an **angel** to strengthen him.
- 38:15 “I could ask the Father for an army of **angels** to defend me.”

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0047, H0430, H4397, H4398, H8136, G00320, G07430, G24650

## Psalms References:

34:7; 35:5; 35:6; 91:11; 103:20; 148:2

# anguish

### Definition:

The term “anguish” refers to severe pain or distress.

- Anguish can be physical or emotional pain or distress.
- Often people who are in extreme anguish will show it in their face and behaviors.
- For example, a person in severe pain or anguish might grit his teeth or cry out.
- The term “anguish” could also be translated as “emotional distress” or “deep sorrow” or “severe pain.”

### Bible References:

- Jeremiah 6:24
- Jeremiah 19:9
- Job 15:24
- Luke 16:24
- Psalms 116:3-4

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2342, H2470, H2479, H3708, H4164, H4689, H4691, H5100, H6695, H6862, H6869, H7267, H7581, G09280, G36000, G49280

## Psalms References:

38:8; 116:3

# anoint, anointed, anointing

### Definition:

The term “anoint” means to rub or pour oil on a person or object. In biblical times, there were several reasons for anointing someone with oil. Often this was a Symbolic Action, representing God empowering that person with the Holy Spirit for special service to him.

- In the Old Testament, priests, kings, and prophets were anointed with oil to set them apart for special service to God.
- Objects such as altars or the tabernacle were also anointed with oil to show that they were to be used to worship and glorify God.
- In the New Testament, sick people were anointed with oil for their healing.
- Sometimes the oil was mixed with spices, giving it a sweet, perfumed smell.
- The New Testament records two times that Jesus was anointed with perfumed oil by a woman, as an act of worship.
- People prepared dead bodies for burial by anointing them with perfumed oils and spices.
- In the New Testament, receiving the Holy Spirit is described as anointing.
- The titles “Messiah” (Hebrew) and “Christ” (Greek) mean “the Anointed (One).”
- Jesus the Messiah is the one who was chosen and anointed as a Prophet, High Priest, and King.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “anoint” could be translated as “pour/put oil on” or “consecrate by pouring oil on” or “consecrate” or “appoint.”
- Depending on the context, to “be anointed” could be translated as “be consecrated with oil” or “be appointed” or “be consecrated” or “be given the Holy Spirit.”
- A phrase like “the anointed priest,” could be translated as “the priest who was consecrated with oil” or “the priest who was set apart by the pouring on of oil.”

(See also: Christ, consecrate, high priest, King of the Jews, priest, prophet)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 2:20
- 1 John 2:27
- 2 Corinthians 1:21
- 1 Samuel 16:2-3
- Acts 4:27-28

- Amos 6:5-6
- Exodus 29:5-7
- James 5:13-15

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0047, H0430, H1101, H1878, H3323, H4397, H4398, H4473, H4886, H4888, H4899, H5480, H8136, G00320, G02180, G07430, G14720, G20250, G34620, G55450, G55480

## Psalms References:

2:2; 16:intro; 18:50; 20:6; 23:5; 28:8; 45:7; 84:9; 89:20; 89:38; 89:51; 105:15; 132:10; 132:17

# appoint, appointed

### Definition:

The terms “appoint” and “appointed” refer to choosing someone to fulfill a specific task or role.

- To “be appointed” can also refer to being “chosen” to receive something, as in “appointed to eternal life.” That people were “appointed to eternal life” means they were chosen to receive eternal life.
- The phrase “appointed time” refers to God’s “chosen time” or “planned time” for something to happen.
- The word “appoint” may also mean to “command” or “assign” someone to do something.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “appoint” could include “choose” or “assign” or “formally choose” or “designate.”
- The term “appointed” could be translated as “assigned” or “planned” or “specifically chose.”
- The phrase “be appointed” could also be translated as “be chosen.”

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 8:11
- Acts 3:20
- Acts 6:2
- Acts 13:48
- Genesis 41:33-34
- Numbers 3:9-10

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0561, H0977, H2163, H2296, H2706, H2708, H2710, H3198, H3245, H3259, H3677, H3983, H4150, H4151, H4152, H4483, H4487, H4662, H5324, H5344, H5414, H5567, H5975, H6310, H6485, H6565, H6635, H6680, H6923, H6942, H6966, H7760, H7896, G03220, G06060, G12990, G13030, G19350, G25250, G27490, G42870, G42960, G43840, G49290, G50210, G50870

## Psalms References:

49:14; 61:7; 75:2; 78:5; 89:25; 102:13; 104:3; 104:8; 104:19; 105:21; 109:6

# ark of the covenant, ark of Yahweh, box, Box of the Testimony, Box of the Covenant of Yahweh

**Definition:**

These terms refer to a special wooden chest, overlaid with gold, that contained the two stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written. It also contained Aaron's staff and a jar of manna.

- The term "ark" here could be translated as "box" or "chest" or "container."
- The objects in this chest reminded the Israelites of God's covenant with them.
- The ark of the covenant was located in the "most holy place."
- God's presence was above the ark of the covenant in the most holy place of the tabernacle, where he spoke to Moses on behalf of the Israelites.
- During the time that the ark of the covenant was in the most holy place of the temple, the high priest was the only one who could approach the ark, once a year on the Day of Atonement.
- Many English versions translate the term "covenant decrees" literally as "testimony." This refers to the fact that the Ten Commandments were a testimony or witness to God's covenant with his people. It is also translated as "covenant law."

(See also: ark, covenant, atonement, holy place, testimony)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Samuel 6:15
- Exodus 25:10-11
- Hebrews 9:5
- Judges 20:27
- Numbers 7:89
- Revelation 11:19

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0727, H1285, H3068

## Psalms References:

132:8

# arrogant, presumptuous

**Definition:**

The term “arrogant” means proud, usually in an obvious, outward way.

- An arrogant person will often boast about himself.
- Being arrogant usually includes thinking that other people are not as important or talented as oneself.
- People who do not honor God and who are in rebellion against him are arrogant because they do not acknowledge how great God is.

(See also: acknowledge, boast, proud)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Corinthians 4:18
- 2 Peter 2:18
- Ezekiel 16:49
- Proverbs 16:5
- Psalm 56:1-2

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1346, H1347, H2102, H2103, H6277, G02120, G54500

## Psalms References:

5:5; 19:13; 36:11; 73:3; 75:5; 86:14; 94:4; 119:69; 119:122; 123:4

# Asaph

**Definition:**

Asaph was a Levite priest and gifted musician who composed the music for the psalms of King David. He also wrote his own psalms.

- Asaph was appointed by King David to be one of three musicians who were responsible for providing songs for worship in the temple. Some of these songs were also prophecies.
- Asaph trained his sons and they carried on this responsibility, playing musical instruments and prophesying in the temple.
- Some of the musical instruments included the lute, harp, trumpet, and cymbals.
- Psalms 50 and 73-83 are said to be from Asaph. It may be that some of these psalms were written by his family members.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: descendant, harp, lute, prophet, psalm, trumpet)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 6:39-43
- 2 Chronicles 35:15
- Nehemiah 2:8
- Psalm 50:1-2

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0623

## Psalms References:

50:1; 73:1; 74:1; 75:front; 76:front; 77:front; 78:1; 79:1; 80:front; 81:front; 82:1

# assembly, assemble, congregation, meeting, gather, community

### Definition:

The term “assembly” usually refers to a group of people who come together for some reason, often to discuss problems, give advice, or make decisions. An assembly can be a group that is organized in an official and somewhat permanent way, or it can be a group of people who come together temporarily for a specific purpose or occasion.

### Old Testament

- In the Old Testament there was a special kind of assembly called a “sacred assembly” in which the people of Israel would gather to worship Yahweh.
- Sometimes the term “assembly” referred to the Israelites in general, as a group.

### New Testament

- In the New Testament, an assembly of 70 Jewish leaders in major cities such as Jerusalem would meet to judge legal matters and to settle disputes between people. This assembly was known as the “Sanhedrin” or the “Council.”

### Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, “assembly” could also be translated as “special gathering” or “congregation” or “council” or “army” or “large group.”
- When the term “assembly” refers generally to the Israelites as a whole, it could also be translated as “community” or “people of Israel.”
- The phrase, “all the assembly” could be translated as “all the people” or “the whole group of Israelites” or “everyone.” (See: hyperbole)
- A large gathering of enemy soldiers was sometimes also referred to as an “assembly.” This could be translated as “army.”

(See also: council)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 8:14
- Acts 7:38
- Ezra 10:12-13
- Hebrews 12:22-24
- Leviticus 4:20-21

- Nehemiah 8:1-3

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0622, H1481, H2199, H3259, H4150, H4186, H4744, H5475, H5712, H6116, H6908, H6950, H6951, H6952, G15770, G38310, G48630, G48640, G48710, G49050

## Psalms References:

1:5; 7:7; 22:22; 22:25; 26:5; 26:9; 26:12; 31:13; 33:7; 35:15; 35:18; 40:9; 40:10; 41:6; 47:9; 48:4; 50:5; 56:6; 59:3; 62:9; 64:2; 68:26; 68:27; 68:30; 74:2; 74:4; 74:8; 82:1; 83:3; 83:5; 85:3; 86:14; 89:5; 102:22; 106:17; 106:18; 106:47; 107:3; 107:32; 111:1; 142:7; 147:2; 149:1

# Assyria, Assyrian, Assyrian Empire

### Definition:

Assyria was a powerful nation during the time the Israelites were living in the land of Canaan. The Assyrian Empire was a group of nations ruled by an Assyrian king.

- The nation of Assyria was located in a region that is now the northern part of Iraq.
- The Assyrians fought against Israel at different times in their history.
- In the year 722 BC, the Assyrians completely conquered the kingdom of Israel and forced many of the Israelites to move to Assyria.
- The remaining Israelites intermarried with foreigners that the Assyrians had brought into Israel from Samaria. The descendants of those people who intermarried were later called the Samaritans.

(See also: Samaria)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 10:11
- Genesis 25:17-18
- Isaiah 7:16-17
- Jeremiah 50:17
- Micah 7:11-13

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 20:2 So God punished both kingdoms by allowing their enemies to destroy them. The kingdom of Israel was destroyed by the **Assyrian Empire**, a powerful, cruel nation. The **Assyrians** killed many people in the kingdom of Israel, took away everything of value, and burned much of the country.
- 20:3 The **Assyrians** gathered all the leaders, the rich people, and the people with skills and took them to **Assyria**.
- 20:4 Then the **Assyrians** brought foreigners to live in the land where the kingdom of Israel had been.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0804, H1121

## Psalms References:

83:8

# atonement, atone, atoned

### Definition:

The terms “atone” and “atonement” refer to how God provided a sacrifice to pay for people’s sins and to appease his wrath for sin.

- In Old Testament times, God allowed temporary atonement to be made for the sins of the Israelites by the offering of a blood sacrifice, which involved killing an animal.
- As recorded in the New Testament, Christ’s death on the cross is the only true and permanent atonement for sin.
- When Jesus died, he took the punishment that people deserve because of their sin. He paid the atonement price with his sacrificial death.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “atone” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “pay for” or “provide payment for” or “cause someone’s sins to be forgiven” or “make amends for a crime.”
- Ways to translate “atonement” could include “payment” or “sacrifice to pay for sin” or “providing the means of forgiveness.”
- Make sure the translation of this term does not refer to payment of money.

(See also: atonement lid, forgive, propitiation, reconcile, redeem)

### Bible References:

- Ezekiel 43:25-27
- Ezekiel 45:18-20
- Leviticus 4:20
- Numbers 5:8
- Numbers 28:22

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3722, H3725, G26430

## Psalms References:

78:38

# avenge, avenger, revenge, vengeance

### Definition:

To “avenge” or “take revenge” or “execute vengeance” is to punish someone in order to pay him back for the harm he did. The act of avenging or taking revenge is “vengeance.”

- Usually “avenge” implies an intent to see justice done or to right a wrong,
- When referring to people, the expression “take revenge” or “get revenge” usually involves wanting to get back at the person who did the harm.
- When God “takes vengeance” or “executes vengeance,” he is acting in righteousness because he is punishing sin and rebellion.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The expression to “avenge” could also be translated as to “right a wrong” or to “get justice for.”
- When referring to human beings, to “take revenge” could be translated as “pay back” or “hurt in order to punish” or “get back at.”
- Depending on the context, “vengeance” could be translated as “punishment” or “punishment of sin” or “payment for wrongs done.” If a word meaning “retaliation” is used, this would apply to human beings only.
- When God says, “take my vengeance,” this could be translated by “punish them for wrongs done against me” or “cause bad things to happen because they have sinned against me.”
- When referring to God’s vengeance, make sure it is clear that God is right in his punishment of sin.

(See also: punish, just, righteous)

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 24:12-13
- Ezekiel 25:15
- Isaiah 47:3-5
- Leviticus 19:17-18
- Psalms 18:47
- Romans 12:19

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1350, H3467, H5358, H5359, H5360, H8199, G15560, G15570, G15580, G37090

## Psalms References:

8:2; 9:12; 18:47; 44:16; 58:10; 79:10; 94:1; 99:8; 149:7

# awe, awesome

### Definition:

The term “awe” refers to the sense of amazement and deep respect that comes from seeing something great, powerful, and magnificent.

- The term “awesome” describes someone or something that inspires a feeling of awe.
- The visions of the glory of God seen by the prophet Ezekiel were “awesome” or “awe-inspiring.”
- Typical human responses showing awe of God’s presence include: fear, bowing or kneeling down, covering the face, and trembling.

(See also: fear, glory)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 17:21
- Genesis 28:16-17
- Hebrews 12:28
- Psalm 22:23
- Psalms 147:4-5

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0366, H1481, H3372, H6206, H7227, G21240

## Psalms References:

8:9; 106:22; 111:9

# ax

### Definition:

An ax is tool used for cutting or chopping trees or wood.

- An ax usually has a long wooden handle with a large metal blade attached to the end.
- If your culture has a tool that is similar to an ax, the name of that tool could be used to translate “ax.”
- Other ways to translate this term could include “tree-cutting tool” or “wooden tool with blade” or “long-handled wood-chopping tool.”
- In one Old Testament event, the blade of an ax fell into a river, so it is best if the tool that is described has a blade that can come loose from the wooden handle.

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 6:7-8
- 2 Kings 6:5
- Judges 9:48-49
- Luke 3:9
- Matthew 3:10
- Psalm 35:3

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1631, H4621, H7134, G05130

## Psalms References:

74:5

# Baal

### Definition:

"Baal" means "lord" or "master" and was the name of the primary false god that was worshiped by the Canaanites.

- There were also local false gods that had "Baal" as part of their names, such as "Baal of Peor." Sometimes all these gods together are referred to as "the Baals."
- Some people had names that included the word "Baal" in them.
- The worship of Baal included evil practices such as sacrificing children and using prostitutes.
- At different time periods throughout their history, the Israelites also became deeply involved in Baal worship, following the example of the pagan nations around them.
- During the reign of King Ahab, God's prophet Elijah set up a test to prove to the people that Baal does not exist and that Yahweh is the only true God. As a result, the prophets of Baal were destroyed and the people started worshiping Yahweh again.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Ahab, Asherah, Elijah, false god, prostitute, Yahweh)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 16:31
- 1 Samuel 7:3-4
- Jeremiah 2:7-8
- Judges 2:11
- Numbers 22:41

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 19:2 Ahab was an evil man who encouraged people to worship a false god named **Baal**.
- 19:6 All the people of the entire kingdom of Israel, including the 450 prophets of **Baal**, came to Mount Carmel. Elijah said to the people, "How long will you keep changing your mind? If Yahweh is God, serve him! If **Baal** is God, serve him!"
- 19:7 Then Elijah said to the prophets of **Baal**, "Kill a bull and prepare it as a sacrifice, but do not light the fire."
- 19:8 Then the prophets of **Baal** prayed to **Baal**, "Hear us, O **Baal**!"
- 19:12 So the people captured the prophets of **Baal**. Then Elijah took them away from there and killed them.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H1120, G08960

## Psalms References:

106:28

# Babylon, Babylonia, Babylonian

### Definition:

The city of Babylon was the capital of the ancient region of Babylonia, which was also part of the Babylonian Empire.

- Babylon was located along the Euphrates River, in the same region where the Tower of Babel had been built hundreds of years before.
- Sometimes the word "Babylon" refers to the entire Babylonian Empire. For example, the "king of Babylon" ruled the entire empire, not just the city.
- The Babylonians were a powerful people group who attacked the kingdom of Judah and kept the people in exile in Babylonia for 70 years.
- Part of this region was called "Chaldea" and the people living there were the "Chaldeans." As a result, the term "Chaldea" was often used to refer to Babylonia. (See: synecdoche)

(See also: **Babel**, **Chaldea**, **Judah**, **Nebuchadnezzar**)

### Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 9:1**
- **2 Kings 17:24-26**
- **Acts 7:43**
- **Daniel 1:2**
- **Ezekiel 12:13**
- **Matthew 1:11**
- **Matthew 1:17**

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **20:6** About 100 years after the Assyrians destroyed the kingdom of Israel, God sent Nebuchadnezzar, king of the **Babylonians**, to attack the kingdom of Judah. **Babylon** was a powerful empire.
- **20:7** But after a few years, the king of Judah rebelled against **Babylon**. So, the **Babylonians** came back and attacked the kingdom of Judah. They captured the city of Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple, and took away all the treasures of the city and the Temple.
- **20:9** Nebuchadnezzar and his army took almost all of the people of the kingdom of Judah to **Babylon**, leaving only the poorest people behind to plant the fields.
- **20:11** About seventy years later, Cyrus, the king of the Persians, defeated **Babylon**.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3778, H3779, H8152, H0894, H0895, H0896, G08970

## Psalms References:

87:4; 137:1; 137:8

# barren, dry

### Definition:

To be “barren” means to not be fertile or fruitful.

- Soil or land that is barren is not able to produce any plants.
- A woman who is barren is one who is physically unable to conceive or bear a child.

### Translation Suggestions:

- When “barren” is used to refer to land, it could be translated as “not fertile” or “unfruitful” or “without plants.”
- When it is referring to a barren woman, it could be translated as “childless” or “not able to bear children” or “unable to conceive a child.”

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 2:5
- Galatians 4:27
- Genesis 11:30
- Job 3:7

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4420, H6115, H6135, H6723, H7921, G06920, G47230

## Psalms References:

37:2; 63:1; 66:6; 74:15; 78:17; 90:6; 107:34; 107:35; 113:9; 129:6

# Bashan

**Definition:**

Bashan was a region of land east of the Sea of Galilee. It covered an area that is now part of Syria and the Golan Heights.

- An Old Testament city of refuge called "Golan" was located in the region of Bashan.
- Bashan was a very fertile region known for its oak trees and pasturing animals.
- Genesis 14 records that Bashan was the site of a war between several kings and their nations.
- During Israel's wanderings in the desert after their escape from Egypt, they took possession of part of the region of Bashan.
- Years later, King Solomon obtained supplies from that region.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Egypt, oak, Sea of Galilee, Syria)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Kings 4:13
- Amos 4:1
- Jeremiah 22:20-21
- Joshua 9:10

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H1316

## Psalms References:

22:12; 68:15; 68:22; 135:11; 136:20

# Bathsheba

### Definition:

Bathsheba was the wife of Uriah, a soldier in King David's army. After Uriah's death, she became the wife of David, and the mother of Solomon.

- David committed adultery with Bathsheba while she was married to Uriah.
- When Bathsheba became pregnant with David's child, David caused Uriah to be killed in battle.
- David then married Bathsheba and she gave birth to their child.
- God punished David for his sin by causing the child to die several days after he was born.
- Later, Bathsheba gave birth to another son, Solomon, who grew up to become king after David.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: David, Solomon. Uriah)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 3:4-5
- 1 Kings 1:11
- 2 Samuel 11:3
- Psalm 51:1-2

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 17:10 One day, when all of David's soldiers were away from home fighting battles, he got up from an afternoon nap and saw a beautiful woman bathing. Her name was **Bathsheba**.
- 17:11 A short time later **Bathsheba** sent a message to David saying that she was pregnant.
- 17:12 **Bathsheba's** husband, a man named Uriah, was one of David's best soldiers.
- 17:13 After Uriah was killed, David married **Bathsheba**.
- 17:14 Later, David and **Bathsheba** had another son, and they named him Solomon.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H1339

## Psalms References:

51:front

# bear, bearer, bore, borne, produce, produced

### Definition:

Used in this sense, the term “bear” means to “produce” or “give birth to.”

- A common expression in the Bible is “bear fruit,” which means “produce fruit”
- When speaking of a woman who will bear a child, this means “give birth to” a child
- Depending on context, this term could be translated as “produce” or “give birth to.”

(Translation suggestions: fruit)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3205, H3209, H3211, H5375, G01420, G03990, G04300, G09410, G10800, G41600, G47220, G50410, G50880, G53420, G54090

## Psalms References:

67:6; 78:46; 85:12; 92:14; 107:37

# bear, bears, bore, borne, bearer, bearing, carry

### Definition:

Used in this sense, the term “bear” means to carry something.

- To “bear a burden” means to carry something heavy.
- The term “burden bearers” refers to men who carry heavy things and could be translated as “burden carriers” or “carriers.”
- The term “armor bearer” could be translated as “armor carrier.”
- The phrase “bearer of news” could be translated as “carrier of news.”
- Depending on context, this term could be translated as “carry” or “bring.”

(See also: strength)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5375

## Psalms References:

28:9; 55:12; 68:19; 69:7; 85:2; 88:15; 89:50; 126:6

# beast

**Definition:**

In the Bible, the term “beast” is often just another way of saying “animal.”

- A wild beast is a type of animal that lives freely in the forest or fields and has not been trained by people.
- A domestic beast is an animal that lives with people and is kept for food or for performing work, such as plowing fields. Often the term “livestock” is used to refer to this kind of animal.
- The Old Testament book of Daniel and the New Testament book of Revelation describe visions which have beasts that represent evil powers and authorities that oppose God. (See: Metaphor)
- Some of these beasts are described as having strange features, such as several heads and many horns. They often have power and authority, indicating that they may represent countries, nations, or other political powers.
- Ways to translate this could include “creature” or “created thing” or “animal” or “wild animal,” depending on the context.

(See also: **authority**, **Daniel**, livestock, nation, **power**, **reveal**, **Beelzebul**)

**Bible References:**

- **1 Corinthians 15:32**
- **1 Samuel 17:44**
- **2 Chronicles 25:18**
- **Jeremiah 16:1-4**
- **Leviticus 7:21**
- Psalms 49:12-13

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0338, H0929, H1165, H2123, H2416, H2423, H2874, H3753, H4806, H7409, G22260, G23410, G23420, G29340, G49680, G50740

## Psalms References:

8:7; 49:12; 49:20; 50:10; 68:30; 73:22; 74:19; 79:2; 135:8; 147:9; 148:10

# beg, beggar, begging

### Definition:

Used in this sense, the term “beg” means to ask someone for money or for some material necessity such as food.

- A “beggar” is someone who regularly sits or stands in a public place to ask people for money.
- Beggars ask for money or food to be given them freely as a gift and do not offer to do work or some other service in exchange for the money or food. Your language may have a word for such a person or activity.
- Depending on the context, this term could be translated as “publicly ask for money” or “regularly ask for money.”

(See also: plead, alms)

### Bible References:

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 44:1 One day, Peter and John were going to the Temple. As they approached the Temple gate, they saw a crippled man who was **begging** for money.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s:

## Psalms References:

37:25; 109:10

# beget, begot, begat, begotten

### Definition:

The term “beget” means to become the father of someone.

### Translation Suggestions:

- You could translate the phrase “beget” as “bring forth” and the term “begat” as “fathered” and the term “begot” as “gave life.”
- The term “begotten” is the passive form of “beget” and means to “be born.”

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3205

## Psalms References:

2:7

# believe, believer, belief, unbeliever, unbelief

### Definition:

The terms “believe” and “believe in” are closely related, but have slightly different meanings:

### 1. believe

- To believe something is to accept or trust that it is true.
- To believe someone is to acknowledge that what that person has said is true.

### 2. believe in

- To “believe in” someone means to “trust in” that person. It means to trust that the person is who he says he is, that he always speaks the truth, and that he will do what he has promised to do.
- When a person truly believes in something, he will act in such a way that shows that belief.
- The phrase “have faith in” usually has the same meaning as “believe in.”
- To “believe in Jesus” means to believe that he is the Son of God, that he is God himself who also became human and who died as a sacrifice to pay for our sins. It means to trust him as Savior and live in a way that honors him.

### 3. believer

In the Bible, the term “believer” refers to someone who believes in and relies on Jesus Christ as Savior.

- The term “believer” literally means “person who believes.”
- The term “Christian” eventually came to be the main title for believers because it indicates that they believe in Christ and obey his teachings.

### 4. unbelief

The term “unbelief” refers to not believing something or someone.

- In the Bible, “unbelief” refers to not believing in or not trusting in Jesus as one’s Savior.
- A person who does not believe in Jesus is called an “unbeliever.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- To “believe” could be translated as to “know to be true” or “know to be right.”

- To “believe in” could be translated as “trust completely” or “trust and obey” or “completely rely on and follow.”
- Some translations may prefer to say “believer in Jesus” or “believer in Christ.”
- This term could also be translated by a word or phrase that means “person who trusts in Jesus” or “someone who knows Jesus and lives for him.”
- Other ways to translate “believer” could be “follower of Jesus” or “person who knows and obeys Jesus.”
- The term “believer” is a general term for any believer in Christ, while “disciple” and “apostle” were used more specifically for people who knew Jesus while he was alive. It is best to translate these terms in different ways, in order to keep them distinct.
- Other ways to translate “unbelief” could include “lack of faith” or “not believing.”
- The term “unbeliever” could be translated as “person who does not believe in Jesus” or “someone who does not trust in Jesus as Savior.”

(See also: believe, **apostle**, **Christian**, **disciple**, faith, trust)

**Bible References:**

- **Genesis 15:6**
- **Genesis 45:26**
- **Job 9:16-18**
- **Habakkuk 1:5-7**
- **Mark 6:4-6**
- **Mark 1:14-15**
- **Luke 9:41**
- **John 1:12**
- **Acts 6:5**
- **Acts 9:42**
- **Acts 28:23-24**
- **Romans 3:3**
- **1 Corinthians 6:1**
- **1 Corinthians 9:5**
- **2 Corinthians 6:15**

- Hebrews 3:12
- 1 John 3:23

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 3:4 Noah warned the people about the coming flood and told them to turn to God, but they did not **believe** him.
- 4:8 Abram **believed** God's promise. God declared that Abram was righteous because he **believed** God's promise.
- 11:2 God provided a way to save the firstborn of anyone who **believed in** him.
- 11:6 But the Egyptians did not **believe** God or obey his commands.
- 37:5 Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever **believes in** me will live, even though he dies. Everyone who **believes in** me will never die. Do you **believe** this?"
- 43:1 After Jesus returned to heaven, the disciples stayed in Jerusalem as Jesus had commanded them to do. The **believers** there constantly gathered together to pray.
- 43:3 While the **believers** were all together, suddenly the house where they were was filled with a sound like a strong wind. Then something that looked like flames of fire appeared over the heads of all the **believers**.
- 43:13 Every day, more people became **believers**.
- 46:6 That day many people in Jerusalem started persecuting the followers of Jesus, so the **believers** fled to other places. But in spite of this, they preached about Jesus everywhere they went.
- 46:1 Saul was the young man who guarded the robes of the men who killed Stephen. He did not believe in Jesus, so he persecuted the **believers**.
- 46:9 Some **believers** who fled from the persecution in Jerusalem went far away to the city of Antioch and preached about Jesus.
- 46:9 It was at Antioch that **believers** in Jesus were first called "Christians."
- 47:14 They also wrote many letters to encourage and teach the **believers** in the churches.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0539, H0540, G05430, G05440, G05690, G05700, G05710, G39820, G41000, G41020, G41030, G41350

## Psalms References:

27:13; 78:22; 78:32; 106:12; 106:24

# beloved

### Definition:

The term “beloved” is an expression of affection that describes someone who is loved and dear to someone else.

- The term “beloved” literally means “loved (one)” or “(who is) loved.”
- God refers to Jesus as his “beloved Son.”
- In their letters to Christian churches, the apostles frequently address their fellow believers as “beloved.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated as “loved” or “loved one” or “well-loved,” or “very dear.”
- In the context of talking about a close friend, this could be translated as “my dear friend” or “my close friend.” In English it is natural to say “my dear friend, Paul” or “Paul, who is my dear friend.” Other languages may find it more natural to order this in a different way.
- Note that the word “beloved” comes from the word for God’s love, which is unconditional, unselfish, and sacrificial.

(See also: love)

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 4:14
- 1 John 3:2
- 1 John 4:7
- Mark 1:11
- Mark 12:6
- Revelation 20:9
- Romans 16:8
- Song of Songs 1:14

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0157, H1730, H2532, H3033, H3039, H4261, G00250, G00270, G52070

## Psalms References:

60:5; 108:6; 127:2

# Benjamin, Benjaminite

**Definition:**

Benjamin was Jacob's twelfth son. He was Rachel's second son. His descendants became one of the tribes of Israel.

- The tribe descended from him was known as the "tribe of Benjamin" or "Benjamin" or the "Benjaminites."
- In Hebrew, the name Benjamin means "son of my right hand."
- The tribe of Benjamin settled just northwest of the Dead Sea, north of Jerusalem.
- King Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin.
- The apostle Paul was from the tribe of Benjamin.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: twelve tribes of Israel, Jacob, Rachel)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 2:1-2
- 1 Kings 2:8
- Acts 13:21-22
- Genesis 35:18
- Genesis 42:4
- Genesis 42:35-36
- Philippians 3:4-5

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H1144, G09580

## Psalms References:

68:27; 80:2

# betray, betrayer

### Definition:

The term “betray” means to act in a way that deceives and harms someone. A “betrayer” is a person who betrays a friend who was trusting him.

- Judas was “the betrayer” because he told the Jewish leaders how to capture Jesus.
- The betrayal by Judas was especially evil because he was an apostle of Jesus who received money in exchange for giving the Jewish leaders information that would result in Jesus’ unjust death.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “betray” could be translated as “deceive and cause harm to” or “turn over to the enemy” or “treat treacherously.”
- The term “betrayer” could be translated as “person who betrays” or “double dealer” or “traitor.”

(See also: **Judas Iscariot**, **Jewish leaders**, **apostle**)

### Bible References:

- **Acts 7:52**
- **John 6:64**
- **John 13:22**
- **Matthew 10:4**
- **Matthew 26:22**

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **21:11** Other prophets foretold that those who killed the Messiah would gamble for his clothes and he would be **betrayed** by a friend. The prophet Zechariah foretold that the friend would be paid thirty silver coins as payment for **betraying** the Messiah.
- **38:2** After Jesus and the disciples arrived in Jerusalem, Judas went to the Jewish leaders and offered to **betray** Jesus to them in exchange for money.
- **38:3** The Jewish leaders, led by the high priest, paid Judas thirty silver coins to **betray** Jesus.
- **38:6** Then Jesus said to the disciples, “One of you will **betray** me.” * * **38:6** Jesus said, “The person to whom I give this piece of bread is the **betrayer**.”
- **38:13** When he returned the third time, Jesus said, “Wake up! My **betrayer** is here.”
- **38:14** Then Jesus said, “Judas, do you **betray** me with a kiss?”

- 39:8 Meanwhile, Judas, the **betrayer**, saw that the Jewish leaders had condemned Jesus to die. He became full of sorrow and went away and killed himself.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H7411, G38600, G42730

## Psalms References:

73:15

# bind, bond, bound

### Definition:

The term “bind” means to tie something or fasten it securely. Something that is tied or joined together is called a “bond.” The term “bound” is the past tense of this term.

- To be “bound” means to have something tied or wrapped around something else.
- In a figurative sense, a person can be “bound” to a vow, which means he is “required to fulfill” what he promised to do.
- The term “bonds” refers to anything that binds, confines, or imprisons someone. It usually refers to physical chains, fetters or ropes that keep a person from being free to move.
- In Bible times, bonds such as ropes or chains were used to attach prisoners to the wall or floor of a stone prison.
- The term “bind” can also be used to talk about wrapping cloth around a wound to help it heal.
- A dead person would be “bound” with cloth in preparation for burial.
- The term “bond” is used figuratively to refer to something, such as sin, that controls or enslaves someone.
- A bond can also be a close relationship between people in which they support each other emotionally, spiritually and physically. This applies to the bond of marriage.
- For example, a husband and wife are “bound” or tied to each other. It is a bond that God does not want broken.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “bind” could also be translated as “tie” or “tie up” or “wrap (around).”
- Figuratively, it could be translated as to “restrain” or to “prevent” or to “keep from (something).”
- A special use of “bind” in Matthew 16 and 18 means “forbid” or “not permit.”
- The term “bonds” could be translated as “chains” or “ropes” or “shackles.”
- Figuratively the term “bond” could be translated as “knot” or “connection” or “close relationship.”
- The phrase “bond of peace” means “being in harmony, which brings people in closer relationship to each other” or “the tying together that peace brings.”
- To “bind up” could be translated as “wrap around” or “put a bandage on.”
- To “bind” oneself with a vow could be translated as “promise to fulfill a vow” or “commit to fulfill a vow.”
- Depending on the context, the term “bound” could also be translated as “tied” or “tied up” or “chained” or “obligated (to fulfill)” or “required to do.”

(See also: fulfill, peace, **prison**, servant, **vow**)

**Bible References:**

- **Leviticus 8:7**

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0247, H0481, H0519, H0615, H0631, H0632, H0640, H1366, H1367, H1379, H2280, H2706, H3256, H3533, H3729, H4147, H4148, H4205, H4562, H5650, H5656, H5659, H6029, H6123, H6616, H6696, H6872, H6887, H7194, H7405, H7573, H7576, H8198, H8244, H8379, G02540, G03310, G03320, G11950, G11960, G11980, G11990, G12100, G13970, G13980, G14010, G14020, G26110, G26150, G37340, G37840, G38140, G40190, G40290, G43850, G48860, G48870, G52650

## Psalms References:

2:3; 105:22; 118:27; 129:7; 146:7; 147:3; 149:8

# blameless

### Definition:

The term “blameless” literally means “without blame.” It is used to refer to a person who obeys God wholeheartedly, but it does not mean that the person is sinless.

- Abraham and Noah were considered blameless before God.
- A person who has a reputation for being “blameless” behaves in a way that honors God.
- According to one verse, a person who is blameless is “one who fears God and turns away from evil.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- This could also be translated as “with no fault to his character” or “completely obedient to God” or “avoiding sin” or “keeping away from evil.”

### Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:10
- 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13
- 2 Peter 3:14
- Colossians 1:22
- Genesis 17:1-2
- Philippians 2:15
- Philippians 3:6

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5352, H5355, H8535, G02730, G02740, G02980, G02990, G03380, G04100, G04230

## Psalms References:

18:23; 18:25; 19:13; 37:18; 51:4; 84:11; 101:2; 119:1; 119:80

# bless, blessed, blessing

### Definition:

To “bless” someone or something means to cause good and beneficial things to happen to the person or thing that is being blessed.

- Blessing someone also means expressing a desire for positive and beneficial things to happen to that person.
- In Bible times, a father would often pronounce a formal blessing on his children.
- When people “bless” God or express a desire that God be blessed, this means they are praising him.
- The term “bless” is sometimes used for consecrating food before it is eaten, or for thanking and praising God for the food.

### Translation Suggestions:

- To “bless” could also be translated as to “provide abundantly for” or to “be very kind and favorable toward.”
- “God has brought great blessing to” could be translated as “God has given many good things to” or “God has provided abundantly for” or “God has caused many good things to happen to”.
- “He is blessed” could be translated as “he will greatly benefit” or “he will experience good things” or “God will cause him to flourish.”
- “Blessed is the person who” could be translated as “How good it is for the person who.”
- Expressions like “blessed be the Lord” could be translated as “May the Lord be praised” or “Praise the Lord” or “I praise the Lord.”
- In the context of blessing food, this could be translated as “thanked God for the food” or “praised God for giving them food” or “consecrated the food by praising God for it.”

(See also: praise)

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 10:16
- Acts 13:34
- Ephesians 1:3
- Genesis 14:20
- Isaiah 44:3
- James 1:25

- Luke 6:20
- Matthew 26:26
- Nehemiah 9:5
- Romans 4:9

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 1:7 God saw that it was good and he **blessed** them.
- 1:15 God made Adam and Eve in his own image. He **blessed** them and told them, “Have many children and grandchildren and fill the earth.”
- 1:16 So God rested from all he had been doing. He **blessed** the seventh day and made it holy, because on this day he rested from his work.
- 4:4 “I will make your name great. I will **bless** those who **bless** you and curse those who curse you. All families on earth will be **blessed** because of you.”
- 4:7 Melchizedek **blessed** Abram and said, “May God Most High who owns heaven and earth **bless** Abram.”
- 7:3 Isaac wanted to give his **blessing** to Esau.
- 8:5 Even in prison, Joseph remained faithful to God, and God **blessed** him.

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0833, H0835, H1288, H1289, H1293, G17570, G21270, G21280, G21290, G31060, G31070, G31080, G60500

## Psalms References:

3:8; 5:12; 10:3; 16:7; 18:46; 21:3; 21:6; 24:5; 26:12; 28:6; 28:9; 29:11; 31:21; 32:intro; 34:1; 37:22; 37:26; 40:4; 41:1; 41:2; 41:13; 45:2; 49:18; 62:4; 63:4; 65:10; 66:8; 66:20; 67:1; 67:6; 67:7; 68:19; 68:26; 68:35; 72:15; 72:17; 72:18; 72:19; 84:6; 89:15; 89:52; 96:2; 100:4; 103:1; 103:2; 103:20; 103:21; 103:22; 104:1; 104:35; 106:48; 107:38; 109:17; 109:28; 112:2; 113:2; 115:12; 115:13; 115:15; 115:18; 118:26; 119:intro; 119:12; 124:6; 127:intro; 128:4; 128:5; 129:8; 132:15; 133:3; 134:1; 134:2; 134:3; 135:19; 135:20; 135:21; 136:intro; 144:1; 145:1; 145:2; 145:10; 145:21; 147:13

# bloodshed

### Definition:

The term “bloodshed” refers to the death of human beings due to murder, war, or some other violent act.

- This term literally means “shedding of blood,” which refers to when blood comes out of a person’s body from an open wound.
- The term “bloodshed” is often used to refer to widespread killing of people.
- It is also used as a general reference to the sin of murder.

### Translation Suggestions:

- “The bloodshed” could be translated as “the killing of people” or “the many people who were killed.”
- “Through bloodshed” could also be translated as “by killing people.”
- “Innocent bloodshed” could be translated as “killing innocent people.”
- “Bloodshed follows bloodshed” could be translated as “they keep killing people” or “the killing of people goes on and on” or “they have killed many people and continue to do that” or “people keep killing other people.”
- Another figurative use, “bloodshed will pursue you,” could be translated as “your people will continue to experience bloodshed” or “your people will keep being killed” or “your people will continue to be at war with other nations and people will keep dying.”

(See also: blood; slaughter)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 22:6-8
- Genesis 9:5-7
- Hebrews 9:21-22
- Isaiah 26:21
- Matthew 23:29-31

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1818

## Psalms References:

9:12; 106:38; 139:19

# blot out, wipe out

### Definition:

The terms “blot out” and “wipe out” are expressions that mean to completely remove or destroy something or someone.

- These expressions can be used in a positive sense, as when God “blots out” sins by forgiving them and choosing not to remember them.
- It is also often used in a negative sense, as when God “blots out” or “wipes out” a people group, destroying them because of their sin.
- The Bible talks about a person’s name being “blotted out” or “wiped out” of God’s Book of Life, which means that the person will not receive eternal life.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, these expressions could be translated as “get rid of” or “remove” or “completely destroy” or “completely remove.”
- When referring to blotting someone’s name out of the Book of Life, this could be translated as “removed from” or “erased.”

### Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 29:20
- Exodus 32:30-32
- Genesis 7:23
- Psalm 51:1

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4229, H8045, G18130

## Psalms References:

9:5; 51:1; 51:9; 69:28; 109:13; 109:14

# bow and arrow, a bow

### Definition:

This is a type of weapon that consists of shooting arrows from a stringed bow. In Bible times it was used for fighting against enemies and for killing animals for food.

- The bow is made out of wood, bone, metal, or other hard material, such as a deer's antler. It has a curved shape and is strung tightly with a string, cord, or vine. When not in use the bow string would not be attached to both ends of the bow so that the bow was not under the pressure of being bent all the time. When preparing to fight a warrior would bend the bow and attach the string to both ends.
- An arrow is a thin shaft with a sharp, pointed head on one end. In ancient times, the arrows could be made of a variety of materials such as wood, bone, stone, or metal.
- Bows and arrows are commonly used by hunters and warriors.
- The term "arrow" is also sometimes used figuratively in the Bible to refer to enemy attacks or divine judgment.

### Bible References:

- Genesis 21:16
- Habakkuk 3:9-10
- Job 29:20-22
- Lamentations 2:4
- Psalms 58:6-8

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H2671, H7198, G51150

## Psalms References:

7:12; 11:2; 18:34; 37:14; 37:15; 44:6; 46:9; 60:4; 76:3; 78:9; 78:57

# bow, bow down, kneel, bend, bend the knee

### Definition:

To bow means to bend over to humbly express respect and honor toward someone. To “bow down” means to bend over or kneel down very low, often with face and hands toward the ground.

- Other expressions include “bow the knee” (meaning to kneel) and “bow the head” (meaning to bend the head forward in humble respect or in sorrow).
- Bowing down can also be a sign of distress or mourning. Someone who is “bowed down” has been brought to a low position of humility.
- Often a person will bow in the presence of someone who is of higher status or greater importance, such as kings and other rulers.
- Bowing down before God is an expression of worship to him.
- In the Bible, people bowed down to Jesus when they realized from his miracles and teaching that he had come from God.
- The Bible says that when Jesus comes back someday, everyone will bow the knee to worship him.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, this term could be translated with a word or phrase that means “bend forward” or “bend the head” or “kneel.”
- The term “bow down” could be translated as “kneel down” or “prostrate oneself.”
- Some languages will have more than one way of translating this term, depending on the context.

(See also: humble, worship)

### Bible References:

- 2 Kings 5:18
- Exodus 20:5
- Genesis 24:26
- Genesis 44:14
- Isaiah 44:19
- Luke 24:5
- Matthew 2:11
- Revelation 3:9

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0086, H3721, H3766, H5753, H5791, H6915, H7743, H7812, H7817, G11200, G25780, G28270, G40980

## Psalms References:

5:7; 10:10; 11:2; 17:13; 18:34; 18:39; 20:8; 22:27; 22:29; 35:14; 42:5; 42:6; 42:11; 43:5; 57:6; 72:9; 78:31; 81:9; 86:9; 95:6; 144:5; 145:14; 146:8

# bread

### Definition:

Bread is a food made from flour mixed with water and oil to form a dough. The dough is then shaped into a loaf and baked.

- When the term "loaf" occurs by itself, it means "loaf of bread."
- Bread dough is usually made with something that makes it rise, such as yeast. However, bread can also be made without yeast so that it does not rise. This is called "unleavened bread" in the Bible. The ancient Israelites ate "unleavened bread" during the passover meal.
- Since bread was the main food for many people in biblical times, this term is also used in the Bible to refer to food in general. (See: Synecdoche) Many times the term "bread" can be translated more generally as "food."
- The phrase "bread of the presence" refers to twelve loaves of bread that were placed on a golden table in the tabernacle or temple building as a sacrifice to God. These loaves represented the twelve tribes of Israel and were only for the priests to eat. This could be translated as "bread showing that God lived among them."
- The term "bread from heaven" refers to the special white food called "manna" that God provided for the Israelites when they were wandering through the desert. Jesus also called himself the "bread that came down from heaven" and the "bread of life."

(See also: Passover, tabernacle, temple, unleavened bread, yeast)

### Bible References:

- Acts 2:46
- Acts 27:35
- Exodus 16:15
- Luke 9:13
- Mark 6:38
- Matthew 4:4
- Matthew 11:18

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H2557, H3899, H4635, H4682, G01060, G07400, G42860

## Psalms References:

14:4; 37:25; 41:9; 42:3; 53:4; 78:20; 78:25; 80:5; 102:4; 102:9; 104:14; 104:15; 105:16; 105:40; 127:2; 132:15; 136:25; 146:7; 147:9

# bribe, bribery, payoff, payoffs

### Definition:

To “bribe” means to give someone something of value, such as money, to influence that person to do something dishonest.

- The soldiers who guarded Jesus’ empty tomb were bribed with money to lie about what happened.
- Sometimes a government official will be bribed to overlook a crime or to vote a certain way.
- The Bible forbids giving or taking bribes.
- The term, “bribe” could be translated as “dishonest payment” or “payment for lying” or “price for breaking the rules.”
- To “bribe” could be translated with a word or phrase that means, to “pay to influence (someone)” or to “pay to have a dishonest favor done” or to “pay for a favor.”

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 8:1-3
- Ecclesiastes 7:7
- Isaiah 1:23
- Micah 3:9-11
- Proverbs 15:27-28

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3724, H4979, H7809, H7810, H7936, H7966, H8021, H8641, G52600

## Psalms References:

15:5; 26:10

# bridegroom, groom

### Definition:

In a marriage ceremony, the bridegroom, also called the groom, is the **man** who will marry the bride (the **woman**).

### Translation Suggestions:

You could use the term that your language uses to refer to the man who is getting married in a marriage ceremony or if you do not have a term for this in your language you could use a descriptive phrase to describe what a bridegroom is. Depending on the context you could translate the terms “bridegroom” and “groom” with descriptive phrases such as “a man getting married” or “a man who is being married” or “the man getting married.”

(See also: bride, marriage)

### Bible References:

- Isaiah 62:5
- Joel 2:15-16
- John 3:30
- Luke 5:35
- Mark 2:19
- Mark 2:20
- Matthew 9:15

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2860, G35660

## Psalms References:

19:5

# bronze

**Definition:**

The term “bronze” refers to a kind of metal that is made from melting together the metals, copper and tin. It has a dark brown color, slightly red.

- Bronze resists water corrosion and is a good conductor of heat.
- In ancient times, bronze was used for making tools, weapons, artwork, altars, cooking pots, and soldiers’ armor, among other things.
- Many building materials for the tabernacle and temple were made of bronze.
- Idols of false gods were also often made of bronze metal.
- Bronze objects were made by first melting the bronze metal into a liquid and then pouring it into molds. This process was called “casting.”

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: armor, tabernacle, temple)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Kings 7:16
- 1 Samuel 17:37-38
- Daniel 2:44-45
- Exodus 25:3-7
- Revelation 1:15

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H5153, H5154, H5174, H5178, G54700, G54740, G54750

## Psalms References:

18:34; 107:16

# burnt offering, offering by fire

**Definition:**

A “burnt offering” was a type of sacrifice to God that was burnt up by fire on an altar. It was offered to make atonement for the sins of the people. This was also called an “offering by fire.”

- Animals used for this offering were usually sheep or goats, but oxen and birds were also used.
- Except for the skin, the entire animal was burned up in this offering. The skin or hide was given to the priest.
- God commanded the Jewish people to offer burnt offerings two times every day.

(See also: altar, atonement, ox, priest, sacrifice)

**Bible References:**

- Exodus 40:5-7
- Genesis 8:20
- Genesis 22:1-3
- Leviticus 3:5
- Mark 12:33

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0801, H5930, H7133, H8548, G36460

## Psalms References:

20:3; 40:6; 50:8; 51:16; 51:19; 66:15

# bury, buried, burial

### Definition:

The term “bury” refers to putting an object (usually a dead body) into a hole or other burial place and then covering it with dirt or stones, etc. The term “burial” is the act of burying something, or it can be used to describe a place where something has been buried.

- Often people bury a dead body by placing it into a deep hole in the ground and then covering it with dirt.
- Sometimes the dead body is placed in a box-like structure, such as a coffin, before burying it.
- In Bible times, dead people were often buried in a cave or similar place. After Jesus died, his body was wrapped in cloths and placed in a stone tomb that was sealed with a large boulder.
- The terms “burial place” or “burial room” or “burial chamber” or “burial cave” always refer to a place where a dead body is buried.
- Other things can also be buried, such as when Achan buried silver and other things that he had stolen from Jericho.
- The phrase “buried his face” usually means “covered his face with his hands.”
- Sometimes the word “hide” can mean “bury” as when Achan hid things in the ground that he had stolen from Jericho. This meant he buried them in the ground.

(See also: Jericho, tomb)

### Bible References:

- 2 Kings 9:9-10
- Genesis 35:4-5
- Jeremiah 25:33
- Luke 16:22
- Matthew 27:7
- Psalm 79:1-3

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6900, H6912, H6913, G17790, G17800, G22900, G49160, G50270

## Psalms References:

79:3

# call, called

### Definition:

The term “call,” in this sense, means to summon a person or being.

- Often in the Bible, “call” has a meaning of “summon” or “command to come” or “request to come.”
- Depending on context the phrase “call upon” can be translated as “summon” or “request help from” or “request to come.”
- God calls people to come to him and be his people. This is their “calling.”
- When God “calls” people, it means that God has appointed or chosen people to be his children, to be his servants and proclaimers of his message of salvation through Jesus.
- The expression, “I have called you by name” means that God has specifically chosen that person.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “call” could be translated by a word that means “summon,” which includes the idea of being intentional or purposeful in calling.
- When the Bible says that God has “called” us to be his servants, this could be translated as “specially chose us” or “appointed us” to be his servants.
- The expression “your calling” could be translated as “your purpose” or “God’s purpose for you” or “God’s special work for you.”
- When God says, “I have called you by name,” this could be translated as “I know you and have chosen you.”
- To “call on the name of the Lord” could be translated as “seek the Lord and depend on him” or “trust in the Lord and obey him.”
- To “call for” something could be translated by “demand” or “ask for” or “command.”

(See also: call to speak loudly, call name)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7121, G25640, G28210, G43410, G47790, G54550

## Psalms References:

13:intro; 31:17; 50:1; 50:4; 99:6; 105:1; 105:16; 116:13; 116:17; 145:18

# call, called

### Definition:

The terms “call” and “called,” in this sense, mean to name a place, person, or being. When referring to a person or thing the terms “call” and “called” can refer either to initially giving someone or something a name for the first time or to saying that thing or persons pre-existing name or title.

- The Bible sometimes uses these terms in the context of naming someone. For example, “His name is called John,” means “He is named John” or “His name is John.”
- To be “called by the name of” means that someone is given the name of someone else. God says that he has called his people by his name.

### Translation Suggestions:

- “You must call his name” can also be translated as “you must name him.”
- “His name is called” could also be translated as “his name is” or “he is named.”
- The expression “you are called by my name” could be translated as “I have given you my name, showing that you belong to me.”
- You could translates Jesus’ words “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’” as “You address me as ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’” or something similar to show that the word “call” in this context means to “address” someone by a specific name or title.

(See also: call to summon)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7121, G25640, G30040, G55810

## Psalms References:

49:11; 147:4

# call, called, call out, called out

### Definition:

The terms “call” and “call out,” in this sense, mean to speak loudly.

- To “call out” to someone means to shout, to announce, or to proclaim. It can also mean to ask someone for help, especially God.
- In some contexts the terms “call” and “call out” mean to loudly ask for help.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The expression “call out to you” could be translated as “ask you for help” or “pray to you urgently.”
- To “call out” could be translated as “say loudly” or “shout” or “say with a loud voice.” Make sure the translation of this does not sound like the person is angry.

(See also: pray, cry, call to summon, call name)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0559, H2199, H4744, H6817, H7121, H7123, H7769, H7773, G01540, G03630, G14580, G15280, G19410, G19510, G20280, G20460, G25640, G28210, G28220, G28400, G29190, G30040, G31060, G33330, G33430, G36030, G36860, G36870, G43160, G43410, G43770, G47790, G48670, G54550, G55370, G55810

## Psalms References:

3:4; 18:41; 28:1; 30:8; 32:11; 34:6; 42:5; 42:7; 42:11; 47:1; 47:5; 61:2; 65:13; 66:1; 66:17; 67:4; 69:3; 74:4; 74:23; 88:9; 95:1; 96:12; 98:4; 102:2; 105:43; 107:6; 107:22; 108:9; 116:2; 116:4; 118:5; 118:15; 119:145; 119:146; 120:1; 130:1; 132:16; 138:3; 147:9; 150:5

# Canaan, Canaanite

### Definition:

Canaan was the son of Ham, who was one of Noah's sons. The Canaanites were the descendants of Canaan.

- The term "Canaan" or the "land of Canaan" also referred to an area of land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. It extended south to the border of Egypt and north to the border of Syria.
- This land was inhabited by the Canaanites, as well as several other people groups.
- God promised to give the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants, the Israelites.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Ham, Promised Land)

### Bible References:

- Acts 13:19-20
- Exodus 3:7-8
- Genesis 9:18
- Genesis 10:19-20
- Genesis 13:7
- Genesis 47:2

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 4:5 He (Abram) took his wife, Sarai, together with all his servants and everything he owned and went to the land God showed him, the land of **Canaan**.
- 4:6 When Abram arrived in **Canaan** God said, "Look all around you. I will give to you and your descendants all the land that you can see as an inheritance."
- 4:9 "I give the land of **Canaan** to your descendants."
- 5:3 "I will give you and your descendants the land of **Canaan** as their possession and I will be their God forever."
- 7:8 After twenty years away from his home in **Canaan**, Jacob returned there with his family, his servants, and all his herds of animals.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3667, H3669, G54780

## Psalms References:

105:11; 106:38; 135:11

# captive, captivate, captivity, catch

### Definition:

The terms “captive” and “captivity” refer to people who have been captured and forced to live somewhere they do not want to live, such as in a foreign country.

- The Israelites from the kingdom of Judah were held captive in the kingdom of Babylonia for 70 years.
- Captives are often required to work for the people or nation that captured them.
- Daniel and Nehemiah were Israelite captives who worked for the Babylonian king.
- The expression to “take captive” is another way of talking about capturing someone.
- The expression, “carry you away captive” could also be translated as “force you to live as captives” or “take you away to another country as prisoners.”
- In a figurative sense, the apostle Paul tells Christians to “take captive” every thought and make it obedient to Christ.
- He also talks about how a person can be “taken captive” by sin, which means he is “controlled by” sin.

### Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, to be “held captive” could also be translated by, “not allowed to be free” or “kept in prison” or “forced to live in a foreign country.”
- The expression, “led captive” or “taken captive” could be translated as “captured” or “imprisoned” or “forced to go to a foreign land.”
- The term “captives” could also be translated as “people who were captured” or “enslaved people.”
- Depending on the context, “captivity” could also be translated as “imprisonment” or “exile” or “forced stay in a foreign country.”

(See also: Babylon, **exile**, **prison**, seize)

### Bible References:

- **2 Corinthians 10:5**
- **Isaiah 20:4**
- **Jeremiah 43:3**
- **Luke 4:18**

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1123, H1473, H1540, H1546, H1547, H7617, H7622, H7628, H7633, H7686, G01610, G01620, G01630, G01640, G22210

## Psalms References:

35:8; 68:18; 78:61; 85:1; 106:46; 126:1; 126:4; 137:3

# cedar, cedarwood

**Definition:**

The term “cedar” refers to a large fir tree which normally has reddish-brown wood. Like other firs, it has cones and needle-like leaves.

- The Old Testament often mentions cedar trees in connection with Lebanon, where they grew plentifully.
- Cedar wood was used in the construction of the Jerusalem temple.
- It was also used for sacrifices and purification offerings.

(See also: fir, pure, sacrifice, temple)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 14:1-2
- 1 Kings 7:1-2
- Isaiah 2:13
- Zechariah 11:2

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0730

## Psalms References:

29:5; 80:10; 92:12; 104:16; 148:9

# chaff

**Definition:**

Chaff is a dry protective covering of a grain seed. The chaff is not good for food so people separate it from the seed and throw it away.

- Often, the chaff is separated from the seed by throwing the heads of grain up into the air. The wind blows the chaff away and the seed falls on the ground. This process is called “winnowing.”
- In the Bible, this term is also used figuratively to refer to evil people and evil, worthless things.

(See also: grain, wheat, winnow)

**Bible References:**

- Daniel 2:35
- Job 21:18
- Luke 3:17
- Matthew 3:12

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H2842, H4671, H5784, H8401, G08920

## Psalms References:

1:4; 35:5; 83:13; 101:3

# chariot, charioteer

### Definition:

In ancient times, chariots were lightweight, two-wheeled carts that were pulled by horses.

- People would sit or stand in chariots, using them for war or travel.
- In war, an army that had chariots had a great advantage of speed and mobility over an army that did not have chariots.
- The ancient Egyptians and Romans were well-known for their use of horses and chariots.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: Egypt, Rome)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 9:22
- 2 Chronicles 18:28-30
- Acts 8:29
- Acts 8:38
- Daniel 11:40-41
- Exodus 14:25
- Genesis 41:43

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 12:10 So they followed the Israelites onto the path through the sea, but God caused the Egyptians to panic and caused their **chariots** to get stuck.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H2021, H4817, H4818, H7393, H7395, H7398, G07160, G44800

## Psalms References:

20:7; 68:17; 104:3

# cherub, cherubim

### Definition:

The term “cherub,” and its plural form “cherubim,” refer to a special type of heavenly being that God created. The Bible describes cherubim as having wings and flames.

- The cherubim display the glory and power of God and seem to be guardians of sacred things.
- After Adam and Eve sinned, God placed cherubim with flaming swords at the east side of the Garden of Eden so that people could no longer get to the tree of life.
- God commanded the Israelites to carve two cherubim facing each other, with their wings touching, over the atonement lid of the ark of the covenant.
- He also told them to weave pictures of the cherubim into the curtains of the tabernacle.
- In some passages, these creatures are also described as having four faces: of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle.
- Cherubim are sometimes thought of as being angels, but the Bible does not clearly state that.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “cherubim” could be translated as “creatures with wings” or “guardians with wings” or “winged spiritual guardians” or “holy, winged guardians.”
- A “cherub” should be translated as the singular of cherubim, as in, “creature with wings” or “winged spiritual guardian,” for example.
- Make sure that the translation of this term is different from the translation of “angel.”
- Also consider how this term is translated or written in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: angel)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 13:6
- 1 Kings 6:23-26
- Exodus 25:15-18
- Ezekiel 9:3
- Genesis 3:22-24

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3742, G55020

## Psalms References:

18:10; 80:1; 99:1

# chief, leader

### Definition:

The term “chief” refers to the most powerful or most important leader of a particular group.

- Examples of this include, “chief musician,” “chief priest,” and “chief tax collector.” and “chief ruler.”
- It can also be used for the head of a specific family, as in Genesis 36 where certain men are named as “chiefs” of their family clans. In this context, the term “chief” could also be translated as “leader” or “head father.”
- When used to describe a noun, this term could be translated as “leading” or “ruling,” as in “leading musician” or “ruling priest.”

(See also: **head**, chief priests, priest, **tax collector**)

### Bible References:

- **Daniel 1:11-13**
- **Ezekiel 26:15-16**
- **Luke 19:2**
- Psalm 4:1

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0047, H0441, H5057, H5387, H5632, H6496, H7218, H7225, H7227, H7229, H7262, H8269, H8334, G07490, G07500, G07540, G44100, G44130, G55060

## Psalms References:

107:40; 133:2

# chosen, choose, chosen people, Chosen One, elect

### Definition:

The term “the elect” literally means “chosen ones” or “chosen people” and refers to those whom God has appointed or selected to be his people. “Chosen One” or “Chosen One of God” is a title that refers to Jesus, who is the chosen Messiah.

- The term “choose” means to select something or someone or to decide something. It is often used to refer to God appointing people to belong to him and to serve him.
- To be “chosen” means to be “selected” or “appointed” to be or do something.
- God chose people to be holy, to be set apart by him for the purpose of bearing good spiritual fruit. That is why they are called “the chosen (ones)” or “the elect.”
- The term “chosen one” is sometimes used in the Bible to refer to certain people such as Moses and King David whom God had appointed as leaders over his people. It is also used to refer to the nation of Israel as God’s chosen people.
- The phrase “the elect” is an older term that literally means “the chosen ones” or “the chosen people.” This phrase in the original language is plural when referring to believers in Christ.
- In older English Bible versions, the term “elect” is used in both the Old and New Testaments to translate the word for “chosen one(s).” More modern versions use “elect” only in the New Testament, to refer to people who have been saved by God through faith in Jesus. Elsewhere in the Bible text, they translate this word more literally as “chosen ones.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate “elect” with a word or phrase that means “chosen ones” or “chosen people.” This could also be translated as “people whom God chose” or “the ones God appointed to be his people.”
- The phrase “who were chosen” could also be translated as “who were appointed” or “who were selected” or “whom God chose.”
- “I chose you” could be translated as “I appointed you” or “I selected you.”
- In reference to Jesus, “Chosen One” could also be translated as “God’s chosen One” or “God’s specially appointed Messiah” or “the One God appointed (to save people).”

(See also: appoint, Christ)

### Bible References:

- 2 John 1:1
- Colossians 3:12
- Ephesians 1:3-4

- **Isaiah 65:22-23**
- **Luke 18:7**
- **Matthew 24:19-22**
- **Romans 8:33**

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0970, H0972, H0977, H1262, H1305, H4005, H6901, G01380, G01400, G15860, G15880, G15890, G19510, G37240, G44000, G44010, G47580, G48990, G55000

## Psalms References:

65:4; 78:67; 84:10; 89:3; 89:19; 105:6; 105:26; 105:43; 106:5; 106:23; 119:30; 119:173; 132:13; 135:4

# Christ, Messiah

### Definition:

The terms “Messiah” and “Christ” mean “Anointed One” and refer to Jesus, God’s Son.

- Both “Messiah” and “Christ” are used in the New Testament to refer to God’s Son, whom God the Father appointed to rule as king over his people, and to save them from sin and death.
- In the Old Testament, the prophets wrote prophecies about the Messiah hundreds of years before he came to earth.
- Often a word meaning “anointed (one)” is used in the Old Testament to refer to the Messiah who would come.
- Jesus fulfilled many of these prophecies and did many miraculous works that proves he is the Messiah; the rest of these prophecies will be fulfilled when he returns.
- The word “Christ” is often used as a title, as in “the Christ” and “Christ Jesus.”
- “Christ” also came to be used as part of his name, as in “Jesus Christ.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated using its meaning, “the Anointed One” or “God’s Anointed Savior.”
- Many languages use a transliterated word that looks or sounds like “Christ” or “Messiah.” (See: How to Translate Unknowns)
- The transliterated word could be followed by the definition of the term as in, “Christ, the Anointed One.”
- Be consistent in how this is translated throughout the Bible so that it is clear that the same term is being referred to.
- Make sure the translations of “Messiah” and “Christ” work well in contexts where both terms occur in the same verse (such as John 1:41).

(See also: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Son of God, David, Jesus, anoint)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 5:1-3
- Acts 2:35
- Acts 5:40-42
- John 1:40-42
- John 3:27-28

- John 4:25
- Luke 2:10-12
- Matthew 1:16

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 17:7 The **Messiah** was God's Chosen One who would save the people of the world from sin.
- 17:8 As it happened, the Israelites would have to wait a long time before the **Messiah** came, almost 1,000 years.
- 21:1 From the very beginning, God planned to send the **Messiah**.
- 21:4 God promised King David that the **Messiah** would be one of David's own descendants.
- 21:5 The **Messiah** would start the New Covenant.
- 21:6 God's prophets also said that the **Messiah** would be a prophet, a priest, and a king.
- 21:9 The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the **Messiah** would be born from a virgin.
- 43:7 "But God raised him to life again to fulfill the prophecy which says, 'You will not let your **Holy One** rot in the grave.'"
- 43:9 "But know for certain that God has caused Jesus to become both Lord and **Messiah**!"
- 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."
- 46:6 Saul reasoned with the Jews, proving that Jesus was the **Messiah**.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H4899, G33230, G55470

## Psalms References:

22:intro; 110:intro; 118:intro

# clan

### Definition:

The term “clan” refers to a group of extended family members who come from a common ancestor.

- In the Old Testament, the Israelites were counted according to their clans, or family groups.
- Clans were normally named after their most well-known ancestor.
- Individual people were sometimes referred to by the name of their clan. An example of this is when Moses’ father-in-law Jethro is sometimes called by his clan name, Reuel.
- The term “clan” might also be translated as “family group” or “extended family” or “relatives.”

(See also: family, Jethro, tribe)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 6:33-35
- Genesis 10:2-5
- Genesis 36:15-16
- Genesis 36:29-30
- Genesis 36:40
- Joshua 15:20
- Numbers 3:38-39

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0001, H0441, H1004, H4940

## Psalms References:

96:7

# column, pillar

### Definition:

The term “pillar” usually refers to a large vertical structure that is used to hold up a roof or other part of a building. Another word for “pillar” is “column.”

- In Bible times, pillars used as support in buildings were normally carved from a single piece of stone.
- When Samson in the Old Testament was captured by the Philistines, he destroyed their pagan temple by pushing the supporting pillars and causing the temple to collapse.
- The word “pillar” sometimes refers to a large stone or boulder that is set up as a memorial to mark a grave or to mark the place where an important event happened.
- It can also refer to an idol that was made to worship a false god. It is another name for a “carved image” and could be translated as “statue.”
- The term “pillar” is used to refer to something that is shaped like a pillar, such as the “pillar of fire” that led the Israelites at night through the desert or the “pillar of salt” that Lot’s wife became after she looked back at the city.
- As a structure supporting a building, the term “pillar” or “column” could be translated as “upright stone support beam” or “supporting stone structure.”
- Other uses of “pillar” could be translated as “statue” or “pile” or “mound” or “monument” or “tall mass,” depending on the context.

(See also: foundation, false god, image)

### Bible References:

- 2 Kings 18:4
- Exodus 13:21
- Exodus 33:9
- Genesis 31:45
- Proverbs 9:1-2

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0352, H0547, H2106, H2553, H3730, H4552, H4676, H4678, H4690, H5324, H5333, H5982, H8490, G47690

## Psalms References:

75:3; 99:7; 144:12

# commit, committed

**Definition:**

In the Bible the terms “commit” and “committed” most often refer to doing a certain wrong action such as “commit a sin” or “commit adultery” or “commit murder.”

(See also: adultery, sin)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 28:7
- 1 Peter 2:21-23
- Jeremiah 2:12-13
- Matthew 13:41
- Psalm 58:2

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0539, H0817, H1361, H1497, H1500, H1540, H1556, H2181, H2388, H2398, H2399, H2403, H4560, H4603, H5003, H5753, H5766, H5771, H6213, H6466, H7683, H7760, H7847, G02640, G20380, G27160, G34290, G34310, G38600, G38720, G39080, G41020, G41600, G42030

## Psalms References:

31:5

# companion, fellow worker, friend

### Definition:

The term “companion” refers to a person who goes with someone else or who is associated with someone else, such as in a friendship or marriage. The term “fellow worker” refers to someone who works with another person.

- Companions go through experiences together, share meals together, and support and encourage each other.
- Depending on the context, this term could also be translated with a word or phrase that means, “friend” or “fellow traveler” or “supporting-person who goes with” or “person who works with.”

### Bible References:

- Ezekiel 37:16
- Hebrews 1:9
- Proverbs 2:17
- Psalms 38:11-12

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0251, H0441, H2269, H2270, H2273, H2278, H3674, H3675, H4828, H7453, H7462, H7464, G28440, G33530, G48980, G49040

## Psalms References:

35:14; 38:11; 41:9; 45:7; 45:14; 55:13; 55:20; 88:18; 119:63; 122:8

# compassion, compassionate

### Definition:

The term “compassion” refers to a feeling of concern for people, especially for those who are suffering. A “compassionate” person cares about other people and helps them.

- The word “compassion” refers to caring about people in need, as well as taking action to help them.
- The Bible says that God is compassionate, that is, he is full of love and mercy.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways of translating “compassion” could include, “deep caring” or “pity” or “helpful mercy.”
- The term “compassionate” could also be translated as “caring and helpful” or “deeply loving and merciful.”

### Bible References:

- Daniel 1:8-10
- Hosea 13:14
- James 5:9-11
- Jonah 4:1-3
- Mark 1:41
- Romans 9:14-16

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2550, H7349, H7355, H7356, G16530, G33560, G36270, G46970, G48340, G48350

## Psalms References:

25:6; 51:1; 69:16; 77:9; 79:8; 90:13; 103:13; 106:46; 112:4; 116:5; 119:77; 119:156; 135:14; 145:8; 145:9

# conceive, conceived, conception

### Definition:

Used in this sense, the terms “conceive” and “conception” usually refer to a woman becoming pregnant with a child. It can also be used for animals that become pregnant.

- The phrase “conceive a child” could be translated as “become pregnant” or some other term that is an acceptable way of referring to this.
- The related term “conception” could be translated as “beginning of a pregnancy” or “moment of becoming pregnant.”
- Depending on context, the term “conceived” could be translated as “became pregnant” or “became pregnant with.”

(See also: create, womb)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 21:1-4
- Hosea 2:4-5
- Job 15:35
- Luke 1:24-25
- Luke 2:21

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2029, H2030, H2032, H2232, H2254, H2803, H3179, G10800, G17220, G28450, G48150

## Psalms References:

51:5

# condemn, condemned, condemnation

### Definition:

The terms “condemn” and “condemnation” refer to judging someone for doing something wrong.

- Often the word “condemn” includes punishing that person for what they did wrong.
- Sometimes “condemn” means to falsely accuse someone or to judge someone harshly.
- The term “condemnation” refers to the act of condemning or accusing someone.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, this term could be translated as “harshly judge” or “criticize falsely.”
- The phrase “condemn him” could be translated as “judge that he is guilty” or “state that he must be punished for his sin.”
- The term “condemnation” could be translated as “harsh judging” or “declaring to be guilty” or “punishment of guilt.”

(See also: judge, punish)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 3:20
- Job 9:29
- John 5:24
- Luke 6:37
- Matthew 12:7
- Proverbs 17:15-16
- Psalms 34:22
- Romans 5:16

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6064, H7034, H7561, H8199, G01760, G08430, G26070, G26130, G26310, G26320, G26330, G29170, G29190, G29200, G52720, G60480

## Psalms References:

37:33; 94:21

# confess, confession

### Definition:

To confess means to admit or assert that something is true. A “confession” is a statement or admission that something is true.

- The term “confess” can refer to boldly stating the truth about God. It can also refer to admitting that we have sinned.
- The Bible says that if people confess their sins to God, he will forgive them.
- James the apostle wrote in his letter that when believers confess their sins to each other, this brings spiritual healing.
- The apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians that someday everyone will confess or declare that Jesus is Lord.
- Paul also said that if people confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead, they will be saved.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “confess” could include, “admit” or “testify” or “declare” or “acknowledge” or “affirm.”
- Different ways to translate “confession” could be, “declaration” or “testimony” or “statement about what we believe” or “admitting sin.”

(See also: faith, testimony)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 1:8-10
- 2 John 1:7-8
- James 5:16
- Leviticus 5:5-6
- Matthew 3:4-6
- Nehemiah 1:6-7
- Philippians 2:9-11
- Psalms 38:17-18

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3034, H8426, G18430, G36700, G36710

## Psalms References:

32:intro; 32:5; 38:18

# confirm, confirmation

### Definition:

The term “confirm” refers to verifying that something is true or legally certifying that a transaction has occurred.

- When a king is “confirmed” it means that the decision to make him king has been agreed upon and supported by the people.
- To confirm what someone wrote means to verify that what was written is true.
- The “confirmation” of the gospel means teaching people about the good news of Jesus in such a way that it shows that it is true.
- To give an oath “as confirmation” means to solemnly state or swear that something is true or trustworthy.
- Ways to translate “confirm” could include, “state as true” or “prove to be trustworthy” or “agree with” or “assure” or “promise,” depending on the context.

(See also: covenant, oath, trust)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 16:15-18
- 2 Corinthians 1:21
- 2 Kings 23:3
- Hebrews 6:16-18

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0559, H1396, H3045, H3559, H4390, H4672, H5414, H5975, H6213, H6965, G09500, G09510, G33150, G49720

## Psalms References:

89:28; 105:10; 119:106

# consume, devour

### Definition:

The term “consume” literally means to use up something. It has several figurative meanings.

- In the Bible, the word “consume” often refers to destroying things or people.
- A fire is said to consume things, which means it destroys them by burning them up.
- God is described as a “consuming fire,” which is a description of his anger against sin. His anger results in terrible punishment for sinners who do not repent.
- To consume food means to eat or drink something.
- The phrase, “consume the land” could be translated as “destroy the land.”

### Translation Suggestions

- In the context of consuming the land or people, this term could be translated as “destroy.”
- When fire is referred to, “consume” could be translated as “burn up.”
- The burning bush that Moses saw “was not consumed” which could be translated as “did not get burned up” or “did not burn up.”
- When referring to eating, “consume” could be translated as “eat” or “devour.”
- If someone’s strength is “consumed,” it means his strength is “used up” or “gone.”
- The expression, “God is a consuming fire” could be translated as “God is like a fire that burns things up” or “God is angry against sin and will destroy sinners like a fire.”

(See also: devour, wrath)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 18:38-40
- Deuteronomy 7:16
- Jeremiah 3:23-25
- Job 7:9
- Numbers 11:1-3

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0398, H0402, H1086, H1104, H1197, H2628, H3615, H3617, H3857, H4529, H5595, H8046, H8552, G03550, G26180, G26540, G27190, G53150

## Psalms References:

14:4; 21:9; 39:11; 41:9; 49:14; 53:4; 59:13; 69:9; 74:11; 78:33; 78:63; 105:35; 106:17; 106:20; 106:28; 119:139; 127:2; 128:2

# contempt, contemptible, not worth listening to

### Definition:

The term “contempt” refers to a deep disrespect and dishonor that is shown toward something or someone. Something that is greatly dishonorable is called “contemptible.”

- A person or behavior that shows open disrespect for God is also called “contemptible” and could be translated as “greatly disrespectful” or “completely dishonorable” or “deserving scorn.”
- To “hold in contempt” means to regard someone as having less value or to judge someone as less worthy than oneself.
- The following expressions have a similar meaning: “have contempt for” or “show contempt for” or “be in contempt of” or “treat with contempt.” These all mean to “strongly disrespect” or “strongly dishonor” something or someone by what is said and done.
- When King David sinned by committing adultery and murder, God said that David had “shown contempt for” God. It means he had greatly disrespected and dishonored God by doing that.

(See also: dishonor)

### Bible References:

- Daniel 12:1-2
- Proverbs 15:5-6
- Psalms 31:18

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0936, H0937, H0959, H0963, H1860, H7043, H7589, H5006, G18480

## Psalms References:

31:18; 107:40; 123:3; 123:4

# cornerstone

### Definition:

The term “cornerstone” refers to a large stone that has been specially cut and placed in the corner of the foundation of a building.

- All the other stones of the building are measured and placed in relation to the cornerstone.
- It is very important for the strength and stability of the whole structure.
- In the New Testament, the Assembly of believers is metaphorically compared to a building which has Jesus Christ as its “cornerstone.”
- In the same way that the cornerstone of a building supports and determines the position of the whole building, so Jesus Christ is the cornerstone on which the Assembly of believers is founded and supported.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “cornerstone” could also be translated as “main building stone” or “foundation stone.”
- Consider whether the target language has a term for a part of a building’s foundation that is the main support. If so, this term could be used.
- Another way to translate this would be, “a foundation stone used for the corner of a building.”
- It is important to keep the fact that this is a large stone, used as a solid and secure building material. If stones are not used for constructing buildings, there may be another word that could be used that means “large stone” (such as “boulder”) but it should also have the idea of being well-formed and made to fit.

### Bible References:

- Acts 4:11
- Ephesians 2:20
- Matthew 21:42
- Psalms 118:22

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0068, H6438, H7218, G02040, G11370, G27760, G30370

## Psalms References:

118:22

# corrupt, corrupted, corruption, incorruptibility, depraved

### Definition:

The terms “corrupt” and “corruption” refer to a state of affairs in which people have become ruined, immoral, or dishonest.

- The term “corrupt” literally means to be “bent” or “broken” morally.
- A person who is corrupt has turned away from truth and is doing things that are dishonest or immoral.
- To corrupt someone means to influence that person to do dishonest and immoral things.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term to “corrupt” could be translated as to “influence to do evil” or to “cause to be immoral.”
- A corrupt person could be described as a person “who has become immoral” or “who practices evil.”
- This term could also be translated as “bad” or “immoral” or “evil.”
- The term “corruption” could be translated as “the practice of evil” or “evil” or “immorality.”

(See also: evil)

### Bible References:

- Ezekiel 20:42-44
- Galatians 6:6-8
- Genesis 6:12
- Matthew 12:33-35
- Psalm 14:1

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2610, H3891, H4889, H7843, H7844, G08610, G13110, G27040, G53510, G53560

## Psalms References:

14:1; 14:3; 53:1; 53:3

# council

### Definition:

A council is a group of people who meet to discuss, give advice, and make decisions about important matters.

- A council is usually organized in an official and somewhat permanent way for a specific purpose, such as making decisions about legal matters.
- The "Jewish Council" in Jerusalem, also known as the "Sanhedrin," had 70 members, which included Jewish leaders such as chief priests, elders, scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees who met regularly to decide matters of Jewish law. It was this council of religious leaders who put Jesus on trial and decided that he should be killed.
- There were also smaller Jewish councils in other cities.
- The apostle Paul was brought before a Roman council when he was arrested for teaching the gospel.
- Depending on the context, the word "council" could also be translated as "legal assembly" or "political assembly."
- To be "in council" means to be in a special meeting to decide something.
- Note that this is a different word than "counsel," which means "wise advice."

(See also: assembly, counsel, Pharisee, law, priest, Sadducee, scribe)

### Bible References:

- Acts 7:57-58
- Acts 24:20
- John 3:2
- Luke 22:68
- Mark 13:9
- Matthew 5:22
- Matthew 26:59

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H4186, H5475, G10100, G48240, G48920

## Psalms References:

64:2; 89:7

# courage, courageous, valor

### Definition:

The term “courage” refers to boldly facing or doing something that is difficult, frightening, or dangerous.

- The term, “courageous” describes someone who shows courage, who does the right thing even when feeling afraid or pressured to give up.
- A person shows courage when he faces emotional or physical pain with strength and perseverance or when he faces the threat of emotional or physical pain with emotional strength.
- The expression “take courage” means “do not be afraid” or “be assured that things will turn out well.”
- When Joshua was preparing to go into the dangerous land of Canaan, Moses exhorted him to be “strong and courageous.”
- The term “courageous” could also be translated as “brave” or “unafraid” or “bold.”
- Depending on the context, to “have courage” could also be translated as “be emotionally strong” or “be confident” or “stand firm.”
- To “speak with courage” could be translated as “speak boldly” or “speak without being afraid” or “speak confidently.”

### Translation Suggestions

(See also: encourage, confidence, fear, strength)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0553, H2428, H2865, G21140, G21150, G21740, G22930, G22940, G38700, G38740, G43890, G51110

## Psalms References:

18:32; 18:39; 27:14; 31:24; 60:12; 108:13; 118:15; 118:16

# court, courtyard

### Definition:

The terms “court” and “courtyard” refer to an enclosed area that is open to the sky and surrounded by walls.

- The tabernacle was surrounded by one courtyard which was enclosed by walls made of thick, cloth curtains.
- The temple complex had three inner courtyards: one for the priests, one for Jewish men, and one for Jewish women.
- These inner courtyards were surrounded by a low stone wall that separated them from an outer courtyard where Gentiles were permitted to worship.
- The king’s court can refer to the physical location where legal and political matters were handled. It can also refer to the people who supported the king and carried out his decrees.
- The courtyard of a house was an open area in the middle of the house.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The terms “court” and “courtyard” could be translated as “enclosed space” or “walled-in land” or “walled-in space” or “tabernacle grounds” or “temple grounds” or “temple enclosure” depending on the context.
- If it would be natural in your language the term used for a king’s court could also be used to refer to Yahweh’s court.

(See also: Gentile,tabernacle, temple)

### Bible References:

- 2 Kings 20:4-5
- Exodus 27:9
- Jeremiah 19:14-15
- Luke 22:55
- Matthew 26:69-70
- Numbers 3:26
- Psalms 65:4

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1004, H1508, H2691, H5835, H7339, H8651, G08330, G42590

## Psalms References:

65:4; 84:2; 84:10; 92:13; 96:8; 100:4; 116:19; 135:2

# covenant

### Definition:

In the Bible, the term “covenant” refers to a formal, binding agreement between two parties that one or both parties must fulfill.

- This agreement can be between individuals, between groups of people, or between God and people.
- When people make a covenant with each other, they promise that they will do something, and they must do it.
- Examples of human covenants include marriage covenants, business agreements, and treaties between countries.
- Throughout the Bible, God made several different covenants with his people.
- In some of the covenants, God promised to fulfill his part without conditions. For example, when God established his covenant with mankind promising to never destroy the earth again with a worldwide flood, this promise had no conditions for people to fulfill.
- In other covenants, God promised to fulfill his part only if the people obeyed him and fulfilled their part of the covenant.

The term “new covenant” refers to the commitment or agreement God made with his people through the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus.

- God’s “new covenant” was explained in the part of the Bible called the “New Testament.”
- This new covenant is in contrast to the “old” or “former” covenant that God had made with the Israelites in Old Testament times.
- The new covenant is better than the old one because it is based on the sacrifice of Jesus, which completely atoned for people’s sins forever. The sacrifices made under the old covenant did not do this.
- God writes the new covenant on the hearts those who become believers in Jesus. This causes them to want to obey God and to begin to live holy lives.
- The new covenant will be completely fulfilled in the end times when God establishes his reign on earth. Everything will once again be very good, as it was when God first created the world.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate this term could include, “binding agreement” or “formal commitment” or “pledge” or “contract.”

- Some languages may have different words for covenant depending on whether one party or both parties have made a promise they must keep. If the covenant is one-sided, it could be translated as “promise” or “pledge.”
- Make sure the translation of this term does not sound like people proposed the covenant. In all cases of covenants between God and people, it was God who initiated the covenant.
- The term “new covenant” could be translated as “new formal agreement” or “new pact” or “new contract.”
- The word “new” in these expressions has the meaning of “fresh” or “new kind of” or “another.”

(See also: covenant, promise)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 9:12
- Genesis 17:7
- Genesis 31:44
- Exodus 34:10-11
- Joshua 24:24-26
- 2 Samuel 23:5
- 2 Kings 18:11-12
- Mark 14:24
- Luke 1:73
- Luke 22:20
- Acts 7:8
- 1 Corinthians 11:25-26
- 2 Corinthians 3:6
- Galatians 3:17-18
- Hebrews 12:24

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 4:9 Then God made a **covenant** with Abram. A **covenant** is an agreement between two parties.
- 5:4 “I will make Ishmael a great nation, too, but my **covenant** will be with Isaac.”

- 6:4 After a long time, Abraham died and all of the promises that God had made to him in the **covenant** were passed on to Isaac.
- 7:10 "The **covenant** promises God had promised to Abraham and then to Isaac now passed on to Jacob."
- 13:2 God said to Moses and the people of Israel, "If you will obey my voice and keep my **covenant**, you will be my prized possession, a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."
- 13:4 Then God gave them the **covenant** and said, "I am Yahweh, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship other gods."
- 15:13 Then Joshua reminded the people of their obligation to obey the **covenant** that God had made with the Israelites at Sinai.
- 21:5 Through the prophet Jeremiah, God promised that he would make a **New Covenant**, but not like the covenant God made with Israel at Sinai. In the **New Covenant**, God would write his law on the people's hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would forgive their sins. The Messiah would start the **New Covenant**.
- 21:14 Through the Messiah's death and resurrection, God would accomplish his plan to save sinners and start the **New Covenant**.
- 38:5 Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the **New Covenant** that is poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Do this to remember me every time you drink it."
- 48:11 But God has now made a **New Covenant** that is available to everyone. Because of this **New Covenant**, anyone from any people group can become part of God's people by believing in Jesus.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H1285, H2319, H3772, G08020, G12420, G49340

## Psalms References:

25:10; 25:14; 44:17; 50:5; 50:16; 55:20; 74:20; 78:10; 78:37; 83:5; 89:3; 89:28; 89:34; 89:39; 103:18; 105:8; 105:10; 106:45; 111:5; 111:9; 132:12

# covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, covenant love

**Definition:**

In biblical times, the term translated as “covenant faithfulness” was used to describe the kind of faithfulness, loyalty, kindness, and love that was both expected and demonstrated between people who were closely related to one another, either by marriage or by blood. This same term is used often in the Bible to describe the way God relates to his people, especially his commitment to fulfill the promises that he made to them.

- The way this term is translated can depend on how each of the individual terms “covenant” and “faithfulness” are translated.
- Other ways to translate this term might include: “faithful love;” “loyal, committed love;” or “loving dependability.”

(See also: covenant, faithful, grace, Israel, people of God, promise)

**Bible References:**

- Ezra 3:11
- Numbers 14:18

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H2617

## Psalms References:

5:7; 6:4; 13:5; 17:7; 18:50; 21:7; 23:6; 25:6; 25:7; 25:10; 26:3; 31:7; 31:16; 31:21; 32:10; 33:5; 33:18; 33:22; 36:5; 36:7; 36:10; 40:10; 40:11; 42:8; 44:26; 48:9; 51:1; 52:1; 52:8; 57:3; 57:10; 59:10; 59:16; 59:17; 61:intro; 61:7; 62:12; 63:3; 66:20; 69:13; 69:16; 77:8; 85:7; 85:10; 86:5; 86:13; 86:15; 88:11; 89:1; 89:2; 89:14; 89:24; 89:28; 89:33; 89:49; 90:14; 92:2; 94:18; 98:3; 100:5; 101:1; 103:4; 103:8; 103:11; 103:17; 106:1; 106:7; 106:45; 107:1; 107:8; 107:15; 107:21; 107:31; 107:43; 108:4; 109:12; 109:16; 109:21; 109:26; 115:1; 117:2; 118:1; 118:2; 118:3; 118:4; 118:29; 119:41; 119:64; 119:76; 119:88; 119:124; 119:149; 119:159; 130:7; 136:1; 136:2; 136:3; 136:4; 136:5; 136:6; 136:7; 136:8; 136:9; 136:10; 136:11; 136:12; 136:13; 136:14; 136:15; 136:16; 136:17; 136:18; 136:19; 136:20; 136:21; 136:22; 136:23; 136:24; 136:25; 136:26; 138:2; 138:8; 141:5; 143:8; 143:12; 144:2; 145:8; 147:11

# cow, bull, calf, cattle, heifer, ox

**Definition:**

The terms “cow,” “bull,” “heifer,” “ox,” and “cattle” all refer to a kind of large, four-legged bovine animal that eats grass.

- The female of this kind of animal is called a “cow,” the male is a “bull,” and their offspring is a “calf.”
- In the Bible, cattle were among the “clean” animals that the people could eat and use for sacrifice. They were primarily raised for their meat and milk.

A “heifer” is an adult female cow that has not yet given birth to a calf.

An “ox” is a type of cattle that is specifically trained to do agricultural work. The plural of this term is “oxen.” Usually oxen are male and have been castrated.

- Throughout the Bible, oxen were depicted as animals tied together by a yoke to pull a cart or a plow.
- Having oxen work together under a yoke was such a common occurrence in the Bible that the phrase to “be under a yoke” became a metaphor for hard work and labor.
- A bull is also a male type of cattle, but it has not been castrated and has not been trained as a work animal.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: yoke)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 15:9-11
- Exodus 24:5-6
- Numbers 19:1-2
- Deuteronomy 21:3-4
- 1 Samuel 1:24-25
- 1 Samuel 15:3
- 1 Samuel 16:2-3
- 1 Kings 1:9
- 2 Chronicles 11:15
- 2 Chronicles 15:10-11

- **Matthew 22:4**
- **Luke 13:15**
- **Luke 14:5**
- **Hebrews 9:13**

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0047, H0441, H0504, H0929, H1165, H1241, H4399, H4735, H4806, H5695, H5697, H6499, H6510, H6629, H7214, H7716, H7794, H7921, H8377, H8450, G10160, G11510, G23530, G29340, G34470, G34480, G41650, G50220

## Psalms References:

22:12; 29:6; 50:9; 50:10; 50:13; 51:19; 66:15; 68:30; 69:31; 78:48; 92:10; 104:14; 106:19; 106:20; 107:38

# create, created, creation, creator

### Definition:

The term “create” means to make something or to cause something to be. Whatever is created is called a “creation.” God is called the “Creator” because he caused everything in the entire universe to come into existence.

- When this term is used to refer to God creating the world, it means he made it out of nothing.
- When human beings “create” something, it means they made it out of things that already existed.
- Sometimes “create” is used in a figurative way to describe something abstract, such as creating peace, or creating a pure heart in someone.
- The term “creation” can refer to the very beginning of the world when God first created everything. It can also be used to refer generally to everything that God created. Sometimes the word “creation” refers more specifically to just the people in the world.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Some languages may have to directly say that God created the world “out of nothing” to make sure this meaning is clear.
- The phrase, “since the creation of the world” means “since the time when God created the world.”
- A similar phrase, “at the beginning of creation” could be translated as “when God created the world at the beginning of time,” or “when the world was first created.”
- To preach the good news to “all creation” means to preach the good news to “all people everywhere on earth.”
- The phrase “Let all creation rejoice” means “Let everything that God created rejoice.”
- Depending on the context, “create” could be translated as “make” or “cause to be” or “make out of nothing.”
- The term “the Creator” could be translated as “the One who created everything” or “God, who made the whole world.”
- Phrases like “your Creator” could be translated as “God, who created you.”

(See also: God, good news, world)

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 11:9-10
- 1 Peter 4:17-19
- Colossians 1:15

- Galatians 6:15
- Genesis 1:1
- Genesis 14:19-20

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H3335, H4639, H6213, H6385, H7069, G20410, G26020, G26750, G29360, G29370, G29390, G41600, G54800

## Psalms References:

51:10; 89:12; 89:47; 94:20; 102:18; 104:24; 104:30; 104:31; 139:13; 148:5

# creature, creation

### Definition:

The term “creature” refers to all the living beings that God created, both humans and animals.

- The prophet Ezekiel described seeing “living creatures” in his vision of the glory of God. He did not know what they were, so he gave them this very general label.
- Note that the term “creation” has a different meaning since it includes everything God created, both living and nonliving things (such as land, water, and stars). The term “creature” only includes living things.

### Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, “creature” could be translated as “being” or “living being” or “created being.”
- The plural, “creatures” could be translated as “all living things” or “people and animals” or “animals” or “human beings.”

(See also: create)

### Bible References:

- Daniel 4:10-12
- Ezekiel 1:9
- Joshua 10:28
- Leviticus 11:46-47
- Revelation 19:4

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1320, H1321, H1870, H2119, H2416, H4639, H5315, H5971, H7430, H8318, G22260, G29370, G29380

## Psalms References:

50:11; 80:13; 104:20; 148:7; 148:10

# crown, crowned

**Definition:**

A crown is a decorative, circular headpiece worn on the head of rulers such as kings and queens. The term to "crown" means to put a crown on someone's head; figuratively it means, to "honor."

- Crowns are usually made of gold or silver, and are embedded with precious gems such as emeralds and rubies.
- A crown was intended to be a symbol of a king's power and wealth.
- By contrast, the crown made of thorn branches that the Roman soldiers placed on Jesus' head was meant to mock him and hurt him.
- In ancient times, winners of athletic contests would be awarded a crown made out of olive branches. The apostle Paul mentions this crown in his second letter to Timothy.
- Used figuratively, to "crown" means to honor someone. We honor God by obeying him and praising him to others. This is like putting a crown on him and acknowledging that he is King.
- Paul calls fellow believers his "joy and crown." In this expression, "crown" is used figuratively to mean that Paul has been greatly blessed and honored by how these believers have remained faithful in serving God.
- When used figuratively, "crown" could be translated as "prize" or "honor" or "reward."
- The figurative use of to "crown" could be translated as to "honor" or to "decorate."
- If a person is "crowned" this could be translated as "a crown was put on his head."
- The expression, "he was crowned with glory and honor" could be translated as "glory and honor were bestowed on him" or "he was given glory and honor" or "he was endowed with glory and honor."

(See also: glory, king, olive)

**Bible References:**

- John 19:3
- Lamentations 5:16
- Matthew 27:29
- Philippians 4:1
- Psalms 21:3
- Revelation 3:11

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3803, H3804, H5145, H5849, H5850, H6936, G12380, G47350, G47370

## Psalms References:

8:5; 21:3; 65:11; 89:39; 103:4; 132:18

# crucify, crucified

### Definition:

The term “crucify” means to execute someone by attaching him to a cross and leaving him there to suffer and die in great pain.

- The victim was either tied to the cross or nailed to it. Crucified people died from blood loss or from suffocation.
- The ancient Roman Empire frequently used this method of execution to punish and kill people who were terrible criminals or who had rebelled against the authority of their government.
- The Jewish religious leaders asked the Roman governor to order his soldiers to crucify Jesus. The soldiers nailed Jesus to a cross. He suffered there for six hours, and then died.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “crucify” could be translated as “kill on a cross” or “execute by nailing to a cross.”

(See also: cross, Rome)

### Bible References:

- Acts 2:23
- Galatians 2:20-21
- Luke 23:20-22
- Luke 23:34
- Matthew 20:17-19
- Matthew 27:23-24

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 39:11 But the Jewish leaders and the crowd shouted, “**Crucify** him (Jesus)!”
- 39:12 Pilate became afraid that the crowd would begin to riot, so he ordered his soldiers to **crucify** Jesus.played a major role in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.
- 40:1 After the soldiers mocked Jesus, they led him away to **crucify** him. They made him carry the cross on which he would die.
- 40:4 Jesus was **crucified** between two robbers.
- 43:6 “Men of Israel, Jesus was a man who did many mighty signs and wonders by the power of God, as you have seen and already know. But you **crucified** him!”

- 43:9 “You **crucified** this man, Jesus.”
- 44:8 Peter answered them, “This man stands before you healed by the power of Jesus the Messiah. You **crucified** Jesus, but God raised him to life again!”

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: G03880, G43620, G47170, G49570

## Psalms References:

22:intro

# cry, cry out, outcry

### Definition:

The terms “cry” or “cry out” usually mean to say something loudly or urgently. Someone can “cry out” in pain, distress, anger, or fear, often with the intent of asking for help.

- The phrase “cry out” can mean to shout or to call out with the intent of asking for help.
- The terms “cry” or “cry out” can also mean to pray.
- This term could also be translated as “exclaim loudly” or “urgently ask for help,” depending on the context.
- An expression such as, “I cry out to you” could be translated as “I call to you for help” or “I urgently ask you for help.”

(See also: call speak loudly, plead, pray)

### Bible References:

- Job 27:9
- Mark 5:5-6
- Mark 6:48-50
- Psalm 22:1-2

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1058, H2199, H2201, H6030, H6463, H6670, H6682, H6817, H6818, H6873, H6963, H7121, H7123, H7321, H7440, H7442, H7723, H7737, H7768, H7771, H7775, H8663, G03100, G03490, G08630, G09940, G09950, G19160, G20190, G27990, G28050, G28960, G29050, G29060, G29290, G43770, G54550

## Psalms References:

5:2; 9:12; 17:1; 18:6; 20:9; 22:2; 27:7; 28:2; 34:15; 34:17; 39:12; 40:1; 56:9; 57:2; 61:1; 72:12; 77:1; 81:7; 84:2; 86:3; 86:7; 88:1; 88:2; 88:13; 89:26; 91:15; 99:6; 102:1; 105:2; 106:44; 107:13; 107:19; 107:28; 119:147; 119:169; 141:1; 142:1; 142:6; 144:14; 145:19

# curse, cursed, cursing

### Definition:

The term “curse” means to cause negative things to happen to the person or thing that is being cursed.

- A curse can be a statement that harm will happen to someone or something.
- To curse someone can also be an expression of desire that bad things will happen to them.
- It can also refer to the punishment or other negative things that someone causes to happen to someone.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated as “cause bad things to happen to” or “declare that something bad will happen to” or “swear to cause evil things to happen to.”
- In the context of God sending curses on his disobedient people, it could be translated as “punish by allowing bad things to happen.”
- The term “cursed” when used to describe people could be translated as “(this person) will experience much trouble.”
- The phrase “cursed be” could be translated as “May (this person) experience great difficulties.”
- The phrase, “Cursed is the ground” could be translated as “The soil will not be very fertile.”
- However, if the target language has the phrase “cursed be” and it has the same meaning, then it is good to keep the same phrase.

(See also: bless)

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 14:24-26
- 2 Peter 2:12-14
- Galatians 3:10
- Galatians 3:14
- Genesis 3:14
- Genesis 3:17
- James 3:10
- Numbers 22:6
- Psalms 109:28

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 2:9 God said to the snake, “You are **cursed**!”
- 2:11 “Now the ground is **cursed**, and you will need to work hard to grow food.”
- 4:4 “I will bless those who bless you and **curse** those who **curse** you.”
- 39:7 Then Peter vowed, saying, “May God **curse** me if I know this man!”
- 50:16 Because Adam and Eve disobeyed God and brought sin into this world, God **cursed** it and decided to destroy it.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0422, H0423, H0779, H1288, H2763, H2764, H3994, H5344, H6895, H7043, H7045, H7621, H8381, G03310, G03320, G06850, G19440, G25510, G26520, G26530, G26710, G26720, G60350

## Psalms References:

10:7; 37:22; 59:12; 62:4; 109:17; 109:18; 109:28; 119:21

# curtain

### Definition:

In the Bible, the term “curtain” refers to a very thick, heavy piece of material used in the making of the tabernacle and the temple.

- The tabernacle was built using four layers of curtains for the top and sides. These curtain coverings were made of cloth or animal skins.
- Cloth curtains were also used to form a wall surrounding the tabernacle courtyard. These curtains were made out of “linen” which was a kind of cloth made out of the flax plant.
- In both the tabernacle and temple building, a thick cloth curtain hung between the holy place and the most holy place. It was this curtain that was miraculously torn into two parts when Jesus died.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Since modern-day curtains are very different from the curtains used in the Bible, it may be more clear to use a different word or to add words that describe the curtains.
- Depending on the context, ways to translate this term could include, “curtain covering” or “covering” or “piece of thick cloth” or “animal skin covering” or “hanging piece of cloth.”

(See also: holy place, tabernacle, temple)

### Bible References:

- Hebrews 10:20
- Leviticus 4:17
- Luke 23:45
- Matthew 27:51
- Numbers 4:5

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1852, H3407, H4539, H6532, H7050, G26650

## Psalms References:

104:2; 105:39

# Cush

**Definition:**

Cush was the oldest son of Noah's son Ham. He was also the ancestor of Nimrod. Two of his brothers were named Egypt and Canaan.

- In Old Testament times, "Cush" was the name of a large region of land south of Israel. It is probable that the land was named after Ham's son Cush.
- The ancient region of Cush covered an area of land that may have, at different times, included parts of the modern-day countries of Sudan, Egypt, Ethiopia, and possibly, Saudi Arabia.
- Another man named Cush is mentioned in the Psalms. He was a Benjamite.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Arabia, Canaan, Egypt, Ethiopia)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 1:8-10
- Ezekiel 29:10
- Genesis 2:13
- Genesis 10:6-7
- Jeremiah 13:23

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H3568, H3569, H3570, 3571

## Psalms References:

7:front; 68:31; 87:4

# cypress

### Definition:

The term “cypress” refers to a kind of fir tree that was plentiful in the regions where people lived in Bible times, especially countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea.

- Cyprus and Lebanon are two places that are specifically mentioned in the Bible as having many cypress trees.
- The wood that Noah used to build the ark may have been cypress.
- Because cypress wood is sturdy and long-lasting, it was used by ancient peoples for building boats and other structures.

(See also: ark, Cyprus, fir, Lebanon)

### Bible References:

- Acts 11:19-21
- Genesis 6:14
- Hosea 14:8
- Isaiah 44:14
- Isaiah 60:13
- Zechariah 11:2

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H8645

## Psalms References:

104:17

# David

**Definition:**

David was the second king of Israel and he loved and served God. He was the main writer of the book of Psalms.

- When David was still a young boy caring for his family's sheep, God chose him to become the next king of Israel.
- David became a great fighter and led the Israelite army in battles against their enemies. His defeat of Goliath the Philistine is well known.
- King Saul tried to kill David, but God protected him, and made him king after Saul's death.
- David committed a terrible sin, but he repented and God forgave him.
- Jesus, the Messiah, is called the "Son of David" because he is a descendant of King David.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Goliath, Philistines, Saul (OT))

**Bible References:**

- 1 Samuel 17:12-13
- 1 Samuel 20:34
- 2 Samuel 5:2
- 2 Timothy 2:8
- Acts 2:25
- Acts 13:22
- Luke 1:32
- Mark 2:26

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 17:2 God chose a young Israelite named **David** to be king after Saul. **David** was a shepherd from the town of Bethlehem. … **David** was a humble and righteous man who trusted and obeyed God.
- 17:3 **David** was also a great soldier and leader. When **David** was still a young man, he fought against a giant named Goliath.
- 17:4 Saul became jealous of the people's love for **David**. Saul tried many times to kill him, so **David** hid from Saul.

- 17:5 God blessed **David** and made him successful. **David** fought many battles and God helped him defeat Israel's enemies.
- 17:6 **David** wanted to build a temple where all the Israelites could worship God and offer him sacrifices.
- 17:9 **David** ruled with justice and faithfulness for many years, and God blessed him. However, toward the end of his life he sinned terribly against God.
- 17:13 God was very angry about what **David** had done, so he sent the prophet Nathan to tell **David** how evil his sin was. **David** repented of his sin and God forgave him. For the rest of his life, **David** followed and obeyed God, even in difficult times.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H1732, G11380

## Psalms References:

3:front; 4:front; 5:front; 6:front; 7:front; 8:front; 9:front; 11:1; 12:front; 13:front; 14:1; 15:1; 16:1; 17:1; 18:front; 18:50; 19:front; 20:front; 21:front; 22:front; 23:1; 24:1; 25:1; 26:1; 27:1; 28:1; 29:1; 31:front; 32:1; 34:front; 36:front; 39:front; 40:front; 41:front; 51:front; 52:front; 53:front; 54:front; 55:front; 56:front; 57:front; 58:front; 59:front; 60:front; 61:front; 62:front; 63:front; 64:front; 65:front; 68:front; 69:front; 70:front; 72:20; 78:70; 86:1; 89:3; 89:20; 89:35; 89:49; 101:1; 103:1; 109:1; 110:1; 122:1; 124:1; 131:1; 132:1; 132:10; 132:11; 132:17; 133:1; 138:1; 139:1; 140:front; 141:1; 142:front; 143:1; 144:1; 144:10; 145:1

# day

### Definition:

The term “day” generally refers to the time it takes for the alternating periods of light and darkness in the sky to complete one cycle (that is, 24 hours). However, in the Bible the same term is often used to refer to a shorter period of time (such as the time between sunrise and sunset) or a longer period of time that is often not specified.

- “Day” is sometimes used in contrast to “night.” In these cases, the term refers to the period of time when the sky is light.
- The term may also refer to a specific point in time, such as “today.”
- Sometimes the term “day” is used figuratively to refer to a longer period of time, such as the “day of Yahweh” or “last days.” Some languages will use a different expression to translate these figurative uses or will translate “day” non-figuratively.

### Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term literally as “day” or “daytime” using the word in your language that refers to the part of the day when there is light.
- Other translations of “day” could include “daytime,” “time,” “season,” “occasion” or “event,” depending on the context.

(See also: **time**, **judgment day**, **last day**)

### Bible References:

- **Acts 20:6**
- **Daniel 10:4**
- **Ezra 6:15**
- **Ezra 6:19**
- **Matthew 9:15**

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3117, H3118, H6242, G22500

## Psalms References:

13:2; 19:2; 44:1; 49:5; 90:15; 94:13; 102:24; 137:7

# deceive, lie, deception, illusion

### Definition:

The term “deceive” means to cause someone to believe something that is not true, often by telling a “lie.” The act of deceiving someone is called “lying,” “deceit,” or “deception.”

- Someone who causes others to believe something false is a “deceiver.” For example, Satan is called a “deceiver.” The evil spirits that he controls are also deceivers.
- To “lie” is to say something that is not true.
- A person, action, or message that is not truthful can be described as “deceptive.”
- The terms “deceit” and “deception” have the same meaning, but there are some small differences in how they are used.
- The descriptive terms “deceitful” and “deceptive” have the same meaning and are used in the same contexts.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “deceive” could include “lie to” or “cause to have a false belief” or “cause someone to think something that is not true.”
- The term “deceived” could also be translated as “caused to think something false” or “lied to” or “tricked” or “fooled” or “misled.”
- “Deceiver” could be translated as “liar” or “one who misleads” or “someone who deceives.”
- Depending on the context, the terms “deception” or “deceit” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “falsehood” or “lying” or “trickery” or “dishonesty.”
- The terms “deceptive” or “deceitful” could be translated as “untruthful” or “misleading” or “lying” to describe a person who speaks or acts in a way that causes other people to believe things that are not true.

(See also: true)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 1:8
- 1 Timothy 2:14
- 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4
- Genesis 3:12-13
- Genesis 31:26-28
- Leviticus 19:11-12
- Matthew 27:64

- Micah 6:11

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0898, H2048, H3577, H3584, H3868, H4123, H4820, H4860, H5230, H5377, H5558, H6121, H6231, H6601, H7411, H7423, H7683, H7686, H7952, H8267, H8496, H8582, H8591, H8649, G05380, G05390, G13860, G13870, G13880, G18180, G38840, G41050, G41060, G41080, G54220, G54230

## Psalms References:

5:6; 7:14; 10:7; 34:13; 40:4; 50:19; 58:3; 59:12; 62:4; 62:9; 78:36; 78:57; 89:35; 101:7; 109:2; 116:11; 119:29; 119:69; 119:78; 119:163; 120:2; 120:3

# declare, proclaim, announce

### Definition:

The terms “declare” and “declaration” refer to making a formal or public statement, often to emphasize something. Other terms with similar meaning include “proclaim,” “proclamation,” “announce,” and “announcement.”

- A “declaration” not only emphasizes the importance of what is being proclaimed, but it also calls attention to the one making the declaration.
- For example, in the Old Testament, a message from God is often preceded by “the declaration of Yahweh” or “this is what Yahweh declares.” This expression emphasizes that it is Yahweh himself who is saying this. The fact that the message comes from Yahweh shows how important that message is.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “declare” could also be translated as “proclaim” or “publicly state” or “strongly say” or “emphatically state.”
- The term “declaration” could also be translated as “statement” or “proclamation.”
- The phrase “this is Yahweh’s declaration” could be translated as “this is what Yahweh declares” or “this is what Yahweh says.”

(See also: preach, decree)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 16:24
- 1 Corinthians 15:31-32
- 1 Samuel 24:17-18
- Amos 2:16
- Ezekiel 5:11-12
- Matthew 7:21-23

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0262, H0559, H0816, H0874, H1696, H3045, H4853, H5002, H5042, H5046, H5608, H6567, H7121, H7561, H7878, H8085, G03120, G05180, G06690, G12290, G13440, G15550, G17180, G18340, G20970, G25110, G26050, G26070, G31400, G36700, G37240, G38220, G38700, G39550, G42960

## Psalms References:

9:11; 19:1; 19:2; 22:22; 22:31; 30:9; 40:5; 40:9; 40:10; 50:6; 51:15; 52:front; 64:9; 68:11; 71:17; 71:18; 75:9; 92:2; 92:15; 96:2; 97:6; 106:2; 110:1; 118:17; 142:2; 145:4; 147:19

# decree, decreed

**Definition:**

The term “decree” means to give an order that must be obeyed. The order itself can also be called a “decree.”

- A “decree” is similar to a “law,” but is generally used more often to refer to something spoken rather than written.
- The term “decree” could be translated as to “order” or to “command” or to “formally require” or to “publicly make a law.”
- God’s laws are also called decrees, statutes, or commandments.
- An example of a decree by a human ruler was the proclamation by Caesar Augustus that everyone living in the Roman Empire must go back to their hometown in order to be counted in a census.

(See also: command, declare, law)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 15:13-15
- 1 Kings 8:57-58
- Acts 17:5-7
- Daniel 2:13
- Esther 1:22
- Luke 2:1

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0559, H0633, H1697, H5715, H1504, H1510, H1881, H1882, H1696, H2706, H2708, H2710, H2711, H2782, H2852, H2940, H2941, H2942, H3791, H3982, H4055, H4406, H4687, H4941, H5407, H5713, H6599, H6680, H7010, H8421, G13780

## Psalms References:

2:7; 93:5; 105:5; 105:7; 148:6

# dedicate, dedication, established, devoted

**Definition:**

To dedicate is to set apart or commit something for a special purpose or function.

- David dedicated his gold and silver to the Lord.
- Often the word “dedication” refers to a formal event or ceremony to set apart something for a special purpose.
- The dedication of the altar included offering a sacrifice to God.
- Nehemiah led the Israelites in a dedication of Jerusalem’s repaired walls with a renewed promise to serve only Yahweh and to take care of his city. This event included giving thanks to God with musical instruments and singing.
- The term “dedicate” could also be translated as “specially assign a special purpose” or “commit something to be used for a specific use” or “commit someone to do a special task.”
- The terms “devote” and “devoted” often refer to something that is completely destroyed as a way of dedicating it to Yahweh.

(See also: commit)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 15:11-12
- 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
- 1 Kings 7:51
- 1 Timothy 4:5
- 2 Chronicles 2:4-5
- John 17:18-19
- Luke 2:22-24

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H2596, H2597, H2598, H2764, H4394, H6942, H6944, G14560, G14570

## Psalms References:

8:2; 9:7; 24:2; 37:23; 51:10; 57:7; 68:9; 74:16; 75:3; 78:5; 89:4; 89:21; 89:37; 90:17; 93:1; 93:2; 96:10; 99:4; 101:7; 102:28; 103:19; 107:41; 111:8; 119:5; 119:73; 119:89; 119:90; 119:133; 140:11; 141:2; 148:6

# deer, doe, fawn, roebuck, stag

**Definition:**

A deer is a large, graceful, four-legged animal that lives in forests or on mountains. The male animal has large horns or antlers on its head.

- The term “doe” refers to a female deer and a “fawn” is the name of a baby deer.
- The terms “buck” and “stag” refer to a male deer.
- A “roebuck” is the male of the specific variety called “roe deer.”
- Deer have strong, thin legs that help them jump high and run fast.
- Their feet have split hooves which help them walk or climb easily on most any terrain.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

**Bible References:**

- 2 Samuel 22:34
- Genesis 49:21
- Job 39:2
- Psalms 18:33
- Song of Songs 2:7

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0354, H0355, H0365, H3180, H3280, H6643, H6646

## Psalms References:

18:33; 22:front; 29:9; 42:1

# defile, defiled, desecrate

### Definition:

The terms “defile” and “be defiled” refer to becoming polluted or dirty. Something can be defiled in a physical, moral, or ritual sense.

- God warned the Israelites to not defile themselves by eating or touching things that he had declared as “unclean” and “unholy.”
- Certain things such as dead bodies and contagious diseases were declared by God to be unclean and would defile a person if they touched them.
- God commanded the Israelites to avoid sexual sins. These would defile them and make them unacceptable to God.
- There were also certain kinds of bodily processes that defiled a person temporarily until he could become ritually pure again.
- In the New Testament, Jesus taught that sinful thoughts and actions are what truly defile a person.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “defile” can also be translated as “cause to be unclean” or “cause to be unrighteous” or “cause to be ritually unacceptable.”
- To “be defiled” could be translated as “become unclean” or “be caused to be morally unacceptable (to God)” or “become ritually unacceptable.”

(See also: profane, clean)

### Bible References:

- 2 Kings 23:8
- Exodus 20:24-26
- Genesis 34:27
- Genesis 49:4
- Isaiah 43:27-28
- Leviticus 11:43-45
- Mark 7:14-16
- Matthew 15:10

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1351, H1352, H1602, H2490, H2491, H2610, H2930, H2931, G28390, G28400, G33920, G34350

## Psalms References:

55:20; 79:1

# delight

### Definition:

The term “delight” means great pleasure or great joy.

- To “delight in” something means to “to take pleasure in” or “take joy in” or “be happy about” it. If a person “delights in” something, it means that he enjoys it very much.
- When something is very agreeable or pleasing it is called “delightful.”
- The expression “my delight is in the law of Yahweh” could be translated as “the law of Yahweh gives me great joy” or “I love to obey the laws of Yahweh” or “I am happy when I obey Yahweh’s commands.”
- The phrases “take no delight in” and “have no delight in” could be translated as “not at all pleased by” or “not happy about.”
- The phrase “delight himself in” means “he enjoys doing” something or “he is very happy about” something or someone.
- The term “delights” refers to things that a person enjoys. This could be translated as “pleasures” or “things that give joy.”
- An expression such as “I delight to do your will” could also be translated as “I enjoy doing your will” or “I am very happy when I obey you.”

### Bible References:

- Proverbs 8:30
- Psalm 1:2
- Psalms 119:69-70
- Song of Songs 1:3

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1523, H2530, H2531, H2532, H2654, H2655, H2656, H2836, H4574, H5276, H5727, H5730, H6026, H6027, H7306, H7381, H7521, H7522, H8057, H8173, H8191, H8588, H8597

## Psalms References:

1:2; 16:3; 16:11; 18:19; 22:8; 35:27; 36:8; 37:4; 37:11; 37:23; 40:6; 40:8; 40:14; 41:11; 49:13; 51:16; 51:19; 62:4; 68:30; 70:2; 109:17; 112:1; 119:16; 119:24; 119:35; 119:47; 119:70; 119:77; 119:92; 119:143; 119:174; 147:10; 147:11

# deliver, deliverer, deliverance, delivered

### Definition:

To “deliver” someone means to rescue that person. The term “deliverer” refers to someone who rescues or frees people from slavery, oppression, or other dangers. The term “deliverance” refers to what happens when someone rescues or frees people from slavery, oppression, or other dangers.

- In the Old Testament, God appointed deliverers to protect the Israelites by leading them in battle against other people groups who came to attack them.
- These deliverers were also called “judges” and the Old Testament book of Judges records the time in history when these judges were governing Israel.
- God is also called a “deliverer.” Throughout the history of Israel, he delivered or rescued his people from their enemies.

### Translation Suggestions:

- In the context of helping people escape from their enemies, the term “deliver” can be translated as “rescue” or “liberate” or “save.”
- When the term “deliverer” refers to the judges who led Israel, it could also be translated as “judge” or “leader.”

(See also: judge, save)

### Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 1:10
- Acts 7:35
- Galatians 1:4
- Judges 10:12

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 16:3 Then God provided a **deliverer** who rescued them from their enemies and brought peace to the land.
- 16:16 They (Israel) finally asked God for help again, and God sent them another **deliverer**.
- 16:17 Over many years, God sent many **deliverers** who saved the Israelites from their enemies.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H1350, H2020, H2502, H3205, H3444, H3467, H4042, H4422, H4672, H5337, H5414, H5462, H6299, H6403, H6413, H6475, H6561, H7725, H7804, H8199, G03250, G05250, G06290, G10800, G13250, G15600, G16590, G18070, G19290, G26730, G30860, G38600, G45060, G49910, G50880, G54830

## Psalms References:

7:1; 11:intro; 12:1; 13:intro; 17:intro; 18:front; 18:2; 18:17; 18:19; 18:48; 22:4; 22:8; 22:20; 25:20; 31:1; 31:8; 32:7; 33:16; 33:17; 33:19; 34:4; 34:17; 34:19; 40:17; 50:15; 50:22; 51:14; 54:7; 56:13; 59:1; 59:2; 60:5; 69:14; 70:1; 70:5; 71:2; 71:11; 72:12; 79:9; 81:7; 82:4; 86:13; 89:48; 91:14; 107:20; 108:12; 119:170; 120:2; 140:intro; 142:intro; 143:intro; 144:7; 144:11

# deliver, hand over, turn over, release

### Definition:

- The term “deliver” or “deliver over to” or “deliver up to” can mean to turn someone over to an enemy or adversary, such as when Judas delivered Jesus over to the Jewish leaders or when God delivered Israel over to their enemies because of their repeated sin.

### Translation Suggestions:

- When “deliver” means for a person or person to deliver someone over to an enemy it can be translated as “betray” or “hand over” or “give over.” When “deliver” refers to God giving people over to an adversary it can be translated as “hand over” or “give over.”

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1350, H2020, H2502, H3205, H3444, H3467, H4042, H4422, H4672, H5337, H5414, H5462, H6299, H6403, H6413, H6475, H6561, H7725, H7804, H8199, G03250, G05250, G06290, G10800, G13250, G15600, G16590, G18070, G19290, G26730, G30860, G38600, G45060, G49910, G50880, G54830

## Psalms References:

16:10; 73:5; 78:62; 88:5; 102:20; 105:20; 144:7; 144:10; 144:11; 146:7

# demon, evil spirit, unclean spirit

### Definition:

All these terms refer to demons, which are spirit beings that oppose God's will.

- God created angels to serve him. When the devil rebelled against God, some of the angels also rebelled and were thrown out of heaven. It is believed that demons and evil spirits are these "fallen angels."
- Sometimes these demons are called "unclean spirits." The term "unclean" means "impure" or "evil" or "unholy."
- Because demons serve the devil, they do evil things. Sometimes they live inside people and control them.
- Demons are more powerful than human beings, but not as powerful as God.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term "demon" could also be translated as "evil spirit."
- The term "unclean spirit" could also be translated as "impure spirit" or "corrupt spirit" or "evil spirit."
- Make sure that the word or phrase used to translate this term is different from the term used to refer to the devil.
- Also consider how the term "demon" is translated in a local or national language. (See: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: **demon-possessed**, **Satan**, false god, angel, evil, **clean**)

### Bible References:

- **James 2:19**
- **James 3:15**
- **Luke 4:36**
- **Mark 3:22**
- **Matthew 4:24**

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **26:9** Many people who had **demons** in them were brought to Jesus. When Jesus commanded them, the **demons** came out of the people, and often shouted, "You are the Son of God!"
- **32:8** The **demons** came out of the man and entered the pigs.

- 47:5 Finally one day when the slave girl started yelling, Paul turned to her and said to the **demon** that was in her, “In the name of Jesus, come out of her.” Right away the **demon** left her.
- 49:2 He (Jesus) walked on water, calmed storms, healed many sick people, drove out **demons**, raised the dead to life, and turned five loaves of bread and two small fish into enough food for over 5,000 people.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2932, H7307, H7451, H7700, G01690, G11390, G11400, G11410, G11420, G41900, G41510, G41520, G41890

## Psalms References:

106:37

# descend, descendant

### Definition:

A “descendant” is someone who is a direct blood relative of someone else further back in history.

- For example, Abraham was a descendant of Noah.
- A person’s descendants are his children, grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, and so on. Jacob’s descendants were the twelve tribes of Israel.
- The phrase “descended from” is another way of saying “a descendant of” as in “Abraham was descended from Noah.” This could also be translated as “from the family line of.”

(See also: Abraham, ancestor, Jacob, Noah, twelve tribes of Israel)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 9:4-5
- Acts 13:23
- Deuteronomy 2:20-22
- Genesis 10:1
- Genesis 28:12-13

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 2:9 “The woman’s **descendant** will crush your head, and you will wound his heel.”
- 4:9 “I give the land of Canaan to your **descendants**.”
- 5:10 “Your **descendants** will be more than the stars in the sky.”
- 17:7 “Someone from your family will always rule as king over Israel, and the Messiah will be one of your **descendants**!”
- 18:13 The kings of Judah were **descendants** of David.
- 21:4 God promised King David that the Messiah would be one of David’s own **descendants**.
- 48:13 God promised David that the Messiah would be one of his **descendants**. Jesus, the Messiah, was that special **descendant** of David.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0319, H1004, H1121, H1323, H1755, H2232, H2233, H3205, H3211, H3318, H3409, H4294, H5220, H6849, H7611, H8435, G10740, G10850, G46900

## Psalms References:

37:28; 78:4; 104:8; 115:17

# desecrate, desecrated

### Definition:

The term “desecrate” means to damage or contaminate a sacred place or object in such a way that it is unacceptable for use in worship.

- Often desecrating something involves showing great disrespect for it.
- For example, pagan kings desecrated special dishes from God’s temple by using them for parties at their palace.
- Bones from dead people were used by enemies to desecrate the altar in God’s temple.
- This term could be translated as “cause to be unholy” or “dishonor by making impure” or “disrespectfully profane” or “cause to be impure.”

(See also: altar, defile, dishonor, profane, pure, temple, holy)

### Bible References:

- Acts 24:4-6
- Isaiah 30:22
- Psalms 74:7-8
- Psalms 89:39

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2490, H2610, H2930, G09530

## Psalms References:

74:3; 106:38

# desert, wilderness

### Definition:

A desert, or wilderness, is a dry, barren place where very few plants and trees can grow.

- A desert is a land area with a dry climate and few plants or animals.
- Because of the harsh conditions, very few people can live in the desert, so it is also referred to as “wilderness.”
- “Wilderness” conveys the meaning of being remote, desolate and isolated from people.
- This word can also be translated as “deserted place” or “remote place” or “uninhabited place.”

### Bible References:

- Acts 13:16-18
- Acts 21:38
- Exodus 4:27-28
- Genesis 37:21-22
- John 3:14
- Luke 1:80
- Luke 9:12-14
- Mark 1:3
- Matthew 4:1
- Matthew 11:8

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0776, H2723, H3293, H3452, H4057, H6160, H6723, H6728, H6921, H8047, H8414, G20470, G20480

## Psalms References:

29:8; 55:7; 63:front; 65:12; 68:7; 72:9; 74:14; 75:6; 78:15; 78:19; 78:40; 78:52; 95:8; 102:6; 105:41; 106:9; 106:14; 106:26; 107:4; 107:33; 107:35; 136:16

# desolate, desolated, desolation, deserted, desolator

### Definition:

The terms “desolate” and “desolation,” when used to refer to a place or location, refer to the state or condition of being ruined and left fully or partially uninhabited. The term “desolate,” when referring to a person or group of people, describes a state or condition of ruin, loneliness, and grief.

- If a field where crops are growing is made desolate, it means that something has destroyed the crops, such as insects or an invading army.
- A “desolate region” refers to an area of land that is partially deserted or abandoned and therefore has few people living there.
- If a city is “made desolate” it means that its buildings and goods have been destroyed or stolen, and its people have been killed or captured. The city becomes “empty” and “ruined.” This is similar to the meaning of “devastate” or “devastated,” but with more emphasis on the emptiness.
- A “desolate land” or “wilderness” was often where outcasts (such as lepers) and dangerous animals lived.
- Depending on the context, this term, when referring to a city or region, could be translated as “ruined” or “destroyed” or “laid waste” or “abandoned” or “deserted.”
- Depending on the context, this term, when referring to a person or people group, could be translated as “lonely and outcast” or “deserted.”
- A “desolator” is one who causes desolation.

(See also: desert, devastate, ruin, waste)

### Bible References:

- 2 Kings 22:19
- Acts 1:20
- Daniel 9:17-19
- Lamentations 3:11
- Luke 11:17
- Matthew 12:25

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0490, H0816, H0910, H1565, H2717, H2720, H2721, H2723, H3173, H3341, H3456, H3582, H4875, H4923, H5352, H5800, H7582, H7701, H7722, H8047, H8074, H8076, H8077, G20480, G20490, G20500, G34430

## Psalms References:

9:6; 46:8; 55:15; 69:25; 73:19; 79:7; 109:10

# destroy, destruction, annihilate

### Definition:

The term “destroy” means to completely make an end to something, so that it no longer exists.

- The term “destroyer” means “a person who destroys.”
- This term is often used in the Old Testament as a general reference to anyone who destroys other people, such as an invading army.
- When God sent the angel to kill all the firstborn males in Egypt, that angel was referred to as “the destroyer of the firstborn.” This could be translated as “the one (or angel) who killed the firstborn males.”
- In the book of Revelation about the end times, Satan or some other evil spirit is called “the Destroyer.” He is the “one who destroys” because his purpose is to destroy and ruin everything God created.

(See also: angel, Egypt, firstborn, Passover)

### Bible References:

- Exodus 12:23
- Hebrews 11:28
- Jeremiah 6:26
- Judges 16:24

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0006, H0007, H0622, H0398, H1104, H1197, H1820, H1826, H1942, H2000, H2015, H2026, H2040, H2254, H2255, H2717, H2718, H2763, H2764, H3238, H3341, H3381, H3423, H3582, H3615, H3617, H3772, H3807, H4191, H4229, H4591, H4658, H4889, H5218, H5221, H5307, H5362, H5420, H5422, H5428, H5595, H5642, H6365, H6789, H6979, H7665, H7667, H7703, H7722, H7760, H7843, H7921, H8045, H8074, H8077, H8316, H8552, G03550, G03960, G06220, G08530, G13110, G18420, G20490, G25060, G25070, G26470, G26730, G27040, G30890, G36450, G41990, G53510, G53560

## Psalms References:

5:6; 5:9; 9:5; 11:3; 18:37; 18:40; 21:10; 35:8; 37:38; 38:12; 49:12; 49:20; 52:4; 54:5; 57:front; 58:front; 59:front; 69:4; 73:18; 73:27; 74:3; 75:front; 78:38; 78:45; 83:4; 83:10; 88:16; 91:6; 92:7; 94:20; 94:23; 101:5; 101:8; 106:23; 106:34; 107:20; 119:95; 143:12; 145:20

# detest, detested, detestable

### Definition:

The term “detestable” describes something that should be disliked and rejected. To “detest” something means to strongly dislike it.

- Often the Bible talks about detesting evil. This means to hate evil and reject it.
- God used the word “detestable” to describe the evil practices of those who worshiped false gods.
- The Israelites were commanded to “detest” the sinful, immoral acts that some of the neighboring people groups practiced.
- God called all wrong sexual acts “detestable.”
- Divination, sorcery, and child sacrifice were all “detestable” to God.
- The term “detest” could be translated as “strongly reject” or “hate” or “regard as very evil.”
- The term “detestable” could also be translated as “horribly evil” or “disgusting” or “deserving rejection.”
- When applied to the righteous being “detestable to” the wicked, this could be translated as “considered very undesirable to” or “distasteful to” or “rejected by.”
- God told the Israelites to “detest” certain kinds of animals that God had declared to be “unclean” and not suitable for food. This could also be translated as “strongly dislike” or “reject” or “regard as unacceptable.”

(See also: **divination**, **clean**)

### Bible References:

- **Genesis 43:32**
- **Jeremiah 7:30**
- **Leviticus 11:10**
- **Luke 16:15**
- **Revelation 17:3-5**

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1602, H6973, H8130, H8251, H8262, H8263, H8441, H8581, G09460, G09470, G09480, G47670, G34040

## Psalms References:

34:21; 107:18

# devastate, devastation

### Definition:

The term “devastated” or “devastation” refers to having one’s property or land ruined or destroyed. It also often includes destroying or capturing the people living on that land.

- This refers to a very severe and complete destruction.
- For example, the city of Sodom was devastated by God as punishment for the sins of the people living there.
- The term “devastation” can also include causing great emotional grief resulting from the punishment or destruction.

### Translation Suggestions

- The term “devastate” could be translated as “completely destroy” or “completely ruin.”
- Depending on the context, “devastation” could be translated as “complete destruction” or “total ruin” or “disaster.”

(See also: ruin)

### Bible References:

- Daniel 8:24-25
- Jeremiah 4:13
- Numbers 21:30
- Zephaniah 1:13

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1110, H1238, H2721, H1826, H3615, H3772, H4875, H7701, H7703, H7722, H7843, H8074, H8077

## Psalms References:

63:9; 137:8

# devour

**Definition:**

The term “devour” means to eat or consume in an aggressive manner.

- Using this word in a figurative sense, Paul warned believers to not devour one another, meaning to not attack or destroy each other with words or actions (Galatians 5:15).
- Also in a figurative sense, the term “devour” is often used with a meaning of “completely destroy” as when talking about nations devouring each other or a fire devouring buildings and people.
- This term could also be translated as “completely consume” or “totally destroy.”

(See also: consume)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Peter 5:8
- Amos 1:10
- Exodus 24:17
- Ezekiel 16:20
- Luke 15:30
- Matthew 23:13-15
- Psalms 21:9

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0398, H0399, H0400, H0402, H1104, H1105, H3216, H3615, H3857, H3898, H7462, H7602, G20680, G26660, G27190, G53150

## Psalms References:

18:8; 27:2; 50:3; 78:45; 79:7

# discern, discernment, distinguish

### Definition:

The term “discern” means to be able to understand something, especially being able to know whether something is right or wrong.

- The term “discernment” refers to understanding and deciding wisely about a certain matter.
- It means to have wisdom and good judgment.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “discern” could also be translated as “understand” or “know the difference between” or “distinguish good and evil” or “judge rightly about” or “perceive right from wrong.”
- “Discernment” could be translated as “understanding” or “ability to distinguish good and evil.”

(See also: judge, wise)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 3:7-9
- Genesis 41:33-34
- Proverbs 1:5
- Psalms 19:12

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0995, H2940, H4209, H5234, H8085, G03500, G12520, G12530, G29240

## Psalms References:

19:12; 73:17; 77:19; 119:66

# dishonor, dishonored, dishonorable

### Definition:

The term “dishonor” means to do something that is disrespectful to someone. This can also cause that person shame or disgrace.

- The term “dishonorable” describes an action that is shameful or that causes someone to be dishonored.
- Children are commanded to honor and obey their parents. When children disobey, they dishonor their parents. They are treating their parents in a way that does not honor them.
- The Israelites dishonored Yahweh when they worshiped false gods and practiced immoral behavior.
- The Jews dishonored Jesus by saying that he was possessed by a demon.
- This could be translated as to “not honor” or to “treat with no respect.”
- The noun “dishonor” could be translated as “disrespect” or “loss of honor.”
- Depending on the context, “dishonorable” could also be translated as “not honorable” or “shameful.”

(See also: honor)

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 4:10
- 1 Samuel 20:34
- 2 Corinthians 6:8-10
- Ezekiel 22:7
- John 8:48
- Leviticus 18:8

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1540, H2490, H2781, H3637, H3639, H5006, H5034, H6172, H6173, H7034, H7043, G08180, G08190, G08200, G26170

## Psalms References:

35:4; 40:14

# disperse, dispersion, scatter, distributed

### Definition:

The terms “disperse” and “dispersion” refer to the scattering of people or things into many different directions.

- In the Old Testament, God talks about “dispersing” people, causing them to have to separate and live in different places apart from each other. He did this to punish them for their sin. Perhaps being dispersed would help them repent and start worshiping God again.
- The term “dispersion” is used in the New Testament to refer to Christians who had to leave their homes and move to many different locations to escape persecution.
- The phrase “the dispersion” could be translated as “believers in many different places” or “the people who moved away to live in different nations.”
- The term “disperse” could be translated as “send away into many different places” or “scatter abroad” or “cause to move away to live in different countries.”

(See also: believe, persecute, captive, exile)

### Bible References:

- 1 Peter 1:1
- Ezekiel 12:15
- Ezekiel 30:23
- Psalms 18:14

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2219, H5310, H6327, H6340, H6504, H8600, G12870, G12900, G46500

## Psalms References:

18:14; 44:11; 53:5; 59:11; 68:1; 68:14; 68:30; 89:10; 92:9; 106:27; 112:9; 141:7; 144:6; 147:2; 147:16

# doctrine, teaching, belief, beliefs, instruction, knowledge

### Definition:

The word “doctrine” literally means “teaching.” It usually refers to religious teaching.

- In the context of Christian teachings, “doctrine” refers to all teachings about God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—including all his character qualities and everything he has done.
- It also refers to everything God teaches Christians about how to live holy lives that bring glory to him.
- The word “doctrine” is sometimes also used to refer to false or worldly religious teachings that come from human beings. The context makes the meaning clear.
- This term could also be translated as “teaching.”

(See also: teach)

### Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 1:3
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- Mark 7:6-7
- Matthew 15:7-9

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3948, G13190, G13220, G20850

## Psalms References:

1:2; 60:front; 78:1; 94:10; 119:1; 119:18; 119:29; 119:34; 119:44; 119:51; 119:53; 119:55; 119:61; 119:70; 119:72; 119:77; 119:85; 119:92; 119:97; 119:109; 119:113; 143:10

# dominion

### Definition:

The term “dominion” refers to power, control, or authority over people, animals, or land.

- Jesus Christ is said to have dominion over all the earth, as prophet, priest, and king.
- Satan’s dominion has been defeated forever by Jesus Christ’s death on the cross.
- At creation, God said that man is to have dominion over fish, birds, and all creatures on the earth.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include “authority” or “power” or “control.”
- The phrase “have dominion over” could be translated as “rule over” or “manage.”

(See also: **authority**, **power**)

### Bible References:

- **1 Peter 5:10-11**
- **Colossians 1:13**
- **Jude 1:25**

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1166, H4474, H4475, H4896, H4910, H4915, H7287, H7300, H7980, H7985, G26340, G29040, G29610, G29630

## Psalms References:

136:8; 136:9; 145:13

# donkey, mule

### Definition:

A donkey is a four-legged work animal, similar to a horse, but smaller and with longer ears.

- A mule is the sterile offspring of a male donkey and a female horse.
- Mules are very strong animals and so they are valuable work animals.
- Both donkeys and mules are used for carrying burdens and people when traveling.
- In Bible times, kings would ride a donkey in times of peace, rather than a horse, which was used for times of war.
- Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a young donkey a week before he was crucified there.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 1:32-34
- 1 Samuel 9:4
- 2 Kings 4:21-22
- Deuteronomy 5:12-14
- Luke 13:15
- Matthew 21:2

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0860, H2543, H3222, H5895, H6167, H6501, H6505, H6506, G36780, G36880, G52680

## Psalms References:

32:9; 104:11

# dove, pigeon, turtledove

**Definition:**

Doves and pigeons are two kinds of small, gray-brown birds that look similar. A dove is often thought of as being lighter in color, almost white.

- Some languages have two different names for them, while others use the same name for both.
- Doves and pigeons were used in sacrifices to God, especially for people who could not afford to buy a larger animal.
- A dove brought the leaf of an olive tree to Noah when the flood waters were going down.
- Doves sometimes symbolize purity, innocence, or peace.
- If doves or pigeons are not known in the language area where the translation is being done, this term could be translated as “a small grayish brown bird called a dove” or “a small gray or brown bird, similar to a (name of local bird)”.
- If both a dove and a pigeon are referred to in the same verse, it is best to use two different words for these birds, if possible.
- A turtledove is a type of dove mentioned in Genesis 15:9, Song of Songs 2:12, and Leviticus 12:6.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: olive, innocent, pure)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 8:9
- Luke 2:22-24
- Mark 1:10
- Matthew 3:16
- Matthew 21:12-14

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1469, H1686, H3123, H8449, G40580

## Psalms References:

55:6; 56:front; 68:13; 74:19

# dream

### Definition:

A dream is something that people see or experience in their minds while they are sleeping.

- Dreams often seem like they are really happening, but they are not.
- Sometimes God causes people to dream about something so they can learn from it. He may also speak directly to people in their dreams.
- In the Bible, God gave special dreams to certain people to give them a message, often about something that would happen in the future.
- A dream is different from a vision. Dreams happen while a person is asleep, but visions usually happen when a person is awake.

(See also: vision)

### Bible References:

- Acts 2:16-17
- Daniel 1:17-18
- Daniel 2:1
- Genesis 37:6
- Genesis 40:4-5
- Matthew 2:13
- Matthew 2:19-21

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 8:2 Joseph's brothers hated him because their father loved him most and because Joseph had **dreamed** that he would be their ruler.
- 8:6 One night, the Pharaoh, which is what the Egyptians called their kings, had two **dreams** that disturbed him greatly. None of his advisors could tell him the meaning of the **dreams**.
- 8:7 God had given Joseph the ability to interpret **dreams**, so Pharaoh had Joseph brought to him from the prison. Joseph interpreted the **dreams** for him and said, "God is going to send seven years of plentiful harvests followed by seven years of famine."
- 16:11 So that night, Gideon went down to the camp and heard a Midianite soldier telling his friend about something he had **dreamed**. The man's friend said, "This **dream** means that Gideon's army will defeat the Midianite army!"
- 23:1 He (Joseph) did not want to shame her (Mary), so he planned to quietly divorce her. Before he could do that, an angel came and spoke to him in a **dream**.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H1957, H2472, H2492, H2493, G17970, G17980, G36770

## Psalms References:

73:20; 126:1

# dung, manure

### Definition:

The term “dung” refers to human or animal solid waste, and is also called feces or excrement. When used as fertilizer for enriching the soil, it is called “manure.”

- These terms can also be used figuratively to refer to something that is worthless or not important.
- Dried animal dung is often used for fuel.
- The expression “like dung on the ground” could be translated as “be scattered like worthless dung over the land.”
- The “Dung Gate” in the South Wall of Jerusalem was probably the gate where garbage and trash were taken out of the city.

(See also: gate)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 14:10
- 2 Kings 6:25
- Isaiah 25:10
- Jeremiah 8:2

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0830, H1119, H1557, H1561, H1686, H1828, H6569, H6675, G28740

## Psalms References:

83:10

# eagle

**Definition:**

An eagle is a very large, powerful bird of prey that eats small animals such as fish, mice, snakes, and chickens.

- The Bible compares the speed and strength of an army to how fast and suddenly an eagle swoops down to catch its prey.
- Isaiah states that those who trust in the Lord will soar as an eagle does. This is figurative language used to describe the freedom and strength that comes from trusting and obeying God.
- In the book of Daniel, King Nebuchadnezzar's hair length was compared to the length of an eagle's feathers, which can be more than 50 centimeters long.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: **Daniel**, **free**, **Nebuchadnezzar**, **power**)

**Bible References:**

- **2 Samuel 1:23**
- **Daniel 7:4**
- **Jeremiah 4:13-15**
- **Leviticus 11:13-16**
- **Revelation 4:7**

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H5403, H5404, G01050

## Psalms References:

103:5

# earth, land

### Definition:

The term “earth” refers to the world on which human beings and other living things live. In the Bible, this term is sometimes translated as “land” when used in a general way to refer to the ground or the soil, or when used in a specific way to refer to a particular geographical area, usually a country or nation.

- In the Bible, the term “earth” is often paired with the term “heaven” as a way of indicating the abode of humankind on the earth in contrast with the abode of God in heaven.
- This term is usually translated “land” when paired with the name of a people group to denote the territory belonging to those people, such as “the land of Canaan.”
- The term “earthly” is sometimes used to refer to things that are physical and/or visible in contrast to things that are non-physical and/or invisible.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term can be translated by the word or phrase that the local language or nearby national languages use to refer to the planet earth on which we live.
- Depending on the context, “earth” could also be translated as “world” or “land” or “dirt” or “soil.”
- Ways to translate “earthly” could include “physical” or “things of this earth” or “visible.”

(See also: world, heaven)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 1:38-40
- 2 Chronicles 2:11-12
- Daniel 4:35
- Luke 12:51
- Matthew 6:10
- Matthew 11:25
- Zechariah 6:5

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0127, H0772, H0776, H0778, H2789, H3007, H3335, H6083, H7494, G10930, G19190, G27090, G28860, G36250, G45780, G55170

## Psalms References:

2:2; 2:8; 2:10; 8:1; 10:16; 16:3; 17:11; 21:10; 22:27; 22:29; 24:1; 25:13; 34:16; 35:20; 37:3; 37:9; 37:11; 37:22; 37:29; 37:34; 41:2; 42:6; 44:3; 44:25; 46:2; 46:6; 46:8; 46:10; 47:9; 48:10; 49:11; 50:1; 52:5; 58:2; 58:11; 60:2; 63:1; 65:5; 67:2; 67:4; 67:6; 67:7; 68:8; 69:34; 72:6; 72:8; 72:16; 73:9; 73:25; 74:8; 74:17; 74:20; 75:3; 75:8; 76:8; 76:9; 76:12; 78:12; 78:17; 78:69; 79:2; 80:9; 81:5; 81:10; 82:5; 85:1; 85:9; 85:11; 85:12; 89:11; 89:27; 90:2; 95:4; 95:5; 98:3; 101:8; 102:19; 104:5; 104:30; 104:32; 105:11; 105:23; 105:27; 105:30; 105:32; 105:35; 105:36; 105:44; 106:17; 106:22; 106:24; 106:27; 107:3; 107:33; 107:35; 109:15; 110:6; 112:2; 113:6; 114:7; 115:15; 115:16; 116:9; 119:19; 119:87; 119:90; 119:119; 121:2; 124:8; 134:3; 135:6; 135:12; 136:21; 137:4; 138:4; 139:15; 140:11; 143:6; 143:10; 146:6; 147:8; 147:15; 148:11; 148:13

# Edom, Edomite, Idumea

**Definition:**

Edom was another name for Esau. The region where he lived also became known as "Edom" and later, "Idumea." The "Edomites" were his descendants.

- The region of Edom changed locations over time. It was mostly located to the south of Israel and eventually extended into southern Judah.
- During New Testament times, Edom covered the southern half of the province of Judea. The Greeks called it "Idumea."
- The name "Edom" means "red," which may refer to the fact that Esau was covered with red hair when he was born. Or it may refer to the red lentil stew that Esau traded his birthright for.
- In the Old Testament, the country of Edom is often mentioned as an enemy of Israel.
- The entire book of Obadiah is about the destruction of Edom. Other Old Testament prophets also spoke negative prophecies against Edom.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: adversary, birthright, Esau, Obadiah, prophet)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 25:30
- Genesis 32:3
- Genesis 36:1
- Isaiah 11:14-15
- Joshua 11:16-17
- Obadiah 1:2

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0123, H0130, H8165, G24010

## Psalms References:

52:front; 60:front; 60:8; 60:9; 83:6; 108:9; 108:10; 137:7

# Egypt, Egyptian

### Definition:

Egypt is a country in the northeast part of Africa, to the southwest of the land of Canaan.

An Egyptian is a person who is from the country of Egypt.

- In ancient times, Egypt was a powerful and wealthy country.
- Ancient Egypt was divided into two parts, Lower Egypt (northern part where the Nile River flowed downward into the sea) and Upper Egypt (southern part). In the Old Testament, these parts are referred to as “Egypt” and “Pathros” in the original language text.
- Several times when there was little food in Canaan, Israel’s patriarchs traveled to Egypt to buy food for their families.
- For several hundred years, the Israelites were slaves in Egypt.
- Joseph and Mary went down to Egypt with the young child Jesus, to escape from Herod the Great.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Herod the Great, Joseph (NT), Nile River, patriarchs)

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 4:7-9
- Acts 7:10
- Exodus 3:7
- Genesis 41:29
- Genesis 41:57
- Matthew 2:15

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 8:4 The slave traders took Joseph to **Egypt**. **Egypt** was a large, powerful country located along the Nile River.
- 8:8 Pharaoh was so impressed with Joseph that he appointed him to be the second most powerful man in all of **Egypt**!
- 8:11 So Jacob sent his older sons to __Egypt __ to buy food.
- 8:14 Even though Jacob was an old man, he moved to **Egypt** with all of his family, and they all lived there.
- 9:1 After Joseph died, all of his relatives stayed in **Egypt**.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H4713, H4714, G01240, G01250

## Psalms References:

68:31; 78:12; 78:43; 78:51; 80:8; 81:5; 81:10; 105:23; 105:38; 106:7; 106:21; 114:1; 135:8; 135:9; 136:10

# elder

### Definition:

The term “elder” refers to people (in the Bible, usually men) who have grown old enough to become mature adults and leaders within a community and to be respected for their wisdom and experience.

- The term “elder” came from the fact that elders were originally older men who, because of their age and experience, had greater wisdom.
- In the Old Testament, the elders helped lead the Israelites in matters of justice and the Law of Moses.
- In the New Testament, Jewish “elders” continued to be leaders in their communities and also were judges for the people.
- In the early Christian churches, Christian “elders” gave spiritual leadership to the local assemblies of believers. Elders in these churches sometimes included young men who were spiritually mature.
- This term could be translated as “respected leaders” or “spiritually mature men leading the church.”

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:1-3
- 1 Timothy 3:1-3
- 1 Timothy 4:14
- Acts 5:19-21
- Acts 14:23
- Mark 11:28
- Matthew 21:23-24

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1419, H2205, H7868, G10870, G31870, G42440, G42450, G48500

## Psalms References:

105:22; 107:32; 119:100

# encourage, encouraged, encouraging, encouragement

### Definition:

The terms “encourage” and “encouragement” refer to saying and doing things to cause someone to have comfort, hope, confidence, and courage.

- A similar term is “exhort,” which means to urge someone to reject an activity that is wrong and to instead do things that are good and right.
- The apostle Paul and other New Testament writers taught Christians to encourage one another to love and serve others.

### Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “encourage” could include “urge” or “comfort” or “say kind things” or “help and support.”
- The phrase “give words of encouragement” means “say things that cause other people to feel loved, accepted, and empowered.”

(See also: **discourage**, **confidence**, **exhort**)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2388

## Psalms References:

77:2

# endure, endurance

### Definition:

The term “endure” means to last a long time or to bear something difficult with patience.

- It also means to stand firm when times of testing come, without giving up.
- The term “endurance” can mean “patience” or “bearing up under a trial” or “persevering when being persecuted.”
- The encouragement to Christians to “endure to the end” is telling them to obey Jesus, even if this causes them to suffer.
- To “endure suffering” can also mean to “experience suffering.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate the term “endure” could include “persevere” or “keep believing” or “continue to do what God wants you to do” or “stand firm.”
- In some contexts, to “endure” could be translated as to “experience” or to “go through.”
- With the meaning of lasting for a long time, the term “endure” could also be translated as “last” or “continue.” The phrase “will not endure” could be translated as “will not last” or “will not continue to survive.”
- Ways to translate “endurance” could include “perseverance” or “continuing to believe” or “remaining faithful.”

(See also: **persevere**)

### Bible References:

- **2 Timothy 2:11-13**
- **James 1:3**
- **James 1:12**
- **Luke 21:19**
- **Matthew 13:21**
- **Revelation 1:9**
- **Romans 5:3-5**

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0386, H3201, H3557, H5331, H5375, H5975, G04300, G09070, G15260, G20050, G20760, G25940, G33060, G47220, G52780, G52810, G52970, G53420

## Psalms References:

10:5; 19:9

# enslave, slave, bondservant, bondage, bound, bond, bonds, young man, young men, young woman, young women

**Short Title: enslave, slave, bondservant, bondage, bond**

**Definition:**

To "enslave" someone means to force that person to serve a master or a ruling country. To be "enslaved" or "in bondage" means to be under the control of something or someone. A "slave" refers to a person who works for (or obeys) another person, either by choice or by force. A slave was under the direction of their master. In the Bible, "servant" and "slave" are mostly interchangeable terms.

- A person who is enslaved or in bondage must serve others without payment; he is not free to do what he wants. Another word for "bondage" is "slavery."
- The New Testament speaks of human beings as "enslaved" to sin until Jesus frees them from its control and power. When a person receives new life in Christ, he stops being a slave to sin and becomes a slave to righteousness.
- In the Bible the words "young man" or "young woman" often mean "servant" or "slave." This meaning will be discerned from context. One indicator of this situation is if the possessive is used, eg. "her young women" which could be translated as "her servants" or "her slaves."

**Translation Suggestions:**

- The term "enslave" could be translated as "cause to not be free" or "force to serve" or "put under the control of."
- The phrase "enslaved to" or "in bondage to" could be translated as "forced to be a slave of" or "forced to serve" or "put under the control of."
- A slave was a kind of servant who was the property of the person he worked for. The person who bought a slave was called his "owner" or "master." Some masters treated their slaves cruelly. Other masters treated their slaves well, like a valued member of the household. The term "slavery" means the state of being a slave.
- A person could be a slave temporarily, for instance while working to repay a debt to his owner.

(See also: free, righteous, servant)

**Bible References:**

- Galatians 4:3
- Galatians 4:24-25

- Genesis 15:13
- Jeremiah 30:8

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 8:4 The **slave** traders sold Joseph as a **slave** to a wealthy government official.
- 9:13 “I (God) will send you (Moses) to Pharaoh so that you can bring the Israelites out of their **slavery** in Egypt.”
- 29:3 “Since the **servant** could not pay the debt, the king said, ‘Sell this man and his family as **slaves** to make payment on his debt.’”

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H3533, H5647, G13980, G14020, G26150

## Psalms References:

107:14; 116:16

# envy, covet, jealous, jealousy

### Definition:

The terms “envy” and “envious” refer to being jealous of someone because of what that person possesses or because of that person’s admirable qualities or abilities. The term “covet” means to strongly desire to have something.

- Envy is normally a negative feeling of resentment because of another person’s success, good fortune, possessions, or abilities.
- Coveting is a strong desire to have someone else’s property, or even someone else’s spouse.
- In some contexts the terms “jealous” and “jealousy” can mean “envy.”

### Translation Suggestions

- When the terms “jealous” and “jealousy” refer to being wrongfully “envious” of someone the terms “envious” or “envy” could be used if the context permits.

(See also: jealous)

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
- 1 Peter 2:1
- Exodus 20:17
- Mark 7:20-23
- Proverbs 3:31-32
- Romans 1:29

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0183, H1214, H1215, H2530, H3415, H5869, H7065, H7068, G08660, G19370, G22050, G22060, G37130, G37880, G41230, G41240, G41900, G53540, G53550, G53660

## Psalms References:

106:16

# Ephraim, Ephraimite

### Definition:

Ephraim was the younger son of Joseph. His descendants, the Ephraimites, formed one of the tribes of Israel.

- The name Ephraim sounds like the Hebrew word meaning “to make fruitful.”
- The tribe of Ephraim was one of the ten tribes located in the northern part of Israel.
- Sometimes the name Ephraim is used in the Bible to refer to the whole northern kingdom of Israel (similar to how the name Judah is sometimes used to refer to the whole southern kingdom of Israel).

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Joseph, Manasseh, **kingdom of Israel**, **twelve tribes of Israel**)

### Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 6:66-69**
- **2 Chronicles 13:4-5**
- **Ezekiel 37:16**
- **Genesis 41:52**
- **Genesis 48:1-2**
- **John 11:54**

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0669, H0673, G21870

## Psalms References:

60:7; 78:9; 78:67; 80:2; 108:8

# Ephrath, Ephrathah

**Definition:**

The name “Ephrathah” refers to a clan of Judah as well as to the territory that they occupied, which was centered around the town of Bethlehem. Sometimes the name is shortened to “Ephrath.”

- The clan of Ephrathah was probably named after a woman named “Ephrathah,” who was a wife of Caleb and the grandmother of the founders of the towns of Kiriath Jearim, Bethlehem, and Beth Gader (1 Chron 2:50-51).
- The towns of Bethlehem (Gen 35:19;48:7) and Kirjath Jearim (Psalm 132:6) are both sometimes referred to as “Ephrathah.”
- Rachel died on the way to a town called “Ephrathah.”
- It is possible that there was a different town called “Ephrathah” further north near Ramah, and that Rachel was buried near there (1 Sam 10:2; Jer 31:15).

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Bethlehem, Boaz, Caleb, David, Israel)

**Bible References:**

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0672, H0673

## Psalms References:

132:6

# eternity, everlasting, eternal, forever

### Definition:

The terms “everlasting” and “eternal” have very similar meanings and refer to something that will always exist or that lasts forever.

- The term “eternity” refers to a state of being that has no beginning or end. It can also refer to life that never ends.
- After this present life on earth, humans will spend eternity either in heaven with God or in hell apart from God.
- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” are used in the New Testament to refer to living forever with God in heaven.

The term “forever” refers to never-ending time.

- The phrase “forever and ever” has the idea of time that never ends and expresses what eternity or eternal life is like. It emphasizes that something will always happen or exist. It refers to time that never ends.
- God said that David’s throne would last “forever.” This is referred to the fact that David’s descendant Jesus will reign as king forever.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “eternal” or “everlasting” could include “unending” or “never stopping” or “always continuing.”
- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” could also be translated as “life that never ends” or “life that continues without stopping” or “the raising up of our bodies to live forever.”
- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “eternity” could include “existing outside of time” or “unending life” or “life in heaven.”
- Also consider how this word is translated in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See: How to Translate Unknowns)
- “Forever” could also be translated by “always” or “never ending.”
- The phrase “will last forever” could also be translated as “always exist” or “will never stop” or “will always continue.”

- The emphatic phrase “forever and ever” could also be translated as “for always and always” or “not ever ending” or “which never, ever ends.”
- David’s throne lasting forever could be translated as “David’s descendant will reign forever” or “a descendant of David will always be reigning.”

(See also: David, reign, life)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 17:8
- Genesis 48:4
- Exodus 15:17
- 2 Samuel 3:28-30
- 1 Kings 2:32-33
- Job 4:20-21
- Psalms 21:4
- Isaiah 9:6-7
- Isaiah 40:27-28
- Daniel 7:18
- Luke 18:18
- Acts 13:46
- Romans 5:21
- Hebrews 6:19-20
- Hebrews 10:11-14
- 1 John 1:2
- 1 John 5:12
- Revelation 1:4-6
- Revelation 22:3-5

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 27:1 One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit **eternal life**?”
- 28:1 One day, a rich young ruler came up to Jesus and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to have **eternal life**?” Jesus said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only One who is good, and that is God. But if you want to have **eternal life**, obey God’s laws.”

- 28:10 Jesus answered, “Everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or property for my name’s sake, will receive 100 times more and will also receive **eternal life**.”

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H3117, H4481, H5331, H5703, H5705, H5769, H5865, H5957, H6924, G01260, G01650, G01660, G13360

## Psalms References:

5:11; 9:5; 9:6; 9:7; 9:18; 10:16; 12:7; 13:1; 15:5; 16:11; 18:50; 19:9; 21:4; 21:6; 22:26; 28:9; 29:10; 30:12; 33:11; 37:18; 37:27; 37:28; 37:29; 41:12; 41:13; 44:8; 44:23; 45:2; 45:6; 45:17; 48:8; 48:14; 49:8; 49:9; 49:11; 49:19; 52:5; 52:8; 52:9; 55:22; 61:4; 61:7; 61:8; 66:7; 68:16; 72:17; 72:19; 73:26; 74:1; 74:3; 74:10; 74:19; 75:9; 77:7; 77:8; 78:69; 79:5; 79:13; 81:15; 83:17; 85:5; 86:12; 89:1; 89:2; 89:4; 89:28; 89:29; 89:36; 89:37; 89:46; 89:52; 90:2; 92:7; 92:8; 93:2; 100:5; 102:12; 103:9; 103:17; 104:5; 104:31; 105:8; 105:10; 106:1; 106:31; 106:48; 107:1; 110:4; 111:3; 111:5; 111:8; 111:9; 111:10; 112:3; 112:6; 112:9; 113:2; 115:18; 117:2; 118:1; 118:2; 118:3; 118:4; 118:29; 119:44; 119:89; 119:93; 119:98; 119:111; 119:112; 119:142; 119:144; 119:152; 119:160; 121:8; 125:1; 125:2; 131:3; 132:12; 133:3; 135:13; 136:1; 136:2; 136:3; 136:4; 136:5; 136:6; 136:7; 136:8; 136:9; 136:10; 136:11; 136:12; 136:13; 136:14; 136:15; 136:16; 136:17; 136:18; 136:19; 136:20; 136:21; 136:22; 136:23; 136:24; 136:25; 136:26; 138:8; 139:24; 145:1; 145:2; 145:13; 145:21; 146:6; 146:10; 148:6

# Euphrates River, the River

### Definition:

The Euphrates is the name of one of the four rivers that flowed through the Garden of Eden. It is the river that is most often mentioned in the Bible.

- The modern day river named Euphrates is located in the Middle East and is the longest and most important river in Asia.
- Together with the Tigris River, the Euphrates borders a region of land known as Mesopotamia.
- The ancient city of Ur where Abraham came from was at the mouth of the Euphrates River.
- This river was one of the boundaries of the land that God promised to give to Abraham (Genesis 15:18).
- Sometimes the Euphrates is simply called “the River.”

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 5:7-9
- 2 Chronicles 9:25-26
- Exodus 23:30-33
- Genesis 2:13-14
- Isaiah 7:20

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5104, H6578, G21660

## Psalms References:

72:8; 80:11

# evil, wicked, wickedness, unpleasant

### Definition:

In the Bible, the term “evil” can refer either to the concept of moral wickedness or emotional unpleasantness. The context will usually make it clear which meaning is intended in the specific instance of the term.

- While “evil” may describe a person’s character, “wicked” may refer more to a person’s behavior. However, both terms are very similar in meaning.
- The term “wickedness” refers to the state of being that exists when people do wicked things.
- The results of evil are clearly shown in how people mistreat others by killing, stealing, slandering and being cruel and unkind.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the terms “evil” and “wicked” can be translated as “bad” or “sinful” or “immoral.”
- Other ways to translate these could include “not good” or “not righteous” or “not moral.”
- Make sure the words or phrases that are used to translate these terms fit the context that is natural in the target language.

(See also: disobey, sin, good, righteous, demon)

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 24:11
- 1 Timothy 6:10
- 3 John 1:10
- Genesis 2:17
- Genesis 6:5-6
- Job 1:1
- Job 8:20
- Judges 9:57
- Luke 6:22-23
- Matthew 7:11-12
- Proverbs 3:7
- Psalms 22:16-17

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 2:4 “God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand good and **evil** like he does.”
- 3:1 After a long time, many people were living in the world. They had become very **wicked** and violent.
- 3:2 But Noah found favor with God. He was a righteous man living among **wicked** people.
- 4:2 God saw that if they all kept working together to do **evil**, they could do many more sinful things.
- 8:12 “You tried to do **evil** when you sold me as a slave, but God used the **evil** for good!”
- 14:2 They (Canaanites) worshiped false gods and did many **evil** things.
- 17:1 But then he (Saul) became a **wicked** man who did not obey God, so God chose a different man who would one day be king in his place.
- 18:11 In the new kingdom of Israel, all the kings were **evil**.
- 29:8 The king was so angry that he threw the **wicked** servant into prison until he could pay back all of his debt.
- 45:2 They said, “We heard him (Stephen) speak **evil** things about Moses and God!”
- 50:17 He (Jesus) will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, **evil**, pain, or death.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0205, H0605, H1100, H1681, H1942, H2154, H2162, H2254, H2617, H3399, H3415, H4209, H4849, H5753, H5766, H5767, H5999, H6001, H6090, H7451, H7455, H7489, H7561, H7562, H7563, H7564, G00920, G01130, G04590, G09320, G09870, G09880, G14260, G25490, G25510, G25540, G25550, G25560, G25570, G25590, G25600, G26350, G26360, G41510, G41890, G41900, G41910, G53370

## Psalms References:

1:1; 1:4; 1:5; 1:6; 3:7; 5:4; 7:4; 7:9; 7:14; 9:5; 9:16; 9:17; 10:2; 10:3; 10:4; 10:7; 10:13; 10:15; 11:intro; 11:2; 11:5; 11:6; 12:8; 15:3; 17:9; 17:13; 18:4; 18:21; 21:11; 22:16; 23:4; 26:5; 26:10; 27:2; 28:3; 28:4; 31:17; 32:10; 34:13; 34:14; 34:16; 34:19; 34:21; 35:4; 35:12; 35:19; 36:1; 36:4; 36:11; 37:7; 37:10; 37:12; 37:14; 37:16; 37:17; 37:19; 37:20; 37:21; 37:27; 37:28; 37:32; 37:33; 37:34; 37:35; 37:38; 37:40; 38:12; 38:20; 39:1; 41:5; 41:8; 45:7; 49:5; 50:16; 50:19; 51:4; 52:3; 55:3; 55:15; 58:2; 58:3; 58:10; 64:2; 64:5; 68:2; 70:2; 71:4; 71:13; 71:20; 73:intro; 73:3; 73:8; 73:12; 75:4; 75:8; 75:10; 82:2; 82:4; 84:10; 89:22; 91:8; 91:10; 92:intro; 92:7; 92:9; 92:11; 94:intro; 94:3; 94:4; 94:13; 94:16; 94:23; 97:10; 101:intro; 101:4; 101:8; 104:35; 106:6; 106:18; 107:34; 107:39; 107:42; 109:2; 109:5; 109:6; 109:20; 112:7; 112:10; 119:53; 119:61; 119:95; 119:101; 119:110; 119:115; 119:119; 119:150; 119:155; 121:7; 125:3; 129:4; 139:19; 139:20; 140:1; 140:2; 140:4; 140:8; 140:11; 141:4; 141:5; 141:9; 141:10; 144:10; 145:20; 146:9; 147:6

# ewe, ram, sheep, sheepfold, sheepshearer, sheepskin

**Definition:**

A “sheep” is a medium-sized animal with four legs that has wool all over its body. A male sheep is called a “ram.” A female sheep is called a “ewe.” The plural of “sheep” is also “sheep.”

- A baby sheep is called a “lamb.”
- The Israelites often used sheep for sacrifices, especially male sheep and young sheep.
- People eat meat from sheep and use their wool to make clothing and other things.
- Sheep are very trusting, weak, and timid. They are easily influenced to wander away. They need a shepherd to lead them, protect them, and provide them with food, water, and shelter.
- In the Bible, people are compared to sheep who have God as their shepherd.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: Israel, lamb, sacrifice, shepherd)

**Bible References:**

- Acts 8:32
- Genesis 30:32
- John 2:14
- Luke 15:5
- Mark 6:34
- Matthew 9:36
- Matthew 10:6
- Matthew 12:12
- Matthew 25:33

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 9:12 One day while Moses was taking care of his **sheep**, he saw a bush that was on fire.
- 17:2 David was a shepherd from the town of Bethlehem. At different times while he was watching his father’s **sheep**, David had killed both a lion and a bear that had attacked the **sheep**.
- 30:3 To Jesus, these people were like **sheep** without a shepherd.

- 38:8 Jesus said, “All of you will all abandon me tonight. It is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd and all the **sheep** will be scattered.’”

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0352, H1494, H1798, H2169, H3104, H3532, H3535, H3733, H3775, H5739, H5763, H6260, H6629, H6792, H7353, H7462, H7716, G41650, G42620, G42630

## Psalms References:

8:7; 44:11; 44:22; 49:14; 66:15; 68:13; 78:52; 78:71; 100:3; 114:4; 114:6; 119:176

# exalt, exalted, exaltation

### Definition:

To exalt is to highly praise and honor someone. It can also mean to put someone in a high position.

- In the Bible, the term “exalt” is most often used for exalting God.
- When a person exalts himself, it means he is thinking about himself in a proud or arrogant way.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “exalt” could include “highly praise” or “honor greatly” or “extol” or “speak highly of.”
- In some contexts it could be translated by a word or phrase that means “put in a higher position” or “give more honor to” or “talk about proudly.”
- “Do not exalt yourself” could also be translated as “Do not think of yourself too highly” or “Do not brag about yourself.”
- “Those that exalt themselves” could also be translated as “Those who think proudly about themselves” or “Those who boast about themselves.”

(See also: praise, worship, glory, boast, proud)

### Bible References:

- 1 Peter 5:5-7
- 2 Samuel 22:47
- Acts 5:31
- Philippians 2:9-11
- Psalms 18:46

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1361, H4984, H5375, H5549, H5927, H7311, H7426, H7682, G18690, G52290, G52510, G53110, G53120

## Psalms References:

3:3; 18:46; 21:13; 34:3; 37:34; 47:9; 66:7; 66:17; 92:8; 92:10; 97:9; 99:5; 99:9; 107:32; 108:5; 118:28; 138:2; 145:1; 147:12; 148:13; 149:6

# exult, exultant

### Definition:

The terms “exult” and “exultant” refer to being very happy because of a success or special blessing.

- To “exult” includes a feeling of celebrating something wonderful.
- A person can exult in God’s goodness.
- The term “exultant” can also include being arrogant in one’s feeling of gladness about success or prosperity.
- The term “exult” could also be translated as “celebrate joyfully” or “praise with great joy.”
- Depending on the context, the term “exultant” could be translated as “praising triumphantly” or “celebrating with self praise” or “arrogant.”

(See also: arrogant, joy, praise, rejoice)

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 2:1
- Isaiah 13:3
- Job 6:10
- Psalm 68:1-3
- Zephaniah 2:15

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5539, H5947, H5970

## Psalms References:

5:11; 9:2; 21:1; 25:2; 28:7; 63:11; 68:3; 68:4; 70:4; 149:5

# 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

## Psalms References:

78:7

# faithful, faithfulness, trustworthy

### Definition:

To be “faithful” to God means to consistently live according to God’s teachings. It means to be loyal to him by obeying him. The state or condition of being faithful is “faithfulness.”

- A person who is faithful can be trusted to always keep his promises and to always fulfill his responsibilities to other people.
- A faithful person perseveres in doing a task, even when it is long and difficult.
- Faithfulness to God is the consistent practice of doing what God wants us to do.

### Translation Suggestions:

- In many contexts, “faithful” can be translated as “loyal” or “dedicated” or “dependable.”
- In other contexts, “faithful” can be translated by a word or phrase that means “continuing to believe” or “persevering in believing and obeying God.”
- Ways that “faithfulness” could be translated could include “persevering in believing” or “loyalty” or “trustworthiness” or “believing and obeying God.”

(See also: believe, faith, believe)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 24:49
- Leviticus 26:40
- Numbers 12:7
- Joshua 2:14
- Judges 2:16-17
- 1 Samuel 2:9
- Psalm 12:1
- Proverbs 11:12-13
- Isaiah 1:26
- Jeremiah 9:7-9
- Hosea 5:7
- Luke 12:46
- Luke 16:10
- Colossians 1:7

- 1 Thessalonians 5:24
- 3 John 1:5

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 8:5 Even in prison, Joseph remained **faithful** to God, and God blessed him.
- 14:12 Even so, God was still **faithful** to His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- 15:13 The people promised to remain **faithful** to God and follow his laws.
- 17:9 David ruled with justice and **faithfulness** for many years, and God blessed him. However, toward the end of his life he sinned terribly against God.
- 35:12 “The older son said to his father, ‘All these years I have worked **faithfully** for you!’”
- 49:17 But God is **faithful** and says that if you confess your sins, he will forgive you.
- 50:4 “If you remain **faithful** to me to the end, then God will save you.”

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0529, H0530, H0539, H0540, H0571, H0898, H2181, H4603, H4604, H4820, G05690, G05710, G41030

## Psalms References:

4:3; 12:1; 16:10; 18:25; 25:10; 30:4; 30:9; 31:5; 31:23; 32:6; 33:4; 37:3; 37:28; 40:10; 43:1; 43:3; 50:5; 52:9; 54:5; 71:22; 78:8; 78:37; 79:2; 85:8; 86:2; 88:11; 89:1; 89:2; 89:5; 89:8; 89:19; 89:24; 89:33; 89:37; 89:49; 91:4; 92:intro; 96:13; 97:10; 98:3; 101:6; 111:7; 111:8; 116:15; 117:intro; 119:30; 119:75; 119:90; 119:138; 132:9; 132:16; 143:1; 145:10; 145:17; 146:6; 148:14; 149:1; 149:5; 149:9

# faithless, unfaithful, unfaithfulness

### Definition:

The term “faithless” means to not have faith or to not believe.

- This word is used to describe people who do not believe in God. Their lack of belief is seen by the immoral way they act.
- The prophet Jeremiah accused Israel of being faithless and disobedient to God.
- They worshiped idols and followed other ungodly customs of people groups who did not worship or obey God.

The term “unfaithful” describes people who do not do what God has commanded them to do. The condition or practice of being unfaithful is “unfaithfulness.”

- The people of Israel were called “unfaithful” when they began to worship idols and when they disobeyed God in other ways.
- In marriage, someone who commits adultery is “unfaithful” to his or her spouse.
- God used the term “unfaithfulness” to describe Israel’s disobedient behavior. They were not obeying God or honoring him.

### Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, the term “faithless” could be translated as “unfaithful” or “unbelieving” or “disobedient to God” or “not believing.”
- The term “faithlessness” could be translated as “unbelief” or “unfaithfulness” or “rebellion against God.”
- The phrase “the unfaithful” could be translated as “people who are not faithful (to God)” or “unfaithful people” or “those who disobey God” or “people who rebel against God.”
- In some languages, the term “unfaithful” is related to the word for “unbelief.”

(See also: How to Translate Names)

(See also: believe, faithful, **disobey**, adultery)

### Bible References:

- **Ezekiel 43:6-8**
- **Ezra 9:1-2**
- **Jeremiah 2:19**
- **Proverbs 2:22**
- **Revelation 21:7-8**

### Word Data:

- Strong's: G05710

## Psalms References:

73:27

# family, household

**Definition:**

The term “family” refers to a group of people who are related by blood and usually includes a father, mother, and their children. In the Bible, this term sometimes includes other close relatives such as grandparents, grandchildren, uncles and aunts.

- In biblical times, usually the oldest man was the major authority of a family.
- Family could also include servants, concubines, and even foreigners.
- Some languages may have a broader word such as “clan” or “household” that would fit better in contexts where more than just parents and children are being referred to.
- The New Testament often uses terms related to the concept of “family” to refer to the Church, meaning people who believe in Jesus.

(See also: clan, ancestor, house)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Kings 8:1-2
- 1 Samuel 18:18
- Exodus 1:21
- Joshua 2:12-13
- Luke 2:4

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0001, H0251, H0272, H0504, H1004, H1121, H2233, H2859, H2945, H3187, H4138, H4940, H5387, H5712, G10850, G36140, G36240, G39650

## Psalms References:

22:27; 107:41

# famine

**Definition:**

The term “famine” refers to an extreme lack of food throughout a country or region, usually due to not enough rain.

- Food crops can fail from natural causes such as lack of rain, crop disease, or insects.
- Food shortages can also be caused by people, such as enemies who destroy crops.
- In the Bible, God sometimes caused famine as a way to punish nations when they sinned against him.
- In Amos 8:11 the term “famine” is used figuratively to refer to a time when God punished his people by not speaking to them. This could be translated with the word for “famine” in your language, or with a phrase such as “extreme lack” or “severe deprivation.”

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 21:11-12
- Acts 7:11
- Genesis 12:10
- Genesis 45:6
- Jeremiah 11:21-23
- Luke 4:25
- Matthew 24:8

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H3720, H7458, H7459, G30420

## Psalms References:

33:19; 37:19; 105:16

# fast, fasting

### Definition:

The term to “fast” means to stop eating food for a period of time, such as for a day or more. Sometimes it also includes not drinking.

- Fasting can help people to focus on God and pray without being distracted by preparing food and eating.
- Jesus condemned the Jewish religious leaders for fasting for the wrong reasons. They fasted so that others would think they were righteous.
- Sometimes people fast because they are very sad or grieved about something.
- The verb to “fast” can also be translated as to “refrain from eating” or to “not eat.”
- The noun “fast” could be translated as “time of not eating” or “time of abstaining from food.”

(See also: **Jewish leaders**)

### Bible References:

- **1 Kings 21:8-10**
- **2 Chronicles 20:3**
- **Acts 13:1-3**
- **Jonah 3:4-5**
- **Luke 5:34**
- **Mark 2:19**
- **Matthew 6:18**
- **Matthew 9:15**

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:1** Immediately after Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit led him out into the wilderness, where he **fasted** for forty days and forty nights.
- **34:8** “‘For example, I **fast** two times every week and I give you ten percent of all the money and goods that I receive.’”
- **46:10** One day, while the Christians at Antioch were **fasting** and praying, the Holy Spirit said to them, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul to do the work I have called them to do.”

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H2908, H5144, H6684, H6685, G35210, G35220

## Psalms References:

35:13; 69:10; 109:24

# favor, favorable, favoritism

### Definition:

The term “favor” generally means approval. Someone who favors another person regards that person positively and approves of them.

- Jesus grew up “in favor with” God and men. This means that both God and others approved of his character and behavior.
- The expression “find favor” with someone means that someone is approved of by that person.
- When a king shows favor to someone, it often means that he approves of that person’s request and grants it.
- A “favor” can also be a gesture or action towards or for another person for their benefit.
- The term “favoritism” means an attitude of acting favorably toward some people but not others. It means the inclination to pick one person over another or one thing over another because the person or item is preferred. Generally, favoritism is considered unfair.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate the term “favor” could include “approval” or “blessing” or “benefit.”
- The “favorable year of Yahweh” could be translated as “the year (or time) when Yahweh will bring great blessing.”
- The term “favoritism” could be translated as “partiality” or “being prejudiced” or “unjust treatment.” This word is related to the word “favorite,” which means to prefer above all others.

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 2:25-26
- 2 Chronicles 19:7
- 2 Corinthians 1:11
- Acts 24:27
- Genesis 41:16
- Genesis 47:25
- Genesis 50:5

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0995, H1156, H1293, H1779, H1921, H2580, H2603, H2896, H5278, H5375, H5414, H5922, H6213, H6437, H6440, H7521, H7522, H7965, G11840, G36850, G43800, G43820, G54850, G54860

## Psalms References:

5:12; 30:5; 30:7; 30:8; 44:3; 69:13; 77:7; 84:11; 85:1; 86:3; 86:16; 89:17; 90:17; 102:13; 102:14; 106:4; 119:29; 142:1

# fear, afraid, frighten

### Definition:

The terms “fear” often refers to the unpleasant emotion a person feels when experiencing a potential threat to their safety or well-being. In the Bible, however, the term “fear” can also mean an attitude of worship, respect, awe, or obedience toward another person, usually someone powerful such as God or a king.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “fear” can be translated in various ways. Some possibilities include: “be afraid;” “deeply respect,” or “deep respect;” “revere,” or “reverence;” or perhaps “be in awe of.”
- The sentence “The fear of God fell on all of them” might be translated in various ways. Some possibilities include: “Suddenly they all felt a deep awe and respect for God;” or “Immediately, they all felt very amazed and revered God deeply;” or “Right then, they all felt very afraid of God (because of his great power).”
- The phrase “fear Yahweh” could be translated as “reverence Yahweh” or “deeply respect Yahweh.”
- The phrase “fear not” could also be translated as “do not be afraid” or “stop being afraid.”

(See also: awe, Yahweh, Lord, marvel, power)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 4:18
- Acts 2:43
- Acts 19:15-17
- Genesis 50:21
- Isaiah 11:3-5
- Job 6:14
- Jonah 1:9
- Luke 12:5
- Matthew 10:28
- Proverbs 10:24-25

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0367, H0926, H1204, H1481, H1672, H1674, H1763, H2119, H2296, H2727, H2729, H2730, H2731, H2844, H2849, H2865, H3016, H3025, H3068, H3372, H3373, H3374, H4032, H4034, H4035, H4116, H4172, H6206, H6342, H6343, H6345, H6427, H7264, H7267, H7297, H7374, H7461, H7493, H8175, G08700, G11670, G11680, G11690, G16300, G17190, G21240, G21250, G29620, G53980, G53990, G54000, G54010

## Psalms References:

2:11; 3:6; 5:7; 14:5; 15:4; 19:9; 22:23; 22:25; 23:4; 25:12; 25:14; 27:1; 27:3; 31:19; 33:8; 34:4; 34:7; 34:9; 34:11; 36:1; 45:4; 46:2; 47:2; 49:5; 49:16; 52:6; 53:5; 55:5; 55:19; 56:3; 56:4; 56:11; 60:4; 64:1; 64:4; 64:9; 65:5; 65:8; 66:3; 66:5; 66:16; 67:7; 68:35; 72:5; 76:7; 76:8; 76:11; 76:12; 78:53; 86:11; 89:7; 90:11; 91:5; 96:4; 99:3; 102:15; 103:11; 103:13; 103:17; 111:5; 111:10; 112:1; 112:7; 112:8; 115:11; 115:13; 118:6; 119:38; 119:63; 119:74; 119:79; 119:120; 128:1; 128:4; 130:4; 135:20; 139:14; 145:6; 145:19; 147:11

# feast, feasting

### Definition:

The term “feast” is a very general term that refers to an event where people gather to celebrate something by eating a large meal together. In biblical times, a feast sometimes lasted for several days or more.

- Often there are special kinds of food that are eaten at a certain feast.
- The religious festivals that God commanded the Jews to celebrate usually included having a feast together. For this reason the festivals are often called “feasts.”
- In biblical times, kings and other rich and powerful people often gave feasts to entertain their family or friends.
- In the story about the lost son, the father had a special feast prepared to celebrate the return of his son.
- The term to “feast” could also be translated as to “eat lavishly” or to “celebrate by eating lots of food” or to “eat a special, large meal.”
- Depending on the context, “feast” could be translated as “celebrating together with a large meal” or “a meal with a lot of food” or “a celebration meal.”

(See also: festival, banquet)

### Bible References:

- 2 Peter 2:12-14
- Genesis 26:30
- Genesis 29:22
- Genesis 40:20
- Jude 1:12-13
- Luke 2:43
- Luke 14:7-9
- Matthew 22:1

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0398, H2077, H2282, H3899, H3900, H4150, H4797, H4960, H7646, H8057, H8354, G00260, G10620, G11730, G18590, G21650, G49100

## Psalms References:

36:8

# festival, feast, celebrate

**Definition:**

In general, a festival is a celebration held by a community of people.

- The word for “festival” in the Old Testament literally means “appointed time.”
- The festivals celebrated by the Israelites were specially appointed times or seasons that God had commanded them to observe.
- In some English translations, the word “feast” is used instead of festival because the celebrations included having a large meal together.
- There were several main festivals that the Israelites celebrated every year:
  - Passover
  - Festival of Unleavened Bread
  - Firstfruits
  - Festival of Weeks (Pentecost)
  - Festival of Trumpets
  - Day of Atonement
  - Festival of Shelters
- The purpose of these festivals was to thank God and to remember the amazing things he had done to rescue, protect, and provide for his people.

(See also: feast)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 23:31
- 2 Chronicles 8:13
- Exodus 5:1
- John 4:45
- Luke 22:1

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1974, H2166, H2282, H2287, H6213, H4150, G14560, G18580, G18590

## Psalms References:

42:4; 64:10; 81:3

# fig

**Definition:**

A fig is a small, soft, sweet fruit that grows on trees. When ripe, this fruit can be a variety of colors, including brown, yellow, or purple.

- Fig trees can grow 6 meters in height and their large leaves provide pleasant shade. The fruit is about 3-5 centimeters long.
- Adam and Eve used the leaves from fig trees to make clothing for themselves after they had sinned.
- Figs can be eaten raw, cooked, or dried. People also chop them into small pieces and press them into cakes to eat later.
- In Bible times, figs were important as a source of food and income.
- The presence of fruitful fig trees is frequently mentioned in the Bible as a sign of prosperity.
- Several times Jesus used fig trees as an illustration to teach his disciples spiritual truths.

**Bible References:**

- Habakkuk 3:17
- James 3:12
- Luke 13:7
- Mark 11:14
- Matthew 7:17
- Matthew 21:18

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H1061, H1690, H6291, H8384, G36530, G48080, G48100

## Psalms References:

105:33

# firstborn

### Definition:

The term “firstborn” refers to an offspring of people or animals that is born first, before the other offspring are born.

- In the Bible, “firstborn” usually refers to the first male offspring that is born.
- In Bible times, the firstborn son was given a place of prominence and twice as much of his family inheritance as the other sons.
- Often it was the firstborn male of an animal that was sacrificed to God.
- This concept can also be used figuratively. For example, the nation of Israel is called God’s firstborn son because God gave it special privileges over other nations.
- Jesus, the Son of God is called God’s firstborn because of his importance and authority over everyone else.

### Translation Suggestions:

- When “first-born” occurs in the text alone, it could also be translated as “firstborn male” or “firstborn son,” since that is what is implied. (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)
- Other ways to translate this term could include “the son who was born first” or “the eldest son” or “the number one son.”
- When used figuratively to refer to Jesus, this could be translated with a word or phrase that means “the son who has authority over everything” or “the Son who is first in honor.”
- Caution: Make sure the translation of this term in reference to Jesus does not imply that he was created.

(See also: inherit, sacrifice, son)

### Bible References:

- Colossians 1:15
- Genesis 4:3-5
- Genesis 29:26-27
- Genesis 43:33
- Luke 2:6-7
- Revelation 1:5

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H1060, H1062, H1067, H1069, G44160, G52070

## Psalms References:

78:51; 89:27; 105:36; 135:8; 136:10

# firstfruit, firstfruits

### Definition:

The term “firstfruits” refers to a portion of the first crop of fruits and vegetables that was reaped during each harvest season.

- The Israelites offered these first fruits to God as a sacrificial offering.
- This term is also used figuratively in the Bible to refer to a firstborn son as being the first fruits of the family. That is, because he was the first son to be born into that family, he was the one who carried on the family name and honor.
- Because Jesus rose from the dead, he is called the “firstfruits” of all believers in him, believers who have died but who will some day come back to life.
- Believers in Jesus are also called the “firstfruits” of all creation, indicating the special privilege and position of those whom Jesus redeemed and called to be his people.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The literal use of this term could be translated as “first portion (of crops)” or “first part of the harvest.”
- If possible, the figurative uses should be translated literally, to allow for different meanings in different contexts. This will also show the correlation between the literal meaning and the figurative uses.

(See also: firstborn)

### Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 31:4-5
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13
- Exodus 23:16-17
- James 1:18
- Jeremiah 2:3
- Psalms 105:36

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1061, H6529, H7225, G05360

## Psalms References:

78:51; 105:36

# flock, herd

### Definition:

In the Bible, “flock” refers to a group of sheep or goats and “herd” refers to a group of cattle or pigs.

- Different languages may have different ways of naming groups of animals or birds.

### Translation Suggestions

- Consider what terms are used in your language to refer to different groups of animals, and use the appropriate term for each kind of animal.
- If your language uses the same word to refer to both groups of sheep and cattle, then you may need to say “groups of sheep” where the Bible says only “flocks,” and “groups of cattle” where the Bible says only “herds.” Alternatively, if the Biblical context does not demand differentiation (if the text simply says “flocks and herds,” meaning all their domesticated animals) you may just use the one word once.

(See also: goat, cow, pig, sheep)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 10:28-29
- 2 Chronicles 17:11
- Deuteronomy 14:22-23
- Luke 2:8-9
- Matthew 8:30
- Matthew 26:31

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0951, H1241, H2835, H4029, H4735, H4830, H5349, H5739, H6251, H6629, H7399, H7462, G00340, G41670, G41680

## Psalms References:

65:13; 68:10; 74:1; 77:20; 78:52; 78:70; 79:13; 80:1; 95:7; 107:41; 114:4; 114:6; 144:13

# flood

### Definition:

The term “flood” literally refers to a large amount of water that completely covers over the land.

- This term is also used figuratively to refer to an overwhelming amount of something, especially something that happens suddenly.
- In Noah’s time, people had become so evil that God caused a worldwide flood to come over the entire surface of the earth, even covering the mountaintops. Everyone who was not in the boat with Noah drowned. All other floods cover a much smaller land area.
- This term can also be an action, as in “the land was flooded by river water.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate the literal meaning of “flood” could include “an overflowing of water” or “large amounts of water.”
- The figurative comparison “like a flood” could keep the literal term, or a substitute term could be used that refers to something that has a flowing aspect to it, such as a river.
- For the expression “like a flood of water” where water is already mentioned, the word “flood” could be translated as “an overwhelming amount” or “an overflowing.”
- This term can be used as a metaphor, as in “do not let the flood sweep over me,” which means “do not let these overwhelming disasters happen to me” or “don’t let me be devastated by disasters” or “don’t let your anger devastate me.” (See: Metaphor)
- The figurative expression “I flood my bed with tears” could be translated as “my tears cover my bed with water like a flood.”

(See also: **ark**, **Noah**)

### Bible References:

- **Daniel 11:10**
- **Genesis 7:6-7**
- **Luke 6:46-48**
- **Matthew 7:24-25**
- **Matthew 7:26-27**
- **Matthew 24:37-39**

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3999, G26270

## Psalms References:

29:10; 32:6; 69:2; 69:15; 90:5

# flute, pipe

### Definition:

In Bible times, pipes were musical instruments made of bone or wood with holes to allow the sound to come out. A flute was a kind of pipe.

- Most pipes had reeds made out of a kind of thick grass that vibrated as air was blown over it.
- A pipe without any reeds was often called a “flute.”
- A shepherd played a pipe to calm his flocks of sheep.
- Pipes and flutes were used for playing sad or joyful music.

(See also: flock, shepherd)

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 14:7
- 1 Kings 1:38-40
- Daniel 3:3-5
- Luke 7:31-32
- Matthew 9:23
- Matthew 11:17

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4953, H5748, H2485, H2490, G08320, G08340, G08360

## Psalms References:

5:front; 150:4

# fool, foolish, folly

### Definition:

The term “fool” refers to a person who often makes wrong choices, especially choosing to disobey. The term “foolish” describes a person or behavior that is not wise.

- In the Bible, the term “fool” usually refers to a person who does not believe or obey God. This is often contrasted to the wise person, who trusts in God and obeys God.
- In the Psalms, David describes a fool as a person who does not believe in God, one who ignores all the evidence of God in his creation.
- The Old Testament book of Proverbs also gives many descriptions of what a fool, or foolish person, is like.
- The term “folly” refers to an action that is not wise because it is against God’s will. Often “folly” also includes the meaning of something that is ridiculous or dangerous.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “fool” could be translated as “foolish person” or “unwise person” or “senseless person” or “ungodly person.”
- Ways to translate “foolish” could include “lacking understanding” or “unwise” or “senseless.”

(See also: wise)

### Bible References:

- Ecclesiastes 1:17
- Ephesians 5:15
- Galatians 3:3
- Genesis 31:28
- Matthew 7:26
- Matthew 25:8
- Proverbs 13:16
- Psalms 49:13

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0191, H0196, H0200, H1198, H1984, H2973, H3684, H3687, H3688, H3689, H3690, H5014, H5034, H5036, H5039, H5528, H5529, H5530, H5531, H6612, H8417, H8602, H8604, G04530, G04540, G07810, G08010, G08770, G08780, G27570, G31500, G31540, G34710, G34720, G34730, G34740, G39120

## Psalms References:

14:1; 38:5; 39:8; 49:10; 49:13; 53:1; 74:18; 74:22; 85:8; 94:8; 107:17

# footstool

### Definition:

The term “footstool” refers to an object which a person puts his feet on, usually to rest them while sitting. This term also has figurative meanings of submission and lower status.

- People in Bible times considered feet to be the least honorable parts of the body. So a “footstool” was of even lower honor because feet were rested on it.
- When God says “I will make my enemies a footstool for my feet” he is declaring power, control, and victory over the people who rebel against him. They will be humbled and conquered to the point of submitting to God’s will.
- To “worship at God’s footstool” means to bow down in worship before him as he sits on his throne. This again communicates humility and submission to God.
- David refers to the temple as God’s “footstool.” This could refer to his absolute authority over his people. This could also be picturing God the King on his throne, with his feet resting on his footstool, which represents all that is in submission to him.

### Bible References:

- Acts 7:49
- Isaiah 66:1
- Luke 20:43
- Matthew 5:35
- Matthew 22:44
- Psalm 110:1

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1916, H3534, H7272, G42280, G52860

## Psalms References:

110:1; 132:7

# forgive, forgiven, forgiveness, pardon, pardoned

### Definition:

To forgive someone means to not hold a grudge against that person even though they did something hurtful. “Forgiveness” is the act of forgiving someone.

- Forgiving someone often means not punishing that person for something he has done wrong.
- This term can be used figuratively to mean “cancel,” as in the expression “forgive a debt.”
- When people confess their sins, God forgives them based on Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross.
- Jesus taught his disciples to forgive others as he has forgiven them.

The term “pardon” means to forgive and not punish someone for his sin.

- This word has the same meaning as “forgive” but may also include the meaning of a formal decision to not punish someone who is guilty.
- In a court of law, a judge can pardon a person found guilty of a crime.
- Even though we are guilty of sin, Jesus Christ pardoned us from being punished in hell, based on his sacrificial death on the cross.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “forgive” could be translated as “pardon” or “cancel” or “release” or “not hold against” (someone).
- The term “forgiveness” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “practice of not resenting” or “declaring (someone) as not guilty” or “the act of pardoning.”
- If the language has a word for a formal decision to forgive, that word could be used to translate “pardon.”

(See also: guilt)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 50:17
- Numbers 14:17-19
- Deuteronomy 29:20-21
- Joshua 24:19-20
- 2 Kings 5:17-19
- Psalms 25:11

- Psalms 25:17-19
- **Isaiah 55:6-7**
- **Isaiah 40:2**
- **Luke 5:21**
- **Acts 8:22**
- **Ephesians 4:31-32**
- **Colossians 3:12-14**
- **1 John 2:12**

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **7:10** But Esau had already **forgiven** Jacob, and they were happy to see each other again.
- **13:15** Then Moses climbed the mountain again and prayed that God would **forgive** the people. God listened to Moses and **forgave** them.
- **17:13** David repented of his sin and God **forgave** him.
- **21:5** In the New Covenant, God would write his law on the people's hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would **forgive** their sins.
- **29:1** One day Peter asked Jesus, "Master, how many times should I **forgive** my brother when he sins against me?"
- **29:8** I **forgave** your debt because you begged me.
- **38:5** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the **forgiveness** of sins."

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H5546, H5547, H3722, H5375, H5545, H5547, H7521, G85900, G86300, G54830

## Psalms References:

25:11; 25:18; 32:intro; 86:5; 99:8; 103:3; 130:4

# forsake, forsaken, leave

### Definition:

The term “forsake” means to abandon someone or to give up something. Someone who has been “forsaken” has been deserted or abandoned by someone else.

- When people “forsake” God, they are being unfaithful to him by disobeying him.
- When God “forsakes” people, he has stopped helping them and allowed them to experience suffering in order to cause them to turn back to him.
- This term can also mean to forsake things, such as forsaking, or not following, God’s teachings.
- The term “forsaken” can be used in the past tense, as in “he has forsaken you” or as in referring to someone who has “been forsaken.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate this term could include “abandon” or “neglect” or “give up” or “go away from” or “leave behind,” depending on the context.
- To “forsake” God’s law could be translated “disobey God’s law.” This could also be translated as “abandon” or “give up on” or “stop obeying” his teachings or his laws.
- The phrase “be forsaken” can be translated as “be abandoned” or “be deserted.”
- It more clearer to use different words to translate this term, depending on whether the text describes forsaking a thing or a person.

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 6:11-13
- Daniel 11:29-30
- Genesis 24:27
- Joshua 24:16-18
- Matthew 27:45-47
- Proverbs 27:9-10
- Psalms 71:18

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0488, H2308, H5203, H5428, H5800, H5805, H7503, G06460, G06570, G08630, G14590, G26410

## Psalms References:

9:10; 10:14; 16:10; 22:1; 27:9; 27:10; 37:25; 37:28; 37:33; 38:10; 38:21; 40:12; 71:9; 71:11; 71:18; 89:30; 94:14; 119:8; 119:121; 138:8

# foundation, founder, founded

### Definition:

Used in this sense, the verb “found” means build, create, or lay a base for. The phrase “founded on” means supported by or based on. A “foundation” is the base of support on which something is built or created.

- The foundation of a house or building must be strong and dependable in order to support the entire structure.
- The term “foundation” can also refer to the beginning of something or to the time when something was first created.
- A “foundation stone” was a stone that was laid as part of the foundation. These stones were tested to make sure they were strong enough to support an entire building.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The phrase “before the foundation of the world” could be translated as “before the creation of the world” or “before the time when the world first existed” or “before everything was first created.”
- The term “founded on” could be translated as “securely built on” or “firmly based on.”
- Depending on the context, “foundation” could be translated as “strong base” or “solid support” or “beginning” or “creation.”

(See also: cornerstone, create)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 6:37-38
- 2 Chronicles 3:1-3
- Ezekiel 13:13-14
- Luke 14:29
- Matthew 13:35
- Matthew 25:34

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0134, H0787, H2713, H3245, H3247, H3248, H4143, H4144, H4146, H4328, H4349, H4527, H8356, G23100, G23110, G26020

## Psalms References:

11:3; 18:7; 18:15; 24:2; 78:69; 82:5; 87:1; 89:11; 89:14; 97:2; 102:25; 104:5; 119:152; 137:7

# fountain, source, spring

### Definition:

The terms “fountain” and “spring” usually refer to a large amount of water that flows out naturally from the ground.

- These words are also used figuratively in the Bible to refer to blessings flowing from God or to refer to something that cleanses and purifies.
- In modern times, a fountain is often a manmade object that has water flowing out of it, such as a drinking fountain. Make sure that the translation of this term refers to a natural source of flowing water.
- Compare the translation of this term with how the term “flood” is translated.

(See also: flood)

### Bible References:

- 2 Peter 2:17
- Genesis 7:11
- Genesis 8:2
- Genesis 24:13
- Genesis 24:42
- James 3:11

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0953, H1530, H1543, H3222, H4002, H4161, H4456, H4599, H4726, H5033, H5869, H5927, H6524, H6779, H8444, H8666, G02420, G40770

## Psalms References:

36:9; 68:26; 74:15; 84:6; 87:7; 104:10; 107:33; 107:35; 114:8

# freewill offering

**Definition:**

A freewill offering was a type of sacrifice to God that was not required by the Law of Moses. It was a person's own choice to give this offering.

- If the freewill offering was an animal to be sacrificed, the animal was permitted to have slight defects since it was a voluntary offering.
- The Israelites ate the sacrificed animal as part of a celebration feast.
- When a freewill offering could be given, this was a cause of rejoicing for Israel since it showed that the harvest had been good so that the people had plenty of food.
- The book of Ezra describes a different type of freewill offering that was brought for rebuilding the temple. This offering consisted of gold and silver money, as well as bowls and other objects made of gold and silver.

(See also: burnt offering, Ezra, feast, grain offering, guilt offering, law, sin offering)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 29:6
- 2 Chronicles 35:7-9
- Deuteronomy 12:17
- Exodus 36:2-4
- Leviticus 7:15-16

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H5068, H5071

## Psalms References:

54:6; 68:9; 110:3; 119:108

# fruit, fruitful, unfruitful

### Definition:

The term “fruit” refers to the part of a plant that can be eaten. Something that is “fruitful” produces a lot of fruit. Something that is “unfruitful” does not produce fruit.

- In general, the expression “fruit of” refers to anything that comes from or that is produced by something else. For example, the phrase “the fruit of every tree” refers to the fruit that comes from these trees.
- The expression “fruit of the land” refers generally to everything that the land produces for people to eat. This includes not only fruits such as grapes or dates, but also vegetables, nuts, and grains.

### Translation Suggestions:

- When the term “fruit” refers to what a specific plant produces, the specific term for the fruit of that plant can be used, otherwise, use a general word for the edible things that plants produce, if possible. In many languages it may be more natural to use the plural “fruits” whenever it refers to more than one fruit.
- When used literally, the term “fruitful” could be translated as “producing much fruit.”
- The expression “fruit of the land” could also be translated as “food that the land produces” or “food crops that are growing in that region.”
- When used literally, the expression “will be more fruitful” could also be translated as “will produce more fruit.”

(See also: descendant, grain, grape, Holy Spirit, vine, womb)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 1:11
- Matthew 7:17

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0004, H1061, H1063, H1069, H2233, H2981, H3581, H3759, H3899, H3978, H4022, H5108, H6509, H6529, H7019, H8393, H8570, G10810, G25900, G25920, G25930, G37030, G50520, G53520

## Psalms References:

1:3; 21:10; 58:11; 72:16; 92:14; 104:13; 105:24; 105:35; 107:34; 107:37; 127:3; 128:3; 132:11; 148:9

# fulfill, fulfilled, carried out

### Definition:

The term “fulfill” means to complete or accomplish something that was expected.

- When a prophecy is fulfilled, it means that God causes to happen what was predicted in the prophecy.
- If a person fulfills a promise or a vow, it means that he does what he has promised to do.
- To fulfill a responsibility means to do the task that was assigned or required.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “fulfill” could be translated as “accomplish” or “complete” or “cause to happen” or “obey” or “perform.”
- The phrase “has been fulfilled” could also be translated as “has come true” or “has happened” or “has taken place.”
- Ways to translate “fulfill,” as in “fulfill your ministry,” could include “complete” or “perform” or “practice” or “serve other people as God has called you to do.”

(See also: prophet, Christ, minister, call)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 2:27
- Acts 3:17-18
- Leviticus 22:17-19
- Luke 4:21
- Matthew 1:22-23
- Matthew 5:17
- Psalms 116:12-15

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 24:4 John **fulfilled** what the prophets said, “See I send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way.”
- 40:3 The soldiers gambled for Jesus’ clothing. When they did this, they **fulfilled** a prophecy that said, “They divided my garments among them, and gambled for my clothing.”
- 42:7 Jesus said, “I told you that everything written about me in God’s word must be **fulfilled**.”

- 43:5 “This **fulfills** the prophecy made by the prophet Joel in which God said, ‘In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit.’”
- 43:7 “This **fulfills** the prophecy which says, ‘You will not let your Holy One rot in the grave.’”
- 44:5 “Although you did not understand what you were doing, God used your actions to **fulfill** the prophecies that the Messiah would suffer and die.”

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1214, H5487, G10960, G41380

## Psalms References:

20:4; 20:5; 22:25; 116:14; 116:18; 119:38; 142:7

# furnace

### Definition:

A furnace was a very large oven used for heating objects to a high temperature.

- In ancient times, most furnaces were used for melting metals to make objects such as cooking pots, jewelry, weapons, and idols.
- Furnaces were also used in the making of clay pottery.
- Sometimes a furnace is referred to figuratively to explain that something is very hot.

(See also: false god, image)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 8:51
- Genesis 19:28
- Proverbs 17:3
- Psalms 21:9
- Revelation 9:2

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0861, H3536, H3564, H5948, H8574, G25750

## Psalms References:

12:6

# gate, gate bar, gatekeeper, gatepost, gateway

### Definition:

The term “gate” refers to an access point in a fence, wall, or other kind of barrier that surrounds a house, property, city, etc.

- A city gate could be opened to allow people, animals, and cargo to travel in and out of the city.
- To protect the city, its walls and gates were thick and strong. Gates were closed and locked with a metal or wooden bar to prevent enemy soldiers from entering the city.
- A “bar” for a gate refers to a wood or metal bar that can be moved into place so that the doors of the gate cannot be opened from the outside.
- In Bible times, a city gate was often the social center for that town or city. It was a place where news of current events was exchanged between people, where business transactions occurred, and where civil judgments were made.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate “gate” could be “door” or “wall opening” or “barrier” or “entranceway.”
- The phrase “bars of the gate” could be translated as “gate bolts” or “wooden beams to lock the gate” or “metal locking rods of the gate.”

### Bible References:

- Acts 9:24
- Acts 10:18
- Deuteronomy 21:18-19
- Genesis 19:1
- Genesis 24:60
- Matthew 7:13

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1817, H5592, H6607, H8179, G23740, G44390, G44400

## Psalms References:

9:13; 9:14; 24:7; 24:9; 69:12; 87:2; 100:4; 107:16; 107:18; 118:19; 118:20; 122:2; 127:5; 147:13

# Gath, Gittite

**Definition:**

Gath was one of the five major cities of the Philistines. It was located north of Ekron and east of Ashdod and Ashkelon.

- The Philistine warrior Goliath was from the city of Gath.
- During the time of Samuel, the Philistines stole the ark of the covenant from Israel and took it to their pagan temple at Ashdod. It was then moved to Gath and later to Ekron. But God punished the people of those cities with disease, so they sent it back to Israel again.
- When David was escaping from King Saul, he fled to Gath and lived there awhile with his two wives and with six hundred men who were his loyal followers.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: **Ashdod**, **Ashkelon**, **Ekron**, **Gaza**, **Goliath**, Philistines)

**Bible References:**

- **1 Kings 2:39**
- **1 Samuel 5:8-9**
- **2 Chronicles 26:6-8**
- **Joshua 11:21-22**

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H1661, H1663

## Psalms References:

56:front

# generation

### Definition:

The term “generation” in this sense refers to a group of descendants who are born to a set of parents. For example, if a certain couple is counted as the first generation, then their children are the second generation, their grandchildren are the third generation, etc. in their family line.

### Translation Suggestions

- “Generations” could be translated as “descendants” or “descendant groups” or “children and their children.”
- The phrase “throughout your generations” could be translated as “for every one of your descendants” or “to your children and to every one after them”
- “A generation to come will serve him; they will tell the next generation about Yahweh” could be translated as “Many people in the future will serve Yahweh and will tell their children and grandchildren about him.”

(See also: descendant, ancestor)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1755, H8435

## Psalms References:

10:6; 22:30; 48:13; 78:4; 78:6; 102:18; 109:13

# generation

### Definition:

The term “generation” in this sense refers to a period of time approximately equal to the lifetime of a person. This could be as long as 100 years. This period of time also came to be measured by the time between the adulthood of one person and the adulthood of his or her offspring, or a 30–40-year time span.

### Translation Suggestions

- When referring to the past, “generations” could be translated as “during the times of our ancestors” or “when people lived before us.”
- When referring to the future, “generations” could be translated as “lifespans” or “times of people who will come afterwards” or “when our descendants are living.”
- The phrase “in his own generation” could be translated as “while he lived” or “during his time”
- The expression “from generation to generation” or “from one generation to the next” could be translated as “from the time of people living now and for always” or “as long as people live on the earth” or “from now to all future time periods” or “for all time.”

(See also: descendant, ancestor)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1755, H8435, G01650, G10740

## Psalms References:

10:6; 12:7; 33:11; 45:17; 49:11; 61:6; 72:5; 77:8; 79:13; 85:5; 89:1; 89:4; 90:1; 100:5; 102:12; 102:24; 105:8; 106:31; 119:90; 135:13; 145:4; 145:13; 146:10

# generation

### Definition:

The term “generation” in this sense refers to a group of people who share a certain characteristic or quality.

### Translation Suggestions:

When the word “generation” is used in this sense, it is the context the determines which particular characteristic or quality is in view. For example, when David says in Psalm 24:6 “This is the generation of the ones seeking him” he is speaking of the type of people who seek Yahweh, so this phrase could also be translated as “These are the ones seeking him.”

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s:

## Psalms References:

14:5; 24:6; 78:8; 95:10; 112:2

# generation

### Definition:

The term “generation” in this sense refers to people who are alive at the same time. These people generally share the same culture, experiences, and way of life.

### Translation Suggestions

- The phrase “the generation of his fathers” could be translated as “his ancestors” or “those who have lived before him.”
- The phrase “this generation” or “people of this generation” could be translated as “the people living now” or “you people.”
- The phrase “future generations” could be translated as “those living after us” or “people living at a later time.”

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s:

## Psalms References:

49:19; 71:18; 73:15

# Gilead, Gileadite

**Definition:**

Gilead was the name of a mountainous region east of the Jordan river where the Israelite tribes of Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh lived.

- This region was also referred to as the "hill country of Gilead" or "Mount Gilead."
- "Gilead" was also the name of several men in the Old Testament. One of these men was the grandson of Manasseh. Another Gilead was the father of Jephthah.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **Gad**, **Jephthah**, Manasseh, **Reuben**, **twelve tribes of Israel**)

**Bible References:**

- **1 Chronicles 2:22**
- **1 Samuel 11:1**
- **Amos 1:3**
- **Deuteronomy 2:36-37**
- **Genesis 31:21**
- **Genesis 37:25-26**

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H1568, H1569

## Psalms References:

60:7; 108:8

# gird, girded, wrapped around, tied up, belt, tuck in belt, put belt around

### Definition:

The term “gird” means to fasten something around something else. It often refers to using a belt or sash around the waist to keep a robe or tunic in place.

- The common biblical phrase, “gird up the loins” refers to tucking the bottom of a garment into a belt to allow a person to move more freely, usually to do work.
- This phrase can also mean “get ready to work” or to be prepared to do something difficult.
- The expression “gird up the loins” could be translated using an expression in the target language that has the same meaning. Or it could be translated figuratively as “prepare yourself for action” or “get yourself ready.”
- The term “girded with” could be translated as “encircled by” or “wrapped with” or “belted with.”

(See also: loins)

### Bible References:

- 1 Peter 1:13
- Job 38:3

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0640, H0247, H2290, H2296, H8151, G03280, G12410, G40240

## Psalms References:

18:32; 18:39; 45:3; 65:6; 65:12; 76:10; 93:1; 109:19

# glory, glorious, glorify

### Definition:

The term “glory” is a general term for a family of concepts including value, worth, importance, honor, splendor, or majesty. The term “glorify” means to ascribe glory to someone or something, or to show or tell how glorious something or someone is.

- In the Bible, the term “glory” is especially used to describe God, who is more valuable, more worthy, more important, more honorable, more splendid, and more majestic than anyone or anything in the universe. Everything about his character reveals his glory.
- People can glorify God by telling about the wonderful things he has done. They can also glorify God by living in accordance with God’s character, because doing so shows to others his value, worth, importance, honor, splendor, and majesty.
- The expression to “glory in” means to boast about or take pride in something.

### Old Testament

- The specific phrase “the glory of Yahweh” in the Old Testament usually refers to some perceptible manifestation of Yahweh’s presence in a particular location.

### New Testament

- God the Father will glorify God the Son by revealing to all people the full extent of how glorious Jesus is.
- Everyone who believes in Christ will be glorified with him. This use of the term “glorify” carries a unique meaning. It means that when people who believe in Christ are raised to life, they will be changed physically to be like Jesus as he appeared after his resurrection.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “glory” could include “splendor” or “majesty” or “awesome greatness” or “extreme value.”
- The term “glorious” could be translated as “full of glory” or “extremely valuable” or “brightly shining” or “awesomely majestic.”
- The expression “give glory to God” could be translated as “honor God’s greatness” or “praise God because of his splendor” or “tell others how great God is.”
- The expression “glory in” could also be translated as “praise” or “take pride in” or “boast about” or “take pleasure in.”
- “Glorify” could also be translated as “give glory to” or “bring glory to” or “cause to appear great.”
- The phrase “glorify God” could also be translated as “praise God” or “talk about God’s greatness” or “show how great God is” or “honor God (by obeying him).”

- The term “be glorified” could also be translated as “be shown to be very great” or “be praised” or “be exalted.”

(See also: honor, majesty, exalt, obey, praise)

**Bible References:**

- Exodus 24:17
- Numbers 14:9-10
- Isaiah 35:2
- Luke 18:43
- Luke 2:9
- John 12:28
- Acts 3:13-14
- Acts 7:1-3
- Romans 8:17
- 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
- Philippians 2:14-16
- Philippians 4:19
- Colossians 3:1-4
- 1 Thessalonians 2:5
- James 2:1-4
- 1 Peter 4:15-16
- Revelation 15:4

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 23:7 Suddenly, the skies were filled with angels praising God, saying, “**Glory** to God in heaven and peace on earth to the people he favors!”
- 25:6 Then Satan showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and all their **glory** and said, “I will give you all this if you bow down and worship me.”
- 37:1 When Jesus heard this news, he said, “This sickness will not end in death, but it is for the **glory** of God.”
- 37:8 Jesus responded, “Did I not tell you that you would see God’s **glory** if you believe in me?”

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0117, H0142, H0155, H0215, H1342, H1921, H1926, H1935, H1984, H3367, H3513, H3519, H3520, H6286, H6643, H7623, H8597, G13910, G13920, G17400, G17410, G27440, G48880

## Psalms References:

3:3; 4:2; 8:5; 16:9; 19:1; 21:5; 24:7; 24:8; 24:9; 24:10; 26:8; 29:1; 29:2; 29:3; 29:9; 30:12; 37:20; 45:3; 45:13; 49:16; 49:17; 50:15; 50:23; 57:5; 57:8; 57:11; 62:7; 63:2; 66:2; 72:19; 73:24; 79:9; 84:11; 85:9; 86:9; 86:12; 87:3; 96:3; 96:7; 96:8; 97:6; 102:15; 102:16; 104:31; 106:20; 106:47; 108:1; 108:5; 113:4; 138:5; 145:5; 145:11; 145:12; 149:5

# goat, goatskin, scapegoat, kid

**Definition:**

A goat is a medium-sized, four-legged animal which is similar to a sheep and is raised primarily for its milk and meat. A baby goat is called a "kid."

- Like sheep, goats were important animals of sacrifice, especially at Passover.
- Although goats and sheep can be very similar, these are some ways that they are different:
  - Goats have coarse hair; sheep have wool.
  - The tail of a goat stands up; the tail of a sheep hangs down.
  - Sheep usually like to stay with their herd, but goats are more independent and tend to wander away from their herd.
- In Bible times, goats were often the main source of milk in Israel.
- Goat skins were used for tent coverings and to make bags for holding wine.
- In both the Old and New Testaments, the goat was used as a symbol for unrighteous people, perhaps because of its tendency to wander away from the one taking care of it.
- The Israelites also used goats as symbolic sin bearers. When one goat was sacrificed, the priest would lay his hands on a second, live goat, and send it into the desert as a symbol that the animal was bearing the people's sins.

(See also: flock, sacrifice, sheep, righteous, wine)

**Bible References:**

- Exodus 12:3-4
- Genesis 30:32
- Genesis 31:10
- Genesis 37:31
- Leviticus 3:12-14
- Matthew 25:33

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0689, H1423, H1429, H3277, H3629, H5795, H5796, H6260, H6629, H6842, H7716, H8163, H8166, H8495, G01220, G20550, G20560, G51310

## Psalms References:

50:9; 50:13; 66:15; 104:18

# God

### Definition:

In the Bible, the term "God" refers to the eternal being who created the universe out of nothing. God exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God's personal name is "Yahweh."

- God has always existed; he existed before anything else existed, and he will continue to exist forever.
- He is the only true God and has authority over everything in the universe.
- God is perfectly righteous, infinitely wise, holy, sinless, just, merciful, and loving.
- He is a covenant-keeping God, who always fulfills his promises.
- People were created to worship God and he is the only one they should worship.
- God revealed his name as "Yahweh," which means "he is" or "I am" or "the One who (always) exists."
- The Bible also teaches about false "gods," which are nonliving idols that people wrongly worship.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate "God" could include "Deity" or "Creator" or "Supreme Being" or "Supreme Creator" or "Infinite Sovereign Lord" or "Eternal Supreme Being."
- Consider how God is referred to in a local or national language. There may also already be a word for "God" in the language being translated. If so, it is important to make sure that this word fits the characteristics of the one true God as described above.
- Many languages capitalize the first letter of the word for the one true God, to distinguish it from the word for a false god. Another way to make this distinction would be to use different terms for "God" and "god." NOTE: In the biblical text, when a person who does not worship Yahweh speaks about Yahweh and uses the word "god," it is acceptable to render the term without a capital letter in reference to Yahweh (see Jonah 1:6, 3:9).
- The phrase "I will be their God and they will be my people" could also be translated as "I, God, will rule over these people and they will worship me."

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: create, false god, God the Father, Holy Spirit, false god, Son of God, Yahweh)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 1:7
- 1 Samuel 10:7-8

- 1 Timothy 4:10
- Colossians 1:16
- Deuteronomy 29:14-16
- Ezra 3:1-2
- Genesis 1:2
- Hosea 4:11-12
- Isaiah 36:6-7
- James 2:20
- Jeremiah 5:5
- John 1:3
- Joshua 3:9-11
- Lamentations 3:43
- Micah 4:5
- Philippians 2:6
- Proverbs 24:12
- Psalms 47:9

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 1:1 **God** created the universe and everything in it in six days.
- 1:15 **God** made man and woman in his own image.
- 5:3 "I am **God** Almighty. I will make a covenant with you."
- 9:14 **God** said, "I AM WHO I AM. Tell them, 'I AM has sent me to you.' Also tell them, 'I am Yahweh, the **God** of your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is my name forever.'"
- 10:2 Through these plagues, **God** showed Pharaoh that he is more powerful than Pharaoh and all of Egypt's gods.
- 16:1 The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of Yahweh, the true **God**.
- 22:7 "You, my son, will be called the prophet of the **Most High God** who will prepare the people to receive the Messiah!"
- 24:9 There is only one **God**. But John heard **God** the Father speak, and saw Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit when he baptized Jesus.
- 25:7 "Worship only the Lord your **God** and only serve him."
- 28:1 "There is only one who is good, and that is **God**."

- 49:9 But **God** loved everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with **God** forever.
- 50:16 But some day **God** will create a new heaven and a new earth that will be perfect.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0136, H0305, H0410, H0426, H0430, H0433, H2486, H2623, H3068, H3069, H3863, H4136, H6697, G01120, G05160, G09320, G09350, G10960, G11400, G20980, G21240, G21280, G21500, G21520, G21530, G22990, G23040, G23050, G23120, G23130, G23140, G23150, G23160, G23170, G23180, G23190, G23200, G33610, G37850, G41510, G52070, G53770, G54630, G55370, G55380

## Psalms References:

3:2; 3:7; 4:1; 5:2; 5:10; 7:1; 7:3; 7:9; 7:10; 7:11; 9:17; 10:4; 10:11; 10:12; 10:13; 13:3; 14:1; 14:2; 14:5; 16:1; 17:6; 18:2; 18:6; 18:21; 18:28; 18:29; 18:30; 18:31; 18:32; 18:46; 18:47; 19:1; 20:1; 20:5; 20:7; 22:1; 22:2; 22:10; 24:5; 25:2; 25:5; 25:22; 27:9; 29:3; 30:2; 30:12; 31:5; 31:14; 33:12; 35:23; 35:24; 36:1; 36:6; 36:7; 37:22; 37:31; 38:15; 38:21; 40:3; 40:5; 40:8; 40:17; 41:13; 42:1; 42:2; 42:3; 42:5; 42:6; 42:8; 42:9; 42:10; 42:11; 43:1; 43:2; 43:4; 43:5; 44:1; 44:4; 44:8; 44:20; 44:21; 45:2; 45:6; 45:7; 46:1; 46:4; 46:5; 46:7; 46:10; 46:11; 47:1; 47:5; 47:6; 47:7; 47:8; 47:9; 48:1; 48:3; 48:8; 48:9; 48:10; 48:14; 49:7; 49:15; 50:1; 50:2; 50:3; 50:6; 50:7; 50:14; 50:16; 50:22; 50:23; 51:1; 51:10; 51:14; 51:17; 52:1; 52:5; 52:7; 52:8; 53:1; 53:2; 53:4; 53:5; 53:6; 54:1; 54:2; 54:3; 54:4; 55:1; 55:14; 55:16; 55:19; 55:23; 56:1; 56:4; 56:7; 56:9; 56:10; 56:11; 56:12; 56:13; 57:1; 57:2; 57:3; 57:5; 57:7; 57:11; 58:6; 58:11; 59:1; 59:5; 59:9; 59:10; 59:13; 59:17; 60:1; 60:6; 60:10; 60:12; 61:1; 61:5; 61:7; 62:1; 62:5; 62:7; 62:8; 62:11; 63:1; 63:11; 64:1; 64:7; 64:9; 65:1; 65:5; 65:9; 66:1; 66:3; 66:5; 66:8; 66:10; 66:16; 66:19; 66:20; 67:1; 67:3; 67:5; 67:6; 67:7; 68:1; 68:2; 68:3; 68:4; 68:5; 68:6; 68:7; 68:8; 68:9; 68:10; 68:15; 68:16; 68:17; 68:18; 68:19; 68:20; 68:21; 68:24; 68:26; 68:28; 68:31; 68:32; 68:34; 68:35; 69:1; 69:3; 69:5; 69:6; 69:13; 69:29; 69:30; 69:32; 69:35; 70:1; 70:4; 70:5; 71:4; 71:11; 71:12; 71:17; 71:18; 71:19; 71:22; 72:1; 72:18; 73:1; 73:11; 73:17; 73:26; 73:28; 74:1; 74:8; 74:10; 74:12; 74:22; 75:1; 75:7; 75:9; 76:1; 76:6; 76:9; 76:11; 77:1; 77:3; 77:9; 77:13; 77:14; 77:16; 78:7; 78:8; 78:10; 78:18; 78:19; 78:22; 78:31; 78:34; 78:35; 78:41; 78:56; 78:59; 79:1; 79:9; 79:10; 80:3; 80:4; 80:10; 81:1; 81:4; 81:10; 82:1; 82:8; 83:1; 83:12; 83:13; 84:2; 84:3; 84:7; 84:8; 84:9; 84:10; 85:4; 85:8; 86:2; 86:10; 86:12; 86:14; 86:15; 87:3; 88:1; 89:7; 89:26; 90:2; 90:17; 91:2; 92:13; 94:1; 94:7; 94:22; 94:23; 95:3; 95:7; 98:3; 99:5; 99:8; 99:9; 100:3; 102:24; 104:1; 104:21; 104:33; 105:7; 106:14; 106:21; 106:47; 106:48; 107:11; 108:1; 108:5; 108:7; 108:11; 108:13; 109:1; 109:26; 113:5; 114:7; 115:2; 115:3; 116:5; 118:27; 118:28; 119:115; 122:9; 123:2; 136:2; 136:26; 139:17; 139:19; 139:23; 140:6; 143:10; 144:9; 144:15; 145:1; 146:2; 146:5; 146:10; 147:1; 147:7; 147:12; 149:6; 150:1

# God the Father, heavenly Father, Father

### Definition:

The terms “God the Father” and “heavenly Father” refer to Yahweh, the one true God. Another term with the same meaning is “Father,” used most often when Jesus was referring to him.

- God exists as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each one is fully God, and yet they are only one God. This is a mystery that mere humans cannot fully understand.
- God the Father sent God the Son (Jesus) into the world and he sends the Holy Spirit to his people.
- Anyone who believes in God the Son becomes a child of God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit comes to live in that person. This is another mystery that human beings cannot fully understand.

### Translation Suggestions:

- In translating the phrase “God the Father,” it is best to translate “Father” with the same word that the language naturally uses to refer to a human father.
- The term “heavenly Father” could be translated by “Father who lives in heaven” or “Father God who lives in heaven” or “God our Father from heaven.”
- Usually “Father” is capitalized when it, refers to God.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: ancestor, God, heaven, Holy Spirit, Jesus, Son of God)

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 8:4-6
- 1 John 2:1
- 1 John 2:23
- 1 John 3:1
- Colossians 1:1-3
- Ephesians 5:18-21
- Luke 10:22
- Matthew 5:16
- Matthew 23:9

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 24:9 There is only one God. But John heard **God the Father** speak, and saw Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit when he baptized Jesus.
- 29:9 Then Jesus said, “This is what my **heavenly Father** will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”
- 37:9 Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “**Father**, thank you for hearing me.”
- 40:7 Then Jesus cried out, “It is finished! **Father**, I give my spirit into your hands.”
- 42:10 “So go, make disciples of all people groups by baptizing them in the name of **the Father**, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”
- 43:8 “Jesus is now exalted to the right hand of **God the Father**.”
- 50:10 “Then the righteous ones will shine like the sun in the kingdom of **God their Father**.”

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0001, H0002, G39620

## Psalms References:

89:26

# god, false god, goddess, idol, idolater, idolatrous, idolatry

### Definition:

A false god is something that people worship instead of the one true God. The term "goddess" refers specifically to a female false god.

- These false gods or goddesses do not exist. Yahweh is the only God.
- People sometimes make objects into idols to worship as symbols of their false gods.
- In the Bible, God's people frequently turned away from obeying him in order to worship false gods.
- Demons often deceive people into believing that the false gods and idols they worship have power.
- Baal, Dagon, and Molech were three of the many false gods that were worshiped by people in Bible times.
- Asherah and Artemis (Diana) were two of the goddesses that ancient peoples worshiped.

An idol is an object that people make so they can worship it. Something is described as "idolatrous" if it involves giving honor to something other than the one true God.

- People make idols to represent the false gods that they worship.
- These false gods do not exist; there is no God besides Yahweh.
- Sometimes demons work through an idol to make it seem like it has power, even though it does not.
- Idols are often made of valuable materials like gold, silver, bronze, or expensive wood.
- An "idolatrous kingdom" means a "kingdom of people who worship idols" or a "kingdom of people who worship earthly things."
- The term "idolatrous figure" is another word for a "carved image" or an "idol."

### Translation Suggestions:

- There may already be a word for "god" or "false god" in the language or in a nearby language.
- The term "idol" could be used to refer to false gods.
- In English, a lower case "g" is used to refer to false gods, and upper case "G" is used to refer to the one true God. Other languages also do that.
- Another option would be to use a completely different word to refer to the false gods.
- Some languages may add a word to specify whether the false god is described as male or female.

(See also: God, Asherah, Baal, Molech, demon, image, kingdom, worship)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 35:2
- Exodus 32:1
- Psalms 31:6
- Psalms 81:8-10
- Isaiah 44:20
- Acts 7:41
- Acts 7:43
- Acts 15:20
- Acts 19:27
- Romans 2:22
- Galatians 4:8-9
- Galatians 5:19-21
- Colossians 3:5
- 1 Thessalonians 1:9

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 10:2 Through these plagues, God showed Pharaoh that he is more powerful than Pharaoh and all of Egypt's **gods**.
- 13:4 Then God gave them the covenant and said, "I am Yahweh, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship other **gods**."
- 14:2 They (Canaanites) worshiped false **gods** and did many evil things.
- 16:1 The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite **gods** instead of Yahweh, the true God.
- 18:13 But most of Judah's kings were evil, corrupt, and they worshiped idols. Some of the kings even sacrificed their children to false **gods**.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0205, H0367, H0410, H0426, H0430, H0457, H1322, H1544, H1892, H2553, H3649, H4656, H4906, H5236, H5566, H6089, H6090, H6091, H6456, H6459, H6673, H6736, H6754, H7723, H8163, H8251, H8267, H8441, H8655, G14930, G14940, G14950, G14960, G14970, G22990, G27120

## Psalms References:

5:4; 16:4; 31:6; 44:20; 50:1; 77:13; 81:9; 82:1; 86:8; 95:3; 96:4; 96:5; 97:7; 97:9; 106:36; 106:38; 115:4; 135:5; 135:15; 136:2; 138:1

# godly, godliness, ungodly, godless, ungodliness, godlessness

### Definition:

The term “godly” is used to describe a person who acts in a way that honors God and shows what God is like. “Godliness” is the character quality of honoring God by doing his will.

- A person who has godly character will show the fruits of the Holy Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and self control.
- The quality of godliness shows that a person has the Holy Spirit and is obeying him.

The terms “ungodly” and “godless” describe people who are in rebellion against God. Living in an evil way, without thought of God, is called “ungodliness” or “godlessness.”

- The meanings of these words are very similar. However, “godless” and “godlessness” may describe a more extreme condition in which people or nations do not even acknowledge God or his right to rule them.
- God pronounces judgment and wrath on ungodly people, on everyone who rejects him and his ways.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The phrase “the godly” could be translated as “godly people” or “people who obey God.” (See: nominaladj)
- The adjective “godly” could be translated as “obedient to God” or “righteous” or “pleasing to God.”
- The phrase “in a godly manner” could be translated as “in a way that obeys God” or “with actions and words that please God.”
- Ways to translate “godliness” could include “acting in a way that pleases God” or “obeying God” or “living in a righteous manner.”
- Depending on the context, the term “ungodly” could be translated as “displeasing to God” or “immoral” or “disobeying God.”
- The terms “godless” and “godlessness” literally mean that the people are “without God” or “having no thought of God” or “acting in a way that does not acknowledge God.”

- Other ways to translate “ungodliness” or “godlessness” could be “wickedness” or “evil” or “rebellion against God”.

(See also evil, honor, obey, righteous)

**Bible References:**

- Job 27:10
- Proverbs 11:9
- Acts 3:12
- 1 Timothy 1:9-11
- 1 Timothy 4:7
- 2 Timothy 3:12
- Hebrews 12:14-17
- Hebrews 11:7
- 1 Peter 4:18
- Jude 1:16

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0430, H1100, H2623, H5760, H7563, G05160, G07630, G07640, G07650, G21240, G21500, G21520, G21530, G23160, G23170

## Psalms References:

15:intro; 35:16

# gold, golden

**Definition:**

Gold is a yellow, high quality metal that was used for making jewelry and religious objects. It was the most valuable metal in ancient times.

- In Bible times, many different kinds of objects were made out of solid gold or were covered with a thin layer of gold.
- These objects included earrings and other jewelry, and idols, altars, and other objects used in the tabernacle or temple, such as the ark of the covenant.
- In Old Testament times, gold was used as a means of exchange in buying and selling. It was weighed on a scale to determine its value.
- Later on, gold and other metals such as silver were used to make coins to use in buying and selling
- When referring to something that is not solid gold, but only has a thin covering of gold, the term “golden” or “gold-covered” or “gold-overlaid” could also be used.
- Sometimes an object is described as “gold-colored,” which means it has the yellow color of gold, but may not actually be made of gold.

(See also: altar, ark of the covenant, false god, silver, tabernacle, temple)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Peter 1:7
- 1 Timothy 2:8-10
- 2 Chronicles 1:15
- Acts 3:6
- Daniel 2:32

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1220, H1722, H2091, H2742, H3800, H5458, H6884, H6885, G55520, G55530, G55540, G55570

## Psalms References:

19:10; 21:3; 45:9; 45:13; 68:13; 72:15; 105:37; 115:4; 119:72; 119:127; 135:15

# good news, gospel

### Definition:

The term “gospel” literally means “good news” and refers to a message or announcement that tells people something that benefits them and makes them glad.

- In the Bible, this term usually refers to the message about God’s salvation for people through Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross.
- In most English Bibles, “good news” is usually translated as “gospel” and is also used in phrases such as, the “gospel of Jesus Christ,” the “gospel of God” and the “gospel of the kingdom.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- Different ways to translate this term could include, “good message” or “good announcement” or “God’s message of salvation” or “the good things God teaches about Jesus.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate the phrase, “good news of” could include, “good news/message about” or “good message from” or “the good things God tells us about” or “what God says about how he saves people.”

(See also: kingdom, sacrifice, save)

### Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 1:5
- Acts 8:25
- Colossians 1:23
- Galatians 1:6
- Luke 8:1-3
- Mark 1:14
- Philippians 2:22
- Romans 1:3

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 23:6 The angel said, “Do not be afraid, because I have some **good news** for you. The Messiah, the Master, has been born in Bethlehem!”
- 26:3 Jesus read, “God has given me his Spirit so that I can proclaim **good news** to the poor, freedom to captives, recovery of sight for the blind, and release to the oppressed. This is the year of the Lord’s favor.”

- 45:10 Philip also used other Scriptures to tell him the **good news of Jesus**.
- 46:10 Then they sent them off to preach the **good news about Jesus** in many other places.
- 47:1 One day, Paul and his friend Silas went to the town of Philippi to proclaim the **good news about Jesus**.
- 47:13 The **good news about Jesus** kept spreading, and the Church kept growing.
- 50:1 For almost 2,000 years, more and more people around the world have been hearing the **good news about Jesus** the Messiah.
- 50:2 When Jesus was living on earth he said, “My disciples will preach the **good news** about the kingdom of God to people everywhere in the world, and then the end will come.”
- 50:3 Before he returned to heaven, Jesus told Christians to proclaim the **good news** to people who have never heard it.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: G20970, G20980, G42830

## Psalms References:

68:11

# good, right, pleasant, better, best, goodness

### Definition:

The term “good” generally refers to a positive evaluation of the quality of something or someone, often in a moral or emotional sense. However, the term conveys various nuances throughout the Bible depending on the context.

- Something that is “good” could be emotionally pleasant, morally right, excellent, helpful, suitable, or profitable.
- In the Bible, the general meaning of “good” is often contrasted with “evil.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- The general term for “good” in the target language should be used wherever this general meaning is accurate and natural, especially in contexts where it is contrasted to evil.
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include “kind” or “excellent” or “pleasing to God” or “righteous” or “morally upright” or “profitable.”
- “Good land” could be translated as “fertile land” or “productive land”; a “good crop” could be translated as a “plentiful harvest” or “large amount of crops.”
- The phrase “do good to” means to do something that benefits others and could be translated as “be kind to” or “help” or “benefit” someone or “cause someone to prosper.”
- To “do good on the Sabbath” means to “do things that help others on the Sabbath.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate the term “goodness” could include “blessing” or “kindness” or “moral perfection” or “righteousness” or “purity.”

(See also: righteous, prosper, evil)

### Bible References:

- Galatians 5:22-24
- Genesis 1:12
- Genesis 2:9
- Genesis 2:17
- James 3:13
- Romans 2:4

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 1:4 God saw that what he had created was **good**.

- 1:11 God planted the tree of the knowledge of **good** and evil.
- 1:12 Then God said, “It is not **good** for man to be alone.”
- 2:4 “God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand **good** and evil like he does.”
- 8:12 “You tried to do evil when you sold me as a slave, but God used the evil for **good**!”
- 14:15 Joshua was a **good** leader because he trusted and obeyed God.
- 18:13 Some of these kings were **good** men who ruled justly and worshiped God.
- 28:1 “**Good** teacher, what must I do to have eternal life?” Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me ‘**good**?’ There is only one who is **good**, and that is God.”

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0117, H0145, H0155, H0202, H0239, H0410, H1580, H1926, H1935, H2532, H2617, H2623, H2869, H2895, H2896, H2898, H3190, H3191, H3276, H3474, H3788, H3966, H4261, H4399, H5232, H5750, H6287, H6643, H6743, H7075, H7368, H7399, H7443, H7999, H8231, H8232, H8233, H8389, H8458, G00140, G00150, G00180, G00190, G05150, G07440, G08650, G09790, G13800, G20950, G20970, G21060, G21070, G21080, G21090, G21140, G21150, G21330, G21400, G21620, G21630, G21740, G22930, G25650, G25670, G25700, G25730, G28870, G29860, G31400, G36170, G37760, G41470, G46320, G46740, G48510, G52230, G52240, G53580, G55420, G55430, G55440

## Psalms References:

4:6; 11:intro; 14:1; 14:3; 15:intro; 16:2; 16:6; 21:3; 23:3; 23:6; 25:7; 25:8; 25:13; 26:intro; 27:13; 31:19; 34:intro; 34:8; 34:10; 34:12; 34:14; 35:12; 36:3; 36:4; 37:3; 37:16; 37:27; 38:20; 39:2; 45:1; 51:4; 51:18; 52:3; 52:9; 53:1; 53:3; 54:6; 63:3; 65:4; 65:11; 68:10; 69:16; 69:31; 73:1; 73:28; 81:2; 84:10; 84:11; 85:12; 86:5; 86:17; 92:1; 94:15; 100:5; 103:5; 104:28; 106:1; 106:5; 107:1; 107:9; 109:5; 109:21; 111:10; 112:5; 113:intro; 118:1; 118:8; 118:9; 118:29; 119:39; 119:65; 119:66; 119:68; 119:71; 119:72; 119:122; 122:9; 125:4; 128:2; 128:5; 133:1; 133:2; 135:3; 136:1; 141:6; 143:10; 145:7; 145:9; 147:1

# 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

## Psalms References:

4:1; 6:2; 25:16; 26:11; 27:7; 30:10; 31:9; 37:21; 37:26; 45:2; 56:1; 57:1; 59:5; 67:1; 77:9; 86:15; 103:8; 111:4; 112:4; 112:5; 119:132; 123:2; 123:3; 145:8

# grain offering

**Definition:**

A grain offering was a gift of wheat or barley flour offered to God, often after a burnt offering.

- The grain used for the grain offering had to be finely ground up. Sometimes it was cooked before being offered, but other times it was left uncooked.
- Oil and salt were added to the grain flour, but no yeast or honey was permitted.
- Part of the grain offering was burned up and part of it was eaten by the priests.

(See also: burnt offering, guilt offering, sacrifice, sin offering)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 23:27-29
- Exodus 29:41-42
- Judges 13:19
- Leviticus 2:2

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H4503, H8641

## Psalms References:

20:3

# grain, grainfields

**Definition:**

The term “grain” usually refers to the seed of a food plant such as wheat, barley, corn, millet, or rice. It can also refer to the whole plant.

- In the Bible, the main grains that are referred to are wheat and barley.
- A head of grain is the part of the plant that holds the grain.
- Note that some older Bible versions use the word “corn” to refer to grain in general. In modern English however, “corn” only refers to one type of grain.

(See also: head, wheat)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 42:3
- Genesis 42:26-28
- Genesis 43:1-2
- Luke 6:2
- Mark 2:24
- Matthew 13:7-9
- Ruth 1:22

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1250, H1430, H1715, H2233, H2591, H3759, H3899, H7054, H7383, H7641, H7668, G02480, G25900, G34500, G46210, G47190

## Psalms References:

4:7; 65:9; 65:13; 72:16; 78:24; 144:13

# grave, gravedigger, tomb, burial place

### Definition:

The terms “tomb” and “grave” refer to a place where people put the body of a person who has died. A “burial place” is a more general term that also refers to this.

- The Jews sometimes used natural caves as tombs, and sometimes they dug caves into rock in the side of a hill.
- In New Testament times, it was common to roll a large, heavy stone in front of the opening of a tomb in order to close it.
- If the target language the word for a tomb can only refer to a hole in which the body is placed below the ground, other ways to translate this could include “cave” or “hole in the side of a hill.”
- The phrase “the grave” is often used generally and figuratively to refer to the condition of being dead or a place where the souls of dead people are.

(See also: bury, death)

### Bible References:

- Acts 2:29-31
- Genesis 23:6
- Genesis 50:5
- John 19:41
- Luke 23:53
- Mark 5:1-2
- Matthew 27:53
- Romans 3:13

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 32:4 The man lived among the **tombs** in the area.
- 37:6 Jesus asked them, “Where have you put Lazarus?” They told him, “In the **tomb**. Come and see.”
- 37:7 The **tomb** was a cave with a stone rolled in front of its opening.
- 40:9 Then Joseph and Nicodemus, two Jewish leaders who believed Jesus was the Messiah, asked Pilate for Jesus’ body. They wrapped his body in cloth and placed it in a **tomb** cut out of rock. Then they rolled a large stone in front the **tomb** to block the opening.

- 41:4 He (the angel) rolled away the stone that was covering the entrance to the **tomb** and sat on it. The soldiers guarding the **tomb** were terrified and fell to the ground like dead men.
- 41:5 When the women arrived at the **tomb**, the angel told them, “Do not be afraid. Jesus is not here. He has risen from the dead, just like he said he would! Look in the **tomb** and see.” The women looked into the **tomb** and saw where Jesus’ body had been laid. His body was not there!

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1430, H6900, H6913, H7585, H7845, G34180, G34190, G50280

## Psalms References:

5:9; 55:23; 88:5; 88:11

# guilt, guilty

### Definition:

The term “guilt” refers to the fact of having sinned or committed a crime.

- To “be guilty” means to have done something morally wrong, that is, to have disobeyed God.
- The opposite of “guilty” is “innocent.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- Some languages might translate “guilt” as “the weight of sin” or “the counting of sins.”
- Ways to translate to “be guilty” could include a word or phrase that means, to “be at fault” or “having done something morally wrong” or “having committed a sin.”

(See also: innocent, iniquity, punish, sin)

### Bible References:

- Exodus 28:36-38
- Isaiah 6:7
- James 2:10-11
- John 19:4
- Jonah 1:14

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 39:2 They brought many witnesses who lied about him (Jesus). However, their statements did not agree with each other, so the Jewish leaders could not prove he was **guilty** of anything.
- 39:11 After speaking with Jesus, Pilate went out to the crowd and said, “I find no **guilt** in this man.” But the Jewish leaders and the crowd shouted, “Crucify him!” Pilate replied, “He is not **guilty**.” But they shouted even louder. Then Pilate said a third time, “He is not **guilty**!”
- 40:4 Jesus was crucified between two robbers. One of them mocked Jesus, but the other said, “Don’t you fear God? We are **guilty**, but this man is innocent.”
- 49:10 Because of your sin, you are **guilty** and deserve to die.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0816, H0817, H0818, H5352, H5355, H7563, G03380, G17770, G37840, G52670

## Psalms References:

5:10; 32:2; 32:5; 34:21; 34:22; 38:18; 109:7

# Hades, Sheol

### Definition:

The terms “Hades” (in Greek) and “Sheol” (in Hebrew) are proper names for the place where the spirits of dead people would go after they had died.

- In these ancient cultures, people thought of this as an underground dwelling place where the spirits of dead people existed in a shadowy, semi-conscious form.
- Although these terms are place names, in the Bible they often mean the same thing as “death” or “the grave.”
- Throughout most of biblical history, “Sheol” and “Hades” refer to a neutral place where all of the dead go to await judgment, both the righteous and the unrighteous. In the New Testament, however, “Hades” begins to be seen as a place for only the unrighteous, in contrast with “Abraham’s side” (Luke 16:22) or “paradise” (Luke 23:43), which describe the place for the righteous.

### Translation Suggestions

- Both “Sheol” and “Hades” can be translated in various ways, depending on the context. Some possibilities include: “place of the dead,” “place for dead spirits,” “the underworld,” “the pit,” “the grave,” or “death.”
- Some translations keep the proper names “Sheol” and “Hades,” spelling them to fit the sound patterns of the language of translation. (See: How to Translate Unknowns).
- A phrase could also be added to each term to explain it. Examples of doing this are, “Sheol, place where dead people are” and “Hades, place of death.”

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: death, heaven, hell, tomb)

### Bible References:

- Acts 2:31
- Genesis 44:29
- Jonah 2:2
- Luke 10:15
- Luke 16:23
- Matthew 11:23
- Matthew 16:18
- Revelation 1:18

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H7585, G00860

## Psalms References:

6:5; 9:17; 16:intro; 16:10; 18:5; 30:3; 31:17; 49:14; 49:15; 55:15; 86:13; 88:3; 89:48; 116:3; 139:8; 141:7

# hail, hailstone, hailstorm

### Definition:

This term usually refers to lumps of frozen water that fall from the sky. Although spelled the same way in English, a different word, “hail” is used in greeting someone and can mean, “hello” or “greetings to you.”

- Hail that comes down from the sky is in the form of balls or chunks of ice called “hailstones.”
- Usually hailstones are small (only a few centimeters wide), but sometimes there are hailstones that are as big as 20 centimeters wide and that weigh over a kilogram.
- The book of Revelation in the New Testament describes enormous hailstones weighing 50 kilograms that God will cause to fall on earth when he judges people for their wickedness in the end times.
- The word “hail” that is a formal greeting in older English literally means “rejoice” and could be translated as “Greetings!” or “Hello!”

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

### Bible References:

- Matthew 27:29
- Matthew 28:8-10
- Psalms 78:48
- Psalms 148:8
- Revelation 8:7

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0068, H0417, H1258, H1259, G54630, G54640

## Psalms References:

18:12; 18:13; 78:47; 78:48; 105:32; 147:17; 148:8

# Ham

**Definition:**

Ham was the second of Noah's three sons.

- During the worldwide flood that covered the whole earth, Ham and his brothers were with Noah in the ark, along with their wives.
- After the flood, there was an occasion where Ham was very dishonoring to his father, Noah. As a result, Noah cursed Ham's son Canaan and all his descendants, who eventually became known as the Canaanites.
- Another son of Ham was Mizraim, which means "Egypt." His descendants became the Egyptians. For this reason, Egypt is sometimes called, "the land of Ham."

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: ark, Canaan, dishonor, Noah)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 5:32
- Genesis 6:10
- Genesis 7:13-14
- Genesis 10:1
- Genesis 10:20

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H2526

## Psalms References:

78:51; 105:23; 105:27; 106:22

# hang, hung

### Definition:

The term “hang” means to suspend something or someone above the ground.

- In modern times, death by hanging is usually done by tying a rope around a person’s neck and suspending him from an elevated object until he dies. This elevated object can be any number of things, such as a tree or a gallows, that is, a platform built specifically for the purpose of hanging a person in order to kill him.
- In biblical times, however, ancient cultures may not have killed people by hanging in precisely the same way. For example, Jesus died while hanging on a wooden cross (sometimes called a “tree”), but there was nothing around his neck. The soldiers suspended him by nailing his hands (or wrists) and his feet to the cross.
- Some ancient cultures “hung” a person by impaling him on a wooden pole in such a way that he was suspended above the ground so that he could not escape. The person would be left there until he died.
- For many references to death by “hanging” in the Bible, the specific means of death is unknown.

### Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 17:23
- Acts 10:39
- Galatians 3:13
- Genesis 40:22
- Matthew 27:3-5

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2614, H3363, H8518, G05190

## Psalms References:

137:2

# hard, harden, harder, hardness

### Definition:

The term “hard” generally refers to something that is persistent, or unyielding.

- The use of “hard” (in various forms) with “heart” refers to people being stubbornly unrepentant or disobedient (usually) to God.

### Translation Suggestions

- The term “hard” could also be translated as “rebellious” or “stubborn” or “obstinate” or “unyielding” depending on the context.
- The terms “hardness” or “hardness of heart” or “hard heart” could be translated as “stubbornness” or “persistent rebellion” or “rebellious attitude” or “stubborn disobedience” or “stubbornly not repenting.”
- The phrase “hard of neck” could also be translated as “obstinate” or “rebellious”
- The term “hardened” could also be translated as “stubbornly unrepentant” or “refusing to obey.”
- “Do not harden your heart” could be translated as “do not refuse to repent” or “do not stubbornly keep disobeying.”
- Other ways to translate “hard-headed” or “hard-hearted” could include “stubbornly disobedient” or “continuing to disobey” or “refusing to repent” or “always rebelling.”

(See also: disobey, evil, stiff-necked)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s:

## Psalms References:

95:8

# harp, harpist

**Definition:**

A harp is a stringed musical instrument, that usually consists of a large open frame with vertical strings.

- In Bible times, fir wood was used to make harps and other musical instruments.
- Harps were often held in the hands and played while walking.
- In many places in the Bible, harps are mentioned as instruments that were used to praise and worship God.
- David wrote several psalms which were set to harp music.
- He also played a harp for King Saul, to soothe the king's troubled spirit.

(See also: David, fir, psalm, Saul (OT))

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 15:16-18
- Amos 5:23-24
- Daniel 3:5
- Psalm 33:1-3
- Revelation 5:8

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H3658, H5035, H5059, H7030, G27880, G27890, G27900

## Psalms References:

33:2; 49:4; 57:8; 71:22; 81:2; 92:3; 98:5; 108:2; 137:2; 147:7; 149:3; 150:3

# harvest, reap

### Definition:

The term “harvest” refers to the gather the ripe fruits, vegetables, seeds, or grains from the plants on which they were growing. The term “reap” means to harvest crops.

- The harvest time normally happens at the end of a growing season.
- The Israelites held a “Festival of Harvest” or “Festival of Ingathering” to celebrate the reaping of the food crops. God commanded them to offer the first fruits of these crops as a sacrifice to him.
- In biblical times, reapers usually harvested crops by hand, either pulling up the plants or cutting them with a sharp cutting tool.

### Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate the concept with the word that is commonly used in the language to refer to the harvesting of crops.
- The event of harvesting could be translated as “time of gathering in” or “crop gathering time” or “fruit picking time.”
- The verb to “harvest” could be translated as to “gather in” or to “pick up” or to “collect.”

(See also: firstfruits, festival, good news)

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 9:9-11
- 2 Samuel 21:7-9
- Galatians 6:9-10
- Isaiah 17:11
- James 5:7-8
- Leviticus 19:9
- Matthew 9:38
- Ruth 1:22
- Galatians 6:9-10
- Matthew 6:25-26
- Matthew 13:30
- Matthew 13:36-39
- Matthew 25:24

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H2758, H4395, H4672 H7105, H7114, H7938, G02700, G23250, G23260, G23270

## Psalms References:

107:37; 126:5; 129:7

# haughty, lofty

### Definition:

The term “haughty” means to be prideful or arrogant. Someone who is “haughty” thinks too highly of himself.

- Often this term describes a proud person who persists in sinning against God.
- Usually a person who is haughty boasts about himself.
- A haughty person is foolish, not wise.
- This term could also be translated as “proud” or “arrogant” or “self-centered.”
- The figurative expression “haughty eyes” could also be translated as “proud way of looking” or “looking at others as less important” or “proud person who looks down on others.”

(See also: boast, proud)

### Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 3:1-4
- Isaiah 2:17
- Proverbs 16:18
- Proverbs 21:24
- Psalm 131:1

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1361, H1363, H1364, H3093, H7312

## Psalms References:

101:5

# heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly

### Definition:

The term that is translated as “heaven” usually refers to where God lives. The same word can also mean “sky,” depending on the context.

- The term “heavens” refers to everything we see above the earth, including the sun, moon, and stars. It also includes the heavenly bodies, such as far-off planets, that we cannot directly see from the earth.
- The term “sky” refers to the blue expanse above the earth that has clouds and the air we breathe. Often the sun and moon are also said to be “up in the sky.”
- In some contexts in the Bible, the word “heaven” could refer to either the sky or the place where God lives.

### Translation Suggestions:

- For “kingdom of heaven” in the book of Matthew, it is best to keep the word “heaven” since this is distinctive to Matthew’s gospel.
- The terms “heavens” or “heavenly bodies” could also be translated as “sun, moon, and stars” or “all the stars in the universe.”
- The phrase, “stars of heaven” could be translated as “stars in the sky” or “stars in the galaxy” or “stars in the universe.”

(See also: **kingdom of God**)

### Bible References:

- **1 Kings 8:22-24**
- **1 Thessalonians 1:8-10**
- **1 Thessalonians 4:17**
- **Deuteronomy 9:1**
- **Ephesians 6:9**
- **Genesis 1:1**
- **Genesis 7:11**
- **John 3:12**
- **John 3:27**
- **Matthew 5:18**
- **Matthew 5:46-48**

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 4:2 They even began building a tall tower to reach **heaven**.
- 14:11 He (God) gave them bread from **heaven**, called “manna.”
- 23:7 Suddenly, the skies were filled with angels praising God, saying, “Glory to God in **heaven** and peace on earth to the people he favors!”
- 29:9 Then Jesus said, “This is what my **heavenly** Father will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”
- 37:9 Then Jesus looked up to **heaven** and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me.”
- 42:11 Then Jesus went up to **heaven**, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1534, H6160, H6183, H7834, H8064, H8065, G09320, G20320, G33210, G37700, G37710, G37720

## Psalms References:

8:1; 8:3; 8:5; 8:8; 11:4; 14:2; 18:9; 18:11; 18:13; 19:1; 19:6; 20:6; 33:6; 33:13; 36:5; 50:4; 50:6; 53:2; 57:3; 57:5; 57:10; 57:11; 68:8; 68:33; 69:34; 73:9; 73:25; 76:8; 77:17; 78:23; 78:24; 79:2; 80:14; 85:11; 89:2; 89:5; 89:6; 89:11; 89:29; 89:37; 96:5; 96:11; 97:6; 102:19; 102:25; 103:11; 103:19; 104:2; 104:12; 105:40; 107:26; 108:4; 108:5; 113:4; 115:3; 115:15; 115:16; 119:89; 121:2; 123:1; 124:8; 134:3; 135:6; 136:5; 136:26; 139:8; 144:5; 146:6; 147:8; 148:1; 148:4; 148:13

# high priest, chief priest

### Definition:

The term “high priest” refers to a special priest who was appointed to serve for one year as the leader of all of the other Israelite priests. In New Testament times, some other priests were also considered very important Jewish religious leaders, with authority over other priests and the people. These were the chief priests.

- The high priest had special responsibilities. He was the only one who was permitted to go into the most holy part of the tabernacle or the temple to offer a special sacrifice once per year.
- The Israelites had many priests, but only one high priest at a time.
- After high priests retired, they still kept the title, along with some of the responsibilities of the office. For example, Annas was still referred to as high priest during the priesthood of Caiaphas and others.
- The chief priests were responsible for everything needed for the worship services at the temple. They were also in charge of the money that was given to the temple.
- The chief priests were higher in rank and power than the ordinary priests. Only the high priest had more authority.
- The chief priests were some of Jesus’ main enemies and they strongly influenced the Roman leaders to arrest and kill him.

### Translation Suggestions:

- “High priest” could be translated as “supreme priest” or “highest ranking priest.”
- The term “chief priests” could be translated as “head priests” or “leading priests” or “ruling priests.”

(See also: Annas, Caiaphas, priest, temple)

### Bible References:

- Acts 5:27
- Acts 7:1
- Acts 9:1
- Exodus 30:10
- Hebrews 6:19-20
- Leviticus 16:32
- Luke 3:2
- Mark 2:25-26

- Matthew 26:3-5
- Matthew 26:51-54

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 13:8 No one could enter the room behind the curtain except the **high priest**, because God lived there.
- 21:7 The Messiah who would come would be the perfect **high priest** who would offer himself as a perfect sacrifice to God.
- 38:3 The Jewish leaders, led by the **high priest**, paid Judas thirty silver coins to betray Jesus.
- 39:1 The soldiers led Jesus to the house of the **high priest** in order for the **high priest** to question him.
- 39:3 Finally, the **high priest** looked directly at Jesus and said, “Tell us, are you the Messiah, the Son of the living God?”
- 44:7 The next day, the Jewish leaders brought Peter and John to the **high priest** and the other religious leaders.
- 45:2 So the religious leaders arrested Stephen and brought him to the **high priest** and the other leaders of the Jews, where more false witnesses lied about Stephen.
- 46:1 The **high priest** gave Saul permission to go to the city of Damascus to arrest Christians there and bring them back to Jerusalem.
- 48:6 Jesus is the Great **High Priest**. Unlike other priests, he offered himself as the only sacrifice that could to take away the sin of all the people in the world. Jesus was the perfect **high priest** because he took the punishment for every sin that anyone has ever committed.

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H7218, H1419, H3548, G07480, G07490

## Psalms References:

110:intro

# Holy One

### Definition:

The term “Holy One” is a title in the Bible that almost always refers to God.

- In the Old Testament, this title often occurs in the phrase “Holy One of Israel.”
- In the New Testament, Jesus is also referred to as the “Holy One.”
- The term “holy one” is sometimes used in the Bible to refer to an angel.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The literal term is “the Holy” (with “One” being implied.) Many languages (like English) will translate this with the implied noun included (such as “One” or “God”).
- This term could also be translated as “God, who is holy” or “the Set Apart One.”
- The phrase “the Holy One of Israel” could be translated as “the Holy God whom Israel worships” or “the Holy One who rules Israel.”
- It is best to translate this term using the same word or phrase that is used to translate “holy.”

(See also: holy, God)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 2:20
- 2 Kings 19:22
- Acts 2:27
- Acts 3:13-14
- Isaiah 5:15-17
- Isaiah 41:14
- Luke 4:33-34

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2623, H0376, H6918, G00400, G37410

## Psalms References:

71:22; 78:41; 89:18

# holy place

### Definition:

In the Bible, the terms “the holy place” and “the most holy place” refer to the two parts of the tabernacle or temple building.

- The “holy place” was the first room, and it contained the altar of incense and the table with the special “bread of the presence” on it.
- The “most holy place” was the second, innermost room, and it contained the ark of the covenant.
- A thick, heavy curtain separated the outer room from the inner room.
- The high priest was the only one who was permitted to go into the most holy place.
- Sometimes “holy place” refers to both the building and courtyard areas of either the temple or tabernacle. It could also refer generally to any place that is set apart for God.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “holy place” could also be translated as “room set apart for God” or “special room for meeting God” or “place reserved for God.”
- The term “most holy place” could be translated as “room that is the most set apart for God” or “most special room for meeting God.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate the general expression “a holy place” could include “a consecrated place” or “a place that God has set apart” or “a place in the temple complex, which is holy” or “a courtyard of God’s holy temple.”

(See also: altar of incense, ark of the covenant, bread, consecrate, courtyard, curtain, holy, set apart, tabernacle, temple)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 6:16-18
- Acts 6:12-15
- Exodus 26:33
- Exodus 31:10-11
- Ezekiel 41:1
- Ezra 9:8-9
- Hebrews 9:1-2
- Leviticus 16:18
- Matthew 24:15-18

- **Revelation 15:5**

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H1964, H4720, H4725, H5116, H6918, H6944, G00400, G00400, G34850, G51170

## Psalms References:

24:3; 68:17; 68:24; 74:3; 74:7

# Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit

### Definition:

These terms all refer to the Holy Spirit, who is God. The one true God exists eternally as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit is also referred to as “the Spirit” and “Spirit of Yahweh” and “Spirit of truth.”
- Because the Holy Spirit is God, he is absolutely holy, infinitely pure, and morally perfect in all his nature and in everything he does.
- Along with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit was active in creating the world.
- When God’s Son, Jesus, returned to heaven, God sent the Holy Spirit to his people to lead them, teach them, comfort them, and enable them to do God’s will.
- The Holy Spirit guided Jesus and he guides those who believe in Jesus.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term could simply be translated with the words used to translate “holy” and “spirit.”
- Ways to translate this term could also include “Pure Spirit” or “Spirit who is Holy” or “God the Spirit.”

(See also: holy, spirit, God, Lord, God the Father, Son of God, gift)

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 10:10
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8
- Acts 8:17
- Galatians 5:25
- Genesis 1:1-2
- Isaiah 63:10
- Job 33:4
- Matthew 12:31
- Matthew 28:18-19
- Psalms 51:10-11

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 1:1 But **God’s Spirit** was there over the water.

- 24:8 When Jesus came up out of the water after being baptized, **the Spirit of God** appeared in the form of a dove and came down and rested on him.
- 26:1 After overcoming Satan's temptations, Jesus returned in the power of **the Holy Spirit** to the region of Galilee where he lived.
- 26:3 Jesus read, "God has given me **his Spirit** so that I can proclaim good news to the poor, freedom to captives, recovery of sight for the blind, and release to the oppressed."
- 42:10 "So go, make disciples of all people groups by baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and **the Holy Spirit** and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."
- 43:3 They were all filled with the **Holy Spirit** and they began to speak in other languages.
- 43:8 "And Jesus has sent the **Holy Spirit** just as he promised he would do. The **Holy Spirit** is causing the things that you are are now seeing and hearing."
- 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. Then he will also give you the gift of the **Holy Spirit**."
- 45:1 He (Stephen) had a good reputation and was full of the **Holy Spirit** and of wisdom.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3068, H6944, H7307, G00400, G41510

## Psalms References:

51:11; 139:7; 143:10

# holy, holiness, unholy, sacred

### Definition:

The terms “holy” and “holiness” refer to the character of God that is totally set apart and separated from everything that is sinful and imperfect.

- Only God is absolutely holy. He makes people and things holy.
- A person who is holy belongs to God and has been set apart for the purpose of serving God and bringing him glory.
- An object that God has declared to be holy is one that he has set apart for his glory and use, such as an altar that is for the purpose of offering sacrifices to him.
- People cannot approach him unless he allows them to, because he is holy and they are merely human beings, sinful and imperfect.
- In the Old Testament, God set apart the priests as holy for special service to him. They had to be ceremonially cleansed from sin in order to approach God.
- God also set apart as holy certain places and things that belonged to him or in which he revealed himself, such as his temple.

Literally, the term “unholy” means “not holy.” It describes someone or something that does not honor God.

- This word is used to describe someone who dishonors God by rebelling against him.
- A thing that is called “unholy” could be described as being common, profane or unclean. It does not belong to God.

The term “sacred” describes something that relates to worshiping God or to the pagan worship of false gods.

- In the Old Testament, the term “sacred” was often said to describe the stone pillars and other objects used in the worship of false gods. This could also be translated as “religious.”
- “Sacred songs” and “sacred music” refer to music that was sung or played for God’s glory. This could be translated as “music for worshiping Yahweh” or “songs that praise God.”
- The phrase “sacred duties” referred to the “religious duties” or “rituals” that a priest performed to lead people in worshiping God. It could also refer to the rituals performed by a pagan priest to worship a false god

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “holy” might include “set apart for God” or “belonging to God” or “completely pure” or “perfectly sinless” or “separated from sin.”

- To “make holy” is often translated as “sanctify” in English. It could also be translated as “set apart (someone) for God’s glory.”
- Ways to translate “unholy” could include “not holy” or “not belonging to God” or “not honoring to God” or “not godly.”
- In some contexts, “unholy” could be translated as “unclean.”

(See also: Holy Spirit, consecrate, sanctify, set apart)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 28:22
- 2 Kings 3:2
- Lamentations 4:1
- Ezekiel 20:18-20
- Matthew 7:6
- Mark 8:38
- Acts 7:33
- Acts 11:8
- Romans 1:2
- 2 Corinthians 12:3-5
- Colossians 1:22
- 1 Thessalonians 3:13
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7
- 2 Timothy 3:15

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 1:16 He (God) blessed the seventh day and made it **holy**, because on this day he rested from his work.
- 9:12 “You are standing on **holy** ground.”
- 13:2 “If you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my prized possession, a kingdom of priests, and a **holy** nation.”
- 13:5 “Always be sure to keep the Sabbath day **holy**.”
- 22:5 “So the baby will be **holy**, the Son of God.”
- 50:2 As we wait for Jesus to return, God wants us to live in a way that is **holy** and that honors him.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0430, H2455, H2623, H4676, H4720, H6918, H6922, H6942, H6944, H6948, G00370, G00380, G00400, G00400, G00410, G00420, G04620, G18590, G21500, G24120, G24130, G28390, G37410, G37420

## Psalms References:

2:6; 3:4; 5:7; 11:4; 15:1; 16:3; 20:6; 22:3; 28:2; 29:2; 30:4; 33:21; 34:9; 43:3; 46:4; 47:8; 48:1; 51:11; 60:6; 65:4; 68:5; 77:13; 78:54; 79:1; 87:1; 89:5; 89:7; 89:20; 89:35; 93:5; 96:9; 97:12; 98:1; 99:3; 99:5; 99:9; 102:19; 103:1; 105:3; 105:42; 106:16; 106:47; 108:7; 110:3; 111:9; 134:2; 138:2; 145:21

# honey, honeycomb

### Definition:

“Honey” is the sweet, sticky, edible substance that honeybees make out of flower nectar.

Honeycomb is the waxy frame where the bees store honey.

- Depending on the kind, honey can be yellowish or brownish in color.
- Honey can be found in the wild, such as in the hollow of a tree, or wherever bees make a nest. People also raise bees in hives in order to produce honey to eat or sell, but probably the honey mentioned in the Bible was wild honey.
- Three people that the Bible specifically mentions as eating wild honey were Jonathan, Samson, and John the Baptist.
- This term is often used figuratively to describe something that is sweet or very pleasurable. For example, God’s words and decrees are said to be “sweeter than honey.” (See also: Simile, Metaphor)
- Sometimes a person’s words are described as seeming sweet like honey, but instead result in deceiving and harming others.

(See also: John (the Baptist), Jonathan, Philistines, Samson)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 14:1-3
- Deuteronomy 6:3
- Exodus 13:3-5
- Joshua 5:6
- Proverbs 5:3

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1706, H3293, H3295, H5317, H6688, G31920

## Psalms References:

19:10; 81:16; 119:103

# honor

### Definition:

The terms “honor” and “to honor” refer to giving someone respect, esteem, or reverence.

- Honor is usually given to someone who is of higher status and importance, such as a king or God.
- God instructs Christians to honor others.
- Children are instructed to honor their parents in ways that include respecting them and obeying them.
- The terms “honor” and “glory” are often used together, especially when referring to Jesus. These may be two different ways of referring to the same thing.
- Ways of honoring God include thanking and praising him, and showing him respect by obeying him and living in a way that shows how great he is.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “honor” could include “respect” or “esteem” or “high regard.”
- The term to “honor” could be translated as to “show special respect to” or to “cause to be praised” or to “show high regard for” or to “highly value.”

(See also: dishonor, glory, praise)

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 2:8
- Acts 19:17
- John 4:44
- John 12:26
- Mark 6:4
- Matthew 15:6

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1420, H1921, H1922, H1923, H1926, H1927, H1935, H2082, H2142, H3366, H3367, H3368, H3372, H3373, H3374, H3444, H3513, H3519, H3655, H3678, H5081, H5375, H5457, H6213, H6286, H6437, H6942, H6944, H6965, H7236, H7613, H7812, H8597, H8416, G08200, G13910, G13920, G17840, G21510, G25700, G31700, G44110, G45860, G50910, G50920, G50930, G53990

## Psalms References:

7:5; 15:4; 22:23; 40:3; 40:4; 49:12; 49:20; 91:15; 112:9; 115:1; 149:9

# hope, hoped

### Definition:

Hope is strongly desiring something to happen. Hope can imply either certainty or uncertainty regarding a future event.

- In the Bible, the term "hope" also has the meaning of "trust," as in "my hope is in the Lord." It refers to a sure expectation of receiving what God has promised his people.
- Sometimes the ULT translates the term in the original language as "confidence." This happens mostly in the New Testament in situations where people who believe in Jesus as their Savior have the assurance (or confidence or hope) of receiving what God has promised.
- To have "no hope" means to have no expectation of something good happening. It means that it is actually very certain that it will not happen.

### Translation Suggestions:

- In some contexts, the term to "hope" could also be translated as to "wish" or to "desire" or to "expect."
- The expression "nothing to hope for" could be translated as "nothing to trust in" or "no expectation of anything good"
- To "have no hope" could be translated as "have no expectation of anything good" or "have no security" or "be sure that nothing good will happen."
- The expression "have set your hopes on" could also be translated as "have put your confidence in" or "have been trusting in."
- The phrase "I find hope in your Word" could also be translated as "I am confident that your Word is true" or "Your Word helps me trust in you" or "When I obey your Word, I am certain to be blessed."
- Phrases such as "hope in" God could also be translated a, "trust in God" or "know for sure that God will do what he has promised" or "be certain that God is faithful."

(See also: bless, confidence, good, obey, trust, word of God)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 29:14-15
- 1 Thessalonians 2:19
- Acts 24:14-16
- Acts 26:6
- Acts 27:20
- Colossians 1:5

- Job 11:20

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0982, H0983, H0986, H2620, H2976, H3175, H3176, H3689, H4009, H4268, H4723, H7663, H7664, H8431, H8615, G00910, G05600, G16790, G16800, G20700

## Psalms References:

9:18; 33:18; 33:22; 39:7; 41:7; 62:5; 62:10; 71:5; 71:14; 119:49; 119:74; 119:116; 119:166; 130:5; 130:7; 131:3; 146:5; 147:11

# horn, horned

**Definition:**

Horns are permanent, hard, pointed growths on the heads of many types of animals, including cattle, sheep, goats, and deer.

- The horn of a ram (male sheep) was made into a musical instrument called a “ram’s horn” or “shofar,” which was blown for special events such as religious festivals.
- This term should be translated with a word that is different from the word that refers to a trumpet.
- God told the Israelites to make a horn-shaped projection on each of the four corners of the incense and brazen altars. Although these projections were called “horns,” they were not actually animal horns.
- The term “horn” was sometimes used to refer to a “flask” that was shaped like a horn and was used for holding water or oil. A flask of oil was used for anointing a king, as Samuel did with David.

(See also: authority, cow, deer, goat, power, royal, sheep, trumpet)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 15:27-28
- 1 Kings 1:39
- 2 Samuel 22:3
- Jeremiah 17:1
- Psalms 22:21

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H3104, H7160, H7161, H7162, H7782, G27680

## Psalms References:

18:2; 22:21; 69:31; 75:4; 75:5; 75:10; 89:17; 89:24; 92:10; 112:9; 118:27; 132:17; 148:14

# horror, horrible, object of horror

**Definition:**

The term “horror” refers to a very intense feeling of fear or terror. The person who is feeling horror is said to be “horrified.”

- Horror is more dramatic and intense than ordinary fear.
- Usually when someone is horrified they are also in shock or stunned.

(See also: fear, terror)

**Bible References:**

- Deuteronomy 28:37
- Ezekiel 23:33
- Jeremiah 2:12-13
- Job 21:4-6
- Psalms 55:5

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1091, H1763, H2189, H4032, H4923, H5892, H6343, H6427, H7588, H8047, H8074, H8175, H8178, H8186

## Psalms References:

40:2; 55:5

# horse, warhorse, horseback, stallion, steed, mare

### Definition:

A horse is a large, four-legged animal that in Bible times was mostly used for war and for transporting people. A stallion is a male horse and a mare is a female horse. “Steed” is a poetic word referring to a horse that is powerful or fast.

- Some horses were used to pull carts or chariots, while others were used to carry individual riders.
- In the Bible, horses were considered to be valuable possessions and a measure of wealth, mainly because of their use in war. For example, part of King Solomon’s great wealth was the thousands of horses and chariots that he had.
- Animals that are similar to the horse are the donkey and the mule.
- Horses often wear a bit and bridle on their heads so they can be guided.

(See also: chariot, donkey, Solomon)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:4
- 2 Kings 2:11
- Exodus 14:23-25
- Ezekiel 23:5-7
- Zechariah 6:8

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0047, H5483, H5484, H6571, H7409, G24620

## Psalms References:

20:7; 32:9; 33:17; 76:6; 147:10

# hour, moment

### Definition:

The term “hour” is often used in the Bible to tell what time of day a certain event took place. It is also used figuratively to mean “time” or “moment.”

- The Jews counted daylight hours starting at sunrise (around 6 AM). For example, “the ninth hour” meant “around three in the afternoon.”
- Nighttime hours were counted starting at sunset (around 6 PM). For example, “the third hour of the night” meant “around nine in the evening” in our present-day system.
- Since references to time in the Bible will not correspond exactly to the present-day time system, phrases such as “around nine” or “about six o’clock” could be used.
- Some translations might add phrases like “in the evening” or “in the morning” or “in the afternoon” to make it clear what time of day is being talked about.
- The phrase, “in that hour” could be translated as “at that time” or “in that moment.”
- Referring to Jesus, the expression “his hour had come” could be translated as “the time had come for him to” or “the appointed time for him had come.”

### Bible References:

- Acts 2:15
- John 4:51-52
- Luke 23:44
- Matthew 20:3

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H8160, G56100

## Psalms References:

2:12; 30:5; 73:19

# house

### Definition:

The term “house” refers to a small building, shelter, or tent, usually the place where a family sleeps.

- When referring to a building where people live and sleep the term “house” could be translated as “dwelling place” or “dwelling structure” or with another term that expresses the meaning.

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1004, H1005, H1035, H1397, G36140, G36240

## Psalms References:

49:11; 50:9; 52:front; 59:front; 68:6; 68:12; 84:3; 104:17; 127:1; 132:3

# house of David

**Definition:**

The expression “house of David” refers to the family or descendants of King David.

- This could also be translated as “descendants of David” or “family of David” or “King David’s clan.”
- Because Jesus was descended from David, he was part of the “house of David.”
- Sometimes “house of David” or “household of David” refers to the people in David’s family who were still living.
- Other times this term is more general and refers to all his descendants, including those who had already died.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: David, descendant, house, Jesus, king)

**Bible References:**

- 2 Chronicles 10:19
- 2 Samuel 3:6
- Luke 1:69-71
- Psalms 122:5
- Zechariah 12:7

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1004, H1732, G11380, G36240

## Psalms References:

122:5

# house of God, your house, his house, Yahweh's house, a house for my name, the house for my name, the house, a house, a house of Yahweh

**Short Title: house of God, Yahweh's house, house of Yahweh**

**Definition:**

In the Bible, the phrases "house of God" (God's house) and "house of Yahweh (Yahweh's house)" refer to a place where God is worshiped.

- This term is also used more specifically to refer to the tabernacle or the temple.
- The terms "house of God" and "house of Yahweh" refer to the tabernacle or temple. These expressions can also refer generally to a central place where Yahweh was worshipped.
- The Bible often uses the phrases "your house" and "his house" to refer to the temple of Yahweh.
- The phrases "the house for my name," "a house for my name," and "a house of Yahweh" all refer to the temple of Yahweh.
- In some contexts, such as in 1 Chronicles 17:25 and 29:16, the phrase "a house" refers to the temple of Yahweh.
- In some contexts, such as in 1 Kings 8:44 and 2 Chronicles 6:4, the phrase "the house" refers to the temple of Yahweh.

**Translation Suggestions:**

- When referring to a place of worship, this term could be translated as "a house for worshiping God" or "a place for worshiping God."
- If it is referring to the temple or tabernacle, this could be translated as "the temple (or tabernacle) where God is worshiped" (or "where God is present" or "where God meets with his people").
- The word "house" may be important to use in the translation in order to communicate that God "dwells" there, that is, his spirit is in that place to meet with his people and to be worshiped by them.
- The phrase "house of Yahweh" could be translated as "Yahweh's temple" or "place where Yahweh is worshiped" or "place where Yahweh meets with his people" or "where Yahweh dwells." The phrase "house of God" could be translated in a similar way.

(See also: people of God, tabernacle, temple)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Timothy 3:14-15

- 2 Chronicles 23:8-9
- Ezra 5:13
- Genesis 28:17
- Judges 18:30-31
- Mark 2:26
- Matthew 12:4

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0426, H0430, H1004, H1005, H3068, G23160, G36240

## Psalms References:

23:6; 26:8; 27:4; 36:8; 42:4; 52:8; 55:14; 65:4; 66:13; 69:9; 84:10; 92:13; 116:19; 118:26; 122:1; 122:9; 134:1; 135:2

# house, household, house of Israel, house of David

### Definition:

The term “house,” in this sense, refers to “descendants.”

- The term “house,” in this sense, means “family” or “descendants,” and refers to all the people related to or descended from a particular person. For example, the phrase “house of David” refers to all the descendants of King David.
- The phrase “house of Israel” can refer generally to the entire nation of Israel or more specifically to the tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel.

### Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, “house” could be translated as “household” or “people” or “family” or “descendants.”
- The phrase “house of David” could be translated as “clan of David” or “family of David” or “descendants of David.” Related expressions could be translated in a similar way.
- Different ways to translate “house of Israel” could include “people of Israel” or “Israel’s descendants” or “Israelites.”

(See also: descendant, house of David, **kingdom of Israel**)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s:

## Psalms References:

98:3; 114:1; 115:10; 115:12; 118:3; 135:19; 135:20

# household, house

### Definition:

The term “household” refers to all the people who live together in a house, including family members and all their servants.

- Used in this sense, the term “house” means “household” and refers to all the people who live together in one house or in a multi-structure home compound (whether buildings or tents), including family members and all their servants.
- Managing a household would have involved directing the servants and also taking care of the property.

### Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, “house” could be translated as “household” or “family.”
- Depending on the context, the phrase “your household” could be translated as “those who live in your house” or “your family.”

(See also: house dwelling structure, house descendants nation)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1004, H1397, G36090, G36095, G36140, G36150, G36240

## Psalms References:

45:10; 49:16; 101:2; 105:21; 112:3; 113:9; 128:3

# humble, humbled, humility

### Definition:

The term “humble” describes a person who does not think of himself as better than others. He is not proud or arrogant. Humility is the quality of being humble.

- To be humble before God means to understand one’s weakness and imperfection in comparison with his greatness, wisdom and perfection.
- When a person humbles himself, he puts himself in a position of lower importance.
- Humility is caring about the needs of others more than one’s own needs.
- Humility also means serving with a modest attitude when using one’s gifts and abilities.
- The phrase “be humble” could be translated as “do not be prideful.”
- “Humble yourself before God” could be translated as “Submit your will to God, recognizing his greatness.”

(See also: proud)

### Bible References:

- James 1:21
- James 3:13
- James 4:10
- Luke 14:11
- Luke 18:14
- Matthew 18:4
- Matthew 23:12

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 17:2 David was a **humble** and righteous man who trusted and obeyed God.
- 34:10 “God will **humble** everyone who is proud, and he will lift up whoever **humbles** himself.”

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1792, H3665, H6031, H6035, H6038, H6041, H6800, H6819, H7511, H7807, H7812, H8213, H8214, H8215, H8217, H8467, G08580, G42360, G42390, G42400, G50110, G50120, G50130, G53910

## Psalms References:

18:35; 25:9; 34:2; 45:4; 68:30; 76:9; 106:42; 107:12; 109:16; 119:22; 119:75; 136:23; 149:4

# I am Yahweh

**Definition:**

The statement “I am Yahweh” is used to mark out a command, historical event, promise, or prophecy as something that is particularly important, as something that happened by Yahweh’s power, or as something that will happen regardless of circumstances. This certainty is based on Yahweh’s character and strength as the all-powerful ruler over all things. At the same time, the statement is used to give Yahweh’s people understanding of who he is and what his name means. By reflecting on the command, historical event, promise, or prophecy so marked, the listener will understand more of who Yahweh is. **Leviticus 11:44-45** makes it clear that by adhering to the holiness laws that follow, the people will become holy like Yahweh. There are four primary ways or forms in which this statement occurs:

1. As “I am Yahweh” or “I am Yahweh your God”
2. As the statement “[someone] will know that I am Yahweh” (often followed by “when [I do something]”). This is the most common use.
3. Followed by an example of what he is going to do or has done that validates his character and power
4. Followed by an attribute

These uses can be combined, such as in **Leviticus 19:2**

- **19:36**, and **20:24**.

**Translation Suggestions:**

- As much as possible, translate this statement fairly literally. This will probably not be difficult for the second and third forms above.
- **Ezekiel 20:5** and **Hebrews 6:13** indicate that in at least some instances (**Genesis 28:13**
- **Exodus 6:2**
- **6:6**

- 6:8, etc.), “I am Yahweh” should be viewed as an oath formula. In these instances (primarily form one above) you may need to include an explanatory comment in your translation.
    - If Yahweh is making a promise, you may need to make this explicit, using an example such as: “I am Yahweh who swears to you.”
    - In Leviticus especially, the statement appears connected to many commands and you may need to make this explicit with a statement, such as: “I am Yahweh who commands this.” You could also use a slightly longer statement, such as: “I am Yahweh, and I bind you to this with an oath.” However, a statement this long may be tedious, so you could consider only using it the first (and possibly the last) time that “I am Yahweh” occurs in a series.
- Some languages will use “the Lord” in place of Yahweh; see Yahweh for more.

(See also: Lord

- Lord Yahweh
- Yahweh)

**Bible References:**

- Exodus 6:2
- Exodus 6:6
- Exodus 6:8
- Exodus 12:12
- Leviticus 18-26 throughout
- Numbers 3:13
- Exodus 7:17
- Exodus 8:18
- 14:4
- 1 Kings 20:13
- 1 Kings 20:28
- Ezekiel 6:7
- Ezekiel 6:13
- Ezekiel 12:15
- Ezekiel 28:22
- Exodus 6:6
- Exodus 20:2
- Leviticus 20:24
- Ezekiel 6:7 throughout

- **Ezekiel 6:13**
- **Ezekiel 12:15**
- **Ezekiel 17:24**
- **20:5-7**
- **Hosea 12:10**
- **Hosea 13:4**
- **Zechariah 10:6**
- Psalm 81:11
- **Isaiah 44:24**
- **Exodus 15:26**
- **Exodus 20:5**
- **Deuteronomy 5:9**
- **Isaiah 43:3**
- **Isaiah 43:15**
- **Jeremiah 9:23**

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0589, H3068, H3069, H3070, H3071, H3072, H3073, H3074, G06380, G33780

## Psalms References:

81:10

# image, carved image, cast metal image, figure, carved figure, statue

### Definition:

These terms are all used to refer to idols that have been made for worshiping a false god. In the context of worshiping idols, the term “image” is a shortened form of “carved image.”

- A “carved image” or “carved figure” is a wooden object that has been made to look like an animal, person, or thing.
- A “cast metal figure” is an object or statue created by melting metal and pouring it into a mold that is in the shape of an object, animal, or person.
- These wooden and metal objects were used in the worship of false gods.
- The term “image” when referring to an idol could either refer to a wooden or metal idol.

### Translation Suggestions:

- When referring to an idol, the term “image” could also be translated as “statue” or “engraved idol” or “carved religious object.”
- It may be more clear in some languages to always use a descriptive word with this term, such as “carved image” or “cast metal figure,” even in places where only the term “image” or “figure” is in the original text.
- Make sure it is clear that this term is different than the term used to refer to being in the image of God.

(See also: false god, God, false god, image of God)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 14:9-10
- Acts 7:43
- Isaiah 21:8-9
- Matthew 22:21
- Romans 1:23

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0457, H1544, H2553, H4541, H4676, H4853, H4906, H5257, H5262, H5566, H6091, H6456, H6459, H6754, H6755, H6816, H8403, H8544, H8655, G15040, G51790

## Psalms References:

78:58; 97:7; 106:19

# incense

**Definition:**

The term “incense” refers to a mixture of fragrant spices that is burned to produce smoke that has a pleasant smell.

- God told the Israelites to burn incense as an offering to him.
- The incense had to be made by mixing equal amounts of five specific spices exactly as God directed. This was a sacred incense, so they were not allowed to use it for any other purpose.
- The “altar of incense” was a special altar that was only used for burning incense.
- The incense was offered at least four times a day, at each hour of prayer. It was also offered every time a burnt offering was made.
- The burning of incense represents prayer and worship rising up to God from his people.
- Other ways to translate “incense” could include “fragrant spices” or “good-smelling plants.”

(See also: **altar of incense**, burnt offering, **frankincense**)

**Bible References:**

- **1 Kings 3:1-3**
- **2 Chronicles 13:10-11**
- **2 Kings 14:4**
- **Exodus 25:3-7**
- **Luke 1:10**

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H2553, H3828, H4196, H4289, H5208, H6988, H6999, H7002, H7004, H7381, G23680, G23690, G23700, G23790, G30310

## Psalms References:

141:2

# inherit, inheritance, heir

### Definition:

The term “inherit” refers to receiving something valuable from a parent after a parent dies. The term can also refer to receiving something valuable from some other person because of a special relationship with that person. An “inheritance” is the things that are received, and an “heir” is a person who receives an inheritance.

- A physical inheritance that is received may be money, land, or other kinds of property.
- God promised Abraham and his descendants that they would inherit the land of Canaan, that it would belong to them forever.

### Translation Suggestions:

- As always, consider first whether there are already terms in the target language for the concept of an heir or an inheritance, and use those terms.
- Depending on the context, other ways that the term “inherit” could be translated might include “receive” or “possess” or “come into possession of.”
- Ways to translate “inheritance” could include “promised gift” or “secure possession.”
- The term “heir” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “privileged child who receives the father’s possessions.”
- The term “heritage” could be translated as “inherited blessings.”

(See also: heir, Canaan, Promised Land, possess)

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 6:9
- 1 Peter 1:4
- 2 Samuel 21:3
- Acts 7:4-5
- Deuteronomy 20:16
- Galatians 5:21
- Genesis 15:7
- Hebrews 9:15
- Jeremiah 2:7
- Luke 15:11
- Matthew 19:29

- Psalm 79:1

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 4:6 When Abram arrived in Canaan God said, “Look all around you. I will give to you and your descendants all the land that you can see as an **inheritance**.”
- 27:1 One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, “Teacher, what must I do to **inherit** eternal life?”
- 35:3 “There was a man who had two sons. The younger son told his father, ‘Father, I want my **inheritance** now!’ So the father divided his property between the two sons.”

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H2490, H2506, H3423, H3425, H4181, H5157, H5159, G28160, G28170, G28190, G28200

## Psalms References:

2:8; 16:5; 16:6; 17:14; 25:13; 28:9; 33:12; 37:9; 37:11; 37:18; 37:22; 37:29; 47:4; 49:10; 61:5; 68:9; 69:36; 74:2; 78:55; 78:62; 78:71; 79:1; 82:8; 94:5; 94:14; 105:11; 106:5; 106:40; 111:6; 119:111; 127:3; 135:12; 136:21; 136:22

# iniquity

### Definition:

The term “iniquity” is a word that is very similar in meaning to the term “sin,” but may more specifically refer to conscious acts of wrongdoing or great wickedness.

- The word “iniquity” literally means a twisting or distorting (of the law). It refers to major injustice.
- Iniquity could be described as deliberate, harmful actions against other people.
- Other definitions of iniquity include “perversity” and “depravity,” which are both words that describe conditions of terrible sin.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “iniquity” could be translated as “wickedness” or “perverse actions” or “harmful acts.”
- Often, “iniquity” occurs in the same text as the word “sin” and “transgression” so it is important to have different ways of translating these terms.

(See also: sin, transgress, trespass)

### Bible References:

- Daniel 9:13
- Exodus 34:5-7
- Genesis 15:14-16
- Genesis 44:16
- Habakkuk 2:12
- Matthew 13:41
- Matthew 23:27-28
- Micah 3:10

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0205, H1942, H5753, H5758, H5766, H5771, H5932, H5999, H7562, G00920, G00930, G04580, G38920, G41890

## Psalms References:

5:5; 6:8; 14:4; 18:23; 25:11; 28:3; 31:10; 36:12; 38:4; 40:12; 49:5; 51:2; 51:5; 51:9; 53:1; 53:4; 55:10; 56:7; 59:2; 59:4; 59:5; 64:2; 64:6; 65:3; 66:18; 69:27; 78:38; 79:8; 85:2; 89:32; 90:8; 94:23; 103:10; 119:133; 125:5

# innocent

### Definition:

The term “innocent” means to not be guilty of a crime or other wrongdoing. It can also refer more generally to people who are not involved in evil things.

- A person accused of doing something wrong is innocent if he has not committed that wrong.
- Sometimes the term “innocent” is used to refer to people who have done nothing wrong to deserve the bad treatment they are receiving, as in an enemy army attacking “innocent people.”
- In the Bible, “blood” can represent “killing,” so “innocent blood” refers to “killing people who did not deserve to die.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- In most contexts, the term “innocent” can be translated as “not guilty” or “not responsible” or “not to blame” for something.
- When referring in general to innocent people, this term could be translated as “who have done nothing wrong” or “who are not involved in evil.”
- “To shed innocent blood” can be translated as “to kill people who did not deserve to die.”

(See also: guilt)

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 4:4
- 1 Samuel 19:5
- Acts 20:26
- Exodus 23:7
- Jeremiah 22:17
- Job 9:23
- Romans 16:18

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 8:6 After two years, Joseph was still in prison, even though he was **innocent**.
- 40:4 One of them mocked Jesus, but the other said, “Do you have no fear of God? We are guilty, but this man is **innocent**.”

- 40:8 When the soldier guarding Jesus saw everything that happened, he said, “Certainly, this man was **innocent**. He was the Son of God.”

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H2136, H2600, H2643, H5352, H5355, H5356, G01210

## Psalms References:

10:8; 15:5; 17:intro; 19:13; 24:4; 64:4; 94:21; 106:38

# inquire, inquiry

### Definition:

The term “inquire” means to ask someone for information. The expression “inquire of” is often used to refer to asking God for wisdom or help.

- The Old Testament records several instances where people inquired of God.
- The word can also be used of a king or government official making a search through official written records.
- Depending on the context, “inquire” could be translated as “ask” or “ask for information.”
- The expression “inquire of Yahweh” could be translated as “ask Yahweh for guidance” or “ask Yahweh what to do.”
- To “inquire after” something could be translated as “ask questions about” or “ask for information about.”
- When Yahweh says “I will not be inquired of by you,” this could be translated as “I will not allow you to ask me for information” or “you will not be permitted to seek help from me.”

### Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 19:18
- Ezekiel 20:1
- Ezekiel 20:30-32
- Ezra 7:14
- Job 10:7

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1240, H1245, H1875, G18300

## Psalms References:

27:4

# instruct, instruction, instructor

### Definition:

The terms “instruct” and “instruction” refer to giving specific directions about what to do.

- To “give instructions” means to tell someone specifically what he is supposed to do.
- When Jesus gave the disciples the bread and fish to distribute to the people, he gave them specific instructions about how to do it.
- Depending on the context, the term “instruct” could also be translated as “tell” or “direct” or “teach” or “give instructions to.”
- The term “instructions” could be translated as “directions” or “explanations” or “what he has told you to do.”
- When God gives instructions, this term is sometimes translated as “commands” or “orders.”

(See also: command, decree, teach)

### Bible References:

- Exodus 14:4
- Genesis 26:5
- Hebrews 11:22
- Matthew 10:5
- Matthew 11:1
- Proverbs 1:30

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0241, H0376, H0559, H0631, H1004, H1696, H1697, H3256, H3289, H3384, H4148, H4156, H4687, H4931, H4941, H6098, H6310, H6490, H6680, H7919, H8451, G12560, G12990, G13190, G13210, G13780, G17810, G17850, G27270, G27530, G35590, G35600, G38110, G38520, G38530, G42640, G43670, G48220

## Psalms References:

1:2; 16:7; 32:8; 34:11; 50:17; 51:6; 90:12; 94:10; 94:12; 106:13; 119:26; 119:33; 119:108; 119:135

# integrity

### Definition:

The term “integrity” refers to being honest, with strong moral principles and behavior is said to have integrity.

- Having integrity also means choosing to do what is honest and right even when nobody else is watching.
- Certain characters in the Bible, such as Joseph and Daniel, showed integrity when they refused to do evil and chose to obey God.
- The book of Proverbs says that it is better to be poor and have integrity than to be rich and corrupt or dishonest.

### Translation Suggestions

- The term “integrity” could also be translated as “honesty” or “moral uprightness” or “behaving truthfully” or “acting in a trustworthy, honest manner.”

(See also: Daniel, Joseph (OT))

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 9:4
- Job 2:3
- Job 4:6
- Proverbs 10:8-9
- Psalm 26:1-3

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3476, H6664, H6666, H8535, H8537, H8537, H8538, H8549, G45870

## Psalms References:

7:8; 25:21; 26:1; 26:11; 37:37; 41:12; 78:72; 101:2; 101:6

# iron

### Definition:

Iron is a hard, slightly shiny metal that is used to make many things.

- In Bible times, iron was used to make coins, chains, furniture, tools, weapons, chariots, gates, nails and other things.
- Iron is a very strong metal.
- If your culture does not have iron you could translate this term with a general expression which describes it such as “hard metal” or “strong metal.”
- If your culture does not have iron you could translate the phrase “an iron tool” as “a tool made of hard metal” or “a strong metal tool.”

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: armor)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1270

## Psalms References:

2:9; 105:18; 107:10; 107:16; 149:8

# Isaac

**Definition:**

Isaac was the only son of Abraham and Sarah. God had promised to give them a son even though they were very old.

- The name "Isaac" means "he laughs." When God told Abraham that Sarah would give birth to a son, Abraham laughed because they were both very old. Some time later, Sarah also laughed when she heard this news.
- But God fulfilled his promise and Isaac was born to Abraham and Sarah in their old age.
- God told Abraham that the covenant he had made with Abraham would also be for Isaac and his descendants forever.
- When Isaac was a youth, God tested Abraham's faith by commanding him to sacrifice Isaac.
- Isaac's son Jacob had twelve sons whose descendants later became the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Abraham, descendant, eternity, fulfill, Jacob, Sarah, twelve tribes of Israel)

**Bible References:**

- Galatians 4:28-29
- Genesis 25:9-11
- Genesis 25:19
- Genesis 26:1
- Genesis 26:8
- Genesis 28:1-2
- Genesis 31:18
- Matthew 8:11-13
- Matthew 22:32

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 5:4 "Your wife, Sarai, will have a son—he will be the son of promise. Name him **Isaac**."

- 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."
- 5:9 God had provided the ram to be the sacrifice instead of **Isaac**.
- 6:1 When Abraham was very old and his son, **Isaac**, had grown to be a man, Abraham sent one of his servants back to the land where his relatives lived to find a wife for his son, **Isaac.**
- 6:5 **Isaac** prayed for Rebekah, and God allowed her to get pregnant with twins.
- 7:10 Then **Isaac** died, and Jacob and Esau buried him. The covenant promises God had promised to Abraham and then to **Isaac** now passed on to Jacob.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3327, H3446, G24640

## Psalms References:

105:9

# Ishmael, Ishmaelite

### Definition:

Ishmael was the son of Abraham and the Egyptian slave Hagar. There were several other men in the Old Testament named Ishmael.

- The name "Ishmael" means "God hears."
- God promised to bless Abraham's son Ishmael, but he was not the son with whom God had promised to establish his covenant.
- God protected Hagar and Ishmael when they were sent into the desert.
- While Ishmael was living in the desert of Paran, he married an Egyptian woman.
- Ishmael son of Nethaniah was an army officer from Judah who led a group of men to kill a governor who had been appointed by the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar.
- There were also four other men named Ishmael in the Old Testament.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Abraham, Babylon, covenant, desert, Egypt, Hagar, Isaac, Nebuchadnezzar, Paran, Sarah)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 1:28-31
- 2 Chronicles 23:1
- Genesis 16:12
- Genesis 25:9-11
- Genesis 25:16
- Genesis 37:25-26

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 5:2 So Abram married Hagar. Hagar had a baby boy, and Abram named him **Ishmael**.
- 5:4 "I will make **Ishmael** a great nation, too, but my covenant will be with Isaac."

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3458, H3459

## Psalms References:

83:6

# Israel, Israelites

### Definition:

The term “Israel” is the name that God gave to Jacob. Often it refers to the nation that is descended from him.

- The name Israel probably means “He struggles with God.”
- The descendants of Jacob became known as the “sons of Israel” or the “people of Israel” or the “nation of Israel” or the “Israelites.”
- God formed his covenant with the people of Israel. They were his chosen people.
- The nation of Israel consisted of twelve tribes.
- Soon after King Solomon died, Israel was divided into two kingdoms: the southern kingdom, called “Judah,” and the northern kingdom, called “Israel.”
- Often the term “Israel” can be translated as “the people of Israel” or “the nation of Israel,” depending on the context.

(See also: Jacob, kingdom of Israel, Judah, nation, twelve tribes of Israel)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 10:1
- 1 Kings 8:2
- Acts 2:36
- Acts 7:24
- Acts 13:23
- John 1:49-51
- Luke 24:21
- Mark 12:29
- Matthew 2:6
- Matthew 27:9
- Philippians 3:4-5

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 8:15 The descendants of the twelve sons became the twelve tribes of **Israel**.
- 9:3 The Egyptians forced the **Israelites** to build many buildings and even whole cities.
- 9:5 A certain **Israelite** woman gave birth to a baby boy.

- 10:1 They said, “This is what the God of **Israel** says, ‘Let my people go!’”
- 14:12 But despite all this, the people of __Israel __ complained and grumbled against God and against Moses.
- 15:9 God fought for **Israel** that day. He caused the Amorites to be confused and he sent large hailstones that killed many of the Amorites.
- 15:12 After this battle, God gave each tribe of __Israel __ its own section of the Promised Land. Then God gave **Israel** peace along all its borders.
- 16:16 So God punished __Israel __ again for worshiping idols.
- 43:6 “Men of **Israel**, Jesus was a man who did many mighty signs and wonders by the power of God, as you have seen and already know.”

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H3478, H3479, H3481, H3482, G09350, G24740, G24750

## Psalms References:

14:7; 22:3; 22:23; 25:22; 41:13; 50:7; 53:6; 59:5; 68:8; 68:26; 68:34; 68:35; 69:6; 71:22; 72:18; 73:1; 76:1; 78:5; 78:21; 78:31; 78:41; 78:55; 78:59; 78:71; 80:1; 81:4; 81:8; 81:11; 81:13; 83:4; 89:18; 98:3; 103:7; 105:10; 105:23; 106:48; 114:1; 114:2; 115:9; 118:2; 121:4; 122:4; 124:1; 125:5; 128:6; 129:1; 130:7; 130:8; 131:3; 135:4; 135:12; 136:11; 136:14; 136:22; 147:2; 147:19; 148:14; 149:2

# Jacob, Israel

**Definition:**

Jacob was the younger twin son of Isaac by Rebekah. God changed his name to "Israel." His descendants became the nation of Israel.

- Jacob is the last of the three patriarchs of the Israelite nation: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The descendants of Jacob's twelve sons became the twelve tribes of Israel.
- The name Jacob is similar to the Hebrew word meaning "heel." As Jacob was being born, he was holding onto the heel of his twin brother Esau. In the Old Testament times, the heel was a body part associated both with attack and with the rear part of a person's body. The Hebrew name Jacob was probably associated with the idea of attacking someone from behind.
- Many years later, God changed Jacob's name to "Israel," which probably means "He struggles with God."
- The name Jacob is often used to represent the nation of Israel.
- Jacob married Laban's two daughters, Leah and Rachel, as well as each of their servants, Zilpah and Bilhah. These four women mothered the twelve sons who became the ancestral fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- In the New Testament, a different man named Jacob is listed as being Joseph's father in Matthew's genealogy.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Israel, twelve tribes of Israel, Leah, Rachel, Zilpah, Bilhah, deceive, Esau, Isaac, Rebekah, Laban)

**Bible References:**

- Acts 7:11
- Acts 7:46
- Genesis 25:26
- Genesis 29:1-3
- Genesis 32:1-2
- John 4:4-5
- Matthew 8:11-13
- Matthew 22:32

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 7:1 As the boys grew up, Rebekah loved **Jacob**, but Isaac loved Esau. **Jacob** loved to stay at home, but Esau loved to hunt.
- 7:7 **Jacob** lived there for many years, and during that time he married and had twelve sons and a daughter. God made him very wealthy.
- 7:8 After twenty years away from his home in Canaan, **Jacob** returned there with his family, his servants, and all his herds of animals.
- 7:10 The covenant promises God had promised to Abraham and then to Isaac now passed on to **Jacob**.
- 8:1 Many years later, when **Jacob** was an old man, he sent his favorite son, Joseph, to check on his brothers who were taking care of the herds.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3290, G23840

## Psalms References:

14:7; 20:1; 22:23; 24:6; 44:4; 46:7; 46:11; 47:4; 53:6; 59:13; 75:9; 76:6; 77:15; 78:5; 78:21; 78:71; 79:7; 81:1; 81:4; 84:8; 85:1; 87:2; 94:7; 99:4; 105:6; 105:10; 105:23; 114:1; 114:7; 132:2; 132:5; 135:4; 146:5; 147:19

# jealous, jealousy

### Definition:

The terms “jealous” and “jealousy” in this sense refer to a strong desire to protect the purity of a relationship. They can also refer to a strong desire to keep possession of something or someone (See Numbers 11:29).

- The term “jealous” is used to describe the angry feeling that a person has toward their spouse when they suspect that their spouse has been unfaithful in their marriage (See Numbers 5:14).
- The terms “jealous” and “jealousy” are often used to describe God’s strong desire that his covenant people love him, remain spiritually faithful to him, and keep him foremost in their affections.
- When used in the Bible, these terms often refer to God’s strong desire for his people to remain pure and unstained by sin.
- God is “jealous” for his glory, desiring that he be treated with honor and reverence.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “jealous” could include “strong protective desire” or “possessive desire.”
- The term “jealousy” could be translated as “strong protective feeling” or “possessive feeling.”
- When talking about God, make sure the translation of these terms does not give a negative meaning of being resentful or envious of someone else.

(See also: envy)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7065, H7067, H7068, H7072, G22050, G22060, G38630

## Psalms References:

78:58; 79:5

# Jerusalem

**Definition:**

Jerusalem was originally an ancient Canaanite city that later became the most important city in Israel. It is located about 34 kilometers west of the Salt Sea and just north of Bethlehem. It is still the capital city of Israel today.

- The name "Jerusalem" is first mentioned in the book of Joshua. Other Old Testament names for this city include "Salem" "city of Jebus," and "Zion." Both "Jerusalem" and "Salem," have the root meaning of "peace."
- Jerusalem was originally a Jebusite fortress called "Zion" which King David captured and made into his capital city.
- It was in Jerusalem that David's son Solomon built the first temple in Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah, which was the mountain where Abraham had offered his son Isaac to God. The temple was rebuilt there after it was destroyed by the Babylonians.
- Because the temple was in Jerusalem, the major Jewish festivals were celebrated there.
- People normally referred to going "up" to Jerusalem since it is located in the mountains.

(See also: Babylon, Christ, David, **Jebusites**, **Jesus**, Solomon, temple, Zion)

**Bible References:**

- **Galatians 4:26-27**
- **John 2:13**
- **Luke 4:9-11**
- **Luke 13:5**
- **Mark 3:7-8**
- **Mark 3:20-22**
- **Matthew 3:6**
- **Matthew 4:23-25**
- **Matthew 20:17**

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **17:5** David conquered **Jerusalem** and made it his capital city.
- **18:2** In **Jerusalem**, Solomon built the Temple for which his father David had planned and gathered materials.

- 20:7 They (Babylonians) captured the city of **Jerusalem**, destroyed the Temple, and took away all the treasures of the city and the Temple.
- 20:12 So, after seventy years in exile, a small group of Jews returned to the city of **Jerusalem** in Judah.
- 38:1 About three years after Jesus first began preaching and teaching publicly, Jesus told his disciples that he wanted to celebrate this Passover with them in **Jerusalem**, and that he would be killed there.
- 38:2 After Jesus and the disciples arrived in **Jerusalem**, Judas went to the Jewish leaders and offered to betray Jesus to them in exchange for money.
- 42:8 "It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to receive forgiveness for their sins. They will do this starting in **Jerusalem**, and then go to all people groups everywhere."
- 42:11 Forty days after Jesus rose from the dead, he told his disciples, "Stay in **Jerusalem** until you receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you."

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3389, H3390, G24140, G24150, G24190

## Psalms References:

51:18; 68:29; 79:1; 79:3; 102:21; 116:19; 122:2; 122:3; 122:6; 125:2; 128:5; 135:21; 137:5; 137:6; 137:7; 147:2; 147:12

# Jesse

### Definition:

Jesse was the father of King David and the grandson of Ruth and Boaz.

- Jesse was from the tribe of Judah.
- He was an "Ephrathite," which means he was from the region of Ephrathah. The town of Bethlehem was located in the region of Ephrathah.
- The prophet Isaiah prophesied about a "shoot" or "branch" that would come from the "root of Jesse" and bear fruit. This refers to Jesus, who was a descendant of Jesse.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **Bethlehem**, **Boaz**, descendant, **Jesus**, king, prophet, **Ruth**, **twelve tribes of Israel**)

### Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 2:12**
- **1 Kings 12:16**
- **1 Samuel 16:1**
- **Luke 3:32**
- **Matthew 1:4-6**

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3448, G24210

## Psalms References:

72:20

# Joab

### Definition:

Joab was an important military leader for King David throughout David's entire reign.

- Before David became king, Joab had already been one of his loyal followers.
- Later, during David's reign as king over Israel, Joab became the commander of King David's army.
- Joab was also King David's nephew, since his mother was one of David's sisters.
- When David's son Absalom betrayed him by trying to take over his kingship, Joab killed Absalom in order to protect the king.
- Joab was a very aggressive fighter and killed many people who were enemies of Israel.

(See also: Absalom, David)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 2:16-17
- 1 Kings 1:7
- 1 Samuel 26:6-8
- 2 Samuel 2:18
- Nehemiah 7:11

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3097

## Psalms References:

60:front

# Jordan River, Jordan

**Definition:**

The Jordan River is a river that flows from north to south, and forms the eastern boundary of the land that was called Canaan.

- Today, the Jordan River separates Israel on its west from Jordan on its east.
- The Jordan River flows through the Sea of Galilee and then empties into the Dead Sea.
- When Joshua led the Israelites into Canaan, they had to cross the Jordan River. It was too deep to cross normally, but God miraculously stopped the river from flowing so they could walk across the river bed.
- Often in the Bible the Jordan River is referred to as “the Jordan.”

(See also: Canaan, Salt Sea, Sea of Galilee)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 32:9-10
- John 1:26-28
- John 3:25-26
- Luke 3:3
- Matthew 3:6
- Matthew 3:13-15
- Matthew 4:14-16
- Matthew 19:1-2

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 15:2 The Israelites had to cross the **Jordan River** to enter into the Promised Land.
- 15:3 After the people crossed the **Jordan River**, God told Joshua how to attack the powerful city of Jericho.
- 19:14 Elisha told him (Naaman) to dip himself seven times in the **Jordan River**.

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H3383, G24460

## Psalms References:

42:6; 114:3; 114:5

# Joseph (OT)

**Definition:**

Joseph was Jacob's eleventh son. He was Rachel's first son. The descendants of his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh became two of the tribes of Israel.

- The Hebrew name Joseph is similar to both the Hebrew word meaning "to add, increase" and the Hebrew word meaning "to gather, take away."
- A large portion of the book of Genesis is dedicated to the story of Joseph, how he remained faithful to God throughout his many difficulties and forgave his brothers who had sold him to be a slave in Egypt.
- Eventually God raised Joseph to the second highest place of power in Egypt and used him to save the people of Egypt and the surrounding nations in a time when there was little food. Joseph helped save his own family from starving and brought them to live with him in Egypt.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: twelve tribes of Israel, Ephraim, Manasseh, Jacob, Rachel)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 30:22-24
- Genesis 33:1-3
- Genesis 37:1-2
- Genesis 37:23-24
- Genesis 41:55-57
- John 4:4-5

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 8:2 **Joseph's** brothers hated him because their father loved him most and because Joseph had dreamed that he would be their ruler.
- 8:4 The slave traders took **Joseph** to Egypt.
- 8:5 Even in prison, **Joseph** remained faithful to God, and God blessed him.
- 8:7 God had given **Joseph** the ability to interpret dreams, so Pharaoh had Joseph brought to him from the prison.
- 8:9 **Joseph** told the people to store up large amounts of food during the seven years of good harvests.
- 9:2 The Egyptians no longer remembered **Joseph** and all he had done to help them.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3084, H3130, G25000, G25010

## Psalms References:

77:15; 78:67; 80:1; 81:5; 105:17

# joy, joyful, rejoice, glad

## Definition:

### joy

The term “joy” refers to a feeling of delight or deep satisfaction. The related term “joyful” describes a person who feels very glad and is full of deep happiness.

- A person feels joy when he has a deep sense that what he is experiencing is very good.
- God is the one who gives true joy to people.
- Having joy does not depend on pleasant circumstances. God can give people joy even when very difficult things are happening in their lives.
- Sometimes places are described as joyful, such as houses or cities. This means that the people who live there are joyful.

### rejoice

The term “rejoice” means to be full of joy and gladness.

- This term often refers to being very happy about the good things that God has done.
- It could be translated as “be very happy” or “be very glad” or “be full of joy.”
- When Mary said “my soul rejoices in God my Savior,” she meant “God my Savior has made me very happy” or “I feel so joyful because of what God my Savior has done for me.”

## Translation Suggestions:

- The term “joy” could also be translated as “gladness” or “delight” or “great happiness.”
- The phrase, “be joyful” could be translated as “rejoice” or “be very glad” or it could be translated “be very happy in God’s goodness.”
- A person who is joyful could be described as “very happy” or “delighted” or “deeply glad.”
- A phrase such as “make a joyful shout” could be translated as “shout in a way that shows you are very happy.”
- A “joyful city” or “joyful house” could be translated as “city where joyful people live” or “house full of joyful people” or “city whose people are very happy.” (See: metonymy)

## Bible References:

- Nehemiah 8:10
- Psalm 48:2

- Isaiah 56:6-7
- Jeremiah 15:15-16
- Matthew 2:9-10
- Luke 15:7
- Luke 19:37-38
- John 3:29
- Acts 16:32-34
- Romans 5:1-2
- Romans 15:30-32
- Galatians 5:23
- Philippians 4:10-13
- 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16
- Philemon 1:4-7
- James 1:2
- 3 John 1:1-4

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 33:7 "The rocky ground is a person who hears God's word and accepts it with **joy**."
- 34:4 "The kingdom of God is also like hidden treasure that someone hid in a field… Another man found the treasure and then buried it again. He was so filled with **joy**, that he went and sold everything he had and used the money to buy that field."
- 41:7 The women were full of fear and great **joy**. They ran to tell the disciples the good news.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H1523, H1524, H1525, H2302, H2304, H2305, H2654, H2898, H4885, H5937, H5947, H5965, H5970, H6342, H6670, H7440, H7442, H7444, H7445, H7797, H7832, H8055, H8056, H8057, H8342, H8643, G00200, G00210, G21650, G21670, G27440, G46400, G47960, G49130, G54630, G54790

## Psalms References:

2:11; 4:7; 5:11; 9:2; 9:14; 13:4; 13:5; 14:7; 16:9; 16:11; 19:5; 19:8; 20:5; 21:1; 21:6; 27:6; 30:1; 30:5; 30:11; 31:7; 32:11; 33:1; 33:21; 34:2; 34:8; 35:9; 35:15; 35:19; 35:24; 35:26; 35:27; 38:16; 40:16; 42:4; 43:4; 45:7; 45:8; 45:15; 46:4; 47:1; 48:2; 48:11; 51:8; 51:12; 53:6; 58:10; 60:6; 63:5; 63:11; 64:10; 65:8; 65:12; 65:13; 66:6; 67:4; 68:3; 69:32; 70:4; 85:6; 86:4; 89:15; 89:16; 89:42; 90:14; 90:15; 92:4; 94:3; 94:12; 95:2; 96:11; 96:12; 97:1; 97:8; 97:11; 97:12; 98:4; 98:8; 100:2; 104:15; 104:31; 104:34; 105:3; 105:38; 105:43;

106:5; 107:30; 107:42; 108:7; 109:28; 113:9; 118:24; 119:14; 119:74; 119:111; 119:162; 122:1; 126:intro; 126:2; 126:3; 126:5; 126:6; 132:9; 132:16; 137:3; 137:6; 145:7; 149:2; 149:5

# Judah

**Definition:**

Judah was Jacob's fourth son. He was Leah's fourth son. His descendants became one of the tribes of Israel.

- The tribe descended from him was known as the "tribe of Judah" or "Judah."
- His name sounds similar to the Hebrew word meaning "praise."
- The tribe of Judah settled in the southern part of Canaan, including the mountainous area to the south of the city of Jerusalem. When used as the name of a region of land, the term "Judah" refers to the land given to the tribe of Judah.
- In the Old Testament, the name Judah is sometimes used to refer to the whole southern kingdom of Israel (similar to how the name Ephraim is sometimes used to refer to the whole northern kingdom).
- King David, King Solomon, and all the kings of the southern kingdom were descendants of Judah. Jesus, too, was a descendant of Judah.
- The words "Jew" and "Judea" come from the name "Judah."

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: twelve tribes of Israel, Judah (kingdom), Jew, Judea, Jacob, Leah)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 2:1-2
- 1 Kings 1:9
- Genesis 29:35
- Genesis 38:2
- Luke 3:33
- Ruth 1:2

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H3063

## Psalms References:

48:11; 60:7; 68:27; 108:8

# Judea, Judah

**Definition:**

The term “Judea” refers to an area of land in ancient Israel. It is sometimes used in a narrow sense and other times in a broad sense.

- Sometimes “Judea” is used in a narrow sense to refer only to the province located in the southern part of ancient Israel just west of the Dead Sea. Some translations call this province “Judah.”
- Other times “Judea” has a broad sense and refers to all the provinces of ancient Israel, including Galilee, Samaria, Perea, Idumea and Judea (Judah).
- If translators want to make the distinction clear, the broad sense of Judea could be translated as “Judea Country” and the narrow sense could be translated as “Judea Province,” or “Judah Province” since this is the part of ancient Israel where the tribe of Judah had originally lived.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Galilee, Edom, Judah, Judah, Samaria)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Thessalonians 2:14
- Acts 2:9
- Acts 9:32
- Acts 12:19
- John 3:22-24
- Luke 1:5
- Luke 4:44
- Luke 5:17
- Mark 10:1-4
- Matthew 2:1
- Matthew 2:5
- Matthew 2:22-23
- Matthew 3:1-3
- Matthew 19:1

### Word Data:

- Strong's: G24530

## Psalms References:

63:front; 69:35; 76:1; 78:68; 97:8; 114:2

# judge

**Definition:**

A judge is a person who decides what is right or wrong when there are disputes between people, usually in matters that pertain to the law.

- In the Bible, God is often referred to as a judge because he is the one perfect judge who makes the final decisions about what is right or wrong.
- After the people of Israel entered the land of Canaan and before they had kings to rule them, God appointed leaders called "judges" to lead them in times of trouble. Often these judges were military leaders who rescued the Israelites by defeating their enemies.
- The term "judge" could also be called "decision-maker" or "leader" or "deliverer" or "governor," depending on the context.

(See also: governor, judge, law)

**Bible References:**

- 2 Timothy 4:8
- Acts 7:27
- Luke 11:19
- Luke 12:14
- Luke 18:1-2
- Matthew 5:25
- Ruth 1:1

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0148, H0430, H1777, H1778, H1779, H1781, H1782, H6414, H6416, H6419, H8199, G03500, G12520, G13480, G29190, G29220, G29230

## Psalms References:

7:11; 9:4; 50:6; 68:5; 75:7; 109:31; 141:6; 148:11

# judge, judgment

### Definition:

The terms “judge” and “judgment” often refer to making a decision about whether or not something is good, wise, or right. However, these terms can also refer to actions performed by a person as the result of a decision, usually in the context of deciding that something is bad, wrong, or evil.

- The terms “judge” and “judgment” can also mean “to cause harm to” (usually because God has decided a person or nation’s actions are wicked).
- The “judgment of God” often refers to his decision to condemn something or someone as sinful.
- God’s judgment usually includes punishing people for their sin.
- The term “judge” can also mean “condemn.” God instructs his people not to judge each other in this way.
- Another meaning is “arbitrate between” or “judge between,” as in deciding which person is right in a dispute between them.
- In some contexts, God’s “judgments” are what he has decided is right and just. They are similar to his decrees, laws, or precepts.
- “Judgment” can refer to wise decision-making ability. A person who lacks “judgment” does not have the wisdom to make wise decisions.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate to “judge” could include to “decide” or to “condemn” or to “punish” or to “decree.”
- The term “judgment” could be translated as “punishment” or “decision” or “verdict” or “decree” or “condemnation.”
- In some contexts, the phrase “in the judgment” could also be translated as “on judgment day” or “during the time when God judges people.”

(See also: decree, judge, **judgment day**, just, **law**, law)

### Bible References:

- **1 John 4:17**
- **1 Kings 3:9**
- **Acts 10:42-43**
- **Isaiah 3:14**
- **James 2:4**

- Luke 6:37
- Micah 3:9-11
- Psalm 54:1

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 19:16 The prophets warned the people that if they did not stop doing evil and start obeying God, then God would **judge** them as guilty, and he would punish them.
- 21:8 A king is someone who rules over a kingdom and **judges** the people. The Messiah would come would be the perfect king who would sit on the throne of his ancestor David. He would reign over the whole world forever, and who would always **judge** honestly and make the right decisions.
- 39:4 The high priest tore his clothes in anger and shouted to the other religious leaders, “We do not need any more witnesses! You have heard him say that he is the Son of God. What is your **judgment**?”
- 50:14 But God will **judge** everyone who does not believe in Jesus. He will throw them into hell, where they will weep and grind their teeth in anguish forever.

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0148, H0430, H1777, H1778, H1779, H1780, H1781, H1782, H2940, H4055, H4941, H6414, H6415, H6416, H6417, H6419, H6485, H8196, H8199, H8201, G01440, G03500, G09680, G11060, G12520, G13410, G13450, G13480, G13490, G29170, G29190, G29200, G29220, G29230, G42320

## Psalms References:

1:5; 7:6; 7:8; 9:8; 9:19; 10:5; 10:18; 17:2; 18:22; 19:9; 35:24; 36:6; 37:33; 48:11; 50:4; 51:4; 58:1; 58:11; 67:4; 72:1; 72:2; 72:4; 75:2; 76:8; 76:9; 81:4; 82:1; 82:2; 82:3; 82:8; 89:30; 94:2; 94:15; 96:10; 96:13; 97:8; 98:9; 109:7; 110:6; 119:7; 119:13; 119:20; 119:30; 119:39; 119:43; 119:52; 119:62; 119:75; 119:91; 119:102; 119:106; 119:120; 119:132; 119:137; 119:149; 119:156; 119:160; 119:164; 119:175; 122:5; 143:2; 147:19; 147:20; 149:9

# just, justice, unjust, injustice, justify, justification

### Definition:

"Just" and "justice" refer to treating people fairly according to God's laws. Human laws that reflect God's standard of right behavior toward others are also just.

- To be "just" is to act in a fair and right way toward others. It also implies honesty and integrity to do what is morally right in God's eyes.
- To act "justly" means to treat people in a way that is right, good, and proper according to God's laws.
- To receive "justice" means to be treated fairly under the law, either being protected by the law or being punished for breaking the law.
- Sometimes the term "just" has the broader meaning of "righteous" or "following God's laws."

The terms "unjust" and "unjustly" refer to treating people in an unfair and often harmful manner.

- An "injustice" is something bad that is done to someone that the person did not deserve. It refers to treating people unfairly.
- Injustice also means that some people are treated badly while others are treated well.
- Someone who is acting in an unjust way is being "partial" or "prejudiced" because he is not treating people equally.

The terms "justify" and "justification" refer to causing a guilty person to be righteous. Only God can truly justify people.

- When God justifies people, he forgives their sins and makes it as though they have no sin. He justifies sinners who repent and trust in Jesus to save them from their sins.
- "Justification" refers to what God does when he forgives a person's sins and declares that person to be righteous in his sight.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate "just" could include "morally right" or "fair."
- The term "justice" could be translated as "fair treatment" or "deserved consequences."
- To "act justly" could be translated as "treat fairly" or "behave in a just way."
- In some contexts, "just" could be translated as "righteous" or "upright."

- Depending on the context, “unjust” could also be translated as “unfair” or “partial” or “unrighteous.”
- The phrase “the unjust” could be translated as “the unjust ones” or “unjust people” or “people who treat others unfairly” or “unrighteous people” or “people who disobey God.”
- The term “unjustly” could be translated as “in an unfair manner” or “wrongly” or “unfairly.”
- Ways to translate “injustice” could include, “wrong treatment” or “unfair treatment” or “acting unfairly.” (See: abstractnouns)
- Other ways to translate “justify” could include “declare (someone) to be righteous” or “cause (someone) to be righteous.”
- The term “justification” could be translated as “being declared righteous” or “becoming righteous” or “causing people to be righteous.”
- The phrase “resulting in justification” could be translated as “so that God justified many people” or “which resulted in God causing people to be righteous.”
- The phrase “for our justification” could be translated as “in order that we could be made righteous by God.”

(See also: forgive, guilt, judge, righteous, righteous)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 44:16
- 1 Chronicles 18:14
- Isaiah 4:3-4
- Jeremiah 22:3
- Ezekiel 18:16-17
- Micah 3:8
- Matthew 5:43-45
- Matthew 11:19
- Matthew 23:23-24
- Luke 18:3
- Luke 18:8

- Luke 18:13-14
- Luke 21:20-22
- Luke 23:41
- Acts 13:38-39
- Acts 28:4
- Romans 4:1-3
- Galatians 3:6-9
- Galatians 3:11
- Galatians 5:3-4
- Titus 3:6-7
- Hebrews 6:10
- James 2:24
- Revelation 15:3-4

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 17:9 David ruled with **justice** and faithfulness for many years, and God blessed him.
- 18:13 Some of these kings (of Judah) were good men who ruled **justly** and worshiped God.
- 19:16 They (the prophets) all told the people to stop worshiping idols and to start showing **justice** and mercy to others.
- 50:17 Jesus will rule his kingdom with peace and **justice**, and he will be with his people forever.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0205, H2555, H3477, H4941, H5765, H5766, H5767, H6662, H6663, H6664, H6666, H8003, H8264, H8636, G00910, G00930, G00940, G13420, G13440, G13450, G13460, G13470, G17380

## Psalms References:

9:4; 9:7; 9:16; 11:intro; 25:9; 33:5; 35:23; 35:28; 37:6; 37:28; 37:30; 43:1; 45:6; 72:2; 82:2; 89:14; 92:intro; 92:15; 94:intro; 94:20; 97:2; 99:intro; 99:4; 101:1; 103:6; 106:3; 111:7; 112:4; 112:5; 119:3; 119:75; 119:84; 119:121; 140:12; 141:7; 146:7

# Kadesh, Kadesh Barnea, Meribah Kadesh

### Definition:

The names Kadesh, Kadesh Barnea, and Meribah Kadesh all refer to an important city in Israel's history which was located in the southern part of Israel, near the region of Edom.

- The city of Kadesh was an oasis, a place where there was water and fertile soil in the middle of a desert named Zin.
- Moses sent twelve spies into the land of Canaan from Kadesh Barnea.
- Israel also encamped at Kadesh during the wandering in the wilderness.
- Kadesh Barnea was where Miriam died.
- It was at Meribah Kadesh where Moses disobeyed God and hit a rock to get water for the Israelites, instead of speaking to it as God had told him to do.
- The name "kadesh" comes from the Hebrew word meaning "holy" or "set apart."

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: desert, Edom, holy)

### Bible References:

- Ezekiel 48:28
- Genesis 14:7-9
- Genesis 16:14
- Genesis 20:1-3
- Joshua 10:40-41
- Numbers 20:1

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H4809, H6946, H6947

## Psalms References:

29:8

# Kedar

### Definition:

Kedar was Ishmael's second son. It was also an important city, which was probably named after the man.

- The city of Kedar is located in the northern part of Arabia near the southern border of Palestine. In Bible times, it was known for its greatness and beauty.
- The descendants of Kedar formed a large people group that is also called "Kedar."
- The phrase "dark tents of Kedar" refers to the black goathair tents the people of Kedar lived in.
- These people raised sheep and goats. They also used camels for transporting things.
- In the Bible, the phrase "the glory of Kedar" refers to the greatness of that city and its people.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Arabia, goat, Ishmael, sacrifice)

### Bible References:

- Song of Songs 1:5

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H6938

## Psalms References:

120:5

# king, kingship

### Definition:

In the Bible, the term “king” refers to a man who is the supreme ruler of a particular group of people or a particular region of land (or both).

- In biblical times, a king was usually chosen to rule on the basis of family relation to the previous king(s). When a king died, usually his oldest son became the next king.
- The Bible often refers to God is as a king who rules over the entire universe (in a general sense) and over his people (in a specific sense).
- The New Testament refers to Jesus as a king in various ways, including: “king of the Jews;” “king of Israel;” and “king of kings.”
- Depending on the context, the term “king” might also be translated as “supreme chief” or “sovereign ruler.”
- The phrase “king of kings” might be translated as “king who rules over all other kings” or “supreme ruler who has authority over all other rulers.”

(See also: authority, Herod Antipas, kingdom, kingdom of God)

### Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 6:15-16
- 2 Kings 5:18
- 2 Samuel 5:3
- Acts 7:9-10
- Acts 13:22
- John 1:49-51
- Luke 1:5
- Luke 22:24-25
- Matthew 5:35
- Matthew 14:9

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 8:6 One night, the Pharaoh, which is what the Egyptians called their kings, had two dreams that disturbed him greatly.
- 16:1 The Israelites had no **king**, so everyone did what they thought was right for them.
- 16:18 Finally, the people asked God for a **king** like all the other nations had.

- 17:5 Eventually, Saul died in battle, and David became **king** of Israel. He was a good **king**, and the people loved him.
- 21:6 God's prophets also said that the Messiah would be a prophet, a priest, and a **king**.
- 48:14 David was the **king** of Israel, but Jesus is the **king** of the entire universe!

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H4427, H4428, H4430, G09350, G09360

## Psalms References:

2:2; 2:6; 2:10; 5:2; 10:16; 18:50; 20:9; 21:1; 21:7; 24:7; 24:8; 24:9; 24:10; 29:10; 33:16; 44:4; 45:1; 45:5; 45:9; 45:11; 45:13; 45:14; 45:15; 47:2; 47:6; 47:7; 48:2; 48:4; 61:6; 63:11; 68:12; 68:14; 68:24; 68:29; 72:1; 72:10; 72:11; 74:12; 76:12; 84:3; 89:18; 89:27; 95:3; 98:6; 99:4; 102:15; 105:14; 105:20; 105:30; 110:1; 110:5; 119:46; 135:10; 135:11; 136:17; 136:18; 136:19; 136:20; 138:4; 144:10; 145:1; 148:11; 149:2; 149:8

# kingdom

### Definition:

A kingdom is a group of people ruled by a king. It also refers to the realm or political regions over which a king or other ruler has control and authority.

- A kingdom can be of any geographical size. A king might govern a nation or country or only one city.
- The term “kingdom” can also refer to a spiritual reign or authority, as in the term “kingdom of God.”
- God is the ruler of all creation, but the term “kingdom of God” especially refers to his reign and authority over the people who have believed in Jesus and who have submitted to his authority.
- The Bible also talks about Satan having a “kingdom” in which he temporarily rules over many things on this earth. His kingdom is evil and is referred to as “darkness.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- When referring to a physical region that is ruled over by a king, the term “kingdom” could be translated as “country (ruled by a king)” or “king’s territory” or “region ruled by a king.”
- In a spiritual sense, “kingdom” could be translated as “ruling” or “reigning” or “controlling” or “governing.”
- One way to translate “kingdom of priests” might be “spiritual priests who are ruled by God.”
- The phrase “kingdom of light” could be translated as “God’s reign that is good like light” or “when God, who is light, rules people” or “the light and goodness of God’s kingdom.” It is best to keep the word “light” in this expression since that is a very important term in the Bible.
- Note that the term “kingdom” is different from an empire, in which an emperor rules over several countries.

(See also: authority, king, kingdom of God, kingdom of Israel, Judah, Judah, priest)

### Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:12
- 2 Timothy 4:17-18
- Colossians 1:13-14
- John 18:36
- Mark 3:24

- **Matthew 4:7-9**
- **Matthew 13:19**
- **Matthew 16:28**
- **Revelation 1:9**

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **13:2** God said to Moses and the people of Israel, “If you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my prized possession, a **kingdom** of priests, and a holy nation.”
- **18:4** God was angry with Solomon and, as a punishment for Solomon’s unfaithfulness, he promised to divide the nation of Israel in two **kingdoms** after Solomon’s death.
- **18:7** Ten of the tribes of the nation of Israel rebelled against Rehoboam. Only two tribes remained faithful to him. These two tribes became the **kingdom** of Judah.
- **18:8** The other ten tribes of the nation of Israel that rebelled against Rehoboam appointed a man named Jeroboam to be their king. They set up their **kingdom** in the northern part of the land and were called the **kingdom** of Israel.
- **21:8** A king is someone who rules over a **kingdom** and judges the people.

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H4410, H4437, H4438, H4467, H4468, H4474, H4475, G09320

## Psalms References:

22:28; 45:6; 46:6; 68:32; 79:6; 102:22; 103:19; 105:13; 135:11; 145:11; 145:12; 145:13

# kiss

### Definition:

A kiss is an action in which one person puts his lips to another person's lips or face. This term can also be used figuratively.

- Some cultures kiss each other on the cheek as a form of greeting or to say goodbye.
- A kiss can communicate deep love between two people, such as a husband and wife.
- The expression to "kiss someone farewell" means to say goodbye with a kiss.
- Sometimes the word "kiss" is used to mean "say goodbye to." When Elisha said to Elijah, "Let me first go and kiss my father and mother," he wanted to say goodbye to his parents before leaving them to follow Elijah.

### Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:25-28
- Genesis 27:26-27
- Genesis 29:11
- Genesis 31:28
- Genesis 45:15
- Genesis 48:10
- Luke 22:48
- Mark 14:45
- Matthew 26:48

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H5390, H5401, G27050, G53680, G53700

## Psalms References:

2:12; 85:10

# know, knew, knowledge, known, unknown, distinguish

### Definition:

Used in this sense the term “know” and “knowledge” mean generally to understand something. It can also mean to be aware of a fact. The expression “to make known” means to tell information.

- The term “knowledge” refers to information that people know. It can apply to knowing physical concepts or abstract concepts.
- To “know about” God means to understand facts about him because of what he has revealed to us.
- To “know the Law” means to be aware of what God has commanded or to understand what God has instructed in the laws he gave to Moses.
- Sometimes “knowledge” is used as a synonym for “wisdom,” which includes living in a way that is pleasing to God.
- The “knowledge of God” is sometimes used as a synonym for the “fear of Yahweh.”

### Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “know” could include “understand” or “be familiar with” or “be aware of” or “be acquainted with.”
- In the context of understanding the difference between two things, the term is usually translated as “distinguish.” When used in this way, the term is often followed by the preposition “between.”
- The term “make known” could be translated as “cause people to know” or “reveal” or “tell about” or “explain.”
- To “know about” something could be translated as “be aware of” or “be familiar with.”
- The expression “know how to” means to understand the process or method of getting something done. It could also be translated as “be able to” or “have the skill to.”
- The term “knowledge” could also be translated as “what is known” or “wisdom” or “understanding,” depending on the context.
- Some languages have two different words for “know,” one for knowing facts and one for knowing a person and having a relationship with that person. The word for knowing facts should be used when translating this sense of the word “know.”

(See also: know-relationship, law, reveal, understand, wise)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H1844, H1847, H3045, H3046, H3318, G00500, G00560, G03190, G10970, G11070, G11080, G11100, G14920, G19210, G19220, G19870, G42670

## Psalms References:

1:6; 9:10; 9:20; 14:4; 16:11; 19:2; 20:6; 31:7; 35:8; 35:11; 35:15; 37:18; 39:4; 39:6; 40:9; 41:11; 44:21; 50:11; 51:3; 53:4; 56:9; 69:5; 71:15; 73:11; 74:5; 74:9; 76:1; 78:6; 79:6; 79:10; 81:5; 82:5; 88:8; 88:12; 88:18; 89:1; 89:15; 92:6; 94:10; 94:11; 95:10; 98:2; 103:7; 103:14; 104:19; 105:1; 106:8; 109:27; 119:79; 119:125; 119:152; 135:5; 138:6; 139:2; 139:4; 139:6; 139:14; 139:23; 140:12; 142:3; 143:8; 145:12; 147:20

# know, knew, knowledge, unknown

### Definition:

Used in this sense the term “know” and “knowledge” and “knew” mean to be in relationship with a person.

- To “know” God means to have a relationship with him. This also applies to knowing people.
- Jesus said in Matthew 7:23 that on the day when he judges everyone, he will say to some people, “I never knew you.” By saying “I never knew you,” he means that he was never in a personal relationship with them.
- The “knowledge of God” is sometimes used as a synonym for the “fear of Yahweh.”
- When used of a man and a woman to “know” is often an euphemism that refers to having sexual intercourse.

### Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, ways to translate this meaning of “know” could include “be acquainted with” or “be familiar with” or “be in relationship with.”
- Some languages have two different words for “know,” one for knowing facts and one for knowing a person and having a relationship with that person. The word for knowing a person and having a relationship with that person should be used when translating this sense of the word “know.”

(See also: know-information,reveal)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s:

## Psalms References:

4:3; 9:16; 18:43; 25:4; 25:14; 31:11; 36:10; 46:10; 48:3; 55:13; 59:13; 67:2; 69:19; 73:22; 83:18; 87:4; 90:11; 91:14; 100:3; 101:4; 119:75; 139:1; 139:23; 144:3

# Korah, Korahite

**Definition:**

Korah was the name of three men in the Old Testament.

1. Korah was a descendant of Levi and so served in the tabernacle as a priest. He became jealous of Moses and Aaron and led a group of men to rebel against them.
2. One of the sons of Esau was named Korah. He became a leader in his community.
3. A third man named Korah is listed as a descendant of Judah.

(See also: Aaron, authority, Caleb, descendant, Esau, Judah, priest)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 1:34-37
- Numbers 16:1-3
- Numbers 16:25-27
- Psalm 42:1-2

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H7141

## Psalms References:

42:front; 44:front; 45:front; 46:front; 47:front; 48:front; 49:front; 84:front; 85:front; 87:1; 88:front

# labor, labors, labored, laboring, laborer, work, hard work

### Definition:

The term “labor” refers to doing hard work of any kind.

- In general, labor is any task which uses energy. It is often implied that the task is difficult.
- A laborer is a person who does any type of labor.
- Ways to translate “labor” could include “work” or “toil” or “hard work” or “difficult work” or to “work hard.”

(See also: hard)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3021, H4399, H4522, H4639, H5647, H5656, H5998, H6001, H6089, G20380, G20400, G20410, G28720, G28730

## Psalms References:

19:1; 78:46; 90:17; 104:23; 127:2; 128:2; 135:15

# lament, lamentation

### Definition:

The terms “lament” and “lamentation” refer to a strong expression of mourning, sorrow, or grief.

- Sometimes this includes deep regret for sin, or compassion for people who have experienced disaster.
- A lamentation could include moaning, weeping, or wailing.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term to “lament” could be translated as to “deeply mourn” or to “wail in grief” or to “be sorrowful.”
- A “lamentation” (or a “lament”) could be translated as “loud wailing and weeping” or “deep sorrow” or “sorrowful sobbing” or “mournful moaning.”

### Bible References:

- Amos 8:9-10
- Ezekiel 32:1-2
- Jeremiah 22:18
- Job 27:15-17
- Lamentations 2:5
- Lamentations 2:8
- Micah 2:4
- Psalm 102:1-2
- Zechariah 11:2

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0056, H0421, H0578, H0592, H1058, H4553, H5091, H5092, H5594, H6088, H6969, H7015, H8567, G23540, G23550, G28700, G28750

## Psalms References:

22:intro; 28:intro; 35:14; 116:3; 142:2

# lamp

**Definition:**

The term “lamp” generally refers to something that produces light. The lamps used in Bible times were usually oil lamps.

The type of lamp that was used in Bible times is a small container with a fuel source, usually oil, that gives light when it burns.

- An ordinary oil lamp usually consisted of a common piece of pottery filled with olive oil, with a wick placed in the oil to burn.
- For some lamps, the pot or jar was oval, with one end pinched close together to hold the wick.
- An oil lamp could be carried or placed on a stand so that its light could fill a room or house.
- In scripture, lamps are used in several figurative ways as symbols of light and life.

(See also: **lampstand**, **life**, **light**)

**Bible References:**

- **1 Kings 11:36**
- **Exodus 25:3-7**
- **Luke 8:16-18**
- **Matthew 5:15**
- **Matthew 6:22**
- **Matthew 25:3**

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H3940, H3974, H4501, H5215, H5216, G29850, G30880

## Psalms References:

18:28; 119:105; 132:17

# law, law of Moses, law of Yahweh, law of God

### Definition:

Most simply, the term “law” refers to a rule or instruction that should be followed. In the Bible, the term “law” is often used generally to refer to anything and everything God wants his people to obey and do. The specific term “law of Moses” refers to the commandments and instructions that God gave Moses for the Israelites to obey.

- Depending on the context, the “law” can refer to:
  - the Ten Commandments that God wrote on stone tablets for the Israelites
  - all the laws given to Moses
  - the first five books of the Old Testament
  - the entire Old Testament (also referred to as “scriptures” in the New Testament).
  - all of God’s instructions and will
- The phrase “the Law and the Prophets” is used in the New Testament to refer to the Hebrew scriptures (or “Old Testament”)

### Translation Suggestions:

- These terms could be translated using the plural, “laws,” since they refer to many instructions.
- The term “law of Moses” could be translated as “the laws that God told Moses to give to the Israelites.”
- Depending on the context, “the law of Moses” could also be translated as “the law that God told to Moses” or “God’s laws that Moses wrote down” or “the laws that God told Moses to give to the Israelites.”
- Ways to translate “the law” or “law of God” or “God’s laws” could include “laws from God” or “God’s commands” or “laws that God gave” or “everything that God commands” or “all of God’s instructions.”
- The phrase “law of Yahweh” could also be translated as “Yahweh’s laws” or “laws that Yahweh said to obey” or “laws from Yahweh” or “things Yahweh commanded.”

(See also: instruct, Moses, Ten Commandments, lawful, Yahweh)

### Bible References:

- Acts 15:6
- Daniel 9:13
- Exodus 28:42-43

- Ezra 7:25-26
- Galatians 2:15
- Luke 24:44
- Matthew 5:18
- Nehemiah 10:29
- Romans 3:20

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 13:7 God also gave many other **laws** and rules to follow. If the people obeyed these **laws**, God promised that he would bless and protect them. If they disobeyed them, God would punish them.
- 13:9 Anyone who disobeyed **God's law** could bring an animal to the altar in front of the Tent of Meeting as a sacrifice to God.
- 15:13 Then Joshua reminded the people of their obligation to obey the covenant that God had made with the Israelites at Sinai. The people promised to remain faithful to God and follow **his laws**.
- 16:1 After Joshua died, the Israelites disobeyed God and did not drive out the rest of the Canaanites or obey **God's laws**.
- 21:5 In the New Covenant, God would write **his law** on the people's hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would forgive their sins.
- 27:1 Jesus answered, "What is written in **God's law**?"
- 28:1 Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me 'good?' There is only one who is good, and that is God. But if you want to have eternal life, obey **God's laws**."

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0430, H1881, H1882, H2706, H2710, H3068, H4687, H4872, H4941, H8451, G23160, G35510, G35650

## Psalms References:

19:intro; 19:7; 37:31; 40:8; 78:5; 78:7; 78:10; 89:30; 94:12; 105:45; 119:126; 119:136; 119:142; 119:150; 119:153; 119:163; 119:165; 119:174

# Lebanon

**Definition:**

Lebanon is a beautiful mountainous region located along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, north of Israel. In Bible times this region was thickly wooded with fir trees, such as cedar and cypress.

- King Solomon sent workers to Lebanon to harvest cedar trees for use in building God's temple.
- Ancient Lebanon was inhabited by Phoenician people, who were skilled builders of ships that were used for a successful trading industry.
- The cities of Tyre and Sidon were located in Lebanon. It was in these cities that a valuable purple dye was first used.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: cedar, cypress, **fir**, **Phoenicia**)

**Bible References:**

- **1 Kings 4:32-34**
- **2 Chronicles 2:8-10**
- **Deuteronomy 1:7-8**
- Psalms 29:3-5
- **Zechariah 10:8-10**

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H3844

## Psalms References:

29:5; 29:6; 72:16; 92:12; 104:16

# Levi, Levite

### Definition:

Levi was Jacob's third son. He was Leah's third son. His descendants became one of the tribes of Israel.

- The tribe descended from him was known as the "tribe of Levi" or the "Levites."
- The name Levi is similar to the Hebrew word for "join to."
- Unlike the other tribes, the tribe of Levi did not inherit a unified area of land in Canaan. Instead, they inherited various cities scattered throughout the regions belonging to the other tribes.
- The tribe of Levi was responsible for taking care of the tabernacle (and later, the temple) and conducting religious rituals, including offering sacrifices and prayers for the Israelite people.
- In the Old Testament, it is not always clear whether the term "Levite" refers generally to a descendant of Levi or specifically to a person who served in the temple helping the priests.
- The Old Testament law prescribed that all priests were to be chosen from the tribe of Levi. The Levite priests were set apart and dedicated for the special work of serving God in the temple.
- Two other men named "Levi" were ancestors of Jesus. Their names are listed in the genealogy in the gospel of Luke.
- Jesus' disciple Matthew was also called Levi.

(See also: twelve tribes of Israel, priest, sacrifice, temple, Jacob, Leah, Matthew)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 2:1-2
- 1 Kings 8:3-5
- Acts 4:36-37
- Genesis 29:34
- John 1:19-21
- Luke 10:32

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3878, H3879, H3881, G30170, G30180, G30190, G30200

## Psalms References:

135:20

# Leviathan

### Definition:

The term “Leviathan” refers to a very large, extinct animal mentioned in the earliest writings of the Old Testament, the books of Job, Psalms, and Isaiah.

- Leviathan is described as a large, snake-like creature, strong and fierce and able to make the water around it “boil.” The descriptions of it were similar to that of a dinosaur.
- Isaiah the prophet referred to Leviathan as “the gliding serpent”.
- Job wrote from firsthand knowledge of Leviathan, so the animal was most likely alive during his lifetime.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Isaiah, Job, serpent)

### Bible References:

- Job 3:8
- Psalms 104:25-26

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3882

## Psalms References:

74:14; 104:26

# likeness

### Definition:

The term “likeness” refers to something or someone being the same as or similar to, or having similar characteristics to something or someone else.

- People were created in God’s “likeness,” that is, in his “image.” It means that they have qualities or characteristics that are “like” or “similar to” qualities that God has, such as the ability to think, feel, and communicate.
- To have “the likeness of” something or someone means to have characteristics that look like that thing or person.

### Translation Suggestions

- In some contexts, the expression “the likeness of” could be translated as “what looked like” or “what appeared to be.”
- The expression “in the likeness of his death” could be translated as “sharing in the experience of his death” or “as if experiencing his death with him.”
- The expression “in the likeness of sinful flesh” could be translated as “being like a sinful human being” or to “be a human being.” Make sure the translation of this expression does not sound like Jesus was sinful.
- “In his own likeness” could also be translated as to “be like him” or “having many of the same qualities that he has.”
- The expression “the likeness of an image of perishable man, of birds, of four-footed beasts and of creeping things” could be translated as “idols made to look like perishable humans, or animals, such as birds, beasts, and small, crawling things.”

(See also: beast, flesh, image of God, image, perish)

### Bible References:

- Ezekiel 1:5
- Mark 8:24
- Matthew 17:2
- Matthew 18:3
- Psalms 73:5
- Revelation 1:12-13

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H1823, H8403, H8544, G15030, G15040, G25090, G25310, G25960, G36640, G36650, G36660, G36670, G36680, G36690, G36970, G48330, G51080, G56130, G56150, G56160, G56180, G56190

## Psalms References:

17:12; 58:4; 106:20

# lion, lioness

**Definition:**

A lion is a large, cat-like, that has animal, with powerful teeth and claws for killing and tearing apart its prey.

- Lions have powerful bodies and great speed to catch their prey. Their fur is short and golden-brown.
- Male lions have a mane of hair that encircles their heads.
- Lions kill other animals to eat them and can be dangerous to human beings.
- When King David was a boy, he killed lions that tried to attack the sheep he was caring for.
- Samson also killed a lion, with his bare hands.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: David, leopard, Samson, sheep)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 11:22-23
- 1 Kings 7:29
- Proverbs 19:12
- Psalms 17:12
- Revelation 5:5

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0738, H0739, H0744, H3715, H3833, H3918, H7826, H7830, G30230

## Psalms References:

7:2; 10:9; 17:12; 22:13; 22:16; 22:21; 34:10; 35:17; 57:4; 58:6; 91:13; 104:21

# livestock, animals

### Definition:

The term “livestock” refers to animals which are raised to provide food and other useful products. Some types of livestock are also trained as work animals.

- Kinds of livestock include sheep, cattle, goats, horses, and donkeys.
- In Biblical times, wealth was partly measured by how much livestock a person had.
- Livestock are used to produce items such as wool, milk, cheese, housing materials, and clothing.
- This term could also be translated as “farm animals.”

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: cow, ox, donkey, goat, horse, sheep)

### Bible References:

- 2 Kings 3:15-17
- Genesis 30:29
- Joshua 1:14-15
- Nehemiah 9:36-37
- Numbers 3:41

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0929, H4399, H4735

## Psalms References:

36:6; 78:48; 104:11

# locust

**Definition:**

The term “locust” refers to a type of large, flying grasshopper that sometimes flies with many other of its kind in a very destructive swarm that eats all vegetation.

- Locusts and other grasshoppers are large, straight-winged insects with long, jointed back legs that give them the ability to jump a long distance way.
- In the Old Testament, swarming locusts were referred to figuratively as a symbol or picture of the overwhelming devastation that would come as a result of Israel’s disobedience.
- God sent locusts as one of the ten plagues against the Egyptians.
- The New Testament says that locusts were a main source of food for John the Baptist while he was living in the desert.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: captive, Egypt, Israel, John (the Baptist), plague)

**Bible References:**

- 2 Chronicles 6:28
- Deuteronomy 28:38-39
- Exodus 10:3-4
- Mark 1:6
- Proverbs 30:27-28

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0697, H1357, H1462, H1501, H2284, H3218, H5556, H6767, G02000

## Psalms References:

78:46; 105:34; 109:23

# loins

### Definition:

The term “loins” refers to the part of the body of an animal or person that is between the lower ribs and the hip bones, also known as the lower abdomen.

- The expression “gird up the loins” refers to preparing to work hard. It comes from the custom of tucking the bottom of one’s robe into a belt around the waist in order to move with ease.
- The term “loins” is often used in the Bible to refer to the lower back part of an animal that was sacrificed.
- In the Bible, the term “loins” often refers figuratively and euphemistically to a man’s reproductive organs as the source of his descendants. (See: euphemism)
- The expression “will come from your loins” could also be translated as “will be your offspring” or “will be born from your seed” or “God will cause to come from you.” (See: euphemism)
- When referring to a part of the body, this could also be translated as “abdomen” or “hips” or “waist,” depending on the context.

(See also: descendant, gird, children)

### Bible References:

- 1 Peter 1:13
- 2 Chronicles 6:9
- Deuteronomy 33:11
- Genesis 37:34
- Job 15:27

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2504, H3409, H3689, H4975, G37510

## Psalms References:

38:7; 66:11; 69:23

# Lord Yahweh, Yahweh God

### Definition:

In the Old Testament, “Lord Yahweh” is frequently used to refer to the one true God.

- The term “Lord” is a divine title and “Yahweh” is God’s personal name.
- “Yahweh” is also often combined with the term “God” to form “Yahweh God.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- If some form of “Yahweh” is used for the translation of God’s personal name, the terms “Lord Yahweh” and “Yahweh God” can be translated literally. Also consider how the term “Lord” is translated in other contexts when referring to God.
- Some languages put titles after the name and would translate this as “Yahweh Lord.” Consider what is natural in the project language: should the title “Lord” come before or after “Yahweh”?
- “Yahweh God” could also be rendered as “God who is called Yahweh” or “God who is the Living One” or “I am, who is God.”
- If the translation follows the tradition of rendering “Yahweh” as “Lord” or “LORD,” the term “Lord Yahweh” could be translated as “Lord God” or “God who is the Lord.” Other possible translations could be, “Master LORD” or “God the LORD.”
- The term “Lord Yahweh” *should not* be rendered as “Lord LORD” because readers may not notice the difference in letter size that has traditionally been used to distinguish these two words and it would look very strange.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: God, lord, Lord, Yahweh)

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 4:3-4
- 2 Samuel 7:21-23
- Deuteronomy 3:23-25
- Ezekiel 39:25-27
- Ezekiel 45:18
- Jeremiah 44:26
- Judges 6:22
- Micah 1:2-4

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0136, H0430, H3068, G23160, G29620

## Psalms References:

69:6; 71:5; 71:16; 72:18; 84:11

# lord, Lord, master, sir

**Definition:**

In the Bible, the term “lord” generally refers to someone who has ownership or authority over other people. In the Bible, however, the term is used to address many different kinds of people, including God.

- This word is sometimes translated as “master” when addressing Jesus or when referring to someone who owns slaves.
- Some English versions translate this as “sir” in contexts where someone is politely addressing someone of higher status.

When “Lord” is capitalized, it is a title that refers to God. (Note, however, that when it is used as a form of addressing someone or it occurs at the beginning of a sentence it may be capitalized and have the meaning of “sir” or “master.”)

- In the Old Testament, this term is also used in expressions such as “Lord God Almighty” or “Lord Yahweh” or “Yahweh our Lord.”
- In the New Testament, the apostles used this term in expressions such as “Lord Jesus” and “Lord Jesus Christ,” which communicate that Jesus is God.
- The term “Lord” in the New Testament is also used alone as a direct reference to God, especially in quotations from the Old Testament. For example, the Old Testament text has “Blessed is he who comes in the name of Yahweh” and the New Testament text has “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”
- In the ULT and UST, the title “Lord” is only used to translate the actual Hebrew and Greek words that mean “Lord.” It is never used as a translation of God’s name (Yahweh), as is done in many translations.
- Some languages translate “Lord” as “Master” or “Ruler” or some other term that communicates ownership or supreme rule.
- In the appropriate contexts, many translations capitalize the first letter of this term to make it clear to the reader that this is a title referring to God.
- For places in the New Testament where there is a quote from the Old Testament, the term “Lord God” could be used to make it clear that this is a reference to God.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term can be translated with the equivalent of "master" when it refers to a person who owns slaves. It can also be used by a servant to address the person he works for.
- When it refers to Jesus, if the context shows that the speaker sees him as a religious teacher, it can be translated with a respectful address for a religious teacher, such as "master."
- If the person addressing Jesus does not know him, "lord" could be translated with a respectful form of address such as "sir." This translation would also be used for other contexts in which a polite form of address to a man is called for.
- When referring to God the Father or to Jesus, this term is considered a title, written as "Lord" (capitalized) in English.

(See also: God, Jesus, ruler, Yahweh)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 39:2
- Joshua 3:9-11
- Psalms 86:15-17
- Jeremiah 27:4
- Lamentations 2:2
- Ezekiel 18:29
- Daniel 9:9
- Daniel 9:17-19
- Malachi 3:1
- Matthew 7:21-23
- Luke 1:30-33
- Luke 16:13
- Romans 6:23
- Ephesians 6:9
- Philippians 2:9-11
- Colossians 3:23
- Hebrews 12:14
- James 2:1
- 1 Peter 1:3
- Jude 1:5
- Revelation 15:4

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 25:5 But Jesus replied to Satan by quoting from the Scriptures. He said, “In God’s word, he commands his people, ‘Do not test the **Lord** your God.’”
- 25:7 Jesus replied, “Get away from me, Satan! In God’s word he commands his people, ‘Worship only the **Lord** your God and only serve him.’”
- 26:3 This is the year of the **Lord’s** favor.
- 27:2 The law expert replied that God’s law says, “Love the **Lord** your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind.”
- 31:5 Then Peter said to Jesus, “**Master**, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water”
- 43:9 “But know for certain that God has caused Jesus to become both **Lord** and Messiah!”
- 47:3 By means of this demon she predicted the future for people, she made a lot of money for her **masters** as a fortuneteller.
- 47:11 Paul answered, “Believe in Jesus, the **Master**, and you and your family will be saved.”

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0113, H0136, H1167, H1376, H4756, H7980, H8323, G02030, G06340, G09620, G12030, G29620

## Psalms References:

2:4; 8:1; 8:9; 12:4; 16:2; 22:30; 30:8; 35:17; 35:22; 35:23; 37:13; 38:9; 38:15; 38:22; 39:7; 40:17; 44:23; 45:11; 51:15; 54:4; 55:9; 57:9; 59:11; 62:12; 66:18; 68:11; 68:17; 68:19; 68:20; 68:22; 68:32; 73:20; 73:28; 77:2; 77:7; 78:65; 79:12; 86:3; 86:4; 86:5; 86:8; 86:9; 86:12; 86:15; 89:49; 89:50; 90:1; 90:17; 97:5; 105:21; 109:21; 110:1; 110:5; 114:7; 123:2; 130:2; 130:3; 130:6; 135:5; 136:3; 140:7; 141:8; 147:5

# Lot

### Definition:

Lot was Abraham's nephew.

- He was the son of Abraham's brother Haran.
- Lot traveled with Abraham to the land of Canaan and settled in the city of Sodom.
- Lot was the ancestor of the Moabites and Ammonites.
- When enemy kings attacked Sodom and captured Lot, Abraham came with several hundred men to rescue Lot and recover his belongings.
- The people living in the city of Sodom were very wicked, so God destroyed that city. But he first told Lot and his family to leave the city so that that they could escape.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Abraham, Ammon, Haran, Moab, Sodom)

### Bible References:

- 2 Peter 2:8
- Genesis 11:27-28
- Genesis 12:4-5

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3876, G30910

## Psalms References:

83:8

# lots, casting lots

**Definition:**

In the Bible, a “lot” is a marked object(s) used as a way of making a fair and/or random decision, usually for the purpose of selecting a specific person within a group. “Casting lots” refers to the process of using “lots” to make a fair and/or random decision.

- In modern times, some cultures “draw” or “pull out” lots using a bunch of straws. Someone holds the straws so that no one can see how long they are. Each person pulls out a straw and the one who picks the longest (or shortest) straw is the one who is chosen.
- In biblical times, the objects cast (the “lots”) were probably small marked stones. It is unknown how the “lots” actually indicated a decision, but it probably involved dropping or throwing marked stones on the ground.
- The phrase “casting lots” can be translated as “tossing lots” or “throwing lots” or “rolling lots.” The translation of “cast” should not sound like the lots were being thrown a long distance.
- If a decision is made “by lot,” this could be translated as “by casting lots” or “by throwing lots,” etc.

(See also: Elizabeth, priest, Zechariah (OT), Zechariah (NT))

**Bible References:**

- Jonah 1:7
- Luke 1:8-10
- Luke 23:34
- Mark 15:22
- Matthew 27:35-37
- Psalms 22:18-19

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1486, H5307, G28190, G29750

## Psalms References:

16:5; 22:18; 125:3

# love, beloved

### Definition:

To love another person is to care for that person and do things that will benefit him. There are different meanings for “love” some languages may express using different words:

1. The kind of love that comes from God is focused on the good of others even when it does not benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do. God himself is love and is the source of true love.
    - Jesus showed this kind of love by sacrificing his life in order to rescue us from sin and death. He also taught his followers to love others sacrificially.
    - When people love others with this kind of love, they act in ways that show they are thinking of what will cause the others to thrive. This kind of love especially includes forgiving others.
    - In the ULT, the word “love” refers to this kind of sacrificial love, unless a Translation Note indicates a different meaning.
2. Another word in the New Testament refers to brotherly love, or love for a friend or family member.
    - This term refers to natural human love between friends or relatives.
    - The term can also be used in such contexts as, “They love to sit in the most important seats at a banquet.” This means that they “like very much” or “greatly desire” to do that.
3. The word “love” can also refer to romantic love between a man and a woman.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Unless indicated otherwise in a Translation Note, the word “love” in the ULT refers to the kind of sacrificial love that comes from God.
- Some languages may have a special word for the kind of unselfish, sacrificial love that God has. Ways to translate this might include, “devoted, faithful caring” or “care for unselfishly” or “love from God.” Make sure that the word used to translate God’s love can include giving up one’s own interests to benefit others and loving others no matter what they do.
- Sometimes the English word “love” describes the deep caring that people have for friends and family members. Some languages might translate this with a word or phrase that means “like very much” or “care for” or “have strong affection for.”
- In contexts where the word “love” is used to express a strong preference for something, this could be translated by “strongly prefer” or “like very much” or “greatly desire.”

- Some languages may also have a separate word that refers to romantic or sexual love between a husband and wife.
- Many languages must express "love" as an action. So for example, they might translate "love is patient, love is kind" as, "when a person loves someone, he is patient with him and kind to him."

(See also: covenant, **death**, sacrifice, save, sin)

**Bible References:**

- **1 Corinthians 13:7**
- **1 John 3:2**
- **1 Thessalonians 4:10**
- **Galatians 5:23**
- **Genesis 29:18**
- **Isaiah 56:6**
- **Jeremiah 2:2**
- **John 3:16**
- **Matthew 10:37**
- **Nehemiah 9:32-34**
- **Philippians 1:9**
- **Song of Songs 1:2**

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **27:2** The law expert replied that God's law says, "**Love** the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. And **love** your neighbor as yourself."
- **33:8** "The thorny ground is a person who hears God's word, but, as time passes, the cares, riches, and pleasures of life choke out his **love** for God."
- **36:5** As Peter was talking, a bright cloud came down on top of them and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son whom I **love**."
- **39:10** "Everyone who **loves** the truth listens to me."
- **47:1** She (Lydia) **loved** and worshiped God.
- **48:1** When God created the world, everything was perfect. There was no sin. Adam and Eve **loved** each other, and they **loved** God.
- **49:3** He (Jesus) taught that you need to **love** other people the same way you love yourself.
- **49:4** He (Jesus) also taught that you need to **love** God more than you **love** anything else, including your wealth.
- **49:7** Jesus taught that God **loves** sinners very much.

- 49:9 But God **loved** everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with God forever.
- 49:13 God **loves** you and wants you to believe in Jesus so he can have a close relationship with you.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0157, H0158, H0159, H0160, H2245, H2617, H2836, H3039, H4261, H5689, H5690, H5691, H7355, H7356, H7453, H7474, G00250, G00260, G53600, G53610, G53620, G53630, G53650, G53670, G53680, G53690, G53770, G53810, G53820, G53830, G53880

## Psalms References:

4:2; 11:5; 11:7; 18:1; 26:8; 31:23; 33:5; 34:12; 37:28; 40:16; 45:front; 45:7; 47:4; 52:3; 52:4; 69:36; 70:4; 78:68; 87:2; 99:4; 109:4; 109:5; 109:17; 116:1; 117:intro; 119:intro; 119:47; 119:48; 119:97; 119:113; 119:119; 119:127; 119:132; 119:140; 119:159; 119:163; 119:165; 119:167; 122:6; 142:4; 145:20; 146:8

# lover

### Definition:

The term “lover” literally means “person who loves.” Usually this refers to people who are in a sexual relationship with each other.

- When the term “lover” is used in the Bible, it usually refers to a person who is involved in a sexual relationship with someone he or she is not married to.
- This wrong sexual relationship is often used in the Bible to refer to Israel’s disobedience to God in worshiping idols. So the term “lovers” is also used in a figurative way to refer to the idols that the people of Israel worshiped. In these contexts, this term could possibly be translated by “immoral partners” or “partners in adultery” or “idols.” [See Metaphor]
- A “lover” of money is someone who puts too much importance on getting money and being rich.
- In the Old Testament book Song of Songs, the term “lover” is used in a positive way.

(See also: adultery, false god, false god, love)

### Bible References:

- Hosea 2:5
- Jeremiah 3:2
- Lamentations 1:2
- Luke 16:14

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0157, H0158, H0868, H5689, H7453, H8566, G08650, G08660, G53660, G53670, G53690, G53770

## Psalms References:

5:11; 97:10

# lowly, lowliness

### Definition:

The terms “lowly” and “lowliness” refer to being poor or having low status. Being lowly can also have the meaning of being humble.

- Jesus humbled himself to the lowly position of becoming a human being and serving others.
- His birth was lowly because he was born in a place where animals were kept, not in a palace.
- Having a lowly attitude is the opposite of being proud.
- Ways to translate “lowly” could include “humble” or “of low status” or “unimportant.”
- The word “lowliness” could also be translated as “humility” or “little importance.”

(See also: humble, proud)

### Bible References:

- Acts 20:19
- Ezekiel 17:14
- Luke 1:48-49
- Romans 12:16

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6041, H6819, H8217, G50110, G50120, G50140

## Psalms References:

18:27; 41:1; 138:6

# lute, lyre

### Definition:

A lute and a lyre are small, stringed, musical instruments that were used by the Israelites to worship God.

- A lyre looks like a small harp, having strings strung across an open frame.
- A lute is very similar to a modern day acoustic guitar, having a wooden sound box and an extended neck on which strings are strung.
- In playing a lute or a lyre, certain strings are held down with the fingers of one hand while these and other strings are plucked or strummed with the other hand.
- The lute, lyre, and harp are all played by strumming or plucking the strings.
- The number of strings varied, but the Old Testament specifically mentions instruments that had ten strings.

(See also: harp)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 10:11-12
- 1 Samuel 10:5-6
- 2 Chronicles 5:11-12

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3658, H5035, H5443

## Psalms References:

33:2; 43:4; 57:8; 71:22; 81:2; 92:3; 108:2; 144:9; 150:3

# majesty

### Definition:

The term “majesty” or “majestic” refers to greatness and splendor, often in relation to the qualities of a king.

- In the Bible, “majesty” frequently refers to the greatness of God, who is the supreme King over the universe.
- “Your Majesty” is a way of addressing a king.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated as “kingly greatness” or “royal splendor.”
- “Your Majesty” could be translated as something like “your Highness” or “your Excellency” or using a natural way of addressing a ruler in the target language.

(See also: king)

### Bible References:

- 2 Peter 1:16-18
- Daniel 4:36
- Isaiah 2:10
- Jude 1:25
- Micah 5:4

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1347, H1348, H1420, H1923, H1926, H1935, H7238, G31680, G31720

## Psalms References:

8:5; 21:5; 29:4; 45:3; 45:4; 68:34; 71:21; 76:4; 90:16; 93:1; 96:6; 104:1; 111:3; 145:5

# Maker

### Definition:

In general, a “maker” is someone who creates or makes things.

- In the Bible, the term “Maker” is sometimes used as a name or title for Yahweh, because he created everything.
- Usually this term is combined with “his” or “my” or “your.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “Maker” can be translated as “the Creator” or “God who creates” or “the One who made everything.”
- The phrase “his Maker” could also be translated as “the One who created him” or “God, who created him.”
- The phrases “your Maker” and “my Maker” could be translated in a similar way.

(See also: How to Translate Names)

(See also: create, Yahweh)

### Bible References:

- Hosea 8:13-14

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3335, H6213, H6466

## Psalms References:

95:6; 115:8; 115:15; 121:2; 124:8; 134:3; 135:18; 136:5; 136:7; 149:2

# man of God

### Definition:

The expression “man of God” is a respectful way of referring to a prophet of Yahweh. It is also used to refer to an angel of Yahweh.

- When referring to a prophet, this could also be translated as “man who belongs to God” or “man whom God has chosen” or “man who serves God.”
- When referring to an angel this could also be translated as “messenger of God” or “your angel” or “heavenly being from God who looks like a man.”

(See also: angel, honor, prophet)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 23:12-14
- 1 Kings 12:22
- 1 Samuel 9:9-11

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0376, H0430, G04440, G23160

## Psalms References:

90:front

# Manasseh

### Definition:

Manasseh was the older son of Joseph. His descendants became one of the tribes of Israel.

- The name Manasseh is similar to the the Hebrew word meaning “to forget.”
- The tribe of Manasseh was often called the “half-tribe of Manasseh” because only part of the tribe settled in the land of Canaan, on the west side of the Jordan River. The other part of the tribe settled on the east side of the Jordan.
- One of the kings of Judah was also named Manasseh. King Manasseh was an evil king who sacrificed his own children as burnt offerings to false gods.
- God punished King Manasseh by allowing him to be captured by an enemy army. Manasseh turned back to God and destroyed the altars where idols were worshiped.
- Three other men named Manasseh are mentioned in the Old Testament. One of them was the grandfather of some Danites who were priests for false gods. The other two were men who lived during the time of Ezra and were required to divorce their pagan wives, who had influenced them to worship false gods.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Joseph, Ephraim, twelve tribes of Israel)

### Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 15:9
- Deuteronomy 3:12-13
- Genesis 41:51
- Genesis 48:1-2
- Judges 1:27-28

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4519, H4520, G31280

## Psalms References:

60:7; 80:2; 108:8

# manna

### Definition:

Manna was a white, grain-like food that God provided for the Israelites to eat during the 40 years of living in the wilderness after they left Egypt.

- Manna looked like white flakes which appeared each morning on the ground under the dew. It tasted sweet, like honey.
- The Israelites gathered the manna flakes every day except on the Sabbath.
- On the day before the Sabbath, God told the Israelites to gather twice the amount of manna so they would not have to gather it on their day of rest.
- The word “manna” means “what is it?”
- In the Bible, manna is also referred to as “bread from heaven” and “grain from heaven.”

### Translation Suggestions

- Other ways to translate this term could include “thin white flakes of food” or “food from heaven.”
- Also consider how this term is translated in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: bread, desert, grain, heaven, Sabbath)

### Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 8:3
- Exodus 16:27
- Hebrews 9:3-5
- John 6:30-31
- Joshua 5:12

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4478, G31310

## Psalms References:

78:intro; 78:24

# marriage, marry, married, wedding

### Definition:

The term “marriage” refers to the formal union between a man and a woman in which they are joined together in a publicly recognized, and often legally recognized, relationship.

- The marriage relationship originated with God. God instituted the marriage relationship and he initiated the first marriage between Adam and Eve.
- God instituted marriage for several reasons. Some of the reasons that God instituted marriage are so that children would have a healthy and secure environment in which to be raised, so that people would have a visual earthly demonstration of his relationship with his covenant people and so that men and women who are married to each other can help each other and complement the others strengths and weaknesses.
- In a marriage ceremony (called a “wedding”) the bridegroom is the **man** who will marry the bride (the **woman**).
- The Bible teaches that marriage should not be prohibited.
- God strictly prohibits adultery in both the Old and the New Testament.
- The New Testament teaches that people who believe in Jesus should not marry unbelievers.
- Jesus taught that there will be no marriage in heaven.

### Translation Suggestions:

Use the term that your language uses to refer to the marriage relationship between a man and a woman.

(See also: bridegroom, bride, adultery, Eve, Adam)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2859

## Psalms References:

78:63

# meditate, meditation

### Definition:

"The term meditate" means to spend time thinking about something carefully and deeply.

- This term is often used in the Bible to refer to thinking about God and his teachings.
- Psalm 1 says that the person who meditates on the law of the Lord "day and night" will be greatly blessed.

### Translation Suggestions:

- To "meditate on" could be translated as to "think about carefully and deeply" or to "consider thoughtfully" or to "think about often."
- The noun form is "meditation" and could be translated as "deep thoughts." A phrase like "meditation of my heart" could be translated as "what I think deeply about" or "what I often think about."

### Bible References:

- Genesis 24:63
- Joshua 1:8-9
- Psalm 1:1-2
- Psalms 119:15

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H1897, H1900, H1902, H7742, H7878, H7879, H7881

## Psalms References:

1:2; 4:4; 19:14; 35:28; 49:3; 63:6; 64:9; 71:24; 77:3; 77:6; 77:12; 104:34; 107:43; 119:15; 119:23; 119:27; 119:48; 119:78; 119:97; 119:99; 119:148; 143:5; 145:5

# meek, meekness

### Definition:

The term “meek” describes a person who is gentle, submissive, and willing to suffer injustice. Meekness is the ability to be gentle even when harshness or force might seem appropriate.

- Meekness is often associated with humility.
- This term could also be translated as “gentle” or “mild-mannered” or “sweet-tempered.”
- The term “meekness” could be translated as “gentleness” or “humility.”

(See also: humble)

### Bible References:

- 1 Peter 3:15-17
- 2 Corinthians 10:1-2
- 2 Timothy 2:25
- Matthew 5:5
- Matthew 11:29
- Psalms 37:11

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6035, H6037, G42350, G42360, G42390, G42400

## Psalms References:

37:11

# Melchizedek

**Definition:**

During the time when Abram lived, Melchizedek was the king of the city of Salem (later "Jerusalem")

- Melchizedek's name means "king of righteousness" and his title "king of Salem" means "king of peace."
- He was also called a "priest of God Most High."
- Melchizedek is first mentioned in the Bible when he served Abram bread and wine after Abram rescued his nephew Lot from powerful kings. Abram gave Melchizedek one-tenth of the plunder from his victory.
- In the New Testament, Melchizedek is described as someone who had no father or mother. He was called a priest and king who will reign forever.
- The New Testament also says that Jesus is a priest according to the priestly "order of Melchizedek." Jesus was not descended from Levi as the Israelite priests were. His priesthood is directly from God, as Melchizedek's was.
- Based on these descriptions of him in the Bible, Melchizedek was a human priest who was also chosen by God to represent or point forward to Jesus, the eternal king of peace and righteousness and our great high priest.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Abraham, everlasting, high priest, Jerusalem, Levite, priest, righteous)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 14:18
- Hebrews 6:20
- Hebrews 7:17
- Psalm 110:4

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H4442, G31980

## Psalms References:

110:4

# mercy, merciful

### Definition:

The terms “mercy” and “merciful” refer to helping people who are in need, especially when they are in a lowly or humbled condition.

- The term “mercy” can also include the meaning of not punishing people for something they have done wrong.
- A powerful person such as a king is described as “merciful” when he treats people kindly instead of harming them.
- Being merciful also means to forgive someone who has done something wrong against us.
- We show mercy when we help people who are in great need.
- God is merciful to us, and he wants us to be merciful to others.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “mercy” could be translated as “kindness” or “compassion” or “pity.”
- The term “merciful” could be translated as “showing pity” or “being kind to” or “forgiving.”
- To “show mercy to” or “have mercy on” could be translated as “treat kindly” or “be compassionate toward.”

(See also: compassion, forgive)

### Bible References:

- 1 Peter 1:3-5
- 1 Timothy 1:13
- Daniel 9:17
- Exodus 34:6
- Genesis 19:16
- Hebrews 10:28-29
- James 2:13
- Luke 6:35-36
- Matthew 9:27
- Philippians 2:25-27
- Psalms 41:4-6

- Romans 12:1

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 19:16 They (the prophets) all told the people to stop worshiping idols and to start showing justice and **mercy** to others.
- 19:17 He (Jeremiah) sank down into the mud that was in the bottom of the well, but then the king had **mercy** on him and ordered his servants to pull Jeremiah out of the well before he died.
- 20:12 The Persian Empire was strong but **merciful** to the people it conquered.
- 27:11 Then Jesus asked the law expert, “What do you think? Which one of the three men was a neighbor to the man who was robbed and beaten?” He replied, “The one who was **merciful** to him.”
- 32:11 But Jesus said to him, “No, I want you to go home and tell your friends and family about everything that God has done for you and how he has had **mercy** on you.”
- 34:9 “But the tax collector stood far away from the religious ruler, did not even look up to heaven. Instead, he pounded on his chest and prayed, ‘God, please be **merciful** to me because I am a sinner.’”

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H2551, H2603, H2604, H2616, H2617, H2623, H3722, H3727, H4627, H4819, H5503, H5504, H5505, H5506, H6014, H7349, H7355, H7356, H7359, G16530, G16550, G16560, G24330, G24360, G36280, G36290, G37410, G46980

## Psalms References:

6:9; 9:13; 40:11; 41:4; 41:10; 51:1; 78:38; 86:15; 102:13; 103:4; 103:8; 111:4; 116:5; 119:58

# Meshech

### Definition:

Meshech is the name of two men in the Old Testament.

- One Meshech was a son of Japheth.
- The other Meshech was a grandson of Shem.
- Meshech was also the name of a region of land, which was probably named after one of these men.
- The region of Meshech may have been located in part of what is now the country of Turkey.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **Japheth**, **Noah**, **Shem**)

### Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 1:5-7**
- **Ezekiel 27:12-13**
- **Genesis 10:2-5**
- Psalms 120:5

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H4851, H4902

## Psalms References:

120:5

# Mesopotamia, Aram Naharaim

**Definition:**

Mesopotamia is the area of land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Its location is in the region of the modern day country of Iraq.

- In the Old Testament, this region was called “Aram Naharaim.”
- The word “Mesopotamia” means “between rivers.” The phrase “Aram Naharaim” means “Aram of two rivers.”
- Abraham lived in the Mesopotamian cities of Ur and Haran before moving on to the land of Canaan.
- Babylon was another important city in Mesopotamia.
- The region called “Chaldea” was also part of Mesopotamia.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Aram, Babylon, Chaldea, Euphrates River)

**Bible References:**

- Acts 2:9
- Acts 7:1-3
- Genesis 24:10-11

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0763, G33180

## Psalms References:

60:front

# messenger

### Definition:

The term “messenger” refers to someone who is given a message to tell others.

- In ancient times, a messenger would be sent from the battlefield to tell people back in the city what was happening.
- An angel is a special kind of messenger whom God sends to give people messages. Some translations translate “angel” as “messenger.”
- John the Baptist was called a messenger who came before Jesus to announce the Messiah’s coming and to prepare people to receive him.
- Jesus’ apostles were his messengers to go share with other people the good news about the kingdom of God.

(See also: angel, **apostle**, **John (the Baptist)**)

### Bible References:

- **1 Kings 19:1-3**
- **1 Samuel 6:21**
- **2 Kings 1:1-2**
- **Luke 7:27**
- **Matthew 11:10**

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1319, H4397, H4398, H5046, H5894, H6735, H6737, H7323, H7971, G00320, G06520

## Psalms References:

78:49; 104:4

# Midian, Midianite

### Definition:

Midian was a son of Abraham and his wife Keturah. It is also the name of a people group and region located in the northern Arabian Desert to the south of the land of Canaan. The people of that group were called “Midianites.”

- When Moses first left Egypt, he went to the region of Midian where he met the daughters of Jethro and helped them water their flocks. Later Moses married one of Jethro’s daughters.
- Joseph was taken to Egypt by a group of Midianite slave traders.
- Many years later the Midianites attacked and raided the Israelites in the land of Canaan. Gideon led the Israelites in defeating them.
- Many of the modern-day Arabian tribes are descendants of this group.

(See also **Arabia**, Egypt, flock, **Gideon**, **Jethro**, Moses)

### Bible References:

- **Acts 7:30**
- **Exodus 2:16**
- **Genesis 25:1-4**
- **Genesis 36:34-36**
- **Genesis 37:28**
- **Judges 7:1**

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **16:3** But then the people forgot about God and started worshiping idols again. So God allowed the **Midianites**, a nearby enemy people group, to defeat them.
- **16:4** The Israelites were so scared, they hid in caves so the **Midianites** would not find them.
- **16:11** The man’s friend said, “This dream means that Gideon’s army will defeat the **Midianite** army!”
- **16:14** God confused the **Midianites**, so that they started attacking and killing each other.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4080, H4084, H4092

## Psalms References:

83:9

# might, mighty, mighty works

### Definition:

The terms “mighty” and “might” refer to having great strength or power.

- Often the word “might” is another word for “strength.” When talking about God, it can mean “power.”
- The phrase “mighty men” often refers to men who are courageous and victorious in battle. David’s band of faithful men who helped protect and defend him were often called “mighty men.”
- God is also referred to as the “mighty one.”
- The phrase “mighty works” usually refers to the amazing things God does, especially miracles.
- This term is related to the term “almighty,” which is a common description for God, meaning that he has complete power.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “mighty” could be translated as “powerful” or “amazing” or “very strong.”
- The phrase “his might” could be translated as “his strength” or “his power.”
- In Acts 7, Moses is described as a man who was “mighty in word and deed.” This could be translated as “Moses spoke powerful words from God and did miraculous things” or “Moses spoke God’s word powerfully and did many amazing things.”
- Depending on the context, “mighty works” could be translated as “amazing things that God does” or “miracles” or “God doing things with power.”
- The term “might” could also be translated as “power” or “great strength.”
- Do not confuse this term with the English word that is used to express a possibility, as in “It might rain.”

(See also: **Almighty**, miracle, **power**, **strength**)

### Bible References:

- **Acts 7:22**
- **Genesis 6:4**
- **Mark 9:38-39**
- **Matthew 11:23**

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0046, H0047, H0117, H0202, H0386, H0410, H0430, H0533, H0650, H1219, H1368, H1369, H1396, H1397, H1419, H2220, H2389, H2428, H3201, H3524, H3581, H3966, H4101, H5794, H5797, H6099, H6105, H6108, H6184, H7227, H7580, H8623, H8624, G14110, G14150, G14980, G24780, G24790, G29000, G29040, G31670, G31730

## Psalms References:

18:17; 19:5; 20:6; 24:8; 46:1; 54:1; 55:12; 59:3; 59:11; 59:16; 59:17; 62:7; 65:6; 66:3; 66:7; 68:28; 68:30; 68:34; 68:35; 69:4; 71:7; 71:18; 76:5; 77:14; 78:4; 78:25; 78:61; 78:65; 80:2; 84:7; 86:16; 88:4; 89:8; 89:10; 89:13; 89:21; 90:10; 90:11; 93:1; 93:4; 96:7; 99:4; 103:11; 103:20; 105:4; 105:24; 106:2; 110:2; 110:3; 111:6; 112:2; 117:2; 132:2; 132:5; 132:8; 135:10; 136:12; 136:18; 145:4; 145:6; 145:12; 147:5; 147:10; 147:13; 150:1; 150:2

# mind, mindful, remind, reminder, likeminded

### Definition:

The term “mind” refers to the part of a person that thinks and makes decisions.

- The mind of each person is the total of his or her thoughts and reasoning.
- To “have the mind of Christ” means to be thinking and acting as Jesus Christ would think and act. It means being obedient to God the Father, obeying the teachings of Christ, being enabled to do this through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- To “change his mind” means someone made a different decision or had a different opinion than he had previously.

### Translation Suggestions

- The term “mind” could also be translated as “thoughts” or “reasoning” or “thinking” or “understanding.”
- The expression “keep in mind” could be translated as “remember” or “pay attention to this” or “be sure to know this.”
- The expression “heart, soul, and mind” could also be translated as “what you feel, what you believe, and what you think about.”
- The expression “call to mind” could be translated as “remember” or “think about.”
- The expression “changed his mind and went” could also be translated as “decided differently and went” or “decided to go after all” or “changed his opinion and went.”
- The expression “double-minded” could also be translated as “doubting” or “unable to decide” or “with conflicting thoughts.”

(See also: believe, heart, soul)

### Bible References:

- Luke 10:27
- Mark 6:51-52
- Matthew 21:29
- Matthew 22:37
- James 4:8

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3629, H3820, H3824, H5162, H7725, G12710, G13740, G33280, G35250, G35400, G35630, G49930, G55900

## Psalms References:

31:12; 98:3; 119:113

# miracle, wonder, sign

### Definition:

A “miracle” is something amazing that is not possible unless God causes it to happen.

- Examples of miracles that Jesus did include calming a storm and healing a blind man.
- Miracles are sometimes called “wonders” because they cause people to be filled with wonder or amazement.
- The term “wonder” can also refer more generally to amazing displays of God’s power, such as when he created the heavens and the earth.
- Miracles can also be called “signs” because they are used as indicators or evidence that God is the all-powerful one who has complete authority over the universe.
- Some miracles were God’s acts of redemption, such as when he rescued the Israelites from being slaves in Egypt and when he protected Daniel from being hurt by lions.
- Other wonders were God’s acts of judgment, such as when he sent a worldwide flood in Noah’s time and when he brought terrible plagues on the land of Egypt during the time of Moses.
- Many of God’s miracles were the physical healings of sick people or bringing dead people back to life.
- God’s power was shown in Jesus when he healed people, calmed storms, walked on water, and raised people from the dead. These were all miracles.
- God also enabled the prophets and the apostles to perform miracles of healing and other things that were only possible through God’s power.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Possible translations of “miracles” or “wonders” could include “impossible things that God does” or “powerful works of God” or “amazing acts of God.”
- The frequent expression “signs and wonders” could be translated as “proofs and miracles” or “miraculous works that prove God’s power” or “amazing miracles that show how great God is.”
- Note that this meaning of a miraculous sign is different from a sign that gives proof or evidence for something. The two can be related.

(See also: power, prophet, apostle, sign)

### Bible References:

- 2 Thessalonians 2:8-10
- Acts 4:17
- Acts 4:22
- Daniel 4:1-3

- Deuteronomy 13:1
- Exodus 3:19-22
- John 2:11
- Matthew 13:58

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 16:8 Gideon asked God for two **signs** so he could be sure that God would use him to save Israel.
- 19:14 God did many **miracles** through Elisha.
- 37:10 Many of the Jews believed in Jesus because of this **miracle**.
- 43:6 “Men of Israel, Jesus was a man who did many mighty **signs** and **wonders** by the power of God, as you have seen and already know.”
- 49:2 Jesus did many **miracles** that prove he is God. He walked on water, calmed storms, healed many sick people, drove out demons, raised the dead to life, and turned five loaves of bread and two small fish into enough food for over 5,000 people.

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0226, H0852, H2368, H2858, H4150, H4159, H4864, H5251, H5824, H5953, H6381, H6382, H6383, H6395, H6725, H7560, H7583, H8047, H8074, H8539, H8540, G08800, G12130, G12290, G14110, G15690, G17180, G17700, G18390, G22850, G22960, G22970, G31670, G39020, G45910, G45920, G50590

## Psalms References:

9:1; 26:7; 40:5; 65:8; 72:18; 75:1; 77:11; 77:14; 78:4; 78:11; 78:12; 78:32; 78:43; 86:10; 88:10; 88:12; 89:5; 96:3; 98:1; 105:2; 105:5; 105:27; 106:7; 106:22; 107:24; 111:intro; 111:4; 114:intro; 118:23; 119:27; 135:9; 136:4; 139:14; 145:5

# Moab, Moabite

### Definition:

The term “Moab” refers to a people group that lived to the east of the Salt Sea. The book of Genesis describes this people group as the descendents of a man named “Moab,” who was the son of Lot’s elder daughter.

- In the book of Ruth, Elimelek and his family went to live in Moab because of the famine around Bethlehem.
- Ruth is called a “Moabite woman” because she was born in the country of Moab and was from that people group.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Bethlehem, Judea, Lot, Ruth, Salt Sea)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 19:37
- Genesis 36:34-36
- Ruth 1:1-2
- Ruth 1:22

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4124, H4125

## Psalms References:

60:8; 83:6; 108:9

# mock, mocker, mockery, ridicule, scoff at, laughingstock

**Definition:**

The terms “mock,” “ridicule,” and “scoff at” all refer to making fun of someone, especially in a cruel way.

- Mocking often involves imitating people’s words or actions with the intent to embarrass them or show contempt for them.
- The Roman soldiers mocked or ridiculed Jesus when they put a robe on him and pretended to honor him as king.
- A group of young people ridiculed or scoffed at Elisha when they called him a name, making fun of his bald head.
- The term “scoff at” can also refer to ridiculing an idea that is not considered believable or important.
- A “mocker” is someone who mocks and ridicules consistently.

**Bible References:**

- 2 Peter 3:4
- Acts 2:12-13
- Galatians 6:6-8
- Genesis 39:13-15
- Luke 22:63-65
- Mark 10:34
- Matthew 9:23-24
- Matthew 20:19
- Matthew 27:29

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 21:12 Isaiah prophesied that people would spit on, **mock**, and beat the Messiah.
- 39:5 The Jewish leaders all answered the high priest, “He deserves to die!” Then they blindfolded Jesus, spit on him, hit him, and **mocked** him.
- 39:12 The soldiers whipped Jesus, and put a royal robe and a crown made of thorns on him. Then they **mocked** him by saying, “Look, the King of the Jews!”
- 40:4 Jesus was crucified between two robbers. One of them **mocked** Jesus, but the other said, “Do you have no fear of God?”

- 40:5 The Jewish leaders and the other people in the crowd **mocked** Jesus. They said to him, “If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross and save yourself! Then we will believe you.”

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1422, H2048, H2049, H2778, H2781, H3213, H3887, H3931, H3932, H3933, H3934, H3944, H3945, H4167, H4485, H4912, H5058, H5607, H6026, H6711, H7046, H7048, H7814, H7832, H8103, H8148, H8437, H8595, G15920, G17010, G17020, G17030, G23010, G26060, G34560, G55120

## Psalms References:

2:4; 22:7; 35:16; 59:8; 73:8; 80:6; 102:8; 119:51

# Moses

### Definition:

Moses was a prophet and leader of the Israelite people for over 40 years. He was the leader of the Israelite people when they came out of Egypt, as described in the book of Exodus.

- When Moses was a baby, Moses' parents put him in a basket in the reeds of the Nile River to hide him from the Egyptian Pharaoh. Moses' sister Miriam watched over him there. Moses' life was spared when the pharaoh's daughter found him and took him to the palace to raise him as her son.
- God chose Moses to free the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and to lead them to the Promised Land.
- After the Israelites' escape from Egypt and while they were wandering in the desert, God gave Moses two stone tablets with the Ten Commandments written on them.
- Near the end of his life, Moses saw the Promised Land, but did not get to live in it, because he disobeyed God.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Miriam, Promised Land, Ten Commandments)

### Bible References:

- Acts 7:21
- Acts 7:30
- Exodus 2:10
- Exodus 9:1
- Matthew 17:4
- Romans 5:14

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 9:12 One day while **Moses** was taking care of his sheep, he saw a bush that was on fire.
- 12:5 **Moses** told the Israelites, "Stop being afraid! God will fight for you today and save you."
- 12:7 God told **Moses** to raise his hand over the sea and divide the waters.
- 12:12 When the Israelites saw that the Egyptians were dead, they trusted in God and believed that Moses was a prophet of God.

- 13:7 Then God wrote these Ten Commandments on two stone tablets and gave them to **Moses**.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H4872, H4873, G34750

## Psalms References:

77:20; 90:front; 99:6; 103:7; 105:26; 106:16; 106:23; 106:32

# Most High

### Definition:

The term “Most High” is a title for God. It refers to his greatness or authority. This title emphasizes God’s supreme authority and power over all creation.

- The meaning of this term is similar to the meaning of “Sovereign” or “Supreme.”
- The word “high” in this title does not refer to physical height or distance. It refers to greatness.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term can also be translated as “Most High God” or “Most Supreme being” or “God Most High” or “Greatest One” or “Supreme One” or “God, who is Greater than all.”
- If a word like “high” is used, make sure it does not refer to being physically high or tall.

(See also: God)

### Bible References:

- Acts 7:47-50
- Acts 16:16-18
- Daniel 4:17-18
- Deuteronomy 32:7-8
- Genesis 14:17-18
- Hebrews 7:1-3
- Hosea 7:16
- Lamentations 3:35
- Luke 1:32

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5945, G53100

## Psalms References:

7:8; 7:17; 9:2; 18:13; 21:7; 46:4; 47:2; 50:14; 57:2; 73:11; 77:10; 78:17; 78:35; 78:56; 82:6; 83:18; 87:5; 91:1; 91:9; 92:1; 97:9; 107:11

# mourn, mourner, weeping

### Definition:

The terms “mourn” and “mourning” refer to expressing deep grief, usually in response to the death of someone.

- In many cultures, mourning includes specific outward behaviors that show this sadness and grief.
- The Israelites and other people groups in ancient times expressed mourning through loud wailing and lamenting. They also wore rough clothing made of sackcloth and put ashes on themselves.
- Hired mourners, usually women, would loudly weep and wail from the time of death until well after the body was put in the tomb.
- The typical period of mourning was seven days, but could last as long as thirty days (as for Moses and Aaron) or seventy days (as for Jacob).
- The Bible also uses the term figuratively to talk about “mourning” because of sin. This refers to feeling deeply grieved because sin hurts God and people.

(See also: sackcloth, sin)

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 15:34-35
- 2 Samuel 1:11
- Genesis 23:2
- Luke 7:31-32
- Matthew 11:17

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0056, H0057, H0060, H0205, H0578, H0584, H0585, H1058, H1065, H1068, H1671, H1897, H1899, H4553, H4798, H5092, H5098, H5110, H5594, H6937, H6941, H8386, G23540, G28750, G36020, G39960, G39970

## Psalms References:

30:5; 30:11; 35:14; 38:6; 39:12; 42:3; 42:9; 43:2; 78:41; 78:64; 88:9; 102:9; 107:39; 116:8; 119:28; 126:6; 137:1

# multiply, multiplied, multiplication

### Definition:

The term “multiply” means to greatly increase in number. It can also mean to cause something to increase in amount, such as causing pain to multiply.

- God told animals and human beings to “multiply” and fill the earth. This was a command to reproduce many more of their own kind.
- Jesus made the bread and fish multiply in order to feed the 5,000 people. The amount of food kept increasing so that there was more than enough food to feed everyone.
- Depending on the context, this term could also be translated as “increase” or “cause to increase” or “greatly increase in number” or “become greater in number” or “become more numerous.”
- The phrase “greatly multiply your pain” could also be translated as “cause your pain to become more severe” or “cause you to experience much more pain.”
- To “multiply horses” means to “greedily keep acquiring more horses” or to “get large numbers of horses.”

### Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 8:1
- Genesis 9:7
- Genesis 22:17
- Hosea 4:6-7

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3254, H3527, H6280, H7231, H7233, H7235, H7680, G40520, G41290

## Psalms References:

16:4; 107:38; 115:14; 144:13

# myrrh

### Definition:

Myrrh is an oil or spice that is made from the resin of a myrrh tree that grows in Africa and Asia. It is related to frankincense.

- Myrrh was also used to make incense, perfume, and medicine, and to prepare dead bodies for burial.
- Myrrh was one of the gifts that the learned men gave to Jesus when he was born.
- Jesus was offered wine mixed with myrrh in order to ease the pain when he was crucified.

(See also: **frankincense**, **learned men**)

### Bible References:

- **Exodus 30:22-25**
- **Genesis 37:25-26**
- **John 11:1-2**
- **Mark 15:23**
- **Matthew 2:11-12**

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3910, H4753, G34640, G46660, G46690

## Psalms References:

45:8

# Naphtali

### Definition:

Naphtali was Jacob's sixth son. He was Bilhah's second son. His descendants became one of the tribes of Israel.

- The tribe descended from him was known as the "tribe of Naphtali" or "Naphtali" or "Naphtalites."
- The name Naphtali is similar to the Hebrew word meaning "to twist, wrestle."
- The tribe of Naphtali settled in the northern part of Canaan, between the tribes of Manassah and Asher. Its eastern border was on the western shoreline of the Sea of Chinnereth. When used as the name of a region of land, the term "Naphtali" refers to the land given to the tribe of Naphtali.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: twelve tribes of Israel, Jacob, Bilhah)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 4:15
- Deuteronomy 27:13-14
- Ezekiel 48:1-3
- Genesis 30:8
- Judges 1:33
- Matthew 4:13

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H5321, G35080

## Psalms References:

68:27

# Nathan

### Definition:

Nathan was a faithful prophet of God who lived while David was king over Israel.

- God sent Nathan to confront David after David sinned grievously against Uriah.
- Nathan rebuked David in spite of the fact that David was the king.
- David repented of his sin after Nathan confronted him.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: David, faithful, prophet, Uriah)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 17:1-2
- 2 Chronicles 9:29
- 2 Samuel 12:1-3
- Psalm 51:1

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 17:7 God sent the prophet **Nathan** to David with this message, “Because you are a man of war, you will not build this Temple for me.”
- 17:13 God was very angry about what David had done, so he sent the prophet **Nathan** to tell David how evil his sin was.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5416, G34810

## Psalms References:

51:front

# nation

### Definition:

In the Bible, a nation is a large group of people who share a common identity and speak the same language. The people of a nation often have the same ancestors and share a common ethnicity.

- In the Bible, a nation could be a country with an extensive government structure and defined boundaries (such as Egypt or Ethiopia), but usually it is more general and refers to a people group.
- Nations in the Bible included the Israelites, the Philistines, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Canaanites, the Romans, and the Greeks, among many others.
- Sometimes the word "nation" was used figuratively to refer to the ancestor of a certain people group, as when Rebekah was told by God that her unborn sons were "nations" that would fight against each other. This could be translated as "the founders of two nations" or the "ancestors of two people groups."
- When used in the plural in a general way, the word translated as "nations" often referred to the people who were not Israelites, that is, to Gentiles, the people who do not worship Yahweh. The context usually makes the meaning clear.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the word "nation" could also be translated as "people group" or "people" or "country."
- If a language has a term for "nation" that is distinct from these other terms, then that term can be used wherever it occurs in the Bible text, as long as it is natural and accurate in each context.
- The plural term "nations" can often be translated as "people groups."
- In certain contexts, this term could also be translated as "Gentiles" or "non-Jews."

(See also: Assyria, Babylon, Canaan, Gentile, Greek, people group, Philistines, Rome)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 14:15-17
- 2 Chronicles 15:6
- 2 Kings 17:11-12
- Acts 2:5
- Acts 13:19
- Acts 17:26

- Acts 26:4
- Daniel 3:4
- Genesis 10:2-5
- Genesis 27:29
- Genesis 35:11
- Genesis 49:10
- Luke 7:5
- Mark 13:7-8
- Matthew 21:43
- Romans 4:16-17

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0523, H0524, H0776, H1471, H3816, H4940, H5971, G02460, G10740, G10850, G14840

## Psalms References:

2:1; 2:8; 9:5; 9:15; 9:17; 9:19; 9:20; 10:16; 18:43; 18:49; 22:27; 22:28; 33:10; 33:12; 43:1; 44:2; 44:11; 44:14; 46:6; 46:10; 47:3; 47:8; 57:9; 59:5; 59:8; 66:7; 67:2; 67:4; 72:11; 72:17; 78:55; 79:1; 79:6; 79:10; 80:8; 82:8; 83:4; 86:9; 94:10; 96:3; 96:10; 98:2; 102:15; 105:13; 105:44; 106:5; 106:27; 106:35; 106:41; 106:47; 108:3; 110:6; 111:6; 113:4; 115:2; 117:1; 118:10; 126:2; 135:10; 135:15; 147:20; 149:7

# Negev

**Definition:**

The Negev is a desert region in the southern part of Israel, southwest of the Salt Sea.

- The original word means “the South,” and some English versions translate it this way.
- It could be that the “South” is not located where the Negev Desert is today.
- When Abraham lived in the city of Kadesh, he was in the Negev or southern region.
- Isaac was living in the Negev when Rebekah traveled to meet him and become his wife.
- The Jewish tribes of Judah and Simeon lived in this southern region.
- The largest city in the Negev region was Beersheba.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Abraham, Beersheba, Israel, Judah, Kadesh, Salt Sea, Simeon)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 12:9
- Genesis 20:1-3
- Genesis 24:62
- Joshua 3:14-16
- Numbers 13:17-20

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H5045, H6160

## Psalms References:

126:4

# neighbor, neighborhood, neighboring

### Definition:

The term “neighbor” usually refers to a person who lives nearby. It can also refer more generally to someone who lives in the same community or people group.

- A “neighbor” is someone who would be protected and treated kindly because he is part of the same community.
- In the New Testament parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus used the term “neighbor” figuratively, expanding its meaning to include all human beings, even someone who is considered an enemy.
- If possible, it is best to translate this term literally with a word or phrase that means “person who lives nearby.”

(See also: adversary, parable, people group, Samaria)

### Bible References:

- Acts 7:26-28
- Ephesians 4:25-27
- Galatians 5:14
- James 2:8
- John 9:8-9
- Luke 1:58
- Matthew 5:43
- Matthew 19:19
- Matthew 22:39

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5997, H7138, H7453, H7468, H7934, G10690, G20870, G40400, G41390

## Psalms References:

12:2; 15:3; 28:3; 31:11; 38:11; 44:13; 79:4; 79:12; 80:6; 89:41; 101:5

# new moon

### Definition:

The term “new moon” refers to the moon when it looks like a small, crescent-shaped sliver of light. This is the beginning phase of the moon as it moves in its orbit around the planet Earth at sunset. It also refers to the first day a new moon should be visible after the moon has been dark for a few days.

- In ancient times, new moons marked the beginnings of certain time periods, such as months.
- The Israelites celebrated a new moon festival that was marked by the blowing of a ram’s horn.
- The Bible also refers to this time as the “beginning of the month.”

(See also: month, earth, festival, horn, sheep)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 23:31
- 1 Samuel 20:5
- 2 Kings 4:23-24
- Ezekiel 45:16-17
- Isaiah 1:12-13

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2320, G33760, G35610

## Psalms References:

81:3

# noble, nobleman, royal official

### Definition:

The term “noble” refers to something that is excellent and of high quality. A “nobleman” is a person who belongs to a high political or social class. A man “of noble birth” is one who was born a nobleman.

- A nobleman was often an officer of the state, a close servant to the king.
- The term “nobleman” could also be translated by, “king’s official” or “government officer.”

### Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 23:20-21
- Daniel 4:36
- Ecclesiastes 10:17
- Luke 19:12
- Psalm 16:1-3

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0117, H1419, H2715, H3358, H3513, H5057, H5081, H6440, H6579, H7261, H8282, H8269, G09370, G21040

## Psalms References:

47:9; 68:31; 83:11; 146:3; 149:8

# oath, vow, swear, swearing, swear by, sworn

### Definition:

The term “oath” in the Bible refers to a formal promise, usually made in a legal or religious context, in which the person making the oath accepts some kind of accountability or punishment if he does not fulfill his promise. In the Bible, the term “swear” means to make an oath. A “vow” is a solemn promise or oath that a person makes to God.

- In a court of law, a witness often gives an oath to promise that whatever he says will be true and factual.
- In modern times, one meaning of the word “swear” is to use foul or vulgar language. This is never its meaning in the Bible.
- The term “swear by” means to use the name of something or someone as the basis or power on which the oath is made.
- Abraham and Abimelech swore an oath when they made a covenant together concerning the use of a well.
- Abraham told his servant to swear (formally promise) that he would find Isaac a wife from among Abraham’s relatives.
- God also made oaths in which he made promises to his people.
- If a person in ancient Israel made a vow to God, that person was obligated to fulfill the vow. The ancient Israelites believed that God might punish a person who did not fulfill a vow that he made.
- In ancient Israel, sometimes a person would ask God to protect him or provide for him in exchange for making the vow. However, the ancient Israelites did not believe that God was obligated to fulfill these requests.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “an oath” could also be translated as “a pledge” or “a solemn promise.”
- To “swear” could be translated as to “formally promise” or to “pledge” or to “commit to do something.”
- Other ways to translate “swear by my name” could include “make a promise using my name to confirm it.”
- To “swear by heaven and earth” could be translated as to, “promise to do something, stating that heaven and earth will confirm it.”
- Make sure the translation of “swear” or “oath” does not refer to cursing. In the Bible it does not have that meaning.
- Depending on the context, the term “vow” can be translated as “solemn promise” or “solemn oath” or “promise made to God.”

(See also: Abimelech, covenant, promise)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 21:23
- Genesis 24:3
- Genesis 31:51-53
- Genesis 47:31
- Luke 1:73
- Mark 6:26
- Matthew 5:36
- Matthew 14:6-7
- Matthew 26:72
- 1 Corinthians 7:27-28
- Acts 21:23
- Genesis 28:21
- Genesis 31:12-13
- Jonah 1:14-16
- Jonah 2:9-10
- Proverbs 7:14

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0422, H0423, H3027, H5375, H7621, H7650, G03320, G36600, G37270, G37280, H5087, H5088, G21710

## Psalms References:

15:4; 22:25; 24:4; 50:14; 56:12; 61:intro; 61:5; 61:8; 65:1; 66:13; 76:11; 89:3; 89:35; 89:49; 95:11; 102:8; 105:9; 110:4; 116:14; 116:18; 119:106; 132:2; 132:11

# Og

**Definition:**

Og is the name of a man who was an Amorite king who ruled over the land of Bashan.

- The Israelites conquered Og and his people and land.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Amorite, Bashan)

**Bible References:**

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H5747

## Psalms References:

135:11; 136:20

# oil

**Definition:**

Oil is a thick, clear liquid that can be taken from certain plants. In Bible times, oil usually came from olives.

- Olive oil was used for cooking, anointing, sacrifice, lamps, and medicine.
- In ancient times, olive oil was highly prized, and the possession of oil was considered a measurement of wealth.
- Make sure the translation of this term refers to the kind of oil that can be used in cooking, not motor oil. Some languages have different words for these different kinds of oil.

(See also: olive, sacrifice)

**Bible References:**

- 2 Samuel 1:21
- Exodus 29:2
- Leviticus 5:11
- Leviticus 8:1-3
- Mark 6:12-13
- Matthew 25:7-9

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H2091, H3323, H4887, H6671, H7246, H8081, G16370, G34640

## Psalms References:

23:5; 45:7; 55:21; 89:20; 92:10; 104:15; 109:18; 133:2; 141:5

# olive

**Definition:**

The olive is the small, oval fruit from an olive tree, which is mostly grown in the regions surrounding the Mediterranean Sea.

- Olive trees are a type of large evergreen shrub with tiny white flowers. They grow best in hot weather and can survive well with little water.
- The olive tree's fruit starts out green and changes to black as they ripen. Olives were useful for food and for the oil that could be extracted from them.
- Olive oil was used for cooking in lamps and for religious ceremonies.
- In the Bible, olive trees and branches are sometimes used figuratively to refer to people.

(See also: lamp, the sea, Mount of Olives)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 27:28-29
- Deuteronomy 6:10-12
- Exodus 23:10-11
- Genesis 8:11
- James 3:12
- Luke 16:6
- Psalms 52:8

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H2132, H3323, H8081, G00650, G16360, G16370, G25650

## Psalms References:

52:8; 128:3

# ordain, ordained, ordination, planned long ago, set up, prepared

**Definition:**

To ordain means to formally appoint a person for a special task or role. It also means to formally make a rule or decree.

- The term "ordain" often refers to formally appointing somebody as a priest, minister, or rabbi.
- For example, God ordained Aaron and his descendants to be priests.
- It can also mean to institute or establish something, such as a religious feast or covenant.
- Depending on the context, to "ordain" could be translated as to "assign" or to "appoint" or to "command" or to "make a rule" or to "institute."

(See also: command, covenant, decree, law, law, priest)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Kings 12:31-32
- 2 Samuel 17:13-14
- Exodus 28:40-41
- Numbers 3:3
- Psalms 111:7-9

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H3245, H4390, H6186, H6213, H6680, H7760, H8239, G12990, G25250, G42700, G42820

## Psalms References:

7:13; 38:17; 68:10; 89:29; 111:9

# oversee, overseer, keeper

### Definition:

The term “overseer” refers to a person who is in charge of the work and welfare of other people. In the Bible, often the term “keeper” means “overseer.”

- In the Old Testament, an overseer had the job of making sure the workers under him did their work well.
- In the New Testament, this term is used to describe leaders of the early Christian church. Their work was to take care of the spiritual needs of the church, making sure the believers received accurate biblical teaching.
- Paul refers to an overseer as being like a shepherd who takes care of the believers in a local church, who are his “flock.”
- The overseer, like a shepherd, keeps watch over the flock. He guards and protects the believers from false spiritual teaching and other evil influences.
- In the New Testament, the terms “overseers,” “elders,” and “shepherds/pastors” are different ways of referring to the same spiritual leaders.

### Translation Suggestions

- Other ways to translate this term could be “supervisor” or “caretaker” or “manager.”
- When referring to a leader of a local group of God’s people, this term could be translated with a word or phrase that means “spiritual supervisor” or “someone who takes care of the spiritual needs of a group of believers” or “person who oversees the spiritual needs of the Church.”

(See also: church, elder, pastor, shepherd)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 26:31-32
- 1 Timothy 3:2
- Acts 20:28
- Genesis 41:33-34
- Philippians 1:1

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5329, H6485, H6496, H7860, H8104, G19830, G19840, G19850

## Psalms References:

119:2; 121:3; 121:4; 121:5

# overtake

### Definition:

The term “overtake” and “overtook” refer to gaining control over someone or something. It usually includes the idea of catching up to something after pursuing it.

- When military troops “overtake” an enemy, it means they defeat that enemy in battle.
- When a predator overtakes its prey, it means that it pursues and catches its prey.
- If a curse “overtakes” someone, it means that whatever was said in that curse happens to the person
- If blessings “overtake” people, it means that those people experience those blessings.
- Depending on the context, “overtake” could be translated as “conquer” or “capture” or “defeat” or “catch up to” or “completely affect.”
- The past action “overtook” can be translated as “caught up to” or “came alongside of” or “conquered” or “defeated” or “caused harm to.”
- When used in a warning that darkness or punishment or terrors will overtake people because of their sin, it means that those people will experience these negative things if they do not repent.
- The phrase “My words have overtaken your fathers” means that the teachings that Yahweh gave to their ancestors will now cause the ancestors to receive punishment because they failed to obey those teachings.

(See also: bless, curse, prey, punish)

### Bible References:

- 2 Kings 25:4-5
- John 12:35

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0579, H0935, H1692, H4672, H5066, H5381, G26380, G29830

## Psalms References:

7:5; 35:8; 69:24

# palace, house

### Definition:

The term “palace” refers to the building or house where a king lived, along with his family members and servants.

- The high priest also lived in a palace complex, as mentioned in the New Testament.
- Palaces were very ornate, with beautiful architecture and furnishings.
- The buildings and furnishings of a palace were constructed of stone or wood, and often were overlaid with expensive wood, gold, or ivory.
- Many other people also lived and worked in the palace complex, which usually included several buildings and courtyards.

(See also: courtyard, high priest, king)

### Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 28:7-8
- 2 Samuel 11:2-3
- Daniel 5:5-6
- Matthew 26:3-5
- Psalms 45:8

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0759, H1002, H1004, H1055, H1406, H1964, H1965, G08330, G09330, G42320

## Psalms References:

45:8; 45:15; 101:7; 144:12

# palm

### Definition:

The term “palm” refers to a type of tall tree with long, flexible, leafy branches extending from the top in a fan-like pattern.

- The palm tree in the Bible usually refers to a type of palm tree that produces a fruit called a “date.” The leaves have a feather-like pattern.
- Palm trees typically grow in places that have a hot, humid climate. Their leaves stay green all year long.
- As Jesus was entering Jerusalem riding on a donkey, the people laid palm branches on the ground in front of him.
- Palm branches signified peace and the celebration of a victory.

(See also: donkey, Jerusalem, peace)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 6:29-30
- Ezekiel 40:14-16
- John 12:12-13
- Numbers 33:9

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3712, H8558, H8560, H8561, G54040

## Psalms References:

92:12

# parable

**Definition:**

The term “parable” usually refers to a short story or object lesson that is used to explain or teach a moral truth.

- Jesus used parables to teach his disciples. Although he also told parables to the crowds of people, he did not always explain the parable.
- A parable could be used to reveal truth to his disciples while hiding that truth from people like the Pharisees who did not believe in Jesus.
- The prophet Nathan told David a parable to show the king his terrible sin.
- The story of the Good Samaritan is an example of a parable that is a story. Jesus’ comparison of old and new wineskins is an example of a parable that was an object lesson to help the disciples understand Jesus’ teachings.

(See also: Samaria)

**Bible References:**

- Luke 5:36
- Luke 6:39
- Luke 8:4
- Luke 8:9-10
- Mark 4:1
- Matthew 13:3
- Matthew 13:10
- Matthew 13:13

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1819, H4912, G38500, G39420

## Psalms References:

78:2

# peace, peaceful, peacemaker

**Definition:**

The term “peace” refers to a state of being or a feeling of having no conflict, anxiety, or fearfulness. A person who is “peaceful” feels calm and assured of being safe and secure.

- In the Old Testament, the term “peace” often means a general sense of a person’s welfare, wellness, or wholeness.
- “Peace” can also refer to a time when people groups or countries are not at war with each other. These people are said to have “peaceful relations.”
- To “make peace” with a person or a group of people means to take actions to cause fighting to stop.
- A “peacemaker” is someone who does and says things to influence people to live at peace with each other.
- To be “at peace” with other people means being in a state of not fighting against those people.
- A good or right relationship between God and people happens when God saves people from their sin. This is called having “peace with God.”
- The greeting “grace and peace” was used by the apostles in their letters to their fellow believers as a blessing.
- The term “peace” can also refer to being in a good relationship with other people or with God.

**Bible References:**

- 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3
- Acts 7:26
- Colossians 1:18-20
- Colossians 3:15
- Galatians 5:23
- Luke 7:50
- Luke 12:51
- Mark 4:39
- Matthew 5:9
- Matthew 10:13

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 15:6 God had commanded the Israelites not to make a **peace** treaty with any of the people groups in Canaan.
- 15:12 Then God gave Israel **peace** along all its borders.
- 16:3 Then God provided a deliverer who rescued them from their enemies and brought **peace** to the land.
- 21:13 He (Messiah) would die to receive the punishment for other people's sin. His punishment would bring **peace** between God and people.
- 48:14 David was the king of Israel, but Jesus is the king of the entire universe! He will come again and rule his kingdom with justice and **peace**, forever.
- 50:17 Jesus will rule his kingdom with **peace** and justice, and he will be with his people forever.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H5117, H7961, H7962, H7965, H7999, H8001, H8002, H8003, H8252, G02690, G15140, G15150, G15160, G15170, G15180, G22720

## Psalms References:

4:8; 7:4; 28:3; 29:11; 34:14; 35:20; 35:27; 37:11; 37:37; 38:3; 55:18; 72:3; 72:7; 85:8; 85:10; 119:165; 120:6; 120:7; 122:6; 122:7; 122:8; 125:5; 128:6; 147:14

# people of God

### Definition:

The concept of the “people of God” in the Bible refers to people with whom God has established a covenant relationship.

- In the Old Testament, the phrase “people of God” refers to the nation of Israel. The nation of Israel was chosen by God and set apart from the other nations of the world in order to serve and obey him.
- In the New Testament, the phrase “people of God” refers to the “Church,” meaning everyone who believes in Jesus. This includes both Jews and Gentiles. In the New Testament, sometimes this group of people is called the “sons of God” or “children of God.”
- When God uses the phrase “my people,” he is referring to people who have a covenant relationship with him. God’s people are chosen by him, and he wants them to live in a way that is pleasing to him.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “people of God” could be translated as “God’s people” or “the people who worship God” or “people who serve God” or “people who belong to God.”
- When God says “my people” other ways to translate it could include “the people I have chosen” or “the people who worship me” or “the people who belong to me.”
- Similarly, “your people” could be translated as “the people who belong to you” or “the people you chose to belong to you.”
- Also “his people” could be translated as “the people who belong to him” or “the people God chose to belong to himself.”

(See also: Israel, people group)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:2
- Acts 7:34
- Acts 7:51-53
- Acts 10:36-38
- Daniel 9:24-25
- Isaiah 2:5-6
- Jeremiah 6:20-22
- Joel 3:16-17
- Micah 6:3-5

- **Revelation 13:7-8**

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0430, H5971, G23160, G29920

## Psalms References:

111:intro

# Peor, Mount Peor, Baal Peor

**Definition:**

The terms “Peor” and “Mount Peor” refer to a mountain located northeast of the Salt Sea, in the region of Moab.

- The name “Beth Peor” was the name of a city, probably located on that mountain or near it. This was where Moses died after God showed him the Promised Land.
- “Baal Peor” was a false god of the Moabites that they worshiped at Mount Peor. The Israelites also started worshiping this idol and God punished them for it.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Baal, false god, Moab, Salt Sea, worship)

**Bible References:**

- Numbers 23:28-30
- Numbers 31:16-17
- Psalms 106:28-29

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1047, H1187, H6465

## Psalms References:

106:28

# perfect, complete

### Definition:

In the New Testament, the term “perfect” means to be mature in our Christian life. To perfect something means to work at it until it is excellent and without flaws. Old Testament sacrifices needed to be “perfect” or “complete,” that is, without blemish.

- Being perfect and mature means that a Christian is obedient, not sinless.
- The term “perfect” also has the meaning of being “complete” or “whole.”
- The New Testament book of James states that persevering through trials will produce completeness and maturity in the believer.
- When Christians study the Bible and obey it, they will become more spiritually perfect and mature because they will be more like Christ in their character.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated as “without flaw” or “without error” or “flawless” or “without fault” or “not having any faults.”

(See also: **blemish**)

### Bible References:

- **Hebrews 12:2**
- **James 3:2**
- **Matthew 5:46-48**
- Psalms 19:7-8

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3632, H3634, H4359, H8003, H8503, H8537, H8549, H8552, G01990, G26750, G26760, G36470, G50460, G50470, G50480, G50500

## Psalms References:

18:30; 18:32; 19:7; 50:2; 64:6; 137:8

# perish

### Definition:

The term “perish” means to die or be destroyed, usually as the result of violence or disaster. In the New Testament, it often has the spiritual meaning of being lost or separated from the people of God.

### Spiritual Meaning of “Perish:”

- People who are “perishing” are those who have refused to trust in Jesus for their salvation.
- Those who “perish” will not live eternally with God in heaven. Instead, they will live eternally in hell under God’s punishment.
- Everyone will die physically, but only those who do not trust in Jesus for their salvation will perish eternally.
- When “perish” is used in a spiritual sense, make sure that your translation expresses this differently than dying physically.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate this term could include “be lost from God’s people,” “die eternally,” “be punished in hell,” or “be destroyed.”
- Try to use a term or expression that does not only mean “die physically” or “cease to exist.”

(See also: death, everlasting)

### Bible References:

- 1 Peter 1:23
- 2 Corinthians 2:16-17
- 2 Thessalonians 2:10
- Jeremiah 18:18
- Psalms 49:18-20
- Zechariah 9:5-7
- Zechariah 13:8

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0006, H0007, H0008, H1478, H1820, H1826, H5486, H5595, H6544, H8045, G05990, G06220, G06840, G08530, G13110, G27040, G48810, G53560

## Psalms References:

1:6; 2:12; 9:3; 9:6; 9:18; 10:16; 37:20; 41:5; 49:10; 68:2; 73:19; 73:27; 80:16; 83:17; 90:7; 92:9; 102:26; 112:10; 119:92; 119:176; 146:4

# persecute

**Definition:**

The terms “persecute” and “persecution” refer to continually treating a person or a certain group of people in a harsh way that causes harm to them.

- Persecution can be against one person or many people and usually involves repeated, persistent attacks.
- The Israelites were persecuted by many different people groups Who attacked them, captured them, and stole things from them.
- People often persecute other people who have different religious beliefs or who are weaker.
- The Jewish religious leaders persecuted Jesus because they did not like what he was teaching.
- After Jesus went back to heaven, the Jewish religious leaders and the Roman government persecuted his followers.
- The term “persecute” could also be translated as “keep oppressing” or “treat harshly” or “continually mistreat.”
- Ways to translate “persecution” could include, “harsh mistreatment” or “oppression” or “persistent hurtful treatment”

(See also: **Christian**, **church**, **oppress**, **Rome**)

**Bible References:**

- **Acts 7:52**
- **Acts 13:50**
- **Galatians 1:13-14**
- **John 5:16-18**
- **Mark 10:30**
- **Matthew 5:10**
- **Matthew 5:43-45**
- **Matthew 10:22**
- **Matthew 13:20-21**
- **Philippians 3:6**

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 33:7 “The rocky ground is a person who hears God’s word and accepts it with joy. But when he experiences hardship or **persecution**, he falls away.”
- 45:6 That day many people in Jerusalem started **persecuting** the followers of Jesus, so the believers fled to other places.
- 46:2 Saul heard someone say, “Saul! Saul! Why do you **persecute** me?” Saul asked, “Who are you, Master?” Jesus replied to him, “I am Jesus. You are **persecuting** me!”
- 46:4 But Ananias said, “Master, I have heard how this man has **persecuted** the believers.”

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1814, H7291, H7852, G13750, G13760, G13770, G15590, G23470

## Psalms References:

3:1; 42:9; 55:3; 69:26

# perverse, perversion, pervert, depraved, malicious, devious, dishonest, distortion

### Definition:

The term “perverse” is used to describe a person or action that is morally crooked or twisted. The term “perversely” means “in a perverse manner.” To “pervert” something means to twist it or turn it away from what is right or good.

- Someone or something that is perverse has deviated from what is good and right.
- In the Bible, the Israelites acted perversely when they disobeyed God. They often did this by worshiping false gods.
- Any action which is against God’s standards or behavior is considered perverse.
- Ways to translate “perverse” could include “morally twisted” or “immoral” or “turning away from God’s straight path,” depending on the context.
- “Perverse speech” could be translated as “speaking in an evil way” or “deceitful talk” or “immoral way of talking.”
- “Perverse people” could be described as “immoral people” or “people who are morally deviant” or “people who continually disobey God.”
- The phrase “acting perversely” could be translated as “behaving in an evil way” or “doing things against God’s commands” or “living in a way that rejects God’s teachings.”
- The term “pervert” could also be translated as “cause to be corrupt” or “turn into something evil.”

(See also: corrupt, deceive, disobey, evil, turn)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 8:47
- 1 Samuel 20:30
- Job 33:27-28
- Luke 23:2
- Psalms 101:4-6

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1942, H2015, H3868, H4297, H5186, H5557, H5558, H5753, H5766, H5773, H5791, H6140, H6141, H8138, H8397, H8419, G12940

## Psalms References:

101:4

# Pharaoh, king of Egypt

### Definition:

In ancient times, the kings who ruled over the country of Egypt were called pharaohs.

- Altogether, over 300 pharaohs ruled Egypt for more than 2,000 years.
- These Egyptians kings were very powerful and wealthy.
- Several of these pharaohs are mentioned in the Bible.
- Often this title is used as a name rather than as a title. In these cases, it is capitalized and written as “Pharaoh.”

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: egypt, king)

### Bible References:

- Acts 7:9-10
- Acts 7:13
- Acts 7:21
- Genesis 12:15
- Genesis 40:7
- Genesis 41:25

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 8:6 One night, the **Pharaoh**, which is what the Egyptians called their kings, had two dreams that disturbed him greatly.
- 8:8 **Pharaoh** was so impressed with Joseph that he appointed him to be the second most powerful man in all of Egypt!
- 9:2 So the **Pharaoh** who was ruling over Egypt at that time made the Israelites slaves to the Egyptians.
- 9:13 “I will send you to **Pharaoh** so that you can bring the Israelites out of their slavery in Egypt.”
- 10:2 Through these plagues, God showed __Pharaoh __ that he is more powerful than **Pharaoh** and all of Egypt’s gods.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4428, H4714, H6547, G53280

## Psalms References:

135:9; 136:15

# Philistia

**Definition:**

Philistia is the name of a large region in the land of Canaan, located along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

- The region was located along the very fertile coastal plain reaching from Joppa in the north to Gaza in the south. It was about 64 kilometers long and 16 kilometers wide.
- Philistia was occupied by the "Philistines," a powerful people group who were frequent enemies of the Israelites.

(See also: Philistines, **Gaza**, **Joppa**)

**Bible References:**

- **1 Chronicles 10:9-10**
- **Joel 3:4**
- Psalms 60:8-9

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0776 H6429 H6430

## Psalms References:

60:8; 83:7; 87:4; 108:9

# Philistines

**Definition:**

The Philistines were a people group who occupied a region known as Philistia along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Their name means “people of the sea.”

- There were five main Philistine cities: Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron, Gath, and Gaza.
- The city of Ashdod was in the northern part of Philistia, and the city of Gaza was in the southern part.
- The Philistines are probably best known for the many years they were at war against the Israelites.
- The judge Samson was a famous warrior against the Philistines, using supernatural strength from God.
- King David often led battles against the Philistines, including the time as a youth when he defeated the Philistine warrior, Goliath.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Ashdod, Ashkelon, David, Ekron, Gath, Gaza, Goliath, Salt Sea)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 18:9-11
- 1 Samuel 13:4
- 2 Chronicles 9:25-26
- Genesis 10:11-14
- Psalm 56:1-2

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H6429, H6430

## Psalms References:

56:front

# Phinehas

### Definition:

Phineas was the name of two men in the Old Testament.

- One of Aaron's grandsons was a priest named Phinehas, who strongly opposed the worship of false gods in Israel.
- Phineas saved the Israelites from a plague that Yahweh had sent to punish them for marrying Midianite women and worshiping their false gods.
- On several occasions Phinehas went with the Israelite army to destroy the Midianites.
- The other Phinehas mentioned in the Old Testament was one of the evil sons of Eli the priest during the time of the prophet Samuel.
- Phinehas and his brother Hophni were both killed when the Philistines attacked Israel and stole the Ark of the Covenant.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: ark of the covenant, Jordan River, Midian, Philistines, Samuel)

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 4:4
- Ezra 8:2
- Joshua 22:13-14
- Numbers 25:6-7

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H6372

## Psalms References:

106:30

# pit, pitfall, trench, cistern

### Definition:

A pit is a deep hole that has been dug in the ground.

- A “cistern” was a hole dug in order to hold water.
- People dig pits for the purpose of trapping animals or finding water.
- A pit can also be used as a temporary place to hold a prisoner.
- Sometimes the phrase “the pit” refers to the grave or to hell. Other times it may refer to “the abyss.”
- The term “pit” is also used figuratively in phrases such as, “pit of destruction” which describes being trapped in a disastrous situation or being deeply involved in sinful, destructive practices.

(See also: **abyss**, **hell**, **prison**)

### Bible References:

- **Genesis 37:21-22**
- **Job 33:18**
- **Luke 6:39**
- **Proverbs 1:12**

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0875, H0953, H1356, H1475, H2352, H4087, H4113, H4379, H6354, H7585, H7745, H7816, H7825, H7845, H7882, G00120, G09990, G54210

## Psalms References:

7:15; 9:15; 16:10; 28:1; 30:3; 30:9; 35:7; 40:2; 49:9; 55:23; 57:6; 69:15; 88:4; 88:6; 94:13; 103:4; 119:85; 140:10; 143:7

# plague

### Definition:

Plagues are events which cause suffering or death to a large number of people. Often a plague is a disease that spreads quickly and causes many people to die before it can be stopped.

- Many plagues have natural causes, but some were sent by God to punish people for sin.
- In the time of Moses, God sent ten plagues against Egypt to force Pharaoh to let Israel leave Egypt. These plagues included water turning into blood, physical diseases, destruction of crops by insects and hail, three days of complete darkness, and death of the firstborn sons.
- This could also be translated as “widespread disasters” or “widespread disease,” depending on the context.

(See also: hail, Israel, Moses, Pharaoh)

### Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 24:13-14
- Exodus 9:14
- Genesis 12:17-20
- Luke 21:11
- Revelation 9:18

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1698, H4046, H4194, H4347, H5061, H5062, H5063, G30610, G41270

## Psalms References:

38:11; 39:10; 78:50; 91:3; 91:6; 91:10; 106:29; 106:30

# plea, plead, please, beg, implore

### Definition:

The terms “plead” and “pleading” refer to urgently asking someone to do something. A “plea” is an urgent request.

- Pleading often implies that the person feels in very great need or strongly desires help.
- People can plead or make an urgent appeal to God for mercy or to ask him to grant something, either for themselves or someone else.
- Other ways to translate this could include “beg” or “implore” or “urgently ask.”
- The term “plea” could also be translated as “urgent request” or “strong urging.”
- Make sure it is clear in the context that this term does not refer to begging for money.

### Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 8:3-5
- Judges 6:31
- Luke 4:39
- Proverbs 18:17

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1777, H2603, H3198, H4941, H4994, H6279, H6293, H6664, H6419, H7378, H7379, H7775, H8199, H8467, H8469, G11890, G17930, G20650, G38700

## Psalms References:

28:2; 28:6; 30:8; 31:22; 40:13; 43:1; 55:1; 74:22; 80:14; 86:6; 116:1; 116:4; 118:25; 119:76; 119:108; 119:154; 119:170; 122:8; 142:1; 143:1

# plow, plower, plowman, plowmen, plowshare, unplowed

### Definition:

A “plow” is a farm tool that is used for breaking up soil to prepare a field for planting.

- Plows have sharp, pointed prongs that dig into the soil. They usually have handles that the farmer uses to guide the plow.
- In Bible times, plows were usually pulled by a pair of oxen or other work animals.
- Most plows were made of hard wood, except for the sharp points which were made of a metal, such as bronze or iron.

(See also: bronze, ox)

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 8:10-12
- Deuteronomy 21:4
- Luke 9:62
- Luke 17:7
- Psalm 141:5-7

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0406, H0855, H2758, H2790, H5215, H5647, H5656, H5674, H6213, H6398, G07220, G07230

## Psalms References:

129:3

# plunder, plundered, spoil, spoils

### Definition:

The terms “spoil” and “plunder,” when used as a noun, refer to things that are taken by force from a person or place, normally during a time of war. The verb “plunder” means to take things from a person or place, normally by force and during a time of war.

- When translating the verb “plunder” in the context of war you should use a different word than “steal” as “to steal” normally implies wrong doing and to “plunder”” something in war is not necessarily sinful.
- You could translate the verb “plunder” with a word such as “pillage” or with a descriptive phrase “take the goods of.”
- You could translate the term “spoil” with a descriptive phrase such as “plundered goods” or “plundered things.”
- Depending on context, you could translate the term “plunder” with a descriptive phrase such as “captured goods” or with some other descriptive phrase or with a term such as “spoil” or “spoils.”
- Your language may have a word for things that are taken by force and/or in a time of war.

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0957, H0962, H7998

## Psalms References:

44:10; 68:12; 76:5; 89:41; 109:11; 119:162

# possess, possessed, possession, dispossess

### Definition:

The terms “possess” and “possession” usually refer to owning something. They can also mean to gain control over something or occupy an area of land.

- In the Old Testament, this term is often used in the context of “possessing” or “taking possession of” an area of land.
- When Yahweh commanded the Israelites to “possess” the land of Canaan, it meant that they should go into the land and live there. This involved first conquering the Canaanite peoples who were living on that land.
- Yahweh told the Israelites that he had given them the land of Canaan as “their possession.” This could also be translated as “their rightful place to live.”
- The people of Israel were also called Yahweh’s “special possession.” This means that they belonged to him as his people whom he had specifically called to worship and serve him.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “possess” could also be translated as “own” or “have” or “have charge over.”
- The phrase “take possession of” could be translated as “take control of” or “occupy” or “live on,” depending on the context.
- When referring to things that people own, “possessions” could be translated as “belongings” or “property” or “owned things” or “things they owned.”
- When Yahweh calls the Israelites, “my special possession” this could also be translated as “my special people” or “people who belong to me” or “my people whom I love and rule.”
- The sentence, “they will become their possession” when referring to land, means “they will occupy the land” or “the land will belong to them.”
- The expression, “found in his possession” could be translated as “that he was holding” or “that he had with him.”
- The phrase “as your possession” could also be translated as “as something that belongs to you” or “as a place where your people will live.”
- The phrase, “in his possession” could be translated as “that he owned” or “which belonged to him.”

(See also: Canaan, worship, inherit)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 6:70
- 1 Kings 9:17-19

- Acts 2:45
- Deuteronomy 4:5-6
- Genesis 31:36-37
- Matthew 13:44

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0270, H0272, H0834, H2505, H2631, H3027, H3423, H3424, H3425, H3426, H4180, H4181, H4672, H4735, H4736, H5157, H5159, H5459, H7069, G11390, G21920, G26970, G27220, G29320, G29330, G29350, G40470, G52240, G55640

## Psalms References:

2:8; 37:34; 44:3; 69:35; 83:12; 105:21; 105:44; 135:4

# praise, praised, praiseworthy

### Definition:

To praise someone is to express admiration and honor for that person.

- People praise God because of how great he is and because of all the amazing things he has done as the Creator and Savior of the world.
- Praise for God often includes being thankful for what he has done.
- Music and singing is often used as a way to praise God.
- Praising God is part of what it means to worship him.
- The term to “praise” could also be translated as to “speak well of” or to “highly honor with words” or to “say good things about.”
- The noun “praise” could be translated as “spoken honor” or “speech that honors” or “speaking good things about.”

(See also: worship)

### Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 1:3
- Acts 2:47
- Acts 13:48
- Daniel 3:28
- Ephesians 1:3
- Genesis 49:8
- James 3:9-10
- John 5:41-42
- Luke 1:46
- Luke 1:64-66
- Luke 19:37-38
- Matthew 11:25-27
- Matthew 15:29-31

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 12:13 The Israelites sang many songs to celebrate their new freedom and to **praise** God because he saved them from the Egyptian army.

- 17:8 When David heard these words, he immediately thanked and **praised** God because he had promised David this great honor and many blessings.
- 22:7 Zechariah said, "**Praise** God, because he has remembered his people!"
- 43:13 They (disciples) enjoyed **praising** God together and they shared everything they had with each other.
- 47:8 They put Paul and Silas in the most secure part of the prison and even locked up their feet. Yet in the middle of the night, they were singing songs of **praise** to God.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H1319, H7121, H8416, G29800, G38530

## Psalms References:

7:17; 9:2; 9:11; 9:14; 18:3; 18:49; 21:13; 22:3; 22:22; 22:23; 22:25; 22:26; 28:7; 30:4; 30:9; 30:12; 33:1; 34:1; 35:18; 35:28; 40:3; 40:16; 41:13; 42:4; 44:8; 47:6; 47:7; 48:1; 48:10; 49:18; 51:15; 54:6; 56:4; 56:10; 63:3; 63:5; 65:1; 66:2; 66:8; 69:30; 69:34; 70:4; 71:6; 71:8; 71:14; 71:22; 74:21; 75:9; 78:4; 78:63; 79:13; 84:4; 89:5; 92:1; 94:4; 96:4; 99:3; 100:4; 101:1; 102:18; 102:21; 104:33; 106:2; 106:12; 106:47; 107:32; 109:1; 109:30; 111:10; 113:1; 113:3; 115:17; 117:1; 119:62; 119:164; 119:171; 119:175; 135:1; 138:2; 140:13; 142:7; 145:2; 145:3; 145:21; 146:1; 146:2; 147:1; 147:12; 148:1; 148:2; 148:3; 148:4; 148:5; 148:7; 148:13; 148:14; 149:1; 149:3; 150:1; 150:2; 150:3; 150:4; 150:5; 150:6

# pray, prayer

### Definition:

The terms “pray” and “prayer” refer to talking with God. These terms are also used to refer to people trying to talk to a false god.

- People can pray silently, talking to God with their thoughts, or they can pray aloud, speaking to God with their voice. Sometimes prayers are written down, such as when David wrote his prayers in the Book of Psalms.
- Prayer can include asking God for mercy, for help with a problem, and for wisdom in making decisions.
- Often people ask God to heal people who are sick or who need his help in other ways.
- People also thank and praise God when they are praying to him.
- Praying includes confessing our sins to God and asking him to forgive us.
- Talking to God is sometimes called “communing” with him as our spirit communicates with his spirit, sharing our emotions and enjoying his presence.
- This term could be translated as “talking to God” or “communicating with God.” The translation of this term should be able to include praying that is silent.

(See also: false god, forgive, praise)

### Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 3:9
- Acts 8:24
- Acts 14:26
- Colossians 4:4
- John 17:9
- Luke 11:1
- Matthew 5:43-45
- Matthew 14:22-24

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 6:5 Isaac **prayed** for Rebekah, and God allowed her to get pregnant with twins.
- 13:12 But Moses **prayed** for them, and God listened to his **prayer** and did not destroy them.
- 19:8 Then the prophets of Baal **prayed** to Baal, “Hear us, O Baal!”
- 21:7 Priests also **prayed** to God for the people.

- 38:11 Jesus told his disciples to **pray** that they would not enter into temptation.
- 43:13 The disciples continually listened to the teaching of the apostles, spent time together, ate together, and **prayed** with each other.
- 49:18 God tells you to **pray**, to study his word, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0559, H0577, H1156, H2470, H3863, H3908, H4994, H6279, H6293, H6419, H6739, H7592, H7878, H7879, H7881, H8034, H8605, G01540, G11620, G11890, G17830, G20650, G21710, G21720, G38700, G43350, G43360

## Psalms References:

4:1; 4:3; 5:2; 6:9; 14:4; 17:1; 17:6; 18:3; 32:6; 35:13; 39:12; 42:8; 50:15; 54:2; 55:1; 55:16; 61:1; 65:2; 66:19; 66:20; 69:13; 72:15; 72:20; 80:4; 84:8; 86:1; 86:5; 86:6; 88:2; 88:13; 90:front; 102:1; 102:17; 109:4; 109:7; 116:16; 141:2; 141:5; 142:front; 143:1

# prey, prey on

### Definition:

The term “prey” refers to something that is hunted, usually an animal that is used for food.

- In a figurative sense, “prey” can refer to a person who is taken advantage of, abused, or oppressed by a more powerful person.
- To “prey on” people means to take advantage of them by oppressing them or stealing something from them.
- The term “prey” could also be translated as “hunted animal” or “hunted one” or “victim.”

(See also: **oppress**)

### Bible References:

- **Jeremiah 12:9**
- Psalms 104:21

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0400, H0957, H0962, H2963, H2964, H5706, H5861, H7997, H7998

## Psalms References:

76:4; 104:21; 124:6

# pride, boastful

### Definition:

The term “pride,” in this sense, refers to having a feeling of great satisfaction or delight in someone or something. The term “boast,” when used with this sense, means to greatly praise something or someone and talk about the things about it or them that are praiseworthy.

- The term “pride,” when used with a positive meaning, refers to having great delight in something or to having a feeling of great delight or satisfaction in what someone has achieved or in their admirable qualities or abilities.
- The expression “take pride in your work” means to find joy in doing your work well.
- Someone can be proud of what he has done without being prideful about it. Some languages have different words for the positive meaning of “pride” and the negative meaning of “pride.”
- A humble person does not boast about himself or take pride in herself but rather boasts about God and what God has done and is doing.
- God urged the Israelites not to boast about their wealth, their strength, their fruitful fields, or their laws but to instead “boast” or be proud about the fact that they know him.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The positive meaning of “pride” could be translated as “joy” or “satisfaction” or “pleasure.”
- To be “proud of” could also be translated as “happy with” or “satisfied with” or “joyful about (the accomplishments of).”
- The phrase “take pride in your work” could be translated as “find satisfaction in doing your work well.”
- The expression “take pride in Yahweh” could also be translated as “be delighted about all the wonderful things Yahweh has done” or “be happy about how amazing Yahweh is.”
- The positive meaning of “boasting in” could be translated as “glorying in” or “rejoicing in.”

(See also:humble, joy, **proud negative sense**)

### Bible References:

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **4:2** They were very **proud**, and they did not care about what God said.

- 34:10 Then Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, God heard the tax collector’s prayer and declared him to be righteous. But he did not like the prayer of the religious leader. God will humble everyone who is **proud**, and he will lift up whoever humbles himself.”

### Word Data:

- Strong’s:

## Psalms References:

10:3; 44:8; 47:4; 106:5

# priest, priesthood

### Definition:

In the Bible, a priest was someone who was chosen to offer sacrifices to God on behalf of God's people. The "priesthood" was the name for the office or condition of being a priest.

- In the Old Testament, God chose Aaron and his descendants to be his priests for the people of Israel.
- The "priesthood" was a right and a responsibility that was passed down from father to son in the Levite clan.
- The Israelite priests had the responsibility of offering the people's sacrifices to God, along with other duties in the temple.
- Priests also offered regular prayers to God on behalf of his people and performed other religious rites.
- The priests pronounced formal blessings on people and taught them God's laws.
- In Jesus' time, there were different levels of priests, including the chief priests and the high priest.
- Jesus is our "great high priest" who intercedes for us in God's presence. He offered himself as the ultimate sacrifice for sin. This means that the sacrifices made by human priests are no longer needed.
- In the New Testament, every believer in Jesus is called a "priest" who can come directly to God in prayer to intercede for himself and other people.
- In ancient times, there were also pagan priests who presented offerings to false gods such as Baal.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term "priest" could be translated as "sacrifice person" or "God's intermediary" or "sacrificial mediator" or "person God appoints to represent him."
- The translation of "priest" should be different from the translation of "mediator."
- Some translations may prefer to always say something like "Israelite priest" or "Jewish priest" or "Yahweh's priest" or "priest of Baal" to make it clear that this does not refer to a modern-day type of priest.
- The term used to translate "priest" should be different from the terms for "chief priest" and "high priest" and "Levite" and "prophet."

(See also: Aaron, high priest, **mediator**, sacrifice)

### Bible References:

- **2 Chronicles 6:41**
- **Genesis 14:17-18**

- Genesis 47:22
- John 1:19-21
- Luke 10:31
- Mark 1:44
- Mark 2:25-26
- Matthew 8:4
- Matthew 12:4
- Micah 3:9-11
- Nehemiah 10:28-29
- Nehemiah 10:34-36
- Revelation 1:6

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 4:7 "Melchizedek, the **priest** of God Most High"
- 13:9 Anyone who disobeyed God's law could bring an animal to the altar in front of the Tent of Meeting as a sacrifice to God. A **priest** would kill the animal and burn it on the altar. The blood of the animal that was sacrificed covered the person's sin and made that person clean in God's sight. God chose Moses' brother, Aaron, and Aaron's descendants to be his **priests**.
- 19:7 So the **priests** of Baal prepared a sacrifice but did not light the fire.
- 21:7 An Israelite **priest** was someone who made sacrifices to God on behalf of the people as a substitute for the punishment of their sins. **Priests** also prayed to God for the people.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H3547, H3548, H3549, H3550, G07480, G07490, G24050, G24060, G24070, G24090, G24200

## Psalms References:

78:64; 99:6; 110:4; 132:9; 132:16

# prince, princess, governor, provincial governor, official, nobleman, noblemen, nobility

### Definition:

A “prince” is the son of a king. A “princess” is a daughter of a king.

- The term “prince” is often used figuratively to refer to a leader, ruler, or other powerful person.
- Because of Abraham’s wealth and importance, he was referred to as a “prince” by the Hittites he was living among.
- In the book of Daniel, the term “prince” is used in the expressions “prince of Persia” and “prince of Greece,” which in those contexts probably refer to powerful evil spirits who had authority over those regions.
- The archangel Michael is also referred to as a “prince” in the book of Daniel.
- Sometimes in the Bible Satan is referred to as “the prince of this world.”
- Jesus is called the “Prince of Peace” and the “Prince of Life.”
- In Acts 2:36, Jesus is referred to as “Lord and Christ” and in Acts 5:31 he is referred to as “Prince and Savior,” showing the parallel meaning of “Lord” and “Prince.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “prince” could include, “king’s son” or “ruler” or “leader” or “chieftain” or “captain.”
- When referring to angels, this could also be translated as “spirit ruler” or “leading angel.”
- When referring to Satan or other evil spirits, this term could also be translated as “evil spirit ruler” or “powerful spirit leader” or “ruling spirit,” depending on the context.

(See also: angel, **authority**, Christ, demon, lord, **power**, ruler, **Satan**, Savior, spirit)

### Bible References:

- **Acts 5:29-32**
- **Genesis 12:15**
- **Genesis 49:26**
- **Luke 1:52**

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0001, H0117, H0324, H2831, H3548, H4502, H5057, H5081, H5139, H5257, H5387, H5633, H5993, H6579, H7261, H7333, H7786, H8269, H8282, H8323, G07470, G07580, G14130, G31750

## Psalms References:

45:16; 68:27; 76:12; 82:7; 83:11; 105:22; 113:8; 118:9; 119:161; 148:11

# profane, profaned

### Definition:

To profane something means to act in a way that defiles, pollutes, or disrespects something that is holy.

- A profane person is one who acts in a way that is unholy and dishonoring of God.
- The verb to “profane” could be translated as to “treat as unholy” or to “be irreverent toward” or to “dishonor.”
- God told the Israelites that they “profaned” themselves with idols, meaning that the people were making themselves “unclean” or “dishonored” by this sin. They were also dishonoring God.
- Depending on the context, the adjective “profane” could be translated as “dishonoring” or “godless” or “unholy.”

(See also: defile, holy, **clean**)

### Bible References:

- **2 Timothy 2:16-18**
- **Ezekiel 20:9**
- **Malachi 1:10-12**
- **Matthew 12:5**
- **Numbers 18:30-32**

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2455, H2490, H2491, H5234, H8610, G09520, G09530

## Psalms References:

74:7; 89:31; 89:34; 89:39

# profit, profits, profited, profitable

### Definition:

Used in this sense, the terms “profit” and “profitable” refer to gaining some material thing through doing certain actions or behaviors. Something is “profitable” to someone if it enables them to earn or attain good material things.

- More specifically, the term “profit” often refers to money that is gained from doing business. A business is “profitable” if it gains more money than it spends.
- Actions are profitable if they cause material things to be gained for people.

(See also: worthy,profit-spiritual)

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “profit” could also be translated as “benefit” or “help” or “gain.”
- Depending on context, the term “profits” could be translated as “earnings” when referring to wages earned by working.
- The term “profitable” could be translated as “useful” or “beneficial” or “helpful.”
- The term “profited” could be translated as “gained.”
- To “profit from” something could be translated as “benefit from” or “gain money from.”
- In the context of a business, “profit” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “money gained” or “surplus of money” or “extra money.”

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1215, H3276, H4195, G12810, G20390, G27700, G27710, G36850, G37860, G48510, G48525, G55390, G56220, G56230, G56240

## Psalms References:

30:9

# promise, promised

### Definition:

When used as a verb, the term “promise” refers to the action of a person saying that he will do something in such way that he obligates himself to fulfill what he has said. When used as a noun, the term “promise” refers to the thing that a person obligates himself to do.

- The Bible records many promises that God has made for his people.
- Promises are an important part of formal agreements such as covenants.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “promise” could be translated as “commitment” or “assurance” or “guarantee.”
- To “promise to do something” could be translated as “assure someone that you will do something” or “commit to doing something.”

(See also: covenant, oath, vow)

### Bible References:

- Galatians 3:15-16
- Genesis 25:31-34
- Hebrews 11:9
- James 1:12
- Numbers 30:2

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 3:15 God said, “I **promise** I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are sinful from the time they are children.”Â
- 3:16 God then made the first rainbow as a sign of his **promise**. Every time the rainbow appeared in the sky, God would remember what he **promised** and so would his people.
- 4:8 God spoke to Abram and **promised** again that he would have a son and as many descendants as the stars in the sky. Abram believed God’s **promise**.
- 5:4 “Your wife, Sarai, will have a son—he will be the son of **promise**.”
- 8:15 The covenant **promises** that God gave to Abraham were passed on to Isaac, then to Jacob, and then to Jacob’s twelve sons and their families.

- 17:14 Though David had been unfaithful to God, God was still faithful to his **promises**.
- 50:1 Jesus **promised** he would return at the end of the world. Though he has not yet come back, he will keep his **promise**.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0559, H0562, H1696, H8569, G18430, G18600, G18610, G18620, G36700, G42790

## Psalms References:

15:intro; 77:8; 111:intro; 116:intro; 119:50; 119:57; 119:82

# Promised Land

### Definition:

The term “Promised Land” only occurs in the Bible stories, not the Bible text. It is an alternate way of referring to the land of Canaan which God had promised to give to Abraham and his descendants.

- When Abram was living in the city of Ur, God commanded him to go live in the land of Canaan. He and his descendants, the Israelites, lived there for many years.
- When a severe famine caused there to be no food in Canaan, the Israelites moved to Egypt.
- Four hundred years later, God rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and brought them back to Canaan again, the land God had promised to give them.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “Promised Land” can be translated as the “land that God said he would give to Abraham” or “land that God promised to Abraham” or “land God promised to his people” or “land of Canaan.”
- In the Bible text, this term occurs as some form of “the land God promised.”

(See also: Canaan, promise)

### Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 8:1-2
- Ezekiel 7:26-27

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 12:1 They (Israelites) were no longer slaves, and they were going to the **Promised Land**!
- 14:1 After God had told the Israelites the laws he wanted them to obey as part of his covenant with them, God began leading them from Mount Sinai toward the **Promised Land**, which was also called Canaan.
- 14:2 God had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give the **Promised Land** to their descendants, but now there were many people groups living there.
- 14:14 Then God led the people to the edge of the **Promised Land** again.
- 15:2 The Israelites had to cross the Jordan River to enter into the **Promised Land**.
- 15:12 After this battle, God gave each tribe of Israel its own section of the **Promised Land**.

- 20:9 This period of time when God's people were forced to leave the **Promised Land** is called the Exile.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0776, H3068, H3423, H5159, H5414, H7650

## Psalms References:

105:intro; 106:intro; 114:intro

# prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess

### Definition:

A “prophet” is a man who speaks God’s messages to people. A woman who does this is called a “prophetess.”

- Often prophets warned people to turn away from their sins and obey God.
- A “prophecy” is the message that the prophet speaks. To “prophesy” means to speak God’s messages.
- Often the message of a prophecy was about something that would happen in the future.
- Many prophecies in the Old Testament have already been fulfilled.
- In the Bible the collection of books written by prophets are sometimes referred to as “the prophets.”
- For example the phrase, “the law and the prophets” is a way of referring to all the Hebrew scriptures, which are also known as the “Old Testament.”
- An older term for a prophet was “seer” or “someone who sees.”
- Sometimes the term “seer” refers to a false prophet or to someone who practices divination.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “prophet” could be translated as “God’s spokesman” or “man who speaks for God” or “man who speaks God’s messages.”
- A “seer” could be translated as “person who sees visions” or “man who sees the future from God.”
- The term “prophetess” could be translated as “spokeswoman for God” or “woman who speaks for God” or “woman who speaks God’s messages.”
- Ways to translate “prophecy” could include, “message from God” or “prophet message.”
- The term “prophesy” could be translated as “speak words from God” or “tell God’s message.”
- The figurative expression, “law and the prophets” could also be translated as “the books of the law and of the prophets” or “everything written about God and his people, including God’s laws and what his prophets preached.” (See: synecdoche)
- When referring to a prophet (or seer) of a false god, it may be necessary to translate this as “false prophet (seer)” or “prophet (seer) of a false god” or “prophet of Baal,” for example.

(See also: Baal, **divination**, false god, **false prophet**, fulfill, law, vision)

### Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16
- Acts 3:25
- John 1:43-45
- Malachi 4:4-6
- Matthew 1:23
- Matthew 2:18
- Matthew 5:17
- Psalm 51:1

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 12:12 When the Israelites saw that the Egyptians were dead, they trusted in God and believed that Moses was a **prophet** of God.
- 17:13 God was very angry about what David had done, so he sent the **prophet** Nathan to tell David how evil his sin was.
- 19:1 Throughout the history of the Israelites, God sent them **prophets**. The **prophets** heard messages from God and then told the people God's messages.
- 19:6 All the people of the entire kingdom of Israel, including the 450 **prophets** of Baal, came to Mount Carmel.
- 19:17 Most of the time, the people did not obey God. They often mistreated the **prophets** and sometimes even killed them.
- 21:9 The **prophet** Isaiah **prophesied** that the Messiah would be born from a virgin.
- 43:5 "This fulfills the **prophecy** made by the **prophet** Joel in which God said, 'In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit.'"
- 43:7 "This fulfills the **prophecy** which says, 'You will not let your Holy One rot in the grave.'"
- 48:12 Moses was a great **prophet** who proclaimed the word of God. But Jesus is the greatest **prophet** of all. He is the Word of God.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H2372, H2374, H4853, H5012, H5013, H5016, H5017, H5029, H5030, H5031, H5197, G24950, G43940, G43950, G43960, G43970, G43980, G55780

## Psalms References:

51:front; 74:9; 105:15; 110:intro

# prosper, prosperity, prosperous

### Definition:

The term “prosper” generally refers to living well, whether it be physically, morally, emotionally, etc. This term often expresses the idea of being wealthy or successful in life.

- The term “prosperous” often refers to success in owning money and property or in producing everything needed for people to live well.
- In the Bible, the term “prosperous” also includes good health and being blessed with children.
- A “prosperous” city or country is one that has many people, good production of food, and businesses that bring in plenty of money.
- The Bible teaches that a person will prosper spiritually when he obeys God’s teachings. He will also experience the blessings of joy and peace. God does not always give people a lot of material wealth, but he will always prosper them spiritually as they follow his ways.
- Depending on the context, the term “prosper” could also be translated as “succeed spiritually” or “be blessed by God” or “experience good things” or “live well.”
- The term “prosperous” could also be translated as “successful” or “wealthy” or “spiritually fruitful.”
- “Prosperity” could also be translated as “well-being” or “wealth” or “success” or “abundant blessings.”

(See also: bless, good, fruit, spirit)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 29:22-23
- Deuteronomy 23:6
- Job 36:11
- Leviticus 25:26-28
- Psalms 1:3

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1129, H1767, H1878, H1879, H2428, H2896, H2898, H3027, H3190, H3444, H3498, H3787, H4195, H5381, H6500, H6509, H6555, H6743, H6744, H7230, H7487, H7919, H7951, H7961, H7963, H7965

## Psalms References:

1:3; 14:7; 37:7; 45:4; 49:6; 49:10; 49:16; 49:18; 53:6; 62:10; 68:6; 73:3; 73:12; 118:25; 122:6; 122:7

# prostitute, harlot, whored

**Definition:**

The terms “prostitute” and “harlot” both refer to a person who performs sexual acts for money or for religious rites. Prostitutes or harlots were usually female, but some were male.

- In the Bible, the word “prostitute” is sometimes used figuratively to refer to a person who worships false gods or who practices witchcraft.
- The expression “play the harlot” means to act like a harlot by being sexually immoral. This expression is also used in the Bible to refer to a person who worships idols.
- To “prostitute oneself” to something means to be sexually immoral or when used figuratively, to be unfaithful to God by worshiping false gods.
- In ancient times, some pagan temples used male and female prostitutes as part of their rituals.
- This term could be translated by the word or phrase that is used in the project language to refer to a prostitute. Some languages may have a euphemistic term that is used for this. (See: euphemism)

(See also: adultery, false god, sexual immorality, false god)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 34:31
- Genesis 38:21
- Luke 15:30
- Matthew 21:31

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H2154, H2181, H2183, H2185, H6945, H6948, H8457, G42040

## Psalms References:

106:39

# prostrate

### Definition:

The term “prostrate” means to be lying face down, stretched out on the ground.

- To “fall prostrate” or to “prostrate oneself” before someone means to suddenly bow down very low or in front of that person.
- Usually this position of being prostrate is a response that shows shock, amazement, and awe because of something miraculous that happened. It also shows honor and respect for the person being bowed to.
- Being prostrate also was a way to worship God. People often responded this way to Jesus in thanksgiving and worship when he did a miracle or to honor him as a great teacher.
- Depending on the context, ways to translate “prostrated” could include “bowed down low with the face to the ground” or “worshiped him by lying face down in front of him” or “bowed down low to the ground in amazement” or “worshiped.”
- The phrase “will not prostrate ourselves” could be translated as “will not worship” or “will not lie face down in worship” or “will not bow down and worship.”
- “Prostrate himself to” could also be translated as “worship” or “bow down in front of.”

(See also: awe, bow)

### Bible References:

- 2 Kings 17:36-38
- Genesis 43:28
- Revelation 19:3-4

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5307, H5457, H6440, H6915, H7812

## Psalms References:

45:11

# prostrate, bow down, worship

### Definition:

To “prostrate” oneself means to lie flat on the ground, usually in submission to a person of authority such as a king or some other powerful person. This same term can also mean to “worship,” referring to the actions of honoring, praising, and obeying God.

- This term often means literally “bow down” or “prostrate oneself” to humbly honor someone.
- We worship God when we serve and honor him, by praising him and obeying him.
- When the Israelites worshiped God, it often included sacrificing an animal on an altar.
- This term can be used both of people who worship Yahweh as the One True God and others who worship false gods.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “worship” could be translated as “bow down to” or “honor and serve” or “honor and obey.”
- In some contexts, it could also be translated as “humbly praise” or “give honor and praise.”

(See also: bow, fear, sacrifice, praise, honor)

### Bible References:

- Colossians 2:18-19
- Deuteronomy 29:18
- Exodus 3:11-12
- Luke 4:7
- Matthew 2:2
- Matthew 2:8

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 13:4 Then God gave them the covenant and said, “I am Yahweh, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not **worship** other gods.”
- 14:2 The Canaanites did not **worship** or obey God. They **worshiped** false gods and did many evil things.
- 17:6 David wanted to build a temple where all the Israelites could **worship** God and offer him sacrifices.

- 18:12 All of the kings and most of the people of the kingdom of Israel **worshiped** idols.
- 25:7 Jesus replied, “Get away from me, Satan! In God’s word he commands his people, ‘**Worship** only the Lord your God and only serve him.’”
- 26:2 On the Sabbath, he (Jesus) went to the place of **worship**.
- 47:1 There they met a woman named Lydia who was a merchant. She loved and **worshiped** God.
- 49:18 God tells you to pray, to study his word, to **worship** him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5457, H5647, H6087, H7812, G13910, G14790, G21510, G23180, G23230, G23560, G30000, G35110, G43520, G43530, G45730, G45740, G45760

## Psalms References:

29:2; 53:4; 66:4; 72:11; 79:6; 80:18; 95:6; 96:9; 97:7; 99:5; 99:9; 106:19; 132:7; 138:2

# proud, pride, prideful, boast, boastful, boasting

### Definition:

The terms “proud” and “pride,” in this sense, refer to a person thinking too highly of themself, and especially, thinking that he is better than other people. The term “boast,” when used with this sense, means to talk proudly about something or someone. Often it means to brag about oneself.

- A proud person often does not admit his own faults. He is not humble.
- Pride can lead to disobeying God in other ways.
- The term “prideful” is always negative, with the meaning of being “arrogant” or “conceited” or “self-important.”
- The term “boastful” is always negative, and refers to a person who brags about themself or what they possess or have done or can do.
- Someone who is “boastful” frequently talks about himself in a proud way.
- God rebuked the Israelites for “boasting in” their idols. They arrogantly worshiped false gods instead of the true God.
- The Bible also talks about people boasting in such things as their wealth, their strength, their fruitful fields, and their laws. This means that they were proud about these things and did not acknowledge that God is the one who provided these things.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The noun “pride” could be translated as “arrogance” or “conceit” or “self-importance.”
- Other ways to translate “boast” could include “brag” or “talk proudly” or “be proud.”
- The term “boastful” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “full of prideful talk” or “prideful” or “talking proudly about oneself.”

(See also: arrogant, humble, proud positive sense)

### Bible References:

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 4:2 They were very **proud**, and they did not care about what God said.
- 34:10 Then Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, God heard the tax collector’s prayer and declared him to be righteous. But he did not like the prayer of the religious leader. God will humble everyone who is **proud**, and he will lift up whoever humbles himself.”

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H1343, H1344, H1346, H1347, H1364, H1431, H2087, H2102, H3093, H4994, G51870, G52430, G52440, G53080, G53090, G54260, G54500

## Psalms References:

17:10; 31:18; 31:23; 34:2; 38:16; 40:4; 41:9; 49:6; 52:1; 59:12; 73:6; 75:4; 92:5; 94:2; 97:7; 105:3; 119:21; 119:51; 119:78; 119:85; 123:4; 138:6; 140:5

# proverb

### Definition:

A proverb is a short statement that expresses some wisdom or truth.

- Proverbs are powerful because they are easy to remember and repeat.
- Often a proverb will include practical examples from everyday life.
- Some proverbs are very clear and direct, while others are more difficult to understand.
- King Solomon was known for his wisdom and wrote over 1,000 proverbs.
- Jesus often used proverbs or parables when he taught people.
- Ways to translate “proverb” could include “wise saying” or “true word.”

(See also: Solomon, true, wise)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 4:32-34
- 1 Samuel 24:12-13
- 2 Peter 2:22
- Luke 4:24
- Proverbs 1:1-3

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2420, H4911, H4912, G38500, G39420

## Psalms References:

44:14; 49:4; 69:11

# provoke, provoked, provocation

### Definition:

The term “provoke” means to cause someone to experience a negative reaction or feeling.

- To provoke someone to anger means to do something that causes that person to be angry. This could also be translated as to “cause to become angry” or to “anger.”
- When used in a phrase such as, “do not provoke him,” this could be translated as “do not anger him” or “do not cause him to be angry” or “do not make him angry with you.”

### Bible References:

- Ezekiel 20:27-29

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3707, H3708, H4784, H4843, H5006, H7065, H7069, H7107, H7264, G20420, G38630, G39470, G39490, G42920

## Psalms References:

78:58

# prudence, prudent

### Definition:

The term “prudent” describes a person who thinks carefully about his actions and makes wise decisions.

- Often “prudence” refers to the ability to make wise decisions about practical, physical matters, such as in managing money or property.
- Although “prudence” and “wisdom” are similar in meaning, often “wisdom” is more general and focuses on spiritual or moral matters.
- Depending on the context, “prudent” could also be translated as “shrewd” or “careful” or “wise.”

(See also: shrewd, spirit, wise)

### Bible References:

- Proverbs 8:4-5
- Proverbs 12:23-24
- Proverbs 27:12

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0995, H5843, H6175, H6191, H6195, H7919, H7922

## Psalms References:

2:10

# psalm

**Definition:**

The term “psalm” refers to a sacred song, often in the form of a poem that was written to be sung.

- The Old Testament Book of Psalms has a collection of these songs written by King David and other Israelites such as Moses, Solomon, and Asaph, among others.
- The psalms were used by the nation of Israel in their worship of God.
- Psalms can be used to express joy, faith, and reverence, as well as pain and sorrow.
- In the New Testament, Christians are instructed to sing psalms to God as a way of worshiping him.

(See also: David, faith, joy, Moses, holy)

**Bible References:**

- Acts 13:33
- Acts 13:35
- Colossians 3:16
- Luke 20:42

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H2158, H2167, H4210, G55670, G55680

## Psalms References:

3:front; 4:front; 5:front; 6:front; 8:front; 9:front; 12:front; 13:front; 15:1; 19:front; 20:front; 21:front; 22:front; 23:1; 24:1; 29:1; 31:front; 39:front; 40:front; 41:front; 47:front; 48:front; 49:front; 50:1; 51:front; 62:front; 63:front; 64:front; 65:front; 66:1; 67:front; 68:front; 73:1; 75:front; 76:front; 77:front; 79:1; 80:front; 82:1; 84:front; 85:front; 87:1; 88:front; 95:2; 98:1; 100:1; 101:1; 109:1; 110:1; 139:1; 140:front; 141:1; 143:1; 145:1

# punish, punished, punishment, unpunished

### Definition:

The term “punish” means to cause someone to suffer a negative consequence for doing something wrong. The term “punishment” refers to the negative consequence that is given as a result of that wrong behavior.

- Often punishment is intended to motivate a person to stop sinning.
- God punished the Israelites when they disobeyed him, especially when they worshiped false gods. Because of their sin, God allowed their enemies to attack and capture them.
- God is righteous and just, so he has to punish sin. Every human being has sinned against God and deserves punishment.
- Jesus was punished for all the evil things that every person has ever done. He received each person’s punishment on himself even though he did nothing wrong and did not deserve that punishment.
- The expressions “go unpunished” and “leave unpunished” mean to decide not to punish people for their wrongdoing. God often allows sin to go unpunished as he waits for people to repent.

(See also: just, repent, righteous, sin)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 4:18
- 2 Thessalonians 1:9
- Acts 4:21
- Acts 7:59-60
- Genesis 4:15
- Luke 23:16
- Matthew 25:46

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 13:7 God also gave many other laws and rules to follow. If the people obeyed these laws, God promised that he would bless and protect them. If they disobeyed them, God would **punish** them.
- 16:2 Because the Israelites kept disobeying God, he **punished** them by allowing their enemies to defeat them.
- 19:16 The prophets warned the people that if they did not stop doing evil and start obeying God, then God would judge them as guilty, and he would **punish** them.

- 48:6 Jesus was the perfect high priest because he took the **punishment** for every sin that anyone has ever committed.
- 48:10 When anyone believes in Jesus, the blood of Jesus takes away that person's sin, and God's **punishment** passes over him.
- 49:9 But God loved everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be **punished** for his sins, but will live with God forever.
- 49:11 Jesus never sinned, but he chose to be **punished** and die as the perfect sacrifice to take away your sins and the sins of every person in the world.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3027, H3256, H4148, H4941, H5221, H5414, H6031, H6064, H6213, H6485, H7999, H8011, H8199, G13490, G15560, G15570, G28490, G38110, G50970

## Psalms References:

38:1; 59:5; 73:14; 78:50; 89:32; 149:7

# pure, purify, purification

### Definition:

To be “pure” means to have no flaw or to have nothing mixed in that is not supposed to be there. To purify something is to cleanse it and remove anything that contaminates or pollutes it.

- In regard to Old Testament laws, “purify” and “purification” refer mainly to the cleansing from things that make an object or a person ritually unclean, such as disease, body fluids, or childbirth.
- The Old Testament also had laws telling people how to be purified from sin, usually by the sacrifice of an animal. This was only temporary and the sacrifices had to be repeated over and over again.
- In the New Testament, to be purified often refers to being cleansed from sin.
- The only way that people can be completely and permanently purified from sin is through repenting and receiving God’s forgiveness, through trusting in Jesus and his sacrifice.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “purify” could be translated as “make pure” or “cleanse” or “cleanse from all contamination” or “get rid of all sin.”
- A phrase such as “when the time for their purification was over” could be translated as “when they had purified themselves by waiting the required number of days.”
- The phrase “provided purification for sins” could be translated as “provided a way for people to be completely cleansed from their sin.”
- Other ways to translate “purification” could include “cleansing” or “spiritual washing” or “becoming ritually clean.”

(See also: atonement, clean, spirit)

### Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 1:5
- Exodus 31:6-9
- Hebrews 9:13-15
- James 4:8
- Luke 2:22
- Revelation 14:4

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H1249, H1252, H1253, H1305, H1865, H2134, H2135, H2141, H2212, H2398, H2403, H2561, H2889, H2890, H2891, H2892, H2893, H3795, H3800, H4795, H5343, H5462, H6337, H6884, H6942, H8562, G00480, G00490, G00530, G00540, G15060, G25110, G25120, G25130, G25140

## Psalms References:

12:6; 18:26; 19:8; 24:4; 51:2; 51:7; 73:1; 73:13; 119:9

# queen

### Definition:

A queen is either the female ruler of a country or the wife of a king.

- Esther became the queen of the Persian empire when she married King Ahasuerus.
- Queen Jezebel was the evil wife of King Ahab.
- The Queen of Sheba was a famous ruler who came to visit King Solomon.
- A term such as “queen mother” usually referred to the mother or grandmother of a ruling king or the widow of the previous king. A queen mother had much influence; Athaliah, for example, influenced the people to worship idols.

(See also: **Ahasuerus**, **Athaliah**, **Esther**, king. **Persia** ruler, Sheba)

### Bible References:

- **1 Kings 10:10**
- **1 Kings 11:18-19**
- **2 Kings 10:12-14**
- **Acts 8:27**
- **Esther 1:17**
- **Luke 11:31**
- **Matthew 12:42**

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1404, H1377, H4410, H4427, H4433, H4436, H4438, H4446, H7694, H8282, G09380

## Psalms References:

45:9

# rage

**Definition:**

The term “rage” refers to intense anger. Often, the term is used to describe an angry person who is out of control in some way.

- When used as a verb, the term “rage” can mean to move powerfully, such as in descriptions of a “raging” storm or ocean waves that “rage.”
- To be “filled with rage” means to have an overwhelming feeling of extreme anger.

(See also: self-control)

**Bible References:**

- Acts 4:25
- Daniel 3:13
- Luke 4:28
- Numbers 25:11
- Proverbs 19:3

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0398, H1348, H1984, H1993, H2121, H2195, H2196, H2197, H2534, H2734, H2740, H3491, H3820, H5590, H5678, H7264, H7265, H7266, H7267, H7283, H7857, G16930, G28300, G37100, G54330

## Psalms References:

6:1; 7:6; 37:12; 102:10; 119:53; 124:5

# Rahab

**Definition:**

Rahab was a woman who lived in Jericho when Israel attacked the city. Rahab was also the name of a mythical monster of primeval chaos.

- Rahab was a prostitute who hid the two Israelites who came to spy on Jericho before the Israelites attacked it. She helped the spies escape back to the Israelite camp.
- Rahab became a believer in Yahweh.
- She and her family came to live with the Israelites after the Israelites destroyed Jericho and spared Rahab and her family.
- The mythical sea monster was pictured as ruling the chaotic sea and God was pictured as defeating that sea monster when he brought order into the world during creation.
- The sea monster Rahab was pictured as a serpent or dragon, and may have been considered the same as the mythical creature called Leviathan.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Israel, Jericho, prostitute)

**Bible References:**

- Hebrews 11:29-31
- James 2:25
- Joshua 2:21
- Joshua 6:17-19
- Matthew 1:5
- Psalms 87:4
- Psalms 89:10
- Job 9:13

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 15:1 In that city there lived a prostitute named **Rahab** who hid the spies and later helped them to escape. She did this because she believed God. They promised to protect **Rahab** and her family when the Israelites would destroy Jericho.
- 15:5 The Israelites destroyed everything in the city as God had commanded. **Rahab** and her family were the only people in the city that they did not kill. They became part of the Israelites.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H7343, G44600

## Psalms References:

87:4; 89:10

# ransom, ransomed

### Definition:

The term “ransom” refers to a sum of money or other payment that is demanded or paid for the release of a person who is held captive.

- As a verb, to “ransom” means to make a payment or to do something self-sacrificially in order to rescue someone who has been captured, enslaved or imprisoned. This meaning of “buy back” is similar to the meaning of “redeem.”
- Jesus allowed himself to be killed as a ransom to free sinful people from their enslavement to sin. This act of God buying back his people through paying the penalty of their sin is also called “redemption” in the Bible.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term to “ransom” could also be translated as to “pay to release” or to “pay a price to free” or to “buy back.”
- The phrase to “pay a ransom” could be translated as to “pay the price (of freedom)” or to “pay the penalty (to free people)” or to “make the required payment.”
- The noun “ransom” could be translated as “a buying back” or “a penalty paid” or “the price paid” (to free or buy back people or land).
- The terms a “ransom” and a “redemption” have the same meaning in English but are sometimes used slightly differently. Other languages may have only one term for this concept.
- Make sure this is translated differently from “atonement.”

(See also: atonement, redeem)

### Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 2:6
- Isaiah 43:3
- Job 6:23
- Leviticus 19:20
- Matthew 20:28
- Psalms 49:7

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1350, H3724, H6299, H6306, G04870, G30830

## Psalms References:

49:7; 69:18

# Rapha, Raphaites, the Valley of the Raphaites

### Definition:

The term “Rapha” is the name for a group of inhabitants who lived in a location on the eastern side of the Jordan river. It is also used to refer to dead people or their spirits. The “Rapha” are called “Raphaites” or “Raphaim.”

- There was a valley named after this people group, “the valley of the Raphaites,” which is mentioned six times in the Old Testament.
- “Rapha” is an English transliteration of a Hebrew word. It is difficult to determine with certainty what the word “Rapha” means and consequently what type of beings the word “Rapha” refers to, whether a group of living people, spirits, or quasi-divine beings. For this reason many English translations have chosen to transliterate the original language (Hebrew) word as “Raphaites” or “Raphaim.” You may desire to do the same thing in your translation.
- In Job 26:5, Psalm 88:10, Proverbs 2:18, Proverbs 9:18, Proverbs 21:16, Isaiah 14:9, Isaiah 26:14, and Isaiah 26:19 the term “Raphaites” refers to people who are dead or to their “spirits.”
- In all other occurrences in the Old Testament the term “Raphaites” refers to the people group who were human beings who were alive and made up a specific people group.
- The people group the Ammonites called the Raphaites by the name “Zamzummites” (See Deuteronomy 2:20).
- The term “Rapha” refers to the living people group in every occurrence in the Old Testament except in 1 Chronicles 8:2 and 8:37. In each of these two verses it refers to the name of a man (a different man in each verse).

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names, Copy or Borrow Words)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s:

## Psalms References:

88:10

# rebel, rebellion, rebellious, rebelliousness

**Definition:**

The term “rebel” means to refuse to submit to someone’s authority. A “rebellious” person often disobeys and does evil things. This kind of person is called “a rebel.”

- A person is rebelling when he does something the authorities over him have told him not to do.
- A person can also rebel by refusing to do what the authorities have commanded him to do.
- Sometimes people rebel against their government or leader who is ruling over them.
- The term to “rebel” could also be translated as to “disobey” or to “revolt,” depending on the context.
- “Rebellious” could also be translated as “continually disobedient” or “refusing to obey.”
- The term “rebellion” means “refusal to obey” or “disobedience” or “law-breaking.”
- The phrase “the rebellion” or “a rebellion” can also refer to an organized group of people who publicly rebel against ruling authorities by breaking the law and attacking leaders and other people. Often they try to get other people to join them in rebelling.

(See also: **authority**, **governor**)

**Bible References:**

- **1 Kings 12:18-19**
- **1 Samuel 12:14**
- **1 Timothy 1:9-11**
- **2 Chronicles 10:17-19**
- **Acts 21:38**
- **Luke 23:19**

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **14:14** After the Israelites had wandered in the wilderness for forty years, all of them who had **rebelled** against God were dead.
- **18:7** Ten of the tribes of the nation of Israel **rebelled** against Rehoboam.
- **18:9** Jeroboam **rebelled** against God and caused the people to sin.
- **18:13** Most of the people of Judah also **rebelled** against God and worshiped other gods.

- 20:7 But after a few years, the king of Judah **rebelled** against Babylon.
- 45:3 Then he (Stephen) said, “You stubborn and **rebellious** people always reject the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors always rejected God and killed his prophets.”

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4775, H4776, H4777, H4779, H4780, H4784, H4805, H5327, H5627, H5637, H6586, H6588, H7846, G38930, G49550

## Psalms References:

5:10; 66:7; 68:6; 68:18; 78:8; 78:17; 78:40; 78:56; 105:28; 106:7; 106:33; 106:43; 107:11; 107:17

# rebuke, reprove

### Definition:

The term “rebuke” refers to correcting someone verbally, usually with sternness or force.

- The New Testament commands Christians to rebuke other believers when they are clearly disobeying God.
- The book of Proverbs instructs parents to rebuke their children when they are disobedient.
- A rebuke is typically given to prevent those who committed a wrong from further involving themselves in sin.
- This could be translated by “sternly correct” or “admonish.”
- The phrase “a rebuke” could be translated by “a stern correction” or “a strong criticism.”
- “Without rebuke” could be translated as “without admonishing” or “without criticism.”

(See also admonish, disobey)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 21:25
- Mark 1:23-26
- Mark 16:14
- Matthew 8:26-27
- Matthew 17:17-18

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1605, H1606, H2778, H2781, H3198, H4045, H4148, H8156, H8433, G16490, G16510, G19690, G20080, G36790

## Psalms References:

6:1; 9:5; 18:15; 38:1; 38:14; 39:11; 68:30; 76:6; 80:16; 94:10; 104:7; 105:14; 106:9; 119:21

# receive, welcome, taken up, acceptance

### Definition:

The term “receive” generally means to get or accept something that is given, offered, or presented.

- To “receive” can also mean to suffer or experience something, as in “he received punishment for what he did.”
- There is also a special sense in which we can “receive” a person. For example, to “receive” guests or visitors means to welcome them and treat them with honor in order to build a relationship with them.
- To “receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” means we are given the Holy Spirit and welcome him to work in and through our lives.
- To “receive Jesus” means to accept God’s offer of salvation through Jesus Christ.
- When a blind person “receives his sight” means that God has healed him and enabled him to see.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “receive” could be translated as “accept” or “welcome” or “experience” or “be given.”
- The expression “you will receive power” could be translated as “you will be given power” or “God will give you power” or “power will be given to you (by God)” or “God will cause the Holy Spirit to work powerfully in you.”
- The phrase “received his sight” could be translated as “was able to see” or “became able to see again” or “was healed by God so that he was able to see.”

(See also: Holy Spirit, Jesus, lord, save)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 5:9
- 1 Thessalonians 1:6
- 1 Thessalonians 4:1
- Acts 8:15
- Jeremiah 32:33
- Luke 9:5
- Malachi 3:10-12
- Psalms 49:14-15

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 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. His punishment would bring peace between God and people.
- 45:5 As Stephen was dying, he cried out, "Jesus, **receive** my spirit."
- 49:6 He (Jesus) taught that some people will receive him and be saved, but others will not.
- 49:10 When Jesus died on the cross, he **received** your punishment.
- 49:13 God will save everyone who believes in Jesus and **receives** him as their Master.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3557, H3947, H6901, H6902, H8254, G03080, G03240, G03530, G03540, G05680, G05880, G06180, G11830, G12090, G15230, G16530, G19260, G28650, G29830, G30280, G33350, G33360, G35490, G38580, G38800, G43270, G43550, G43560, G46870, G52640, G55620

## Psalms References:

39:6; 51:18; 68:18

# redeem, redeemer, redemption

### Definition:

The term “redeem” refers to buying back something or someone that has been previously owned or held captive. A “redeemer” is someone who redeems something or someone.

- God gave laws to the Israelites about how to redeem people or things. For example, someone could redeem a person who was in slavery by paying the price so that the slave could go free. The word “ransom” also refers to this practice.
- If someone’s land had been sold, a relative of that person could “redeem” or “buy back” that land so that it would stay in the family.
- These practices show how God redeems people who are in slavery to sin. When he died on the cross, Jesus paid the full price for people’s sins and redeemed all those who trust in him for salvation. People who have been redeemed by God are set free from sin and its punishment.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “redeem” could also be translated as “buy back” or “pay to free (someone)” or “ransom.”
- The term “redemption” could be translated as “ransom” or “freedom payment” or “buying back.”
- The words “ransom” and “redeem” have basically the same meaning, so some languages may have only one term to translate both these words. The word “ransom,” however, can also mean the payment necessary to “redeem” something or someone. The term “redeem” never refers to the actual payment itself.

(See also: free, ransom)

### Bible References:

- Colossians 1:13-14
- Ephesians 1:7-8
- Ephesians 5:16
- Galatians 3:13-14
- Galatians 4:5
- Luke 2:38
- Ruth 2:20

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H1350, H1353, H6299, H6302, H6304, H6306, H6561, H7069, G00590, G06290, G18050, G30840, G30850

## Psalms References:

19:14; 25:22; 26:11; 31:5; 34:22; 44:26; 49:7; 49:8; 49:15; 55:18; 69:18; 71:23; 72:14; 74:2; 77:15; 78:35; 78:42; 103:4; 106:10; 107:2; 111:9; 119:134; 119:154; 130:7; 130:8

# reed

### Definition:

The term “reed” refers to a plant with a long stalk that grows in the water, usually along the edge of a river or stream.

- The reeds in the Nile River where Moses was hidden as a baby were also called “bulrushes.” They were tall, hollow stalks growing in dense clumps in the river water.
- These fibrous plants were used in ancient Egypt for making paper, baskets, and boats.
- The stalk of the reed plant is flexible and is easily bent over by the wind.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Egypt, Moses, Nile River)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 14:15
- Luke 7:24
- Matthew 11:7
- Matthew 12:20
- Psalm 68:30

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0098, H0100, H0260, H5488, H6169, H7070, G25630

## Psalms References:

68:30

# refuge, refugee, shelter, sheltered

### Definition:

The term “refuge” refers to a place or condition of safety and protection. A “refugee” is someone who is seeking a safe place. A “shelter” refers to a place that can protect from weather or danger.

- In the Bible, God is often referred to as a refuge where his people can be safe, protected, and cared for.
- The term “city of refuge” in the Old Testament referred to one of several cities where a person who accidentally killed someone could go for protection from people who would attack them in revenge.
- A “shelter” is often a physical structure such as a building or roof that can provide protection to people or animals.
- Sometimes “shelter” means “protection,” as when Lot said that his guests were “under the shelter” of his roof. He was saying that they should be safe because he was taking responsibility to protect them as members of his household.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “refuge” could be translated as “safe place” or “place of protection.”
- “Refugees” are people leaving their home to escape from a dangerous situation, and could be translated as “aliens,” “homeless people,” or “exiles.”
- Depending on the context, the term “shelter” could be translated as “something that protects” or “protection” or “protected place.”
- If it refers to a physical structure, “shelter” could also be translated as “protective building” or “house of safety.”
- The phrase “into safe shelter” could be translated as “into a safe place” or “into a place that will protect.”
- To “find shelter” or to “take shelter” or to “take refuge” could be translated as to “find a place of safety” or to “put oneself in a protected place.”

### Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 22:3-4
- Deuteronomy 32:37-38
- Isaiah 23:14
- Jeremiah 16:19
- Numbers 35:24-25
- Psalm 46:1
- Psalms 28:8

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H2620, H4268, H4498, H4585, H4733, H4869

## Psalms References:

2:12; 5:11; 7:1; 11:1; 14:6; 16:1; 17:7; 18:2; 18:30; 25:20; 27:1; 28:8; 31:1; 31:2; 31:4; 31:19; 31:20; 34:8; 34:22; 36:7; 37:40; 39:12; 43:2; 46:1; 52:7; 57:1; 59:16; 61:intro; 61:3; 61:4; 62:7; 62:8; 64:10; 71:1; 71:7; 73:28; 91:1; 91:2; 91:4; 91:9; 94:22; 104:18; 118:8; 118:9; 141:8; 142:4; 142:5; 144:2

# reign, rule

### Definition:

The term to “reign” means to rule over the people of a particular country or kingdom. The reign of a king is the time period during which he is ruling.

- The term “reign” is also used to refer to God reigning as king over the entire world.
- God allowed human kings to reign over Israel after the people rejected him as their king.
- When Jesus Christ returns, he will openly reign as king over the whole world, and Christians will reign with Him.
- This term could also be translated as “absolute rule” or “rule as king.”

(See also: kingdom)

### Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 2:11-13
- Genesis 36:34-36
- Luke 1:30-33
- Luke 19:26-27
- Matthew 2:22-23

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3427, H4427, H4437, H4438, H4467, H4468, H4475, H4791, H4910, H6113, H7287, H7786, G07570, G09360, G22310, G48210

## Psalms References:

47:8; 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1; 103:22; 146:10

# reject, rejected, rejection

### Definition:

To “reject” someone or something means to refuse to accept that person or thing.

- The term “reject” can also mean to “refuse to believe in” something.
- To reject God also means to refuse to obey him.
- When the Israelites rejected Moses’ leadership, it means that they were rebelling against his authority. They did not want to obey him.
- The Israelites showed that they were rejecting God when they worshiped false gods.
- The term “push away” is the literal meaning of this word. Other languages may have a similar expression that means to reject or refuse to believe someone or something.

### Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, the term “reject” could also be translated by “not accept” or “stop helping” or “refuse to obey” or “stop obeying.”
- In the expression “stone that the builders rejected,” the term “rejected” could be translated as “refused to use” or “did not accept” or “threw away” or “got rid of as worthless.”
- In the context of people who rejected God’s commandments, rejected could be translated as “refused to obey” his commands or “stubbornly chose to not accept” God’s laws.

(See also: **command**, **disobey**, **obey**, **stiff-necked**)

### Bible References:

- **Galatians 4:12-14**
- **Hosea 4:6-7**
- **Isaiah 41:9**
- **John 12:48-50**
- **Mark 7:9**

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0947, H0959, H2186, H2310, H3988, H5006, H5034, H5186, H5203, H5307, H5541, H5800, G01140, G04830, G05500, G05790, G05800, G05930, G06830, G07200, G16090, G38680

## Psalms References:

15:4; 36:4; 43:2; 44:9; 44:23; 60:1; 60:10; 66:20; 74:1; 77:7; 78:59; 78:67; 88:14; 89:38; 108:11; 118:22; 119:53; 119:87; 119:118; 132:10

# remnant

### Definition:

The term “remnant” literally refers to people or things that are “remaining” or “left over” from a larger amount or group.

- Often a “remnant” refers to people who survive a life-threatening situation or who remain faithful to God while undergoing persecution.
- Isaiah referred to a group of Jews as being a remnant who would survive attacks from outsiders and live to return to the Promised Land in Canaan.
- Paul talks about there being a “remnant” of people who were chosen by God to receive his grace.
- The term “remnant” also implies that there were other people who did not remain or were not left over.

### Translation Suggestions:

- A phrase such as “the remnant of this people” could be translated as “the rest of these people” or “the people who are left.”
- The “whole remnant of people” could be translated by “all the rest of the people” or “the remaining people.”

### Bible References:

- Acts 15:17
- Amos 9:12
- Ezekiel 6:8-10
- Genesis 45:7
- Isaiah 11:11
- Micah 4:6-8

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3498, H3499, H5629, H6413, H7604, H7605, H7611, H8281, H8300, G26400, G30050, G30620

## Psalms References:

76:10

# repent, repentance

### Definition:

The terms “repent” and “repentance” refer to turning away from sin and turning back to God.

- To “repent” literally means to “change one’s mind.”
- In the Bible, “repent” usually means to turn away from a sinful, human way of thinking and acting, and to turn to God’s way of thinking and acting.
- When people truly repent of their sins, God forgives them and helps them start obeying him.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “repent” can be translated with a word or phrase that means “turn back (to God)” or “turn away from sin and toward God” or “turn toward God, away from sin.”
- Often the term “repentance” can be translated using the verb “repent.” For example, “God has given repentance to Israel” could be translated as “God has enabled Israel to repent.”
- Other ways to translate “repentance” could include “turning away from sin” or “turning to God and away from sin.”

(See also: forgive, sin, turn)

### Bible References:

- Acts 3:19-20
- Luke 3:3
- Luke 3:8
- Luke 5:32
- Luke 24:47
- Mark 1:14-15
- Matthew 3:3
- Matthew 3:11
- Matthew 4:17
- Romans 2:4

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 16:2 After many years of disobeying God and being oppressed by their enemies, the Israelites **repented** and asked God to rescue them.
- 17:13 David **repented** of his sin and God forgave him.
- 19:18 They (prophets) warned people that God would destroy them if they did not **repent**.
- 24:2 Many people came out to the wilderness to listen to John. He preached to them, saying, "**Repent**, for the kingdom of God is near!"
- 42:8 "It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to **receive** forgiveness for their sins."
- 44:5 "So now, **repent** and turn to God so that your sins will be washed away."

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H5150, H5162, H5164, G02780, G33380, G33400, G33410

## Psalms References:

7:12; 51:13; 70:3

# report, reported, tell, reputation

### Definition:

The term to “report” means to tell people about something that happened, often giving details about that event. A “report” is what is told, and can be spoken or written.

- “Report” could also be translated as “tell” or “explain” or “tell the details of.”
- The expression “Report this to no one” could be translated as “Do not talk about this with anyone” or “Do not tell anyone about this.”
- Ways to translate “a report” could include “an explanation” or “a story” or “a detailed account,” depending on the context.

### Bible References:

- Acts 5:22-23
- John 12:38
- Luke 5:15
- Luke 8:34-35
- Matthew 28:15

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1681, H1696, H1697, H5046, H7725, H8034, H8052, H8085, H8088, H8089, G01890, G01910, G03120, G05180, G09870, G12250, G13100, G18340, G20360, G21630, G30040, G30560, G31400, G33770

## Psalms References:

9:1; 9:14; 26:7; 35:28; 41:6; 44:1; 48:13; 50:16; 59:12; 64:5; 66:16; 71:15; 73:15; 73:28; 75:1; 78:4; 78:6; 79:13; 87:6; 96:3; 102:21; 107:22; 119:26; 122:1; 145:6; 145:11

# restore, restoration

### Definition:

The terms “restore” and “restoration” refer to causing something to return to its original place or condition.

- When a diseased body part is restored, this means it has been “healed.”
- A broken relationship that is restored has been “reconciled.” God restores sinful people and brings them back to himself.
- If people have been restored to their home country, they have been “brought back” or “returned” to that country.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “restore” could include “renew” or “repay” or “return” or “heal” or “bring back.”
- Other expressions for this term could be “make new” or “make like new again.”
- When property is “restored,” it has been “repaired” or “replaced” or “given back” to its owner.
- Depending on the context, “restoration” could be translated as “renewal” or “healing” or “reconciliation.”

### Bible References:

- 2 Kings 5:10
- Acts 3:21
- Acts 15:15-18
- Isaiah 49:5-6
- Jeremiah 15:19-21
- Lamentations 5:22
- Leviticus 6:5-7
- Luke 19:8
- Matthew 12:13
- Psalm 80:1-3

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7725, H7999, H8421, G06000, G26750

## Psalms References:

7:7; 14:7; 18:20; 19:7; 23:3; 35:17; 51:12; 53:6; 60:1; 68:22; 69:4; 71:20; 80:3; 80:7; 80:14; 80:19; 85:1; 85:4; 85:6; 94:15; 104:9; 104:29; 104:30; 116:7; 116:12; 126:4; 146:4

# resurrection

### Definition:

The term “resurrection” refers to the act of becoming alive again after having died.

- To resurrect someone means to bring that person back to life again. Only God has the power to do this.
- The word “resurrection” often refers to Jesus’ coming back to life after he died.
- When Jesus said, “I am the Resurrection and the Life” he meant that he is the source of resurrection, and the one who causes people to come back to life.

### Translation Suggestions:

- A person’s “resurrection” could be translated as his “coming back to life” or his “becoming alive again after being dead.”
- The literal meaning of this word is “a rising up” or “the act of being raised (from the dead).” These would be other possible ways to translate this term.

(See also: **life**, **death**, **raise**)

### Bible References:

- **1 Corinthians 15:13**
- **1 Peter 3:21**
- **Hebrews 11:35**
- **John 5:28-29**
- **Luke 20:27**
- **Luke 20:36**
- **Matthew 22:23**
- **Matthew 22:30**
- **Philippians 3:11**

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **21:14** Through the Messiah’s death and **resurrection**, God would accomplish his plan to save sinners and start the New Covenant.
- **37:5** Jesus replied, “I am the **Resurrection** and the Life. Whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies.”

### Word Data:

- Strong's: G03860, G14540, G18150

## Psalms References:

16:intro

# revere, revered, reverence, reverent

### Definition:

The term “reverence” refers to feelings of profound, deep respect for someone or something. “Revere” someone or something is to show reverence towards that person or thing.

- Feelings of reverence can be seen in actions that honor the person who is revered.
- The fear of the Lord is an inner reverence that manifests itself in obedience to God’s commandments.
- This term could also be translated as “fear and honor” or “sincere respect.”

(See also: fear, honor, obey)

### Bible References:

- 1 Peter 1:15-17
- Hebrews 11:7
- Isaiah 44:17
- Psalms 5:7-8

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3372, H3373, H3374, H4172, H6342, H7812, G01270, G17880, G21250, G24120, G53990, G54010

## Psalms References:

85:9

# reward, prize, deserve

### Definition:

The term “reward” refers to what a person receives because of something he has done, either good or bad. To “reward” someone is to give someone something he deserves. However, this is different than the concept of “wages,” which refers to payment (often money) given in exchange for work performed.

- A reward can be a good or positive thing that a person receives because he has done something well or because he has obeyed God.
- Sometimes a reward can refer to negative things that may result from bad behavior, such as the statement “the reward of the wicked.” In this context “reward” refers to the punishment or negative consequences they receive because of their sinful actions.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “reward” could be translated as “payment” or “something that is deserved” or “punishment.”
- To “reward” someone could be translated by to “repay” or to “punish” or to “give what is deserved.”
- Make sure the translation of this term does not refer to wages. A reward is not specifically about earning money as part of a job.

(See also: punish)

### Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 32:6
- Isaiah 40:10
- Luke 6:35
- Mark 9:40-41
- Matthew 5:11-12
- Matthew 6:3-4
- Psalms 127:3-5
- Revelation 11:18

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0319, H0866, H0868, H1576, H1578, H1580, H4909, H4991, H5023, H6118, H6468, H6529, H7938, H7939, H7999, G04690, G05140, G05910, G26030, G34050, G34060, G34080

## Psalms References:

18:20; 19:11; 127:3

# 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

## Psalms References:

1:5; 1:6; 4:1; 4:5; 5:8; 5:12; 7:8; 7:9; 7:10; 7:11; 7:17; 9:4; 9:8; 11:2; 11:3; 11:5; 11:7; 14:5; 15:2; 17:1; 17:15; 18:20; 18:24; 19:8; 19:9; 20:8; 22:31; 24:intro; 24:5; 25:8; 25:21; 31:1; 31:18; 32:11; 33:1; 33:4; 33:5; 34:15; 34:19; 34:21; 35:24; 35:27; 36:6; 36:10; 37:1; 37:12; 37:14; 37:16; 37:17; 37:21; 37:25; 37:29; 37:30; 37:32; 37:37; 37:39; 40:9; 40:10; 45:4; 45:7; 48:10; 49:14; 50:6; 51:14; 51:19; 52:3; 52:6; 55:22; 58:1; 58:10; 58:11; 64:10; 65:5;

67:4; 68:3; 69:27; 69:28; 71:2; 71:15; 71:16; 71:19; 71:24; 72:1; 72:2; 72:3; 72:7; 73:intro; 75:10; 85:10; 85:11; 85:13; 88:12; 89:14; 89:16; 92:12; 92:15; 94:15; 94:21; 96:13; 97:2; 97:6; 97:11; 97:12; 98:2; 98:9; 99:4; 103:6; 103:17; 106:3; 106:31; 107:42; 111:1; 111:3; 111:8; 112:intro; 112:2; 112:3; 112:4; 112:6; 112:9; 116:5; 118:15; 118:19; 118:20; 119:7; 119:36; 119:40; 119:62; 119:106; 119:121; 119:123; 119:137; 119:138; 119:142; 119:144; 119:160; 119:164; 119:172; 125:3; 125:4; 129:4; 132:9; 140:13; 141:5; 142:7; 143:1; 143:2; 143:11; 145:7; 145:17; 146:8

# robe, robed

**Definition:**

A robe is an outer garment with long sleeves that can be worn by a man or a woman. It is similar to a coat.

- Robes are open in the front and are tied shut with a sash or belt.
- They can be long or short.
- Purple robes were worn by kings as a sign of royalty, wealth, and prestige.

(See also: **royal**, **tunic**)

**Bible References:**

- **Exodus 28:4-5**
- **Genesis 49:11-12**
- **Luke 15:22**
- **Luke 20:46**
- **Matthew 27:27-29**

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0145, H0155, H0899, H1545, H2436, H2684, H3671, H3801, H3830, H3847, H4060, H4254, H4598, H5497, H5622, H6614, H7640, H7757, H7897, H8071, G17460, G20670, G24400, G47490, G40160, G55110

## Psalms References:

22:18; 35:13; 45:13; 69:11; 109:29

# rod

**Definition:**

The term “rod” refers to a narrow, solid, stick-like tool that was used in several different ways. It was probably at least a meter in length.

- A wooden rod was used by a shepherd to defend the sheep from other animals. It was also thrown toward a wandering sheep to bring it back to the the flock.
- In Psalm 23, King David used the terms “rod” and “staff” as metaphors to refer to God’s guidance and discipline for his people.
- A shepherd’s rod was also used to count the sheep as they passed under it.
- Another metaphorical expression, “rod of iron,” refers to God’s punishment for people who rebel against him and do evil things.
- In ancient times, measuring rods made of metal, wood, or stone were used to measure the length of a building or object.
- In the Bible, a wooden rod was also referred to as an instrument to discipline children.

(See also: staff, sheep, shepherd)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Corinthians 4:21
- 1 Samuel 14:43-44
- Acts 16:23
- Exodus 27:9-10
- Revelation 11:1

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H2415, H4294, H4731, H7626, G25630, G44630, G44640

## Psalms References:

2:9; 23:4; 89:32; 125:3

# ruin, ruins, ruined

### Definition:

To “ruin” something means to spoil, destroy, or cause to be useless. The term “ruin” or “ruins” refers to the rubble and spoiled remains of something that has been destroyed.

- The prophet Zephaniah spoke about the day of God’s wrath as a “day of ruin” when the world will be judged and punished.
- The book of Proverbs says that ruin and destruction await those who are ungodly.
- Depending on the context, to “ruin” could be translated as to “destroy” or to “spoil” or to “make useless” or to “break.”
- The term “ruin” or “ruins” could be translated as “rubble” or “broken-down buildings” or “destroyed city” or “devastation” or “brokenness” or “destruction,” depending on the context.

(See also: devastated)

### Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 12:7-8
- 2 Kings 19:25-26
- Acts 15:16
- Isaiah 23:13-14

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0006, H1197, H1530, H1820, H1942, H2034, H2040, H2717, H2719, H2720, H2723, H2930, H3510, H3765, H3782, H3832, H4072, H4288, H4384, H4654, H4876, H4889, H5221, H5327, H5557, H5754, H5856, H7451, H7489, H7582, H7591, H7612, H7701, H7703, H7843, H8047, H8074, H8077, H8414, H8510, G26790, G26920, G36390, G44850

## Psalms References:

89:40; 102:6

# rule, reign, ruler, prefect, official, leader

**Definition:**

The term “ruler” is a general reference to a person who has authority over other people, such as a leader of a country, kingdom, or religious group. A ruler is one who “rules,” and his authority is his “rule.”

- In the Old Testament, a king was sometimes referred to generally as a “ruler,” as in the phrase “appointed him ruler over Israel.”
- God was referred to as the ultimate ruler, who rules over all other rulers.
- In the New Testament, the leader of a synagogue was called a “ruler.”
- Another type of ruler in the New Testament was a “governor.”
- Depending on the context, “ruler” could be translated as “leader” or “person who has authority over.”
- The action to “rule” means to “lead” to “have authority over.” It means the same thing as “reign” when it refers to the ruling of a king.

(See also: authority, governor, king, synagogue)

**Bible References:**

- Acts 3:17-18
- Acts 7:35-37
- Luke 12:11
- Luke 23:35
- Mark 10:42
- Matthew 9:32-34
- Matthew 20:25
- Titus 3:1

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0995, H1166, H1167, H1404, H2708, H2710, H3027, H3548, H3920, H4043, H4410, H4427, H4428, H4438, H4467, H4474, H4475, H4623, H4910, H4941, H5057, H5065, H5387, H5401, H5461, H5715, H6113, H6213, H6485, H6957, H7101, H7218, H7287, H7300, H7336, H7786, H7860, H7980, H7981, H7985, H7989, H7990, H8199, H8269, H8323, H8451, G07460, G07520, G07550, G07570, G07580, G09320, G09360, G10180, G12030, G12990, G17780, G17850, G18490, G22320, G22330, G25250, G25830, G28880, G29610, G35450, G38410, G41650, G41730, G42910

## Psalms References:

2:2; 2:10; 8:6; 19:13; 22:28; 49:14; 59:13; 66:7; 68:27; 72:8; 89:9; 103:19; 105:20; 105:21; 106:41; 110:2; 119:23; 119:133

# sackcloth

### Definition:

Sackcloth was a coarse, scratchy type of cloth that was made from goat hair or camel hair.

- A person who wore clothing made from it would be uncomfortable. Sackcloth was worn to show mourning, grief, or humble repentance.
- The phrase “sackcloth and ashes” was a common term referring to a traditional expression of grief and repentance.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated as “coarse cloth from animal hair” or “clothes made of goat hair” or “rough, scratchy clothing.”
- Another way to translate this term could be “rough, scratchy mourning clothes.”
- The phrase “sit in sackcloth and ashes” could be translated as “show mourning and humility by wearing scratchy cloth and sitting in ashes.”

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: ash, camel, goat, humble, mourn, repent, sign)

### Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 3:31
- Genesis 37:34
- Joel 1:8-10
- Jonah 3:5
- Luke 10:13
- Matthew 11:21

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H8242, G45260

## Psalms References:

30:11; 35:13; 69:11

# sacrifice, offering

### Definition:

In the Bible, the terms “sacrifice” and “offering” refer to special gifts given to God as an act of worshiping him. People also offered sacrifices to false gods.

### sacrifice

- Sacrifices to God often involved the killing of an animal.
- Only the sacrifice of Jesus, God’s perfect sinless Son, can completely cleanse people from sin; animal sacrifices could never do that.

### offering

- The word “offering” generally refers to anything that is offered or given. The term “sacrifice” refers to something that is given or done at great cost to the giver.
- Offerings to God were specific things that he commanded the Israelites to give in order to express devotion and obedience to him.
- The names of the different offerings, such as “burnt offering” and “peace offering,” indicated what kind of offering was being given.

### Translation Suggestions

- The term “offering” could also be translated as “a gift to God” or “something given to God” or “something valuable that is presented to God.”
- Depending on the context, the term “sacrifice” could also be translated as “something valuable given in worship” or “a special animal killed and presented to God.”
- The action to “sacrifice” could be translated as to “give up something valuable” or to “kill an animal and give it to God.”
- Another way to translate “present yourself as a living sacrifice” could be “as you live your life, offer yourself to God as completely as an animal is offered on an altar.”

(See also: altar, burnt offering, **drink offering**, false god, **fellowship offering**, freewill offering**peace offering**, priest, **sin offering**, worship)

### Bible References:

- **2 Timothy 4:6**
- **Acts 7:42**
- **Acts 21:25**
- **Genesis 4:3-5**

- James 2:21-24
- Mark 1:43-44
- Mark 14:12
- Matthew 5:23

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 3:14 After Noah got off the boat, he built an altar and **sacrificed** some of each kind of animal which could be used for a **sacrifice**. God was happy with the **sacrifice** and blessed Noah and his family.
- 5:6 "Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a **sacrifice** to me." Again Abraham obeyed God and prepared to **sacrifice** his son.
- 5:9 God had provided the ram to be the **sacrifice** instead of Isaac.
- 13:9 Anyone who disobeyed God's law could bring an animal to the Tent of Meeting as a **sacrifice** to God. A priest would kill the animal and burn it on the altar. The blood of the animal that was **sacrificed** covered the person's sin and made that person clean in God's sight.
- 17:6 David wanted to build a temple where all the Israelites could worship God and offer him **sacrifices**.
- 48:6 Jesus is the Great High Priest. Unlike other priests, he offered himself as the only **sacrifice** that could to take away the sin of all the people in the world.
- 48:8 But God provided Jesus, the Lamb of God, as a **sacrifice** to die in our place.
- 49:11 Because Jesus **sacrificed** himself, God can forgive any sin, even terrible sins.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0801, H0817, H0819, H1685, H1890, H1974, H2076, H2077, H2281, H2282, H2398, H2401, H2402, H2403, H2409, H3632, H4394, H4503, H4504, H5066, H5068, H5071, H5257, H5258, H5261, H5262, H5927, H5928, H5930, H6453, H6944, H6999, H7133, H7311, H8002, H8426, H8548, H8573, H8641, G02660, G03340, G10490, G14350, G14940, G23780, G23800, G36460, G43760, G54850

## Psalms References:

4:5; 16:4; 27:6; 40:6; 50:5; 50:8; 50:14; 50:23; 51:16; 51:17; 51:19; 54:6; 56:12; 66:13; 96:8; 106:28; 106:37; 106:38; 107:22; 116:17; 118:27; 141:2

# Samuel

**Definition:**

Samuel was a prophet and the last judge of Israel. He anointed both Saul and David as kings over Israel.

- Samuel was born to Elkanah and Hannah in the town of Ramah.
- Hannah had been barren, so she had prayed earnestly that God would give her a son. Samuel was the answer to that prayer.
- Hannah promised that if, in answer to her desperate prayer that God would give her a male child, her request was granted, she would dedicate her son to Yahweh.
- To fulfill her promise to God, when Samuel was a young boy, Hannah sent him to live with and help Eli the priest in the temple.
- God raised up Samuel to be a great prophet.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Hannah, judge, prophet, Yahweh)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Samuel 1:19
- 1 Samuel 9:24
- 1 Samuel 12:17
- Acts 3:24
- Acts 13:20
- Hebrews 11:32-34

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H8050, G45450

## Psalms References:

99:6

# sanctuary

### Definition:

The term “sanctuary” literally means “holy place” and refers to a place that God has made sacred and holy. It also can refer to a place that provides protection and safety.

- In the Old Testament, the term “sanctuary” was often used to refer to the tabernacle or temple building where the “holy place” and “most holy place” were located.
- God referred to the sanctuary as the place where he lived among his people, the Israelites.
- He also called himself a “sanctuary” or safe place for his people where they can find protection.

### Translation Suggestions:

- This term has a basic meaning of “holy place” or “place that is set apart.”
- Depending on the context, the term “sanctuary” could be translated as “holy place” or “sacred building” or “God’s holy dwelling place” or “holy place of protection” or “sacred place of safety.”
- The phrase “shekel of the sanctuary” could be translated as “kind of shekel given for the tabernacle” or “shekel used in paying the tax to take care of the temple.”
- Note: Be careful that the translation of this term does not refer to a worship room in a modern-day church.

(See also: holy, Holy Spirit, holy, set apart, tabernacle, tax, temple)

### Bible References:

- Amos 7:13
- Exodus 25:3-7
- Ezekiel 25:3
- Hebrews 8:1-2
- Luke 11:49-51
- Numbers 18:1
- Psalms 78:69

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4720, H6944, G00400

## Psalms References:

20:2; 28:2; 46:4; 63:2; 68:35; 73:17; 78:69; 96:6; 108:8; 114:2; 150:1

# sandal

### Definition:

A sandal is a simple shoe with a flat sole that is held onto the foot by straps that go around the foot or ankle. Sandals are worn by both men and women.

- In ancient Israel, a sandal was sometimes used to confirm a legal transaction, such as the selling of property. One person would take off a sandal and give it to the other person to show that the transaction was legal and binding.
- John said that he was not worthy to even untie Jesus' sandals, which was a normal task for the servant or slave with the lowest status in a Jewish household.

### Bible References:

- Acts 7:33
- Deuteronomy 25:10
- John 1:27
- Joshua 5:15
- Mark 6:7-9

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H5274, H5275, H8288, G45470, G52660

## Psalms References:

60:8; 108:9

# Saul (OT)

**Definition:**

Saul was an Israelite man whom God chose to become the first king of Israel.

- Saul was tall and handsome, and a powerful soldier. He was the kind of man that the Israelites wanted to be their king.
- Although he served God at first, Saul later became proud and disobeyed God. As a result, God appointed David to take Saul's place as king and allowed Saul to be killed in battle.
- In the New Testament, there was a Jew named Saul who was also known as Paul and who became an apostle of Jesus Christ.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: king)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 10:1-3
- 1 Samuel 9:1
- 2 Samuel 1:1-2
- Acts 13:22
- Psalm 18:1

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 17:1 **Saul** was the first king of Israel. He was tall and handsome, just like the people wanted. **Saul** was a good king for the first few years that he ruled over Israel. But then he became a wicked man who did not obey God, so God chose a different man who would one day be king in his place.
- 17:4 **Saul** became jealous of the people's love for David. **Saul** tried many times to kill him, so David hid from **Saul**.
- 17:5 Eventually, **Saul** died in battle, and David became king of Israel.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H7586, G45490

## Psalms References:

18:front; 52:front; 54:front; 57:front; 59:front

# save, saved, safe, salvation, rescue

### Definition:

The term “save” refers to keeping someone from experiencing something bad or harmful. To “be safe” means to be protected from harm or danger.

- In a physical sense, people can be saved or rescued from harm, danger, or death.
- In a spiritual sense, if a person has been “saved,” then God, through Jesus’ death on the cross, has forgiven him and rescued him from being punished in hell for his sin.
- People can save or rescue people from danger, but only God can save people from being punished eternally for their sins.

The term “salvation” refers to being saved or rescued from evil and danger.

- In the Bible, “salvation” usually refers to the spiritual and eternal deliverance granted by God to those who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus.
- The Bible also talks about God saving or delivering his people from their physical enemies.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “save” could include “deliver” or “keep from harm” or “take out of harm’s way” or “keep from dying.”
- In the expression “whoever would save his life,” the term “save” could also be translated as “preserve” or “protect.”
- The term “safe” could be translated as “protected from danger” or “in a place where nothing can harm.”
- The term “salvation” could also be translated using words related to “save” or “rescue,” as in “God’s saving people (from being punished for their sins)” or “God’s rescuing his people (from their enemies).”
- “God is my salvation” could be translated as “God is the one who saves me.”
- “You will draw water from the wells of salvation” could be translated as “You will be refreshed as with water because God is rescuing you.”

(See also: cross, deliver, punish, sin, Savior)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 49:18
- Genesis 47:25-26
- Psalms 80:3
- Jeremiah 16:19-21
- Micah 6:3-5
- Luke 2:30
- Luke 8:36-37
- Acts 4:12
- Acts 28:28
- Acts 2:21
- Romans 1:16
- Romans 10:10
- Ephesians 6:17
- Philippians 1:28
- 1 Timothy 1:15-17
- Revelation 19:1-2

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 9:8 Moses tried to **save** his fellow Israelite.
- 11:2 God provided a way to **save** the firstborn son of anyone who believed in him.
- 12:5 Moses told the Israelites, “Stop being afraid! God will fight for you today and **save** you.”
- 12:13 The Israelites sang many songs to celebrate their new freedom and to praise God because he **saved** them from the Egyptian army.
- 16:17 This pattern repeated many times: the Israelites would sin, God would punish them, they would repent, and God would send a deliverer to **save** them.
- 44:8 “You crucified Jesus, but God raised him to life again! You rejected him, but there is no other way to be **saved** except through the power of Jesus!”
- 47:11 The jailer trembled as he came to Paul and Silas and asked, “What must I do to be **saved**?” Paul answered, “Believe in Jesus, the Master, and you and your family will be **saved**.”
- 49:12 Good works cannot **save** you.
- 49:13 God will **save** everyone who believes in Jesus and receives him as their Master. But he will not **save** anyone who does not believe in him.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0983, H2421, H2502, H3444, H3467, H3468, H4190, H4422, H4931, H5338, H6308, H6403, H7682, H7951, H7965, H8104, H8199, H8668, G08030, G08040, G08060, G12950, G15080, G49820, G49910, G49920, G51980

## Psalms References:

3:2; 3:7; 3:8; 6:4; 7:1; 7:2; 7:4; 9:14; 11:intro; 12:intro; 13:intro; 13:5; 14:7; 17:7; 17:13; 18:2; 18:3; 18:27; 18:35; 18:41; 18:43; 18:46; 18:50; 20:5; 20:6; 20:9; 21:1; 21:5; 22:1; 22:5; 22:8; 22:21; 24:5; 25:5; 27:1; 27:9; 28:9; 31:2; 31:15; 31:16; 33:16; 33:17; 34:6; 34:7; 34:18; 35:3; 35:9; 35:10; 36:6; 37:27; 37:39; 37:40; 38:22; 40:10; 40:13; 40:16; 41:1; 42:5; 42:11; 43:1; 43:5; 44:3; 44:4; 44:6; 44:7; 50:23; 51:12; 51:14; 53:6; 54:1; 55:16; 57:3; 59:2; 60:5; 60:11; 62:1; 62:2; 62:6; 62:7; 65:5; 67:2; 68:19; 68:20; 69:1; 69:13; 69:29; 69:35; 70:4; 71:2; 71:3; 71:4; 71:15; 72:4; 72:13; 74:12; 76:9; 78:22; 79:9; 80:2; 80:3; 80:7; 80:19; 82:4; 85:4; 85:7; 85:9; 86:2; 86:16; 88:1; 89:26; 91:3; 91:14; 91:15; 91:16; 95:1; 96:2; 98:1; 98:2; 98:3; 102:intro; 106:4; 106:8; 106:10; 106:43; 106:47; 107:intro; 107:6; 107:13; 107:19; 107:28; 108:6; 109:21; 109:26; 109:31; 116:intro; 116:4; 116:6; 116:8; 116:13; 118:14; 118:15; 118:21; 118:25; 119:41; 119:81; 119:94; 119:117; 119:123; 119:146; 119:153; 119:155; 119:166; 119:174; 129:intro; 132:16; 138:7; 140:1; 140:7; 142:6; 143:9; 144:10; 145:19; 146:3; 149:4

# Savior, savior

### Definition:

The term “savior” refers to a person who saves or rescues others from danger. It can also refer to someone who gives strength to others or provides for them.

- In the Old Testament, God is referred to as Israel’s Savior because he often rescued them from their enemies, gave them strength, and provided them with what they needed to live.
- In the Old Testament, God appointed judges to protect the Israelites by leading them in battle against other people groups who came to attack them. These judges are sometimes called “saviors.” The Old Testament book of Judges records the time in history when these judges were governing Israel.
- In the New Testament, “Savior” is used as a description or title for Jesus Christ because he saves people from being eternally punished for their sin. He also saves them from being controlled by their sin.

### Translation Suggestions:

- If possible, “Savior” should be translated with a word that is related to the words “save” and “salvation.”
- Ways to translate this term could include “the One who saves” or “God, who saves” or “who delivers from danger” or “who rescues from enemies” or “Jesus, the one who rescues (people) from sin.”

(See also: deliver, Jesus, save, save)

### Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 4:10
- 2 Peter 2:20
- Acts 5:29-32
- Isaiah 60:15-16
- Luke 1:47
- Psalms 106:19-21

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3467, G49900

## Psalms References:

7:10; 106:21; 144:2

# scepter

### Definition:

The term “scepter” refers to an ornamental rod or staff held by a ruler, such as a king.

- Scepters were originally a branch of wood with carved decorations. Later scepters were also made of precious metals such as gold.
- The scepter was a symbol of royalty and authority and also symbolized the honor and dignity associated with a king.
- In the Old Testament, God was described as having a scepter of righteousness because God rules as king over his people.
- An Old Testament prophecy referred to the Messiah as a symbolic scepter that would come from Israel to rule over all nations.
- This could also be translated as “ruling rod” or “ruler’s rod” or “king’s rod.”

(See also: authority, Christ, king, righteous)

### Bible References:

- Amos 1:5
- Esther 4:11
- Genesis 49:10
- Hebrews 1:8
- Numbers 21:18
- Psalms 45:6

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2710, H4294, H7626, H8275, G44640

## Psalms References:

45:6; 60:7; 108:8; 110:2

# scribe

**Definition:**

Scribes were officials who were responsible for writing or copying important government or religious documents by hand. Another name for a Jewish scribe was “expert in Jewish law.”

- Scribes were responsible for copying and preserving the books of the Old Testament.
- They also copied, preserved, and interpreted religious opinions and commentary on the law of God.
- At times, scribes were important government officials.
- Important biblical scribes include Baruch and Ezra.
- In the New Testament, the term translated “scribes” was also translated as “teachers of the Law.”
- In the New Testament, scribes were usually part of the religious group called the “Pharisees,” and the two groups were frequently mentioned together.

(See also: law, Pharisee)

**Bible References:**

- Acts 4:5
- Luke 7:29-30
- Luke 20:47
- Mark 1:22
- Mark 2:16
- Matthew 5:19-20
- Matthew 7:28
- Matthew 12:38
- Matthew 13:52

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H5608, H5613, H7083, G11220

## Psalms References:

45:1

# scroll

### Definition:

In ancient times, a scroll was a type of book made of one long, rolled-up sheet of papyrus or leather.

- After writing on a scroll or reading from it, people rolled it up by using the rods attached to its ends.
- Scrolls were used for legal documents and scripture.
- Sometimes scrolls that were delivered by a messenger were sealed with wax. If the wax was still present when the scroll was received, then the receiver knew that no one had opened the scroll to read it or write on it since it had been sealed.
- Scrolls containing the Hebrew Scriptures were read aloud in the synagogues.

(See also: **seal**, **synagogue**, word of God)

### Bible References:

- **Jeremiah 29:3**
- **Luke 4:17**
- **Numbers 21:14-15**
- **Revelation 5:2**

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H4039, H4040, H5612, G09740, G09750

## Psalms References:

40:7

# Sea of Reeds, Red Sea

### Definition:

The “Sea of Reeds” was the name of a body of water located between Egypt and Arabia. It is now called the “Red Sea.”

- The Red Sea is long and narrow. It is larger than a lake or river, but much smaller than an ocean.
- The Israelites had to cross the Red Sea when they were fleeing from Egypt. God performed a miracle and caused the waters of the sea to divide so that the people could walk across on dry land.
- The land of Canaan was north of this sea.
- This could also be translated as “Reed Sea.”

(See also: Arabia.Canaan, Egypt)

### Bible References:

- Acts 7:35-37
- Exodus 13:17-18
- Joshua 4:22-24
- Numbers 14:23-25

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 12:4 When the Israelites saw the Egyptian army coming, they realized they were trapped between Pharaoh’s army and the **Red Sea**.
- 12:5 Then God told Moses, “Tell the people to move toward the **Red Sea**.”
- 13:1 After God led the Israelites through the **Red Sea**, he led them through the wilderness to a mountain called Sinai.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3220, H5488, G20630, G22810

## Psalms References:

106:7; 106:9; 106:22; 136:13; 136:15

# seed

### Definition:

A “seed” is the part of a plant that gets planted in the ground to reproduce more of the same kind of plant.

- The term “seed” can also refer to what a man plants into a woman that allows them to reproduce.
- Related to this, “seed” is also used to refer to a man‘s or woman‘s offspring or descendants.
- This word often has a plural meaning, referring to more than one seed grain or more than one descendant.
- In the parable of the farmer planting seeds, Jesus compared his seeds to the Word of God, which is planted in people’s hearts in order to produce good spiritual fruit.
- The apostle Paul also uses the term “seed” to refer to the Word of God.

### Translation Suggestions:

- For the seed of a plant, use a general term that can apply to all plants, if possible.
- When “seed” refers to people who are of the same family line, it may be more clear to use the word “descendant” or “descendants” instead of “seed.” Some languages may have a word that means “children and grandchildren.”
- For a man or woman’s “seed,” consider how the target expresses this in a way that will not offend or embarrass people.

(See also: children, descendant)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 18:32
- Genesis 1:11
- Jeremiah 2:21
- Matthew 13:8

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2232, H2233, H3610, H6507, G46150, G46870, G46900, G47010, G47030

## Psalms References:

18:50; 21:10; 22:23; 22:30; 25:13; 37:25; 37:26; 69:36; 89:4; 89:29; 89:36; 102:28; 105:6; 106:27; 112:2; 126:6

# seek, search, look for

**Definition:**

The term “seek” means to look for something or someone. In the past tense, the verb is “sought.” This term is sometimes used figuratively, meaning to “attempt” or “make an effort” to do something or to ask for something.

- To “seek” or “look for” an opportunity to do something can mean to “try to find a time” to do it.
- To “seek Yahweh” means to “spend time and energy getting to know Yahweh and learning to obey him.”
- To “seek protection” means to “try to find a person or place that will protect you from danger.”
- To “seek justice” means to “make an effort to see that people are treated justly or fairly.”
- To “seek the truth” means to “make an effort to find out what the truth is.”
- To “seek favor” means to “urgently ask for favor” or to “do things to cause someone to help you.”

(See also: just, true)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 10:14
- Acts 17:26-27
- Hebrews 11:6
- Luke 11:9
- Psalms 27:8

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0579, H1156, H1239, H1243, H1245, H1556, H1875, H2470, H2603, H2658, H2664, H3289, H7125, H7592, H7836, H8446, G03270, G15670, G19340, G20520, G22120

## Psalms References:

4:2; 9:10; 9:12; 10:4; 10:13; 10:15; 14:2; 17:7; 22:26; 24:6; 27:4; 27:8; 34:4; 34:10; 34:14; 35:4; 37:32; 37:36; 38:12; 40:14; 40:16; 53:2; 54:3; 63:1; 63:9; 69:6; 69:32; 70:2; 70:4; 71:13; 71:24; 77:2; 77:6; 78:34; 83:16; 86:14; 104:21; 105:3; 105:4; 109:10; 111:2; 119:2; 119:10; 119:45; 119:94; 119:155; 119:176; 122:9; 139:1; 139:23; 145:3

# seize, seizure, capture

### Definition:

The term “seize” means to take or capture someone or something by force. It can also mean to overpower and control someone.

- When a city was taken by means of military force, the soldiers would seize the valuable property of the people they had conquered.
- When used figuratively, a person can be described as being “seized with fear.” This means that the person was suddenly “overcome by fear.” If a person was “seized with fear” it could also be stated that the person “suddenly became very afraid.”
- In the context of labor pains that “seize” a woman, the meaning is that the pains are sudden and overpowering. This could be translated by saying that the pains “overcome” or “suddenly come upon” the woman.
- This term could also be translated as “take control of” or “suddenly take” or “grab.”
- The expression “seized and slept with her” could be translated as “forced himself on her” or “violated her” or “raped her.” Make sure the translation of this concept is acceptable.

(See: euphemism)

### Bible References:

- Acts 16:19-21
- Exodus 15:14
- John 10:37-39
- Luke 8:29
- Matthew 26:48

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0270, H1497, H2388, H3027, H3920, H3947, H4672, H5377, H5860, H6031, H7760, H8610, G07240, G19490, G26380, G29020, G29830, G48150, G48840

## Psalms References:

10:9; 48:6; 56:front; 71:11; 119:53; 137:9

# selah

### Definition:

The term “selah” is a Hebrew word that occurs mostly in the book of Psalms. It has several possible meanings.

- It could mean “pause and praise,” which would invite the audience to think carefully about what was just said.
- Since many of the Psalms were written as songs, it is thought that “selah” may have been a musical term to instruct the singer to pause in his singing to allow for the musical instruments to play alone or to encourage listeners to think about the words of the song.

(See also: psalm)

### Bible References:

- Psalm 3:3-4
- Psalm 24:5-6
- Psalms 46:6-7

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5542

## Psalms References:

3:2; 3:4; 3:8; 4:2; 4:4; 7:5; 9:16; 9:20; 20:3; 21:2; 24:6; 24:10; 32:4; 32:5; 32:7; 39:5; 39:11; 44:8; 46:3; 46:7; 46:11; 47:4; 48:8; 49:13; 49:15; 50:6; 52:3; 52:5; 54:3; 55:7; 55:19; 57:3; 57:6; 59:5; 59:13; 60:4; 61:4; 62:4; 62:8; 66:4; 66:7; 66:15; 67:1; 67:4; 68:7; 68:19; 68:32; 75:3; 76:3; 76:9; 77:3; 77:9; 77:15; 81:7; 82:2; 83:8; 84:4; 84:8; 85:2; 87:3; 87:6; 88:7; 88:10; 89:4; 89:37; 89:45; 89:48; 140:3; 140:5; 140:8; 143:6

# serpent, snake, viper

### Definition:

These terms all refer to a kind of reptile that has a long, thin body and large, fanged jaws, and that moves by slithering back and forth across the ground. The term “serpent” usually refers to a large snake and “viper” refers to a type of snake that has venom which it uses to poison its prey.

- This animal is also used figuratively to refer to a person who is evil, especially someone who is deceitful.
- Jesus called the religious leaders “offspring of vipers” because they pretended to be righteous but deceived people and treated them unfairly.
- In the garden of Eden, Satan took the form of a serpent when he talked to Eve and tempted her to disobey God.
- After the serpent tempted Eve to sin, and both Eve and her husband Adam did sin, God cursed the snake, saying that from then on, all snakes would slither along the ground, implying that before then they had had legs.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: curse, deceive, disobey, Eden, evil, prey, Satan, sin, tempt)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 3:3
- Genesis 3:4-6
- Genesis 3:12-13
- Mark 16:17-18
- Matthew 3:7
- Matthew 23:33

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0660, H2119, H5175, H6620, H6848, H8314, H8577, G21910, G20620, G37890

## Psalms References:

58:4; 91:13; 140:3

# servant, serve, maidservant, young man, young women

### Definition:

A “servant” refers to a person who works for (or obeys) another person, either by choice or by force. A servant was under his master’s direction. In the Bible, “servant” and “slave” are mostly interchangeable terms. The term “serve” generally means to do work for someone, and the concept can be applied in a wide variety of contexts.

- In the Bible the words “young man” or “young woman” often mean “servant” or “slave.” This meaning will be discerned from context. One indicator of this situation is if the possessive is used, eg. “her young women” which could be translated as “her servants” or “her slaves.”

### Translation Suggestions

- The term “serve” can also be translated as “minister to” or “work for” or “take care of” or “obey,” depending on the context.
- To “serve God” can be translated as to “worship and obey God” or to “do the work that God has commanded.”
- In the Old Testament, God’s prophets and other people who worshiped God were often called his “servants.”
- In the New Testament, people who obeyed God through faith in Christ were often called his “servants.”
- To “serve tables” means to bring food to people who are sitting at tables, or more generally, to “distribute food.”
- In the context of a person serving guests, this term means “care for” or “serve food to” or “provide food for.” When Jesus told the disciples to “serve” the fish to the people, this could be translated as, “distribute” or “hand out” or “give.”
- People who teach others about God are said to serve both God and the ones they are teaching.
- The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians about how they used to “serve” the old covenant. This refers to obeying the laws of Moses. Now they “serve” the new covenant. That is, because of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, believers in Jesus are enabled by the Holy Spirit to please God and live holy lives.
- Paul talks about their actions in terms of their “service” to either the old or new covenant. This could be translated as “serving” or “obeying” or “devotion to.”
- Often, when a person referred to himself as “your servant” he was showing respect to the person addressed. That person may have had higher social status, or the speaker may be showing humility. It did not mean that the person speaking was an actual servant.

(See also: enslave, works 🔗, obey 🔗, house, lord)

### Bible References:

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 6:1 When Abraham was very old and his son, Isaac, had grown to be a man, Abraham sent one of his **servants** back to the land where his relatives lived to find a wife for his son, Isaac.
- 19:10 Then Elijah prayed, “O Yahweh, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, show us today that you are the God of Israel and that I am your **servant**.”
- 29:3 “Since the **servant** could not pay the debt, the king said, ‘Sell this man and his family as **slaves** to make payment on his debt.’”
- 35:6 “All my father’s **servants** have plenty to eat, and yet here I am starving.”
- 47:4 The **slave** girl kept yelling as they walked, “These men are servants of the Most High God.”
- 50:4 Jesus also said, “A **servant** is not greater than his master.”

### Word Data:

- Strong’s for Servant: H0519, H5288, H5647, H5649, H5650, H5657, H7916, H8198, H8334, G12490, G14010, G14020, G23240, G34070, G34110, G36100, G38160, G49830, G52570

Strong’s for Serve: H3547, H4929, H4931, H5647, H5656, H5673, H5975, H6213, H6399, H6402, H6440, H6633, H6635, H7272, H8104, H8120, H8199, H8278, H8334, G12470, G12480, G13980, G14020, G14380, G19830, G20640, G22120, G23230, G29990, G30000, G30090, G43370, G43420, G47540, G50870, G52560

## Psalms References:

2:11; 18:front; 18:43; 19:11; 19:13; 22:30; 27:9; 31:16; 34:22; 35:27; 36:front; 69:17; 69:36; 72:11; 78:70; 79:2; 79:10; 86:2; 86:4; 86:16; 89:3; 89:20; 89:39; 89:50; 90:13; 90:16; 97:7; 100:2; 101:6; 102:14; 102:22; 102:28; 103:21; 104:4; 105:6; 105:17; 105:25; 105:26; 105:42; 106:36; 109:28; 113:1; 116:16; 119:17; 119:23; 119:38; 119:49; 119:65; 119:76; 119:84; 119:91; 119:122; 119:124; 119:125; 119:135; 119:140; 119:176; 123:2; 132:10; 134:1; 135:1; 135:9; 135:14; 136:22; 143:2; 143:12; 144:10

# Shaddai

### Definition:

The term “Shaddai” is a Hebrew word used for deity. It is used in the Old Testament as a personal name for God. The specific origin (and therefore meaning) of this term is not known. Scholars have proposed different possibilities for what it means and the most probable is that “shaddai” means “mountain” or “mountain range.”

- The Hebrew word “Shaddai” is often translated into English as “the Almighty.”
- The Hebrew phrase “El Shaddai” is often translated into English as “God Almighty.”
- If “Shaddai” means “mountain” or “mountain range” then the Hebrew phrase “El Shaddai” literally means “God, the one of the mountain.”
- The ULT and UST texts always translate this term as, “Shaddai,” in agreement with the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Even though the word Shaddai is a name for a God it is often translated as a title or description, “the Almighty,” rather than as a name. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to translate the word in the same way that it does. If a translation does not exist, you may wish to use the name Shaddai.
- If you choose to translate the term “Shaddai” as a name you could spell it the way it sounds in your language and you could also spell the phrase “El Shaddai” the way it sounds in your language.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: God)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7706

## Psalms References:

68:14; 91:1

# shame, ashamed, disgrace, humiliate, reproach

### Definition:

The term “shame” refers to the painful feeling of being disgraced or humiliated that a person feels when they do something that others consider dishonorable or improper.

- Something that is “shameful” is “improper” or “dishonorable.”
- The term “ashamed” describes how a person feels when he has done something improper or dishonorable.
- The term “humiliate” means to cause someone to feel shamed or disgraced, usually publicly. The act of shaming someone is called “humiliation.”
- To “reproach” someone means to criticize or disapprove of that person’s character or behavior.
- The phrase “put to shame” means to defeat people or expose their actions so that they feel ashamed of themselves. The prophet Isaiah said that those who make and worship idols will be put to shame.
- The term “disgraceful” can be used to describe a sinful act or the person who did it. When a person does something sinful, it can cause him to be in a state of disgrace or dishonor.
- Sometimes a person who is doing good things is treated in a way that causes him disgrace or shame. For example, when Jesus was killed on a cross, this was a disgraceful way to die. Jesus had done nothing wrong to deserve this disgrace.
- When God humbles someone, it means that he is causing a prideful person to experience failure to help him overcome his pride. This is different from humiliating someone, which is often done in order to hurt that person.
- Saying that a person is “above reproach” or “beyond reproach” or “without reproach” means that this person behaves in a God-honoring way and there is little or nothing that could be said in criticism of him.

### Translation Suggestions

- Ways to translate “disgrace” could include “shame” or “dishonor.”
- Ways to translate “disgraceful” could include “shameful” or “dishonoring.”
- To “humiliate” could also be translated as to “shame” or to “cause to feel shame” or to “embarrass.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate “humiliation” could include “shame” or “degrading” or “disgrace.”
- The word “reproach” could also be translated as “accusation” or “shame” or “disgrace.”
- To “reproach” could also be translated as to “rebuke” or to “accuse” or to “criticize,” depending on the context.

(See also: dishonor, accuse, rebuke, false god, humble, Isaiah, worship)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Peter 3:15-17
- 2 Kings 2:17
- 2 Samuel 13:13
- Luke 20:11
- Mark 8:38
- Mark 12:4-5
- 1 Timothy 3:7
- Genesis 34:7
- Hebrews 11:26
- Lamentations 2:1-2
- Psalms 22:6
- Deuteronomy 21:14
- Ezra 9:5
- Proverbs 25:7-8
- Psalms 6:8-10
- Psalms 123:3
- 1 Timothy 5:7-8
- 1 Timothy 6:13-14
- Jeremiah 15:15-16
- Job 16:9-10
- Proverbs 18:3

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0937, H0954, H0955, H1317, H1322, H1421, H1442, H1984, H2490, H2616, H2617, H2659, H2778, H2781, H2865, H3001, H3637, H3639, H3640, H3971, H5007, H5034, H5039, H6030, H6031, H6172, H6256, H7022, H7034, H7036, H7043, H7511, H7817, H8103, H8213, H8216, H8217, H8589, G01520, G01530, G04100, G04220, G04230, G08080, G08180, G08190, G08210, G17880, G17910, G18700, G26170, G30590, G36790, G36800, G36810, G38560, G50140, G51950, G51960, G54840

## Psalms References:

4:2; 6:10; 14:6; 22:5; 22:6; 25:2; 25:3; 25:20; 31:1; 31:11; 31:17; 34:5; 35:4; 35:26; 37:19; 39:8; 40:14; 40:15; 42:10; 44:7; 44:9; 44:13; 44:15; 44:16; 53:5; 55:12; 57:3; 69:6; 69:7; 69:9; 69:10; 69:19; 69:20; 70:2; 70:3; 71:1; 71:13; 71:24; 74:10; 74:18; 74:21; 74:22; 78:66; 79:4; 79:12; 83:16; 83:17; 86:17; 89:41; 89:45; 89:50; 97:7; 102:8; 109:25; 109:28;

109:29; 119:6; 119:22; 119:31; 119:39; 119:42; 119:46; 119:78; 119:80; 119:116; 127:5; 129:5; 132:18

# Sheba

**Definition:**

In ancient times, Sheba was an ancient civilization or region of land that was located somewhere in southern Arabia.

- The region or country of Sheba was probably located near what are now the present-day countries of Yemen and Ethiopia.
- Its inhabitants were probably descendants of Ham.
- The Queen of Sheba came to visit King Solomon when she heard the fame of his riches and wisdom.
- There were also several men named “Sheba” listed in genealogies in the Old Testament. It is possible that the name of the region of Sheba came from one of these men.
- The city of Beersheba was shortened to Sheba one time in the Old Testament.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Arabia, Beersheba, Ethiopia, Solomon)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Chronicles 1:8-10
- 1 Kings 10:1-2
- Isaiah 60:6-7
- Psalms 72:10

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H5434, H7614

## Psalms References:

72:10; 72:15

# Shechem

### Definition:

Shechem was a town in Canaan located about 40 miles north of Jerusalem. Shechem was also the name of a man in the Old Testament.

- The town of Shechem was where Jacob settled after being reconciled to his brother Esau.
- Jacob bought land from the sons of Hamor the Hivite in Shechem. This land later became his family burial ground and the place where his sons buried him.
- Hamor's son Shechem raped Jacob's daughter Dinah, resulting in Jacob's sons killing all the men in the town of Shechem.

(Translation suggestions: Hamor)

(See also: Canaan, Esau, Hamor, Hivite, Jacob)

### Bible References:

- Acts 7:14-16
- Genesis 12:6-7
- Genesis 33:19
- Genesis 37:13

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H7928, H7930

## Psalms References:

60:6; 108:7

# shepherd, herder, pastor

### Definition:

A “shepherd” is a person who takes care of sheep. In the Old Testament, this word can also refer to a “herder” who takes care of other kinds of domestic livestock such as goats or cattle.

- As a verb, the term “shepherd” means to lead sheep (or other livestock) to places with good food and water, protect them from wild animals, keep them from getting lost and other duties necessary to keep livestock alive and healthy.
- In the Bible, this term is often used figuratively to refer to taking care of the needs of people (not only animals), both physical and spiritual.
- In the Old Testament, God was called the “shepherd” of his people because he took care of them. In the New Testament, Jesus called himself the “good shepherd,” and in other places Jesus is called the “great shepherd” of the Church.
- The term “shepherd” is also used in the New Testament to refer to a person who is a spiritual leader over other believers. The word translated as “pastor” is the same word that is translated as “shepherd.” Elders and overseers are also called shepherds.

### Translation Suggestions

- The noun “shepherd” can be translated as “person who takes care of sheep” or “sheep tender” or “sheep caregiver.”
- When referring to someone who cares for livestock other than sheep, the term can be translated as “herder,” “tender of livestock” or “person who takes care of livestock.”
- When used as a verb, the term “shepherd” could be translated as “take care of sheep” or “watch over sheep.”
- In some contexts, the term “shepherd” could be translated as “leader” or “guide” or “caregiver.”
- When used figuratively, the noun “shepherd” could be translated in different ways, including “spiritual shepherd” or “spiritual leader” or “one who is like a shepherd” or “one who cares for his people like a shepherd cares for his sheep” or “one who leads his people like a shepherd guides his sheep” or “one who takes care of God’s sheep.”
- When used figuratively, the verb “shepherd” could be translated as to “take care of” or to “spiritually nourish” or to “guide and teach” or to “lead and take care of (like a shepherd cares for sheep).”

(See also: sheep, livestock, pastor)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 13:7
- Genesis 49:24

- Luke 2:9
- Mark 6:34
- Mark 14:26-27
- Matthew 2:6
- Matthew 9:36
- Matthew 25:32
- Matthew 26:31

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 9:11 Moses became a **shepherd** in the wilderness far away from Egypt.to
- 17:2 David was a **shepherd** from the town of Bethlehem. At different times while he was watching his father's sheep, David had killed both a lion and a bear that had attacked the sheep.
- 23:6 That night, there were some **shepherds** in a nearby field guarding their flocks.
- 23:8 The **shepherds** soon arrived at the place where Jesus was and they found him lying in a feeding trough, just as the angel had told them.
- 30:3 To Jesus, these people were like sheep without a **shepherd**.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H6629, H7462, H7469, H7473, G07500, G41650, G41660

## Psalms References:

23:1; 28:9; 49:14; 78:71; 78:72; 80:1

# shield

**Definition:**

A shield was an object held by a soldier in battle to protect himself from being injured by the enemy's weapons. To "shield" someone means to protect that person from harm.

- Shields were often circular or oval, were made of materials such as leather, wood, or metal, and were sturdy and thick enough to keep a sword or arrow from piercing them.
- Using this term as a metaphor, the Bible refers to God as a protective shield for his people. (See: Metaphor)
- Paul talked about the "shield of faith," which is a figurative way of saying that having faith in Jesus and living out that faith in obedience to God will protect believers from the spiritual attacks of Satan.

(See also: faith, obey, Satan, spirit)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Kings 14:26
- 2 Chronicles 23:8-9
- 2 Samuel 22:36
- Deuteronomy 33:29
- Psalms 18:35

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H2653, H3591, H4043, H5437, H5526, H6793, H7982, G23750

## Psalms References:

3:3; 5:12; 7:10; 18:2; 18:30; 18:35; 28:7; 33:20; 35:2; 47:9; 59:11; 76:3; 84:9; 84:11; 89:18; 91:4; 115:9; 115:10; 115:11; 119:114; 144:2

# Shiloh

**Definition:**

Shiloh was a walled Canaanite city that was conquered by the Israelites under the leadership of Joshua.

- The city of Shiloh was located west of the Jordan River and northeast of the city of Bethel.
- During the time that Joshua was leading Israel, the city of Shiloh was a meeting place for the people of Israel.
- The twelve tribes of Israel met together at Shiloh to hear Joshua tell them which portion of the land of Canaan had been assigned to each of them.
- Before any temple was built in Jerusalem, Shiloh was the place where the Israelites came to sacrifice to God.
- When Samuel was a young boy, his mother Hannah took him to live in Shiloh to be trained by the priest Eli to serve Yahweh.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Bethel, dedicate, Hannah, Jerusalem, Jordan River, priest, sacrifice, Samuel, temple)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Kings 2:26-27
- 1 Samuel 1:9-10
- Joshua 18:1-2
- Judges 18:30-31

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H7886, H7887

## Psalms References:

78:60

# shrewd, cunning

### Definition:

The term “shrewd” describes a person who is intelligent and clever, especially in practical matters.

- Often the term “shrewd” has a meaning that is partly negative since it usually also involves being selfish.
- A shrewd person is usually focused on helping himself, not others.
- Other ways to translate this term could include “cunning” or “crafty” or “smart” or “clever,” depending on the context.

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2450, H6175, G54290

## Psalms References:

18:26; 83:3

# siege, besiege, besieged, siegework, siegeworks

### Definition:

A “siege” occurs when an attacking army surrounds a city and keeps it from receiving any supplies of food and water. To “besiege” a city or to put it “under siege” means to attack it by means of a siege.

- When the Babylonians came to attack Israel, they used the tactic of a siege against Jerusalem to weaken the people inside the city.
- Often during a siege, ramps of dirt are gradually constructed to enable the attacking army to cross over the city walls and invade the city.
- To “besiege” a city can also be expressed as to “lay siege” to it or to “perform a siege” on it.
- The term “besieged” has the same meaning as the expression “under siege.” Both these expressions describe a city that an enemy army is surrounding and besieging.

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 20:1
- 1 Kings 20:1-3
- 1 Samuel 11:1-2
- Jeremiah 33:4

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4692, H4693, H5341, H5437, H5564, H6693, H6696, H6887

## Psalms References:

31:21

# sign, proof, reminder

### Definition:

The term “sign” usually refers an object, event, or action that communicates a special meaning.

- In the Bible, signs are sometimes given in connection to a promise or covenant that God has made:
  - The book of Genesis describes the rainbow God created in the sky as a sign (or reminder) to himself that he has promised he will never again destroy all life with a worldwide flood.
  - In the book of Genesis, God commanded the Israelites to circumcise their sons as a sign (or indicator) of the fact that he had made his covenant with them.
- Signs can reveal or point to something:
  - The book of Luke describes that an angel gave shepherds a sign that would help them know which baby in Bethlehem was the newborn Messiah.
  - Judas kissed Jesus as a sign to the religious leaders that Jesus was the one they should arrest.
- Signs can prove that something is true:
  - The book of Exodus describes the plagues that destroyed Egypt as signs that showed who Yahweh was and proved that he was greater than Pharaoh and the Egyptian gods.
  - The book of Acts describes the miracles performed by the prophets and apostles as signs that proved they were speaking God’s message.
  - The book of John describes the miracles that Jesus performed as signs that proved he was truly the Messiah.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The frequent expression “signs and wonders” could be translated as “proofs and miracles” or “miraculous works that prove God’s power” or “amazing miracles that show how great God is.”
- Depending on its context, “sign” could also be translated as “signal” or “symbol” or “mark” or “evidence” or “proof” or “gesture.”
- To “make signs with the hands” could also be translated as “motion with the hands” or “gesture with the hands” or “make gestures.”
- In some languages, there may be one word for a “sign” that proves something and a different word for a “sign” that is a miracle.

(See also: miracle, apostle, Christ, covenant, circumcise)

**Bible References:**

- Acts 2:18-19
- Exodus 4:8-9
- Exodus 31:12-15
- Genesis 1:14
- Genesis 9:12
- John 2:18
- Luke 2:12
- Mark 8:12
- Psalms 89:5-6

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0226, H0852, H2368, H2858, H4150, H4159, H4864, H5251, H5824, H6161, H6725, H6734, H7560, G03640, G08800, G12130, G12290, G17180, G17300, G17320, G17700, G39020, G41020, G45910, G45920, G49530, G49730, G52800

## Psalms References:

74:4; 74:9; 78:43; 86:17; 105:27; 135:9

# Sihon

**Definition:**

Sihon is the name of a man who was an Amorite king who ruled over the land of Heshbon.

- The Israelites conquered Sihon and his people and land.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Amorite, Heshbon)

**Bible References:**

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H5511

## Psalms References:

135:11; 136:19

# silver

### Definition:

Silver is a shiny, gray precious metal used to make coins, jewelry, containers, and ornaments.

- The various containers that are made from silver include silver cups and bowls, and other things used for cooking, eating, or serving.
- Silver and gold were used in the building of the tabernacle and the temple. The temple in Jerusalem had containers made of silver.
- In Bible times, a shekel was a unit of weight, and a purchase was often priced at a certain number of shekels of silver. By New Testament times there were silver coins of various weights that were measured in shekels.
- Joseph's brothers sold him as a slave for twenty shekels of silver.
- Judas was paid thirty silver coins for betraying Jesus.
- If your culture does not have silver you could translate this term as "precious metal"

(See also: tabernacle, temple)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:9-11
- 1 Samuel 2:36
- 2 Kings 25:13-15
- Acts 3:6
- Matthew 26:15

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3701, H3702, H7192, G06930, G06940, G06950, G06960, G14060

## Psalms References:

12:6; 15:5; 66:10; 68:13; 68:30; 105:37; 115:4; 119:72; 135:15

# 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 do not 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 did not 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 “rebelling 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 do not 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 **sinners** 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

## Psalms References:

1:1; 1:5; 4:4; 25:7; 25:8; 25:18; 26:9; 32:intro; 32:1; 32:5; 36:2; 36:3; 36:4; 37:38; 38:3; 38:5; 38:18; 39:1; 39:8; 39:11; 40:6; 41:4; 51:2; 51:3; 51:4; 51:5; 51:9; 51:13; 59:3; 59:12; 69:5; 78:17; 78:32; 79:9; 85:2; 90:8; 103:3; 103:10; 104:35; 106:intro; 106:6; 106:43; 107:17; 109:7; 109:14; 119:11; 130:3; 130:8

# Sinai, Horeb

**Definition:**

Mount Sinai, also called Mount Horeb, is a mountain that was probably located in the southern part of what is now called the Sinai Peninsula, but the exact location of this mountain is not known.

- It is the place where God revealed his covenant to the Israelites and gave Moses the stone tablets on which he had written the ten commandments.
- It is also called the "mountain of God."
- It was also the place where God later told Moses to strike a rock to provide water for the Israelites as they were wandering in the desert.
- It was the place where Moses saw the burning bush when he was tending sheep.
- It is possible that "Horeb" was the actual name of the mountain and that "Mount Sinai" simply means "mountain of Sinai," referring to the fact that Mount Horeb was located in the desert of Sinai.

(See also: desert, Ten Commandments, covenant, Israel, Moses, Sinai)

**Bible References:**

- Acts 7:29-30
- Exodus 16:1-3
- Galatians 4:24
- Leviticus 27:34
- Numbers 1:17-19
- 1 Kings 8:9-11
- 2 Chronicles 5:9-10
- Deuteronomy 1:2
- Exodus 3:1-3
- Psalms 106:19

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 13:1 After God led the Israelites through the Red Sea, he led them through the wilderness to a mountain called **Sinai**.
- 13:3 Three days later, after the people had prepared themselves spiritually, God came down on top of **Mount Sinai** with thunder, lightning, smoke, and a loud trumpet blast.

- 13:11 For many days, Moses was on top of **Mount Sinai** talking with God.
- 15:13 Then Joshua reminded the people of their obligation to obey the covenant that God had made with the Israelites at **Sinai**.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H2722, H5514, G37350, G46140

## Psalms References:

68:8; 68:17; 106:19

# slander, slanderer, revile, insult

### Definition:

A slander consists of negative, defaming things spoken (not written) about another person. To say such things (not to write them) about someone is to slander that person. The person saying such things is a slanderer.

- Slander may be a true report or a false accusation, but its effect is to cause others to think negatively of the person being slandered.
- To “slander” could be translated as to “speak against” or to “spread an evil report” or to “defame.”
- A slanderer is also called an “informer” or a “tale-bearer.”

(See also: **blasphemy**)

### Bible References:

- **1 Corinthians 4:13**
- **1 Timothy 3:11**
- **2 Corinthians 6:8-10**
- **Mark 7:20-23**

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1681, H1696, H1848, H3960, H5791, H7270, H7400, H8267, G09870, G09880, G12280, G14260, G26360, G26370, G30590, G30600

## Psalms References:

15:3; 44:16; 50:20; 101:5; 119:78

# slaughter, slaughtered

### Definition:

The term “slaughter” refers to killing a large number of animals or people, or to killing in a violent way. It can also refer to killing an animal for the purpose of eating it. The act of slaughtering is also called “slaughter.”

- When Abraham received three visitors at his tent in the desert, he ordered his servants to slaughter and cook a calf for his guests.
- The prophet Ezekiel prophesied that God would send his angel to slaughter all those who would not follow His word.
- 1 Samuel records a great slaughter in which 30,000 Israelites were killed by their enemies because of disobedience to God.
- “Weapons of slaughter” could be translated as “weapons for killing.”
- The expression “the slaughter was very great” could be translated as “a large number were killed” or “the number of deaths was very great” or “a terribly high number of people died.”
- Other ways to translate “slaughter” could include “kill” or “slay” or “killing.”

(See also: angel, cow, disobey, Ezekiel, servant, slay)

### Bible References:

- Ezekiel 21:10-11
- Hebrews 7:1
- Isaiah 34:2
- Jeremiah 25:34

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2026, H2027, H2028, H2076, H2491, H2873, H2874, H2878, H4046, H4293, H4347, H4660, H5221, H6993, H7524, H7819, H7821, G28710, G49670, G49690

## Psalms References:

44:22

# slay, slain, slaughter, kill, murder

### Definition:

To “slay” a person or animal means to kill it. Often it means to kill it in a forceful or violent way. If a man has killed an animal he has “slain” it.

- When referring to an animal or to a large number of people, the term “slaughter” is another term that is often used.
- An act of slaughtering is also called a “slaughter.”
- The phrase “the slain” could also be translated as “the slain people” or “the people who were killed.”

(See also: slaughter)

### Bible References:

- Ezekiel 28:23
- Isaiah 26:21

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2026, H2076, H2491, H2717, H2763, H2873, H2874, H4191, H4194, H5221, H6991, H6992, H7523, H7819, G03370, G06150, G13150, G23800, G26950, G49680, G49690, G54070

## Psalms References:

10:8; 18:37; 34:21; 37:14; 37:32; 44:22; 59:front; 59:11; 78:31; 78:34; 88:5; 89:10; 94:6; 105:29; 135:10; 136:18; 139:19; 143:12

# snare, ensnare, entrap, trap, trapped, pitfall

**Definition:**

The terms “snare” and “trap” refer to devices that are used to catch animals and keep them from escaping. To “snare” or “ensnare” is to catch with a snare, and to “trap” or “entrap” is to catch with a trap. In the Bible, these terms were also used figuratively to talk about how sin and temptation are like hidden traps that catch people and harm them.

- A “snare” is a loop of rope or wire that suddenly pulls tight when an animal steps into it, ensnaring its leg.
- A “trap” is usually made of metal or wood and has two parts that suddenly and powerfully close together, catching an animal so it can not get away. Sometimes a trap can be a deep hole that has been made in order to get something to fall into it.
- Usually the snare or trap is hidden so that its prey is taken by surprise.
- The phrase “set a trap” means to get a trap ready to capture something.
- To “fall into a trap” refers to falling into a deep hole or pit that was dug and hidden in order to catch an animal.
- A person who is starts sinning and cannot stop can be described as “ensnared by sin” in a figurative reference to the way an animal can be ensnared and cannot escape.
- Just as an animal is endangered and hurt by being in a trap, so a person caught in the trap of sin is being harmed by that sin and needs to be set free.

(See also: free, prey, Satan, tempt)

**Bible References:**

- Ecclesiastes 7:26
- Luke 21:34
- Mark 12:13
- Psalms 18:5

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H2256, H3353, H3369, H3920, H3921, H4170, H4204, H4434, H4685, H4686, H4889, H5367, H5914, H6341, H6351, H6354, H6679, H6983, H7639, H7845, H8610, G00640, G23390, G23400, G38020, G38030, G39850, G46250

## Psalms References:

9:16; 11:6; 18:5; 38:12; 64:5; 69:22; 91:3; 106:36; 109:11; 119:61; 119:110; 124:7; 140:5; 141:9; 142:3

# snow

### Definition:

The term “snow” refers to white flakes of frozen water that can fall from clouds in places where the air temperature is cold.

- Snow falls in places of higher elevation in Israel, but does not always stay on the ground very long before melting. The peaks of mountains tend to have snow that lasts longer. One example of a place mentioned in the Bible as having snow is Mount Lebanon.
- Something that is very white often has its color compared to the color of snow. For example, in the book of Revelation Jesus’ clothing and hair were described as being “white as snow.”
- The whiteness of snow also symbolizes purity and cleanliness. For example, the statement that our “sins will be as white as snow” means that God will completely cleanse his people from their sins.
- Some languages might refer to snow as “frozen rain” or “flakes of ice” or “frozen flakes.”
- “Snow water” refers to the water that comes from melted snow.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Lebanon, pure)

### Bible References:

- Exodus 4:6
- Job 37:4-6
- Matthew 28:3
- Psalms 147:16
- Revelation 1:14

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7949, H7950, H8517, G55100

## Psalms References:

51:7; 68:14; 147:16; 148:8

# soldier, warrior

### Definition:

The terms “warrior” and “soldier” both can refer to someone who fights in an army. But there are also some differences.

- Usually the term “warrior” is a general, broad term to refer to a man who is gifted and courageous in battle.
- Yahweh is figuratively described as a “warrior.”
- The term “soldier” more specifically refers to someone who belongs to a certain army or who is fighting in a certain battle.
- Roman soldiers in Jerusalem were there to keep order and to carry out duties such as executing prisoners. They guarded Jesus before crucifying him and some were ordered to stand guard at his tomb.
- The translator should consider whether there are two words in the project language for “warrior” and “soldier” that also differ in meaning and use.

(See also: courage, crucify, Rome, tomb)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 21:5
- Acts 21:33
- Luke 3:14
- Luke 23:11
- Matthew 8:8-10

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0352, H0510, H1368, H1416, H1995, H2389, H2428, H2502, H3715, H4421, H5971, H6518, H6635, H7273, H7916, G46860, G47530, G47540, G47570, G47580, G49610

## Psalms References:

33:16; 45:3; 52:1; 89:19; 103:20; 120:4; 127:4

# Solomon

**Definition:**

Solomon was one of King David's sons. His mother was Bathsheba.

- When Solomon became king, God told him to ask for anything he wanted. So Solomon asked for wisdom to rule the people justly and well. God was pleased with Solomon's request and gave him both wisdom and much wealth.
- Solomon is also well known for having a magnificent temple built in Jerusalem.
- Although Solomon ruled wisely in the first years of his reign, later on he foolishly married many foreign women and started worshiping their gods.
- Because of Solomon's unfaithfulness, after his death God divided the Israelites into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah. These kingdoms often fought against each other.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Bathsheba, David, Israel, **Judah**, **kingdom of Israel**, temple)

**Bible References:**

- **Acts 7:47-50**
- **Luke 12:27**
- **Matthew 1:7-8**
- **Matthew 6:29**
- **Matthew 12:42**

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- **17:14** Later, David and Bathsheba had another son, and they named him **Solomon**.
- **18:1** After many years, David died, and his son **Solomon** began to rule. God spoke to **Solomon** and asked him what he wanted most. When **Solomon** asked for wisdom, God was pleased and made him the wisest man in the world. **Solomon** learned many things and was a very wise judge. God also made him very wealthy.
- **18:2** In Jerusalem, **Solomon** built the Temple for which his father David had planned and gathered materials.
- **18:3** But **Solomon** loved women from other countries.…When **Solomon** was old, he also worshiped their gods.
- **18:4** God was angry with **Solomon** and, as a punishment for **Solomon's** unfaithfulness, he promised to divide the nation of Israel into two kingdoms after **Solomon's** death.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H8010, G46720

## Psalms References:

72:1; 127:1

# Son of Man, son of man

### Definition:

The title “Son of Man” was used by Jesus to refer to himself. He often used this term instead of saying “I” or “me.”

- In the Bible, “son of man” could be a way of referring to or addressing a man. It could also mean “human being.”
- Throughout the Old Testament book of Ezekiel, God frequently addressed Ezekiel as “son of man.” For example he said, “You, son of man, must prophesy.”
- The prophet Daniel saw a vision of a “son of man” coming with the clouds, which is a reference to the coming Messiah.
- Jesus also said that the Son of Man will be coming back someday on the clouds.
- These references to the Son of Man coming on the clouds reveal that Jesus the Messiah is God.

### Translation Suggestions:

- When Jesus uses the term “Son of Man” it could be translated as “the One who became a human being” or “the Man from heaven.”
- Some translators occasionally include “I” or “me” with this title (as in “I, the Son of Man”) to make it clear that Jesus was talking about himself.
- Check to make sure that the translation of this term does not give a wrong meaning (such as referring to an illegitimate son or giving the wrong impression that Jesus was only a human being).
- When used to refer to a person, “son of man” could also be translated as “you, a human being” or “you, man” or “human being” or “man.”

(See also: heaven, son, Son of God, Yahweh)

### Bible References:

- Acts 7:56
- Daniel 7:14
- Ezekiel 43:6-8
- John 3:12-13
- Luke 6:5
- Mark 2:10
- Matthew 13:37
- Psalms 80:17-18

- **Revelation 14:14**

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0120, H0606, H1121, H1247, G04440, G52070

## Psalms References:

4:2; 8:4; 80:17; 144:3; 146:3

# sons of God, children of God

### Definition:

The term “sons of God” is a figurative expression that has several possible meanings.

- In the New Testament, the term “sons of God” refers to all believers in Jesus and is often translated as “children of God” since it includes both males and females.
- This use of the term speaks of a relationship with God that is like the relationship between a human son and his father, with all the privileges associated with being sons.
- Some people interpret the term “sons of God” that appears in Genesis 6 to mean fallen angels—evil spirits or demons. Others think it may refer to powerful political rulers or to the descendants of Seth.
- The title “Son of God” is a different term: it refers to Jesus, who is God’s only Son.

### Translation Suggestions:

- When “sons of God” refers to believers in Jesus, it could be translated as “children of God.”
- In Genesis 6:2 and 4 ways to translate “sons of God” could include “angels,” “spirit beings,” “supernatural creatures,” or “demons.”
- Also see the link for “son.”

(See also: angel, demon, son, Son of God, ruler, spirit)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 6:2
- Genesis 6:4
- Job 1:6
- Romans 8:14

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0430, H1121, G52070, G50430

## Psalms References:

29:1; 89:6

# soul, self

### Definition:

The term “soul” can either refer generally to the non-physical part of a person or refer specifically to a person’s awareness of themselves as a person distinct from others.

- In the Bible, the terms “soul” and “spirit” may be two different concepts, or they may be two terms that refer to the same concept.
- When a person dies, his soul leaves his body.
- In contrast to the body, the “soul” can be spoken of as the part of a person that “relates to God.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “soul” could also be translated as “inner self” or “inner person.”
- In some contexts, “my soul” could be translated as “I” or “me.”
- Usually the phrase “the soul” can be translated as “the person” or “he” or “him,” depending on the context.
- Some languages might only have one word for the concepts “soul” and “spirit.”
- In Hebrews 4:12, the figurative phrase “dividing soul and spirit” could mean “deeply discerning or exposing the inner person.”

(See also: spirit)

### Bible References:

- 2 Peter 2:8
- Acts 2:27-28
- Acts 2:41
- Genesis 49:6
- Isaiah 53:10-11
- James 1:21
- Jeremiah 6:16-19
- Jonah 2:7-8
- Luke 1:47
- Matthew 22:37
- Psalms 19:7
- Revelation 20:4

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H5082, H5315, H5397, G55900

## Psalms References:

6:3; 6:4; 7:5; 10:3; 11:1; 11:5; 13:2; 16:10; 17:9; 17:13; 19:7; 22:29; 23:3; 24:4; 25:1; 25:13; 26:9; 30:3; 31:7; 31:9; 33:19; 33:20; 34:2; 34:22; 35:3; 35:9; 35:12; 35:13; 35:17; 35:25; 41:2; 41:4; 42:1; 42:2; 42:4; 42:5; 42:6; 42:11; 43:5; 44:25; 49:15; 49:18; 57:1; 57:4; 57:6; 62:1; 62:5; 63:1; 63:5; 63:8; 66:9; 66:16; 69:10; 69:18; 71:23; 77:2; 78:50; 84:2; 86:2; 86:4; 86:13; 88:3; 88:14; 89:48; 94:17; 94:19; 103:1; 103:2; 103:22; 104:1; 104:35; 105:22; 107:5; 107:9; 107:18; 107:26; 109:20; 109:31; 116:7; 116:8; 119:20; 119:25; 119:28; 119:81; 119:109; 119:129; 119:167; 119:175; 120:2; 120:6; 121:7; 123:4; 124:4; 124:5; 124:7; 130:5; 130:6; 131:2; 138:3; 139:14; 141:8; 142:4; 142:7; 143:3; 143:6; 143:8; 143:11; 143:12; 146:1

# sow, sower, plant, planted, replanted, transplanted

### Definition:

To “sow” means to put seeds on top of or in the ground in order to grow plants. A “sower” is a person who sows or plants seeds. A “plant” is generally something that grows and is attached to the ground.

- One method of sowing or planting seeds during biblical times was to take handfuls of seeds and scatter them on the ground.
- Farmers would often plow the ground on which they had sown seeds after they had sown the seeds. The reason farmers would plow the ground after they had sown the seed is so that the seed would be covered with soil.
- Sometimes farmers may have plowed the field that they sowed seeds in both before and after sowing seeds.

### Translations Suggestions

- The term to “sow” could also be translated as to “plant.” Make sure the word or phrase you use to translate this term refers to, or can include, planting seeds by scattering them because this is the method of sowing that Jesus was referring to in his parable in Matthew 13:3-23, Mark 4:2-20, and Luke 8:4-8 where he describes a sower who sowed seeds.
- Other ways to translate “sower” could include “planter” or “farmer” or “person who plants seeds.”
- In English, “sow” is only used for planting seeds, but the English word “plant” can be used for planting seeds as well as larger things, such as trees. Other languages may also use different words, depending on what is being planted.

(See also: harvest)

### Bible References:

- Luke 8:5
- Matthew 6:25-26
- Matthew 13:4
- Matthew 13:19
- Matthew 25:24

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2221, H2232, H2233, H2236, H4218, H4302, H5193, H7971, H8362, G46870, G47030, G54520

## Psalms References:

37:2; 44:2; 80:8; 80:15; 92:13; 94:9; 104:14; 104:16; 107:37; 126:5; 144:12

# spear, spearmen

### Definition:

A spear is a weapon with a long wooden handle and sharp metal blade on one end that is thrown a long distance.

- Spears were commonly used for war in biblical times. They are sometimes still used in present-day conflicts between certain people groups.
- A spear was used by a Roman soldier to pierce the side of Jesus while he hung on the cross.
- Sometimes people throw spears to catch fish or other prey to eat.
- Similar weapons are the “javelin” or “lance.”
- Make sure that the translation of “spear” is different from the translation of “sword,” which is a weapon that is used for thrusting or stabbing, not throwing. Also, a sword has a long blade with a handle, while a spear has a small blade on the end of a long shaft.

(See also: prey, Rome, sword, warrior)

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 13:19-21
- 2 Samuel 21:19
- Nehemiah 4:12-14
- Psalm 35:3

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1265, H2595, H3591, H6767, H7013, H7420, G30570

## Psalms References:

35:3; 46:9; 57:4

# spirit, wind, breath

### Definition:

The term “spirit” refers to the non-physical part of a person which cannot be seen. In biblical times, the concept of a person’s spirit was closely related to the concept of a person’s breath. The term can also refer to wind, that is, the movement of air in the natural world.

- The term “spirit” can refer to a being that does not have a physical body, such as an evil spirit.
- In general, the term “spiritual” describes things in the non-physical world.
- The term “spirit of” can also mean “having the characteristics of,” such as in “spirit of wisdom” or “in the spirit of Elijah.” Sometimes the Bible applies this term in the context of a person’s attitude or emotional state, such as “spirit of fear” and “spirit of jealousy.”
- Jesus said that God is a spirit.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, some ways to translate “spirit” might include “non-physical being” or “inside part” or “inner being.”
- In some contexts, the term “spirit” could be translated as “evil spirit” or “evil spirit being.”
- Sometimes the term “spirit” is used to express the feelings of a person, as in “my spirit was grieved in my inmost being.” This could also be translated as “I felt grieved in my spirit” or “I felt deeply grieved.”
- The phrase “spirit of” could be translated as “character of” or “influence of” or “attitude of” or “thinking (that is) characterized by.”
- Depending on the context, “spiritual” could be translated as “non-physical” or “from the Holy Spirit” or “God’s” or “part of the non-physical world.”
- The phrase “spiritual maturity” could be translated as “godly behavior that shows obedience to the Holy Spirit.”
- The term “spiritual gift” could be translated as “special ability that the Holy Spirit gives.”
- Sometimes this term can be translated as “wind” when referring to the simple movement of air or “breath” when referring to air movement caused by living beings.

(See also: soul, Holy Spirit, demon, **breath**)

### Bible References:

- **1 Corinthians 5:5**

- 1 John 4:3
- 1 Thessalonians 5:23
- Acts 5:9
- Colossians 1:9
- Ephesians 4:23
- Genesis 7:21-22
- Genesis 8:1
- Isaiah 4:4
- Mark 1:23-26
- Matthew 26:41
- Philippians 1:27

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 13:3 Three days later, after the people had prepared themselves **spiritually**, God came down on top of Mount Sinai with thunder, lightning, smoke, and a loud trumpet blast.
- 40:7 Then Jesus cried out, “It is finished! Father, I give my **spirit** into your hands.” Then he bowed his head and gave up his **spirit**.
- 45:5 As Stephen was dying, he cried out, “Jesus, receive my **spirit**.”
- 48:7 All the people groups are blessed through him, because everyone who believes in Jesus is saved from sin, and becomes a **spiritual** descendant of Abraham.

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0178, H1172, H5397, H7307, H7308, G41510, G41520, G41530, G53260, G54270

## Psalms References:

18:15; 31:5; 32:2; 33:6; 34:18; 39:5; 51:10; 51:12; 51:17; 76:12; 77:3; 77:6; 78:8; 104:29; 104:30; 106:33; 135:17; 142:3; 143:4; 143:7; 146:4; 150:6

# splendor

### Definition:

The term “splendor” refers to the extreme beauty and elegance that is often associated with wealth and a magnificent appearance.

- Often splendor is used to describe the wealth that a king has, or how he looks in his expensive, beautiful finery.
- The word “splendor” can also be used to describe the beauty of trees, mountains, and other things that God has created.
- Certain cities are said to have splendor because of o their natural resources, elaborate buildings and roads, and the wealth of their people, which includes rich clothing, gold, and silver.
- Depending on the context, this word could be translated as “magnificent beauty” or “amazing majesty” or “kingly greatness.”

(See also: glory, king, majesty)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 16:27
- Exodus 28:1-3
- Ezekiel 28:7
- Luke 4:7
- Psalms 89:44-45
- Revelation 21:26-27

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1925, H1926, H1927, H1935, H2091, H2122, H2892, H3314, H3519, H6643, H7613, H8597

## Psalms References:

8:1; 16:3; 21:5; 71:8; 78:61; 89:17; 89:44; 96:6; 96:9; 104:1; 111:3; 145:5; 145:12; 148:13

# staff, clubs

### Definition:

A staff is a long wooden stick or rod, often used as a walking stick.

- When Jacob was old, he used a staff to help him walk.
- God turned Moses' staff into a snake to show his power to Pharaoh.
- Shepherds also used a staff to help guide their sheep, or to rescue the sheep when they fell or wandered.
- The shepherd's staff had a hook on the end, so it differed from the shepherd's rod, which was straight and was used to kill wild animals that were trying to attack the sheep.

(See also: Pharaoh, power, sheep, shepherd)

### Bible References:

- Exodus 4:1-3
- Exodus 7:9
- Luke 9:3
- Mark 6:7-9
- Matthew 10:8-10
- Matthew 27:29

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H4132, H4294, H4731, H4938, H6086, H6418, H7626, G25630, G35860, G44640

## Psalms References:

23:4; 105:16

# statute

**Definition:**

A statute is a specific written law that provides guidance for people to live by.

- The term “statute” is similar in meaning to “ordinance” and “command” and “law” and “decree.” All these terms involve instructions and requirements that God gives to his people or rulers give to their people.
- King David said that he delighted himself in Yahweh’s statutes.
- The term “statute” could also be translated as “specific command” or “special decree.”

(See also: command, decree, law, ordinance, Yahweh)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Kings 11:11-13
- Deuteronomy 6:20-23
- Ezekiel 33:15
- Numbers 19:2

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H2706, H2708, H7010, G13450

## Psalms References:

18:22; 50:16; 81:4; 89:31; 94:20; 99:7; 105:10; 105:45; 119:5; 119:6; 119:8; 119:12; 119:16; 119:19; 119:21; 119:23; 119:26; 119:33; 119:40; 119:45; 119:48; 119:54; 119:63; 119:64; 119:68; 119:69; 119:71; 119:78; 119:80; 119:83; 119:108; 119:112; 119:117; 119:118; 119:124; 119:135; 119:145; 119:155; 119:159; 119:168; 119:171; 119:173; 147:19

# stone, stoning

**Definition:**

A stone is a small rock. To “stone” someone is to throw stones and larger rocks at that person with the intention of killing him. A “stoning” is an event in which someone was stoned.

- In ancient times, stoning was a common method of executing people as punishment for crimes they had committed.
- God commanded the Israelite leaders to stone people for certain sins, such as adultery.
- In the New Testament, Jesus forgave a woman caught in adultery and stopped people from stoning her.
- Stephen, who was the first person in the Bible to be killed for testifying about Jesus, was stoned to death.
- In the city of Lystra, the apostle Paul was stoned, but he did not die from his wounds.

(See also: adultery, commit, crime, death, Lystra, testimony)

**Bible References:**

- Acts 7:57-58
- Acts 7:59-60
- Acts 14:5
- Acts 14:19-20
- John 8:4-6
- Luke 13:34
- Luke 20:6
- Matthew 23:37-39

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0068, H0069, H0810, H1382, H1496, H1530, H2106, H2672, H2687, H2789, H4676, H4678, H5553, H5601, H5619, H6344, H6443, H6697, H6864, H6872, H7275, H7671, H8068, G26420, G29910, G30340, G30350, G30360, G30370, G40740, G43480, G55860

## Psalms References:

91:12; 102:14

# storehouse

### Definition:

A “storehouse” is a large building that is used for keeping food or other things, often for a long time.

- In the Bible a “storehouse” was usually used to store extra grain and other food to be used later when there was a famine.
- This term was also used figuratively to refer to all the good things that God wants to give to his people.
- The storehouses of the temple and tent of meeting (sometimes called “the tabernacle”)contained valuable things that had been dedicated to Yahweh, such as gold and silver. Some of these things used to repair and maintain the temple were also kept there.
- Other ways to translate “storehouse” could include “a building for storing grain” or “place for keeping food” or “room for keeping valuable things safe.”
- When referring to the place where valuable things were kept for the tent of meeting or temple, another way to translate the word “storehouse” is “treasury.”

(See also: consecrate, dedicate, famine, gold, grain, silver, temple)

### Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 16:2-3
- Luke 3:17
- Matthew 3:12
- Psalms 33:7

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0214, H0618, H0624, H4035, H4200, H4543, G05960

## Psalms References:

33:7; 135:7

# strife, disputes, quarrel, arguing, conflict

### Definition:

The term “strife” refers to physical or emotional conflict between people.

- A person who causes strife does things that result in strong disagreements between people and in hurt feelings.
- Sometimes the use of the word “strife” implies that strong emotions are involved, such as anger or bitterness.
- Other ways to translate this term could include “disagreement” or “dispute” or “conflict.”

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 3:3-5
- Habakkuk 1:3
- Philippians 1:17
- Proverbs 17:1
- Psalms 55:8-9
- Romans 13:13

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1777, H1779, H4066, H4090, H4683, H4808, H7379, H7701, G04850, G20520, G20540, G30550, G31630, G53790

## Psalms References:

18:43; 31:20; 55:9; 80:6

# stronghold, fortification, fortress, citadel

### Definition:

The terms “stronghold” and “fortress” both refer to places that are well protected against an attack by enemy soldiers. A “citadel” is a fortress inside a city. The term “fortified” describes a city or other place that has been made safe from attack.

- Often, strongholds and fortresses were manmade structures with defensive walls. They could also have been places with natural protective barriers such as rocky cliffs or high mountains.
- People fortified strongholds by building thick walls or other structures that made it difficult for an enemy to break through.
- “Stronghold” or “fortress” could be translated as “securely strong place” or “strongly protected place.”
- The term “fortified city” could be translated as “securely protected city” or “strongly built city.”
- Another figurative meaning for the term “stronghold” referred to something that someone wrongly trusted in for security, such as a false god or other thing that was worshiped instead of Yahweh. This could be translated as “false strongholds.”
- This term should be translated differently from “refuge,” which emphasizes safety more than the concept of being fortified.

(See also: false god, false god, refuge, Yahweh)

### Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 10:4
- 2 Kings 8:10-12
- 2 Samuel 5:8-10
- Acts 21:35
- Habakkuk 1:10-11

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0490, H0553, H0759, H1001, H1002, H1003, H1219, H1225, H2388, H4013, H4026, H4581, H4526, H4679, H4685, H4686, H4692, H4694, H4869, H5794, H5797, H5800, H6438, H6877, H7682, G37940, G39250

## Psalms References:

18:2; 18:45; 31:2; 31:3; 37:39; 46:7; 46:11; 48:3; 48:13; 59:9; 59:16; 59:17; 60:9; 62:2; 62:6; 71:3; 89:40; 91:2; 122:7; 144:2

# stumble, reeling

### Definition:

The term “stumble” means “almost fall” when walking or running. Usually it involves tripping over something.

- Figuratively, to “stumble” can mean to “sin” or to “falter” in believing.
- This term can also refer to faltering or showing weakness when fighting a battle or when being persecuted or punished.

### Translation Suggestions

- In contexts where the term “stumble” means to physically trip over something, it should be translated with a term that means “almost fall” or “trip over.”
- This literal meaning could also be used in a figurative context, if it communicates the correct meaning in that context.
- For figurative uses where the literal meaning would not make sense in the project language, “stumble” could be translated as “sin” or “falter” or “stop believing” or “become weak,” depending on the context.
- Another way to translate this term could be, “stumble by sinning” or “stumble by not believing.”
- The phrase “made to stumble” could be translated as “caused to become weak” or “caused to falter.”

(See also: believe, persecute, sin, stumbling block)

### Bible References:

- 1 Peter 2:8
- Hosea 4:5
- Isaiah 31:3
- Matthew 11:4-6
- Matthew 18:8

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1762, H3782, H4383, H5062, H5063, H5307, H6328, H6761, H8058, G06790, G43480, G43500, G44170, G46240, G46250

## Psalms References:

9:3; 27:2; 35:15; 37:24; 38:17; 56:13; 64:8; 105:37; 107:12; 116:8; 119:165

# submit, submitted, submitting, submission, in submission

### Definition:

To “submit” usually means to voluntarily place oneself under the authority of a person or government.

- The Bible tells believers in Jesus to submit to God and other authorities in their lives.
- The instruction to “submit to one another” means to humbly accept correction and to focus on the needs of others rather than on our own needs.
- To “live in submission to” means to put oneself under the authority of something or someone.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The command “submit to” could be translated as “put yourself under the authority of” or “follow the leadership of” or “humbly honor and respect.”
- The term “submission” could be translated as “obedience” or “the following of authority.”
- The phrase “live in submission to” could be translated as “be obedient to” or “put oneself under the authority of.”
- The phrase “be in submission” could be translated as “humbly accept authority.”

(See also: subject-submission)

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: G52260, G52920, G52930

## Psalms References:

18:44; 81:11

# Succoth

### Definition:

Succoth was the name of two Old Testament cities. The word, “succoth” (or “sukkoth”) means “shelters.”

- One city called Succoth was located on the east side of the Jordan River.
- Jacob stayed at Succoth with his family and flocks, building shelters for them there.
- Hundreds of years later, Gideon and his exhausted men stopped at Succoth as they were chasing the Midianites, but the people there refused to give them any food.
- The other city called Succoth was located on the northern border of Egypt and was a place where the Israelites stopped after they crossed the Red Sea as they were escaping from slavery in Egypt.

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 7:46
- Exodus 12:37-40
- Joshua 13:27-28
- Judges 8:4-5

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5523, H5524

## Psalms References:

60:6; 108:7

# suffer, suffering

### Definition:

The terms “suffer” and “suffering” refer to experiencing something very unpleasant, such as illness, pain, or other hardships.

- When people are persecuted or when they are sick, they suffer.
- Sometimes people suffer because of wrong things they have done; other times they suffer because of sin and disease in the world.
- Suffering can be physical, such as feeling pain or sickness. It can also be emotional, such as feeling fear, sadness, or loneliness.
- The phrase “suffer me” means “bear with me” or “hear me out” or “listen patiently.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “suffer” can be translated as “feel pain” or “endure difficulty” or “experience hardships” or “go through difficult and painful experiences.”
- Depending on the context, “suffering” could be translated as “extremely difficult circumstances” or “severe hardships” or “experiencing hardship” or “time of painful experiences.”
- The phrase “suffer thirst” could be translated as “experience thirst” or “suffer with thirst.”
- To “suffer violence” could also be translated as “undergo violence” or “be harmed by violent acts.”

### Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16
- 2 Thessalonians 1:3-5
- 2 Timothy 1:8
- Acts 7:11-13
- Isaiah 53:11
- Jeremiah 6:6-8
- Matthew 16:21
- Psalms 22:24
- Revelation 1:9
- Romans 5:3-5

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 9:13 God said, “I have seen the **suffering** of my people.”
- 38:12 Jesus prayed three times, “My Father, if it is possible, please let me not have to drink this cup of **suffering**.”
- 42:3 He (Jesus) reminded them that the prophets said the Messiah would **suffer** and be killed, but would rise again on the third day.
- 42:7 He (Jesus) said, “It was written long ago that the Messiah would **suffer**, die, and rise from the dead on the third day.”
- 44:5 “Although you did not understand what you were doing, God used your actions to fulfill the prophecies that the Messiah would **suffer** and die.”
- 46:4 God said, “I have chosen him (Saul) to declare my name to the unsaved. I will show him how much he must **suffer** for my sake.”
- 50:17 He (Jesus) will wipe away every tear and there will be no more **suffering**, sadness, crying, evil, pain, or death.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0943, H1741, H1934, H4531, H5142, H5375, H5999, H6031, H6040, H6041, H6064, H6090, H6770, H6869, H6887, H7661, G00910, G09410, G09710, G22100, G23460, G23470, G25520, G25530, G25610, G38040, G39580, G43100, G47780, G47770, G48410, G50040

## Psalms References:

41:3; 119:71

# sweep

### Definition:

To “sweep” usually means to remove dirt by making broad, quick movements with a broom or brush. “Swept” is the past tense of “sweep.” These words are also used figuratively.

- The term “sweep” is used figuratively to describe how an army attacks with swift, decisive, wide-reaching movements.
- For example, Isaiah prophesied that the Assyrians would “sweep through” the Kingdom of Judah. This means they would destroy Judah and capture its people.
- The term “sweep” can also be used to describe the manner in which rapidly flowing water pushes things and forces them away.
- When overwhelming, difficult things are happening to a person, it can be said that they are “sweeping over” him.

(See also: Assyria, Isaiah, Judah, prophet)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 16:3
- Daniel 11:40-41
- Genesis 18:24
- Proverbs 21:7-8
- Psalms 90:5

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0622, H0857, H1640, H2498, H2894, H3261, H5500, H5595, H7857, G42160, G45630, G49510

## Psalms References:

40:14

# sword, swordsmen

### Definition:

A sword is a flat-bladed metal weapon used to cut or stab. It has a handle and a long, pointed blade with a very sharp cutting edge.

- In ancient times the length of a sword's blade was about 60 to 91 centimeters.
- Some swords have two sharp edges and are called "double-edged" or "two-edged" swords.
- Jesus' disciples had swords for self defense. With his sword, Peter cut off the ear of the high priest's servant.
- Both John the Baptist and the apostle James were beheaded with swords.

### Translation Suggestions

- A sword is used as a metaphor for God's word. God's teachings in the Bible exposed people's innermost thoughts and convicted them of their sin. In a similar way, a sword cuts deeply, causing pain. (See: Metaphor)
- One way to translate this figurative use would be, "God's word is like a sword, which cuts deeply and exposes sin."
- Another figurative use of this term occurred in the book of Psalms, where the tongue or speech of a person was compared to a sword, which can injure people. This could be translated as "the tongue is like a sword that can badly injure someone."
- If swords are not known in your culture, this word could be translated with the name of another long-bladed weapon that is used to cut or stab.
- A sword could also be described as a "sharp weapon" or "long knife." Some translations could include a picture of a sword.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: James (brother of Jesus), John (the Baptist), tongue, word of God)

### Bible References:

- Acts 12:2
- Genesis 27:40
- Genesis 34:25
- Luke 2:33-35
- Luke 21:24
- Matthew 10:34
- Matthew 26:55

- **Revelation 1:16**

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0019, H1300, H2719, H4380, H6609, H7524, H7973, G31620, G45010

## Psalms References:

7:12; 17:13; 22:20; 37:14; 37:15; 44:3; 44:6; 45:3; 55:21; 57:4; 59:7; 63:10; 64:3; 76:3; 78:62; 78:64; 89:43; 144:10; 149:6

# tabernacle

### Definition:

The tabernacle was a special tent-like structure where the Israelites worshiped God during the 40 years they traveled around in the desert.

- God had given the Israelites detailed instructions for building this large tent, which had two rooms and was surrounded by an enclosed courtyard.
- Each time the Israelites moved to a different place in the desert to live, the priests would take the tabernacle apart and carry it to their next campsite. Then they would set it up again in the center of their new camp.
- The tabernacle was constructed of wood frames hung with curtains made of cloth, goat hair, and animal skins. The courtyard surrounding it was enclosed with more curtains.
- The two sections of the tabernacle were the Holy Place (where the altar for burning incense was located) and the Most Holy Place (where the ark of the covenant was kept).
- The courtyard of the tabernacle had an altar for burning animal sacrifices and a special washbasin for ritual cleansing.
- The Israelites stopped using the tabernacle when the temple was built in Jerusalem by Solomon.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The word “tabernacle” means “dwelling place.” Other ways to translate it could include, “sacred tent” or “tent where God was” or “God’s tent.”
- Make sure that the translation of this term is different from the translation of “temple.”

(See also: altar, **altar of incense**, ark of the covenant, temple, **tent of meeting**)

### Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 21:30**
- **2 Chronicles 1:2-5**
- **Acts 7:43**
- **Acts 7:45**
- **Exodus 38:21**
- **Joshua 22:19-20**
- **Leviticus 10:16-18**

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0168, H4908, H5520, H5521, H5522, H7900, G46330, G46340, G46360, G46380

## Psalms References:

26:8; 78:28; 78:60; 84:1; 87:2; 132:5; 132:7

# Tarshish

**Definition:**

In biblical times, Tarshish was a port city situated on the Mediterranean Sea. The specific location of the city is unknown. Also, the Old Testament mentions two different men named Tarshish.

- The city of Tarshish was a prosperous port city with ships that carried products to buy, sell, or trade. The Bible states that King Solomon kept a fleet of ships stationed at Tarshish.
- The Old Testament prophet Jonah boarded a ship bound for the city of Tarshish instead of obeying God's command to go preach to Nineveh.
- One of Japheth's grandsons was named Tarshish.
- Tarshish was also the name of one of the wise men of King Ahashuerus.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **Esther**, **Japheth**, **Jonah**, **Nineveh**, **Phoenicia**, **wise men**)

**Bible References:**

- **Genesis 10:2-5**
- **Isaiah 2:16**
- **Jeremiah 10:9**
- **Jonah 1:3**
- Psalms 48:7

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H8659

## Psalms References:

48:7; 72:10

# teacher, Teacher

### Definition:

A teacher is a person who gives other people new information. Teachers help others to obtain and use both knowledge and skills.

- In the Bible, the word “teacher” is used in a special sense to refer to someone who teaches about God.
- People who learn from a teacher are called “students” or “disciples.”
- In some Bible translations, this term is capitalized (“Teacher”) when it is used as a title for Jesus.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The usual word for a teacher can be used to translate this term, unless that word is only used for a school teacher.
- Some cultures may have a special title that is used for religious teachers, such as “Sir” or “Rabbi” or “Preacher.”

(See also: **disciple**, **preach**)

### Bible References:

- **Ecclesiastes 1:12-15**
- **Ephesians 4:11-13**
- **Galatians 6:6-8**
- **Habakkuk 2:18**
- **James 3:2**
- **John 1:37-39**
- **Luke 6:40**
- **Matthew 12:38-40**

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- **27:1** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, “**Teacher**, what must I do to inherit eternal life?”
- **28:1** One day a rich young ruler came up to Jesus and asked him, “Good **Teacher**, what must I do to have eternal life?”

- 37:2 After the two days had passed, Jesus said to his disciples, “Let’s go back to Judea.” “But **Teacher**,” the disciples answered, “Just a short time ago the people there wanted to kill you!”
- 38:14 Judas came to Jesus and said, “Greetings, **Teacher**,” and kissed him.
- 49:3 Jesus was also a great **teacher**, and he spoke with authority because he is the Son of God.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3384, H3925, G13200, G25670, G35470, G55720

## Psalms References:

119:99; 144:1

# temple, house, house of God

### Definition:

A temple is a building dedicated to the worship of a specific diety where that diety was thought to dwell. Nations around Israel had temples dedicated to their various gods. The temple in Israel was a building surrounded by walled courtyards where the Israelites came to pray and to offer sacrifices to God. It was located on Mount Moriah in the city of Jerusalem.

- Often the term “temple” referred to the whole temple complex, including the courtyards that surrounded the main building. Sometimes it referred only to the building.
- The temple building had two rooms, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place.
- God referred to the temple as his dwelling place.
- King Solomon built the first temple during his reign. It was supposed to be the permanent place of worship in Jerusalem.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Usually when the text says that people were “in the temple,” it is referring to the courtyards outside the building. This could be translated as “in the temple courtyards” or “in the temple complex.”
- Where it refers specifically to the building itself, some translations translate “temple” as “temple building,” to make it the reference clear.
- Ways to translate “temple” could include, “God’s holy house” or “sacred worship place.”
- Often in the Bible, the temple is referred to as “the house of Yahweh” or “the house of God.”

(See also: sacrifice, Solomon, Babylon, Holy Spirit, tabernacle, courtyard, Zion, house)

### Bible References:

- Acts 3:2
- Acts 3:8
- Ezekiel 45:18-20
- Luke 19:46
- Nehemiah 10:28
- Psalm 79:1-3

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 17:6 David wanted to build a **temple** where all the Israelites could worship God and offer him sacrifices.
- 18:2 In Jerusalem, Solomon built the **Temple** for which his father David had planned and gathered materials. Instead of at the Tent of Meeting, people now worshiped God and offered sacrifices to him at the **Temple**. God came and was present in the **Temple**, and he lived there with his people.
- 20:7 They (Babylonians) captured the city of Jerusalem, destroyed the **Temple**, and took away all the treasures.
- 20:13 When the people arrived in Jerusalem, they rebuilt the **Temple** and the wall around the city.
- 25:4 Then Satan took Jesus to the highest point on the **Temple** and said, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ‘God will command his angels to carry you so your foot does not hit a stone.’”
- 40:7 When he died, there was an earthquake and the large curtain that separated the people from the presence of God in the **Temple** was torn in two, from the top to the bottom.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1004, H1964, H1965, G14930, G24110, G34850

## Psalms References:

5:7; 11:4; 15:intro; 18:6; 27:4; 29:9; 43:3; 48:9; 65:4; 68:29; 74:7; 79:1; 84:4; 93:5; 138:2

# tent, tentmaker

### Definition:

A tent is a portable shelter made of sturdy fabric that is draped over a structure of poles and attached to them.

- Tents can be small, with just enough space for a few people to sleep in, or they can be very large, with space for an entire family to sleep, cook, and live in.
- For many people, tents are used as permanent dwelling places. For example, during most of the time that Abraham's family lived in the land of Canaan, they dwelled in large tents constructed from sturdy cloth made of goat hair.
- The Israelites also lived in tents during their forty-year wanderings through the desert of Sinai.
- The tabernacle building was a kind of very large tent, with thick walls made of cloth curtains.
- When the apostle Paul traveled to different cities to share the gospel, he supported himself by making tents.
- The term "tents" is sometimes used figuratively to refer generally to where people live. This could also be translated as "homes" or "dwellings" or "houses" or even "bodies." (See: synecdoche)

(See also: Abraham, Canaan, curtain, Paul, Sinai, tabernacle, tent of meeting)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 5:10
- Daniel 11:45
- Exodus 16:18
- Genesis 12:9

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0167, H0168, H2583, H3407, H6898

## Psalms References:

15:1; 19:4; 27:5; 27:6; 52:5; 61:4; 69:25; 78:51; 78:55; 78:60; 78:67; 83:6; 84:10; 91:10; 104:2; 106:25; 118:15; 120:5; 132:3

# terror, terrorize, terrify, dread, panic

### Definition:

The term “terror” refers to a feeling of extreme or intense fear. To “terrify” someone means to cause that person to feel very afraid.

- A “terror” is something or someone that causes great fear or dread. An example of a terror could be an attacking enemy army or a plague or disease that is widespread, killing many people.
- These terrors can be described as “terrifying.” This term could be translated as “fear-causing” or “terror-producing.”
- The judgment of God will someday cause terror in unrepentant people who reject his grace.
- The “terror of Yahweh” could be translated as “the terrifying presence of Yahweh” or “the dreaded judgment of Yahweh” or “when Yahweh causes great fear.”
- Ways to translate “terror” could also include “extreme fear” or “deep dread.”

(See also: adversary, fear, judge, plague, Yahweh)

### Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 2:25
- Exodus 14:10
- Luke 21:9
- Mark 6:48-50

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0367, H0926, H0928, H1091, H1161, H1204, H1205, H1763, H2111, H2113, H2189, H2731, H2847, H2851, H2865, H3372, H3707, H4032, H4172, H4288, H4637, H6184, H6206, H6343, H6973, G16290, G16300, G22580, G44220, G44260, G54010

## Psalms References:

2:5; 9:20; 10:18; 27:1; 31:11; 31:13; 33:8; 37:35; 55:4; 73:19; 78:33; 83:15; 88:15; 88:16; 89:7; 90:7; 91:5; 105:38; 116:11; 119:39; 119:120

# test, tested, testing, testing in the fire

### Definition:

The term “test” refers to a difficult or painful experience that reveals a person’s strengths and weaknesses.

- God tests people, but he does not tempt them to sin. Satan, however, tempts people to sin.
- God sometimes uses tests to expose people’s sin. A test helps a person to turn away from sin and to draw closer to God.
- Gold and other metals are tested with fire to find out how pure and strong they are. This is a picture of how God uses painful circumstances to test his people.
- To “put to the test” can mean, “challenge something or someone to prove its value.”
- In the context of putting God to the test, it means to try to make him do a miracle for us, taking advantage of his mercy.
- Jesus told Satan that it is wrong to put God to the test. He is the almighty, holy God who is above everything and everyone.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term to “test” could also be translated as, to “challenge” or to “cause to experience difficulties” or to “prove.”
- Ways to translate “a test” could be, “a challenge” or “a difficult experience.”
- To “put to the test” could be translated as to “test” or to “set up a challenge” or to “force to prove oneself.”
- In the context of testing God, this could be translated as “trying to force God to prove his love.”
- In some contexts, when God is not the subject, the term “test” can mean “tempt.”

(See also: tempt)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 4:1
- 1 Thessalonians 5:21
- Acts 15:10
- Genesis 22:1
- Isaiah 7:13
- James 1:12
- Lamentations 3:40-43

- **Malachi 3:10**
- **Philippians 1:10**
- Psalm 26:2

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H5254, H5713, H5715, H5749, H6030, H8584, G12420, G12630, G13030, G13820, G19570, G31400, G31410, G31420, G31430, G39840, G43030, G44510, G48280, G60200

## Psalms References:

11:4; 11:5; 17:3; 26:2; 66:10; 78:18; 78:41; 78:56; 81:7; 95:9; 106:14

# testimony, testify, witness, eyewitness, evidence

### Definition:

When a person gives “testimony” he makes a statement about something he knows, claiming that the statement is true. To “testify” is to give “testimony.”

- In some places in the Old Testament, “Testimony” refers specifically to the tablets of stone on which Yahweh wrote his ten commandments. From that use it came to refer to God’s law more broadly.
- Often a person “testifies” about something he has experienced directly.
- A witness who gives “false testimony” does not tell the truth about what happened.
- Sometimes the term “testimony” refers to a prophecy that a prophet has stated.
- In the New Testament, this term was often used to refer to how Jesus’ followers testified about the events of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection.

The term “witness” refers to a person who has personally experienced something that happened. Usually a witness is also someone who testifies about what they know is true. The term “eyewitness” emphasizes that the person was actually there and saw what happened.

- To “witness” something means to see it happen.
- At a trial, a witness “gives witness” or “bears witness.” This has the same meaning as “testify.”
- Witnesses are expected to tell the truth about what they have seen or heard.
- A witness who does not tell the truth about what happened is called a “false witness.” He is said to “give false witness” or to “bear false witness.”
- The expression “be a witness between” means that something or someone will be evidence that a contract has been made. The witness will make sure each person does what he has promised to do.

### Translation Suggestions:

- The term “testify” or “give testimony” could also be translated as “tell the facts” or “tell what was seen or heard” or “tell from personal experience” or “give evidence” or “tell what happened.”

- Ways to translate “testimony” could include, “report of what happened” or “statement of what is true” or “evidence” or “what has been said” or “prophecy.”

- Ways to translate “Testimony” could include, “the stone slabs on which I wrote my commands” or “God’s law” or “God’s commands” or “the record of the agreement between Yahweh and Israel.”
- The phrase, “as a testimony to them” could be translated as to “show them what is true” or to “prove to them what is true.”
- The phrase, “as a testimony against them” could be translated as “which will show them their sin” or “exposing their hypocrisy” or “which will prove that they are wrong.”
- To “give false testimony” could be translated as “say false things about” or “state things that are not true.”
- The term “witness” or “eyewitness” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “person seeing it” or “the one who saw it happen” or “those who saw and heard (those things).”
- Something that is “a witness” could be translated as “guarantee” or “sign of our promise” or “something that testifies that this is true.”
- The phrase “you will be my witnesses” could also be translated as “you will tell other people about me” or “you will teach people the truth that I taught you” or “you will tell people what you have seen me do and heard me teach.”
- To “witness to” could be translated as to “tell what was seen” or to “testify” or to “state what happened.”
- To “witness” something could be translated as to “see something” or to “experience something happen.”

(See also: ark of the covenant, guilt, judge, prophet, true)

**Bible References:**

- Deuteronomy 31:28
- Micah 6:3
- Matthew 26:60
- Mark 1:44
- John 1:7
- John 3:33

- Acts 4:32-33
- Acts 7:44
- Acts 13:31
- Romans 1:9
- 1 Thessalonians 2:10-12
- 1 Timothy 5:19-20
- 2 Timothy 1:8
- 2 Peter 1:16-18
- 1 John 5:6-8
- 3 John 1:12
- Revelation 12:11

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 39:2 Inside the house, the Jewish leaders put Jesus on trial. They brought many **false witnesses** who lied about him.
- 39:4 The high priest tore his clothes in anger and shouted, “We do not need any more **witnesses**. You have heard him say that he is the Son of God. What is your judgment?”
- 42:8 “It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to receive forgiveness for their sins. They will do this starting in Jerusalem, and then go to all people groups everywhere. You are **witnesses** of these things.”
- 43:7 “We are **witnesses** to the fact that God raised Jesus to life again.”

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H5707, H5713, H5715, H5749, H6030, H8584, G02670, G12630, G19570, G26490, G31400, G31410, G31420, G31430, G31440, G43030, G48280, G49010, G55750, G55760, G55770, G60200

## Psalms References:

19:7; 25:10; 27:12; 35:11; 50:7; 60:front; 78:5; 78:56; 80:front; 81:5; 81:8; 89:37; 99:7; 119:2; 119:14; 119:22; 119:24; 119:31; 119:36; 119:46; 119:59; 119:79; 119:88; 119:95; 119:99; 119:111; 119:119; 119:125; 119:129; 119:138; 119:144; 119:146; 119:152; 119:157; 119:167; 119:168; 122:4; 132:12

# the sea, the Great Sea, the western sea

**Definition:**

In the Bible, the “Great Sea” or “western sea” refers to what is now called the “Mediterranean Sea,” which was the largest body of water known to the people of Bible times.

- The Mediterranean Sea is bordered by: Israel (east), Europe (north and west), and Africa (south).
- This sea was very important in ancient times for trade and travel since it bordered so many countries. Cities and people groups located on the coast of this sea were very prosperous because of how easy it was to access goods from other countries by boat.
- Since the Great Sea was located to the west of Israel, it was sometimes referred to as the “western sea.”

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Israel, people group, prosper)

**Bible References:**

- Ezekiel 47:15-17
- Ezekiel 47:18-20
- Joshua 15:3-4
- Numbers 13:27-29

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0314, H1419, H3220

## Psalms References:

80:11; 89:25; 139:9

# thief, thieves, rob, robber, robbery, bandit

**Definition:**

The term “thief” refers to a person who steals money or property from other people. The plural of “thief” is “thieves.” The term “robber” often refers to a thief who also physically harms or threatens the people he is stealing from.

- Jesus told a parable about a Samaritan man who took care of a Jewish man who had been attacked by robbers. The robbers had beaten the Jewish man and wounded him before stealing his money and clothing.
- Both thieves and robbers come suddenly to steal, when people are not expecting it. Often they use the cover of darkness to hide what they are doing.
- In a figurative sense, the New Testament describes Satan as a thief who comes to steal, kill, and destroy. This means that Satan’s plan is to try to get God’s people to stop obeying him. If he succeeded in doing this Satan would be stealing from them the good things that God has planned for them.
- Jesus compared the suddenness of his return to the suddenness of a thief coming to steal from people. Just as a thief comes at a time when people are not expecting it, so Jesus will return at a time when people do not expect it.

(See also: bless, crime, crucify, darkness, destroyer, power, Samaria, Satan)

**Bible References:**

- 2 Peter 3:10
- Luke 12:33
- Mark 14:48
- Proverbs 6:30
- Revelation 3:3

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1214, H1215, H1416, H1589, H1590, H1980, H6530, H7703, G07270, G24170, G28120, G30270

## Psalms References:

10:3; 35:10; 50:18; 62:10

# thorn, thorn bush, thistle

### Definition:

Thorn bushes and thistles are plants that have prickly branches or flowers. These plants do not produce fruit or anything else that is useful.

- A “thorn” is a hard, sharp growth on the branch or stem of a plant. A “thornbush” is a type of small tree or shrub that has many thorns on its branches.
- A “thistle” is a plant with prickly stems and leaves. Often the flowers are purple.
- Thorn and thistle plants multiply quickly and can cause nearby plants or crops to not be able to grow. This is a picture of how sin keeps a person from producing good spiritual fruit.
- A crown made of twisted thorn branches was placed on Jesus’ head before he was crucified.
- If possible, these terms should be translated by the names of two different plants or bushes that are known in the language area.

(See also: crown, fruit, spirit)

### Bible References:

- Hebrews 6:7-8
- Matthew 13:7
- Matthew 13:22
- Numbers 33:55

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0329, H1863, H2312, H2336, H4534, H5285, H5518, H5544, H6791, H6796, H6975, H7063, H7898, G01730, G01740, G46470, G51460

## Psalms References:

58:9; 118:12

# threshold, doorway

### Definition:

The term “threshold” refers to the bottom part of a doorway or the part of a building that is just inside the door.

- Sometimes a threshold is a strip of wood or stone that must be stepped over in order to enter a room or building.
- Both a gate and the opening to a tent can also have a threshold.
- This term should be translated with a term in the project language that refers to the place at the very entrance to a home that a person steps across.
- If there is no term for this, “threshold” could also be translated as “doorway” or “opening” or “entranceway,” depending on the context.

(See also: gate, tent)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 9:17-19
- Ezekiel 9:3
- Isaiah 6:4
- Proverbs 17:19

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4670, H5592

## Psalms References:

84:10; 119:130

# throne, enthroned

**Definition:**

A throne is a specially-designed chair where a ruler sits when he decides important matters and listens to requests from his people.

- A throne is also a symbol of the authority and power that a ruler has.
- The word “throne” can also be used to refer to the ruler, his reign, or his power.
- In the Bible, God was often portrayed as a king who sits on his throne. Jesus was described as sitting on a throne at the right hand of God the Father.
- Jesus said that heaven is God’s throne. One way to translate this could be, “where God reigns as king.”

(See also: **authority**, **power**, king, reign)

**Bible References:**

- **Colossians 1:15-17**
- **Genesis 41:40**
- **Luke 1:32**
- **Luke 22:30**
- **Matthew 5:34**
- **Matthew 19:28**
- **Revelation 1:4-6**

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H3427, H3676, H3678, H3764, H7675, G09680, G23620

## Psalms References:

9:4; 9:7; 11:4; 45:6; 47:8; 89:4; 89:14; 89:29; 89:36; 89:44; 93:2; 94:20; 97:2; 103:19; 122:5; 132:11; 132:12

# tongue, language

### Definition:

The term “tongue” refers to the organ inside a person’s mouth that is used to speak. The term is often used figuratively to mean “language” or “speaking.” There also several other figurative meanings as well.

- In the Bible, the most common figurative meaning for this term is “language” or “speech.”
- Sometimes “tongue” may refer to a human language spoken by a certain people group.
- Other times it refers to a supernatural language that the Holy Spirit gives believers in Christ as one of the “gifts of the Spirit.”
- In the book of Acts, the expression “tongues” of fire refers to “flames” of fire, presumably shaped like tongues.

### Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, the term “tongue” can be translated as “language” or “supernatural language.” If it is not clear which one it is referring to, it is better to translate it as “language.”
- When referring to fire, this term could be translated as “flames.”
- The expression “my tongue rejoices” could be translated as “I rejoice and praise God” or “I am joyfully praising God.”
- The phrase, “tongue that lies” could be translated as “person who tell lies” or “people who lie.”
- Phrases such as “with their tongues” could be translated as “with what they say” or “by their words.”

(See also: gift, Holy Spirit, joy, praise, rejoice, spirit)

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 12:10
- 1 John 3:18
- 2 Samuel 23:2
- Acts 2:26
- Ezekiel 36:3
- Philippians 2:11

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H3956, G11000, G12580, G20840

## Psalms References:

5:9; 10:7; 12:3; 12:4; 15:3; 22:15; 31:20; 34:13; 37:30; 39:1; 39:3; 39:12; 45:1; 50:19; 51:14; 52:2; 52:4; 55:9; 57:4; 64:3; 64:8; 66:17; 68:23; 71:24; 73:9; 78:36; 109:2; 114:1; 119:172; 120:2; 120:3; 126:2; 137:6; 139:4; 140:3; 140:11

# torment, tormented, tormentor

### Definition:

The term “torment” refers to terrible suffering. To torment someone means to cause that person to suffer, often in a cruel way.

- Sometimes the term “torment” refers to physical pain and suffering. For example, the book of Revelation describes physical torment that worshipers of the “beast” will suffer in the end times.
- Suffering may also take the form of spiritual and emotional pain, as experienced by Job.
- The apostle John wrote in the book of Revelation that people who do not believe in Jesus as their Savior will experience eternal torment in the lake of fire.
- This term could be translated as “terrible suffering” or “cause someone to suffer greatly” or “agony.” Some translators may add “physical” or “spiritual” to make the meaning clear.

(See also: beast, everlasting, Job, Savior, spirit, suffer, worship)

### Bible References:

- 2 Peter 2:8
- Jeremiah 30:20-22
- Lamentations 1:11-12
- Luke 8:28-29
- Revelation 11:10

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3013, G09280, G09290, G09300, G09310, G25580, G28510, G36000

## Psalms References:

137:3

# trample

### Definition:

To “trample” means to step on something and smash it with the feet. This term is also used figuratively in the Bible to mean “destroy” or “defeat” or “humiliate.”

- An example of “trampling” would be the smashing down of grass by the feet of people running in a field.
- In ancient times, wine was sometimes made by trampling grapes to remove the juice from them.
- Sometimes the term to “trample” has a figurative meaning of to “punish by humiliating,” comparing it to trampling mud for a threshing floor.
- The term “trample” was used figuratively to express how Yahweh would punish his people Israel for their pride and rebellion.
- Other ways that “trample” could be translated include “crush with the feet” or “smash down with the feet” or “stomp on and crush” or “smash into the ground.”
- Depending on the context, this term could also be translated as “run over,” “walk around on,” or “crush underfoot.”

(See also: grape, shame, punish, rebel, thresh, wine)

### Bible References:

- Hebrews 10:29
- Psalms 7:5

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0947, H1758, H1869, H4001, H4823, H7429, H7512, G26620, G39610

## Psalms References:

7:5; 44:5; 56:1; 56:2; 57:3; 60:12; 91:13; 108:13

# transgress, transgression

### Definition:

The term “transgress” means to cross a line or to violate a boundary. The term is often used figuratively, meaning to break a command, rule, or moral code.

- This term is very similar to the word “trespass,” but is generally used more often to describe violations against God than against other people.
- To “transgress” can also be described as to “cross a line,” that is, to go beyond a limit or boundary that has been set for the good of the person and others.

### Translation Suggestions:

- To “transgress” could be translated as to “sin” or to “disobey” or to “rebel.”
- If a verse or passage uses two terms that mean “sin” or “transgress” or “trespass,” it is important, if possible, to use different ways to translate these terms. When the Bible uses two or more terms with similar meanings in the same context, usually its purpose is to emphasize what is being said or to show its importance.

(See: parallelism)

(See also: disobey, sin, trespass, iniquity)

### Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 4:6
- Daniel 9:24-25
- Galatians 3:19-20
- Galatians 6:1-2
- Numbers 14:17-19
- Psalm 32:1

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0898, H4603, H4604, H6586, H6588, G04580, G04590, G38450, G38470, G38480, G39280

## Psalms References:

5:10; 17:3; 19:13; 25:7; 32:1; 32:5; 36:1; 51:1; 51:3; 59:3; 65:3; 89:32; 101:3; 103:12

# tremble, stagger, shake, shaken, quake

### Definition:

The term “tremble” means to quiver or to shake slightly and repeatedly, usually from fear or distress. The term can also be used figuratively, meaning “to be very afraid.”

- Sometimes when the ground shakes it is said to “tremble.” It can do this during an earthquake or in response to a very loud noise.
- The Bible says that in the presence of the Lord the earth will tremble. This could mean that the people of the earth will shake out of fear of God or that the earth itself will shake.
- This term could be translated as “be afraid” or “fear God” or “shake,” depending on the context.

(See also: earth, fear, Lord)

### Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 7:15
- 2 Samuel 22:44-46
- Acts 16:29-31
- Jeremiah 5:22
- Luke 8:47

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1674, H2111, H2112, H2151, H2342, H2648, H2729, H2730, H2731, H5128, H5568, H6342, H6426, H6427, H7264, H7268, H7269, H7322, H7460, H7461, H7481, H7493, H7578, H8078, H8653, G17900, G51410, G51560, G54250

## Psalms References:

2:11; 4:4; 6:2; 10:6; 13:4; 15:5; 16:8; 18:7; 18:45; 21:7; 22:7; 29:8; 30:6; 37:7; 44:14; 46:2; 46:3; 46:5; 46:6; 48:6; 55:3; 55:5; 55:22; 60:2; 60:3; 62:2; 62:6; 68:8; 69:23; 77:16; 77:18; 82:5; 96:9; 96:10; 97:4; 99:1; 104:32; 107:27; 109:25; 114:7; 119:161; 125:1

# trespass

### Definition:

The term “trespass” means to cross a line or to violate a boundary. This term is often used figuratively, meaning to break a law or to violate the rights of another person.

- This term is very similar to the word “transgression,” but is generally used more often to describe violations against other people than against God.
- A trespass can be a violation of a moral law or a civil law.
- A trespass can also be a sin committed against another person.
- This term is related to the terms “sin” and “transgress,” especially as it relates to disobeying God. All sins are trespasses against God.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, to “trespass against” could be translated as to “sin against” or to “break the rule.”
- Some languages may have an expression like “cross the line” that could be used to translate “trespass.”
- Consider how this term fits with the meaning of the surrounding Bible text and compare it to other terms that have a similar meaning, such as “transgress” and “sin.”

(See also: disobey, iniquity, sin, transgress)

### Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 25:28
- 2 Chronicles 26:16-18
- Colossians 2:13
- Ephesians 2:1
- Ezekiel 15:7-8
- Romans 5:17
- Romans 5:20-21

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0816, H0817, H0819, H2398, H4603, H4604, H6586, H6588, G02640, G39000

## Psalms References:

68:21

# tribe, tribal, tribesmen

### Definition:

A tribe is a group of people who are descended from a common ancestor.

- People from the same tribe usually also share a common language and culture.
- In the Old Testament, God divided the people of Israel into twelve tribes. Each tribe was descended from a son or grandson of Jacob.
- A tribe is smaller than a nation, but larger than a clan.

(See also: clan, nation, **people group**, **twelve tribes of Israel**)

### Bible References:

- **1 Samuel 10:19**
- **2 Kings 17:16-18**
- **Genesis 25:16**
- **Genesis 49:17**
- **Luke 2:36-38**

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0523, H4294, H7625, H7626, G14290, G54430

## Psalms References:

74:2; 78:55; 78:67; 78:68; 105:37; 122:4

# tribulation, distress, distresses, trouble

### Definition:

The term “tribulation” refers to a time of hardship, suffering, and distress.

- It is explained in the New Testament that Christians will endure times of persecution and other kinds of tribulation because many people in this world are opposed to Jesus’ teachings.
- The term “tribulation” could also be translated as “time of great suffering” or “deep distress” or “severe difficulties.”

(See also: earth, teach, wrath)

### Bible References:

- Mark 4:17
- Mark 13:19
- Matthew 13:20-21
- Matthew 24:9
- Matthew 24:29
- Romans 2:9

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6869, G23470, G44230

## Psalms References:

4:1; 10:6; 18:6; 25:17; 32:7; 66:14; 69:17; 73:5; 81:7; 88:3; 90:10; 91:15; 102:2; 107:6; 107:13; 107:19; 107:28; 107:39

# tribute, contribution

### Definition:

The term “tribute” refers to a gift from one ruler to another ruler, for the purpose of protection and for good relations between their nations. A tribute can also be a payment that a ruler or government requires from the people, such as a toll or tax.

- In Bible times, traveling kings or rulers sometimes paid a tribute to the king of the region they were traveling through to make sure they would be protected and safe.
- Often the tribute would include things besides money, such as foods, spices, rich clothing, and expensive metals such as gold.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “tribute” could be translated as “official gifts” or “special tax” or “required payment.”

(See also: gold, king, ruler, tax)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:1-2
- 2 Chronicles 9:22-24
- 2 Kings 17:3
- Luke 23:2

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1093, H4061, H4503, H4530, H4853, H6066, H7862, G54110

## Psalms References:

72:10

# trouble, disturb, stir up, distress, hardship, calamity

### Definition:

A “trouble” is an experience in life that is very difficult and distressing. To “trouble” someone means to “bother” that person or to cause him distress. To be “troubled” means to feel upset or distressed about something.

- Troubles can be physical, emotional, or spiritual things that hurt a person.
- In the Bible, often troubles are times of testing that God uses to help believers mature and grow in their faith.
- The Old Testament use of “trouble” also referred to judgment that came on people groups who were immoral and rejected God.

### Translation Suggestions

- The term “trouble” or “troubles” could also be translated as “danger” or “painful things that happen” or “persecution” or “difficult experiences” or “distress.”
- The term “troubled” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “undergoing distress” or “feeling terrible distress” or “worried” or “anxious” or “distressed” or “terrified” or “disturbed.”
- “Do not trouble her” could also be translated as “do not bother her” or “do not criticize her.”
- The phrase “day of trouble” or “times of trouble” could also be translated as “when you experience distress” or “when difficult things happen to you” or “when God causes distressing things to happen.”
- Ways to translate “make trouble” or “bring trouble” could include “cause distressing things to happen” or “cause difficulties” or “make them experience very difficult things.”

(See also: afflict, persecute)

### Bible References:

- 1 Kings 18:18-19
- 2 Chronicles 25:19
- Luke 24:38
- Matthew 24:6
- Matthew 26:36-38

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H0926, H0927, H1204, H1607, H1644, H1804, H2000, H4103, H5916, H5999, H6031, H6040, H6470, H6696, H6862, H6869, H6887, H7264, H7267, H7451, H7489, H8513, G03870, G16130, G17760, G23460, G23470, G23500, G23600, G28730, G36360, G39260, G39300, G39860, G44230, G46600, G50150, G51820

## Psalms References:

6:3; 6:10; 7:14; 7:16; 9:9; 10:1; 18:18; 20:1; 22:11; 25:17; 25:18; 25:22; 27:5; 31:7; 31:9; 34:6; 34:17; 35:26; 37:8; 37:39; 39:2; 40:12; 41:1; 46:1; 50:15; 52:2; 52:7; 54:7; 55:3; 55:10; 55:11; 57:1; 59:16; 71:20; 73:16; 77:2; 77:4; 78:38; 78:49; 86:7; 90:15; 91:3; 107:6; 107:12; 107:13; 107:19; 107:28; 119:143; 138:7; 142:2; 143:11

# trumpet, trumpeter

### Definition:

The term “trumpet” refers to an instrument for producing music or for calling people to gather together for an announcement or meeting.

- A trumpet was commonly made from either metal, seashell, or an animal horn.
- Trumpets were most commonly blown to call people to come together for battle, and for Israel’s public assemblies.
- The book of Revelation describes a scene in the end times in which angels blow their trumpets to signal the outpouring of the wrath of God on the earth.

(See also: angel, assembly, earth, horn, Israel, wrath)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 13:7-8
- 2 Kings 9:13
- Exodus 19:12-13
- Hebrews 12:19
- Matthew 6:2
- Matthew 24:31

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2689, H2690, H3104, H7782, H8619, H8643, G45360, G45370, G45380

## Psalms References:

47:5; 81:3; 98:6; 150:3

# trust, trusted, trustworthy, trustworthiness

### Definition:

To “trust” something or someone is to believe that the thing or person is true or dependable. That belief is also called “trust.” A “trustworthy” person is one you can trust to do and say what is right and true, and therefore one who has the quality of “trustworthiness.”

- Trust is closely related to faith. If we trust someone, we have faith in that person to do what they promised to do.
- Having trust in someone also means depending on that person.
- To “trust in” Jesus means to believe that he is God, to believe that he died on the cross to pay for our sins, and to rely on him to save us.
- A “trustworthy saying” refers to something that is said that can be counted on to be true.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “trust” could include “believe” or “have faith” or “have confidence” or “depend on.”
- The phrase “put your trust in” is very similar in meaning to “trust in.”
- The term “trustworthy” could be translated as “dependable” or “reliable” or “can always be trusted.”

(See also: believe, confidence, faith, faithful, true)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 9:22-24
- 1 Timothy 4:9
- Hosea 10:12-13
- Isaiah 31:1-2
- Nehemiah 13:13
- Psalm 31:5
- Titus 3:8

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 12:12 When the Israelites saw that the Egyptians were dead, they **trusted** in God and believed that Moses was a prophet of God.
- 14:15 Joshua was a good leader because he **trusted** and obeyed God.

- 17:2 David was a humble and righteous man who **trusted** and obeyed God.
- 34:6 Then Jesus told a story about people who **trusted** in their own good deeds and despised other people.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0539, H0982, H1556, H2620, H2622, H3176, H4009, H4268, H7365, G16790, G38720, G39820, G40060, G41000, G42760

## Psalms References:

4:5; 9:10; 13:5; 19:7; 20:intro; 21:7; 22:4; 22:5; 22:9; 25:2; 26:1; 28:7; 31:6; 31:14; 32:10; 33:21; 36:5; 37:3; 37:5; 40:3; 40:4; 40:10; 40:11; 41:9; 44:6; 49:6; 52:7; 52:8; 55:23; 56:3; 56:4; 56:11; 62:8; 62:10; 78:22; 84:12; 86:2; 91:2; 93:5; 108:4; 112:7; 115:1; 115:8; 115:9; 115:10; 115:11; 116:10; 117:2; 118:8; 118:9; 119:42; 119:66; 123:intro; 125:1; 130:intro; 135:18; 138:2; 143:8; 146:3

# TW ARTICLE FOR other :: commandments NOT FOUND!

## Psalms References:

78:intro

# Tyre, Tyrians

**Definition:**

Tyre was an ancient Canaanite city located on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in a region that is now part of the modern-day country of Lebanon. Its people were called "Tyrians."

- Part of the city was located on an island in the sea, about one kilometer from the mainland.
- Because of its location and its valuable natural resources, such as cedar trees, Tyre had a prosperous trading industry and was very wealthy.
- King Hiram of Tyre sent wood from cedar trees and skilled laborers to help build a palace for King David.
- Years later, Hiram also sent King Solomon wood and skilled laborers to help build the temple. Solomon paid him with large amounts of wheat and olive oil.
- Tyre was often associated with the nearby ancient city of Sidon. These were the most important cities of the region of Canaan called Phoenicia.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Canaan, cedar, Israel, the sea, Phoenicia, Sidon)

**Bible References:**

- Acts 12:20
- Mark 3:7-8
- Matthew 11:22
- Matthew 15:22

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H6865, H6876, G51830, G51840

## Psalms References:

45:12; 83:7; 87:4

# understand, understanding, thinking

### Definition:

The term “understand” means to hear or receive information and know what it means.

- The term “understanding” can refer to “knowledge” or “wisdom” or realizing how to do something.
- To understand someone can also mean to know how that person is feeling.
- While walking on the road to Emmaus, Jesus caused the disciples to understand the meaning of the scriptures about the Messiah.
- Depending on the context, the term “understand” could be translated by “know” or “believe” or “comprehend” or “know what (something) means.”
- Often the term “understanding” can be translated by “knowledge” or “wisdom” or “insight.”

(See also: believe, know, wise)

### Bible References:

- Job 34:16-17
- Luke 2:47
- Luke 8:10
- Matthew 13:12
- Matthew 13:14
- Proverbs 3:5

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0995, H0998, H0999, H1847, H2940, H3045, H3820, H3824, H4486, H7200, H7919, H7922, H7924, H8085, H8394, G00500, G01450, G01910, G08010, G10970, G11080, G12710, G19210, G19220, G19870, G19900, G26570, G35390, G35630, G49070, G49080, G49200, G54240, G54280, G54290

## Psalms References:

5:1; 14:2; 32:9; 33:15; 36:2; 38:9; 49:3; 49:20; 50:22; 53:2; 58:9; 73:16; 82:5; 92:6; 94:7; 94:8; 111:10; 119:27; 119:34; 119:66; 119:73; 119:99; 119:100; 119:104; 119:125; 119:130; 119:144; 119:169; 136:5; 139:2; 147:5

# vain, vanity

### Definition:

The terms “vain” and “vanity” describe something that is useless or extremely temporary.

- In the Old Testament, idols are sometimes described as “vain” things that are worthless and cannot do anything.
- If something is done “in vain,” it means that there the effort or action did not accomplish what was intended. The phrase “in vain” might be translated in various ways, including: “without result;” “with no result;” “for no reason;” “for no purpose,” or “with no purpose.”
- Depending on the context, the term “vain” could be translated as “empty,” “useless,” “hopeless,” “worthless,” “meaningless,” etc.

(See also: false god, worthy)

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 15:1-2
- 1 Samuel 25:21-22
- 2 Peter 2:18
- Isaiah 45:19
- Jeremiah 2:29-31
- Matthew 15:9

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1891, H1892, H2600, H7307, H7385, H7387, H7723, H8193, H8267, H8414, G09450, G15000, G27560, G27580, G27610, G31510, G31520, G31530, G31550

## Psalms References:

73:13; 127:1; 127:2; 139:20

# vine

**Definition:**

The term “vine” refers to a plant that grows by trailing along the ground or by climbing trees and other structures. The word “vine” in the Bible is used only of fruit-bearing vines and usually refers to grape vines.

- In the Bible, the word “vine” almost always means “grapevine.”
- The branches of the grapevine are attached to the main stem which gives them water and other nutrients so that they can grow.
- Jesus called himself the “vine” and called his people the “branches.” In this context, the word “vine” could also be translated as “grapevine stem” or “grape plant stem.” (See: Metaphor)

(See also: grape, vineyard)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 40:9
- Genesis 49:11
- John 15:1
- Luke 22:18
- Mark 12:3
- Matthew 21:35-37

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H5139, H1612, H8321, G02880, G02900, G10090, G10920

## Psalms References:

78:47; 80:8; 80:14; 105:33; 128:3

# vineyard

**Definition:**

A vineyard is a large garden area where grapevines are grown and grapes are cultivated.

- A vineyard often has a wall around it to protect the fruit from thieves and animals.
- God compared the people of Israel to a vineyard that did not bear good fruit. (See: Metaphor)
- Vineyard could be also translated as “grapevine garden” or “grape plantation.”

(See also: grape, Israel, vine)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 9:20-21
- Luke 13:6
- Luke 20:15
- Matthew 20:2
- Matthew 21:40-41

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H1612, H3754, H3755, H8284, G02900

## Psalms References:

107:37

# virgin, virginity

### Definition:

A virgin is a woman who has never had sexual relations.

- The prophet Isaiah said that the Messiah would be born from a virgin.
- Mary was a virgin when she was pregnant with Jesus. He did not have a human father.
- Some languages may have a term that is a polite way of referring to a virgin. (See: Euphemism)

(See also: Christ, Isaiah, Jesus, Mary)

### Bible References:

- Genesis 24:15-16
- Luke 1:27
- Luke 1:35
- Matthew 1:23
- Matthew 25:2

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 21:9 The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be born from a **virgin**.
- 22:4 She (Mary) was a **virgin** and was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph.
- 22:5 Mary replied, “How can this be, since I am a **virgin**?”
- 49:1 An angel told a **virgin** named Mary that she would give birth to God’s Son. So while she was still a **virgin**, she gave birth to a son and named him Jesus.

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1330, H1331, G39320, G39330

## Psalms References:

78:63

# vision, envision

### Definition:

The term “vision” refers to something that a person sees. It especially refers to something unusual or supernatural that God shows people in order to give them a message.

- Usually, visions are seen while the person is awake. However, sometimes a vision is something a person sees in a dream while asleep.
- God sends visions to tell people something that is very important. For example, Peter was shown a vision to tell him that God wanted him to welcome Gentiles.

### Translation Suggestion

- The phrase “saw a vision” could be translated as “saw something unusual from God” or “God showed him something special.”
- Some languages may not have separate words for “vision” and “dream.” So a sentence such as “Daniel had dreams and visions in his mind” could be translated as something like “Daniel was dreaming while asleep and God caused him to see unusual things.”

(See also: dream)

### Bible References:

- Acts 9:10-12
- Acts 10:3-6
- Acts 10:11
- Acts 12:9-10
- Luke 1:22
- Luke 24:23
- Matthew 17:9-10

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2376, H2377, H2378, H2380, H2384, H4236, H4758, H4759, H7203, H7723, H8602, G37010, G37050, G37060

## Psalms References:

89:19

# wadi

### Definition:

The term “wadi” refers to a seasonal stream, seasonal river, or a valley that is a stream bed during part of the year.

- A “wadi” has water in it part of the year and is dry for part of the year.
- When a “wadi” has water in it, the amount of water that it has in it depends on what time of year it is and how much rain the area has received as well as how big the wadi is.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “wadi” could include “seasonal stream” or “seasonal stream bed” or “river basin” or “river bed”

### Bible References:

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5158

## Psalms References:

74:15; 104:10

# waste, wasted, wasteland, becomes weak

**Definition:**

To waste something means to carelessly throw it away or to use it unwisely. Something that is a “wasteland” or a “waste” refers to land or a city that has been destroyed so that nothing lives in it anymore.

- The term “waste away” is an expression that means to become more and more sick or ruined. A person who is wasting away usually becomes very thin due to illness or lack of food.
- To “lay waste” to a city or land means to destroy it.
- Another word for a “wasteland” could be “desert” or “wilderness.” But a wasteland also implies that people used to live there and the land used to have trees and plants that produced food.

**Bible References:**

- Ezekiel 6:6
- Leviticus 26:39
- Matthew 26:8
- Revelation 18:15-17
- Zechariah 7:13-14

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0535, H1086, H1104, H1326, H2100, H2490, H2522, H2717, H2721, H2723, H3615, H3856, H4127, H4198, H4592, H4743, H5307, H5327, H7334, H7582, H7703, H7736, H7843, H8047, H8074, H8077, H8414, G06840, G12870, G20490, G26730

## Psalms References:

6:7; 31:9; 31:10; 32:3; 91:6; 106:14; 106:15

# watch (biblical time)

### Definition:

In biblical times, a “watch” was a period of time at night during which a watchman or guard for a city would be on duty looking out for any danger from an enemy.

- In the Old Testament, the Israelites had three watches which were called “beginning” (sunset to 10 PM), “middle” (10 PM to 2 AM), and “morning” (2 AM to sunrise) watches.
- In the New Testament, the Jews followed the Roman system and had four watches, named simply “first” (sunset to 9 PM), “second” (9 PM to 12 midnight), “third” (12 midnight to 3 AM), and “fourth” (3 AM to sunrise) watches.
- These could also be translated with more general expressions such as “late evening” or “middle of the night” or “very early in the morning,” depending on which watch is being referred to.

(See also: watch)

### Bible References:

- Luke 12:37-38
- Mark 6:48-50
- Matthew 14:25-27
- Psalms 90:3-4

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0821, G54380

## Psalms References:

63:6; 90:4; 119:148

# watch, guard, take heed, beware

**Definition:**

The term “watch” means to look at something very closely and carefully. It also has several figurative meanings. A “watchman” was someone whose job was to guard a city by looking carefully all around him for any danger or threat to the people in the city.

- The command to “watch your life and doctrine closely” means to be careful to live wisely and to not believe false teachings.
- To “watch out” is a warning to be careful to avoid a danger or harmful influence.
- To “watch” or “keep watch” means to always be alert and on guard against sin and evil. It can also mean to “be ready.”
- To “keep watch over” or “keep close watch” can mean to guard, protect or take care of someone or something.
- Other ways of translating “watch” could include “pay close attention to” or “be diligent” or “be very careful” or “be on guard.”
- Other words for “watchman” are “sentry” or “guard.”

**Bible References:**

- 1 Thessalonians 5:6
- Hebrews 13:17
- Jeremiah 31:4-6
- Mark 8:15
- Mark 13:33-34
- Matthew 25:10-13

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H0821, H2370, H4929, H4931, H5027, H5341, H6486, H6822, H6836, H6974, H7462, H7789, H7919, H8104, H8108, H8245, G00690, G09910, G11270, G14920, G23340, G28920, G35250, G37080, G39060, G43370, G46480, G50830, G54380

## Psalms References:

5:3; 10:8; 12:7; 16:1; 17:4; 17:8; 18:21; 19:13; 25:20; 28:5; 34:13; 34:20; 37:28; 37:32; 37:37; 39:1; 41:2; 66:7; 71:10; 78:10; 78:56; 86:2; 89:28; 91:11; 97:10; 102:7; 106:3; 116:6; 119:8; 119:22; 119:34; 119:67; 119:101; 119:136; 119:167; 119:168; 121:7; 121:8; 127:1; 130:6; 140:4; 141:3; 141:9; 145:20; 146:9

# watchtower, tower

### Definition:

The term “watchtower” refers to a tall structure built as a place from which guards could look out for any danger. These towers were often made of stone.

- Landowners sometimes built watchtowers from which they could guard their crops and protect them from being stolen.
- The towers often included rooms where the watchmen or family lived, so that they could guard the crops day and night.
- Watchtowers for cities were built higher than the city walls so that watchmen could see if any enemies were coming to attack the city.
- The term “watchtower” is also used as a symbol of protection from enemies. (See: Metaphor)

(See also: adversary, watch)

### Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 27:25-27
- Ezekiel 26:3-4
- Mark 12:1-3
- Matthew 21:33-34
- Psalm 62:2

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0803, H0971, H0975, H1785, H2918, H4026, H4029, H4692, H4707, H4869, H6076, H6438, H6836, G44440

## Psalms References:

48:12; 61:3; 94:22

# wheat

### Definition:

Wheat is a type of grain that people grow for food. When the Bible mentions “grain” or “seeds,” it is often talking about wheat grain or seeds.

- The wheat seeds or grains grow at the top of the wheat plant.
- After harvesting the wheat, the grain is separated from the stalk of the plant by threshing it. The stalk of the wheat plant is also called “straw” and is often placed on the ground for animals to sleep on.
- After threshing, the chaff surrounding the grain seed is separated from the grain by winnowing and is thrown away.
- People grind the wheat grain into flour, and use this for making bread.

(See also: barley, chaff, grain, seed, thresh, winnow)

### Bible References:

- Acts 27:36-38
- Exodus 34:21-22
- John 12:24
- Luke 3:17
- Matthew 3:12
- Matthew 13:26

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1250, H2406, G46210

## Psalms References:

81:16; 147:14

# wine, wineskin, new wine

### Definition:

In the Bible, the term “wine” refers to a kind of fermented drink made from the juice of a fruit called grapes. Wine was stored in “wineskins,” which were containers made out of animal skin.

- The term “new wine” referred to grape juice that had just been taken from the grape and was not fermented yet. Sometimes the term “wine” also referred to unfermented grape juice.
- To make wine, grapes are crushed in a winepress so that the juice comes out. The juice eventually ferments and alcohol forms in it.
- In Bible times, wine was the normal drink with meals. It did not have as much alcohol as present-day wine has.
- Before wine was served for a meal, it was often mixed with water.
- A wineskin that was old and brittle would get cracks in it, which allowed the wine to leak out. New wineskins were soft and flexible, which meant they did not tear easily and could store the wine safely.
- If wine is unknown in your culture, it could be translated as “fermented grape juice” or “fermented drink made from a fruit called grapes” or “fermented fruit juice.” (See: How to Translate Unknowns)
- Ways to translate “wineskin” could include “bag for wine” or “animal skin wine bag” or “animal skin container for wine.”

(See also: grape, vine, vineyard, winepress)

### Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 5:23
- Genesis 9:21
- Genesis 49:12
- John 2:3-5
- John 2:10
- Matthew 9:17
- Matthew 11:18

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2561, H2562, H3196, H4469, H4997, H5435, H6025, H6071, H8492, G10980, G36310, G38200, G39430

## Psalms References:

4:7; 60:3; 75:8; 78:65; 104:15; 119:83

# winnow, sift

### Definition:

The terms “winnow” and “sift” mean to separate grain from unwanted materials. In the Bible, both words can also be used to refer to separating or dividing people.

- To “winnow” means to separate grain from the unwanted parts of the plant by tossing both the grain and chaff into the air, allowing the wind to blow the chaff away.
- The word “sift” refers to shaking the winnowed grain in a sieve to get rid of any remaining unwanted materials, such as dirt or stones.
- In the Old Testament, “winnow” and “sift” are used figuratively to describe hardship that separates the righteous people from the unrighteous people.
- Jesus also used the term “sift” in this figurative way when he was telling Simon Peter about how he and the other disciples would be tested in their faith.
- To translate these terms, use the words or phrases in the project language that refer to these activities; possible translations might be “shaking” or “fanning.” If winnowing or sifting are not known, then these terms could be translated by a term that refers to a different method of separating grain from chaff or dirt, or by describing this process.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: chaff, grain)

### Bible References:

- Isaiah 21:10
- Luke 22:31
- Matthew 3:12
- Proverbs 20:8
- Ruth 3:2

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2219, H5128, H5130, G44250, G46170

## Psalms References:

139:3

# wise, wisdom

### Definition:

The term “wise” describes someone who understands what is the right and moral thing to do and then does that. “Wisdom” is the understanding and practice of what is true and morally right.

- Being wise includes the ability to make good decisions, especially choosing to do what pleases God.
- People become wise by listening to God and humbly obeying his will.
- A wise person will show the fruits of the Holy Spirit in his life, such as joy, kindness, love, and patience.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate “wise” could include “obedient to God” or “sensible and obedient” or “God-fearing.”
- “Wisdom” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “wise living” or “sensible and obedient living” or “good judgment.”
- It is best to translate “wise” and “wisdom” in such a way that they are different terms from other key terms like righteous or obedient.

(See also: obey, fruit)

### Bible References:

- Acts 6:3
- Colossians 3:15-17
- Exodus 31:6
- Genesis 3:6
- Isaiah 19:12
- Jeremiah 18:18
- Matthew 7:24

### Examples from the Bible stories:

- 2:5 She also wanted to be **wise**, so she picked some of the fruit and ate it.
- 18:1 When Solomon asked for **wisdom**, God was pleased and made him the **wisest** man in the world.

- 23:9 Some time later, **wise** men from countries far to the east saw an unusual star in the sky.
- 45:1 He (Stephen) had a good reputation and was full of the Holy Spirit and of **wisdom**.

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0998, H1350, H2445, H2449, H2450, H2451, H2452, H2454, H2942, H3820, H3823, H6195, H6493, H6912, H7535, H7919, H7922, H8454, G46780, G46790, G46800, G49200, G54280, G54290, G54300

## Psalms References:

15:intro; 19:7; 36:3; 37:30; 41:1; 49:3; 49:10; 51:6; 58:5; 73:intro; 78:intro; 90:12; 104:24; 105:22; 107:27; 107:43; 111:10; 112:intro; 119:98

# woe

### Definition:

The term “woe” refers to a feeling of great distress. It also gives a warning that someone will experience severe trouble.

- The expression “woe to” is followed by a warning to people that they will experience suffering as punishment for their sins.
- In several places in the Bible, the word “woe” is repeated, to emphasize an especially terrible judgment.
- A person who says “woe is me” or “woe to me” is expressing sorrow about severe suffering.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “woe” could also be translated as “great sorrow” or “sadness” or “calamity” or “disaster.”
- Other ways to translate the expression “Woe to (name of city)” could include, “How terrible it will be for (name of city)” or “The people in (that city) will be severely punished” or “Those people will suffer greatly.”
- The expression, “Woe is me!” or “Woe to me!” could be translated as “How sad I am!” or “I am so sad!” or “How terrible this is for me!”
- The expression “Woe to you” could also be translated as “You will suffer terribly” or “You will experience terrible troubles.”

### Bible References:

- Ezekiel 13:17-18
- Habakkuk 2:12
- Isaiah 31:1-2
- Jeremiah 45:1-3
- Jude 1:9-11
- Luke 6:24
- Luke 17:1-2
- Matthew 23:23

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0188, H0190, H0337, H0480, H1929, H1945, H1958, G37590

## Psalms References:

107:26; 120:5

# womb

### Definition:

The term “womb” refers to where a baby grows inside its mother.

- This is an older term that is sometimes used in order to be polite and less direct. (See: euphemism)
- A more modern term for womb is “uterus.”
- Some languages use a word like “belly” to refer to a woman’s womb or uterus.
- Use a word for this in the project language that is well-known, natural, and acceptable.

### Bible References:

- Genesis 25:23
- Genesis 25:24-26
- Genesis 38:27-28
- Genesis 49:25
- Luke 2:21
- Luke 11:27
- Luke 23:29
- Matthew 19:12

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0990, H4578, H7356, H7358, G10640, G28360, G33880

## Psalms References:

22:9; 22:10; 58:3; 71:6; 110:3; 127:3; 139:13

# word of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, word of truth, scripture

### Definition:

In the Bible, the term “word of God” refers to anything that God has communicated to people. This includes spoken and written messages. Jesus is also called “the Word of God.”

- The term “scriptures” means “writings.” It is only used in the New Testament and refers to the Hebrew scriptures, which is the Old Testament. These writings were God’s message that he had told people to write down so that many years in the future people could still read it.
- The related terms “word of Yahweh” and “word of the Lord” often refer to a specific message from God that was given to a prophet or other person in the Bible.
- Sometimes this term occurs as simply “the word” or “my word” or “your word” (when talking about God’s word).
- In the New Testament, Jesus is called “the Word” and “the Word of God.” These titles mean that Jesus fully reveals who God is, because he is God himself.

The term “word of truth” is another way of referring to “God’s word,” which is his message or teaching. It does not refer to just one word.

- God’s word of truth includes everything that God has taught people about himself, his creation, and his plan of salvation through Jesus.
- This term emphasizes the fact that what God has told us is true, faithful, and real.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include “the message of Yahweh” or “God’s message” or “the teachings from God.”
- It may be more natural in some languages to make this term plural and say “God’s words” or “the words of Yahweh.”
- The expression “the word of Yahweh came” is often used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. This could be translated as “Yahweh spoke this message” or “Yahweh spoke these words.”
- The term “scripture” or “scriptures” could be translated as “the writings” or “the written message from God.” This term should be translated differently from the translation of the term “word.”

- When “word” occurs alone and it refers to God’s word, it could be translated as “the message” or “God’s word” or “the teachings.” Also consider the alternate translations suggested above.
- When the Bible refers to Jesus as “the Word,” this term could be translated as “the Message” or “the Truth.”
- “Word of truth” could be translated as “God’s true message” or “God’s word, which is true.”
- It is important for the translation of this term to include the meaning of being true.

(See also: prophet, true, Yahweh)

**Bible References:**

- Genesis 15:1
- 1 Kings 13:1
- Jeremiah 36:1-3
- Luke 8:11
- John 5:39
- Acts 6:2
- Acts 12:24
- Romans 1:2
- 2 Corinthians 6:7
- Ephesians 1:13
- 2 Timothy 3:16
- James 1:18
- James 2:8-9

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 25:7 In **God’s word** he commands his people, “Worship only the Lord your God and only serve him.”
- 33:6 So Jesus explained, “The seed is the **word of God**.”
- 42:3 Then Jesus explained to them what **God’s word** says about the Messiah.
- 42:7 Jesus said, “I told you that everything written about me in **God’s word** must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds so they could understand **God’s word**.
- 45:10 Philip also used other **scriptures** to tell him the good news of Jesus.

- 48:12 But Jesus is the greatest prophet of all. He is the **Word of God**.
- 49:18 God tells you to pray, to study his **word**, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0561, H0565, H1697, H3068, G30560, G44870

## Psalms References:

18:30; 33:4; 33:6; 119:43

# world, worldly

### Definition:

The term “world” usually refers to the part of the universe where people live: the earth. The term “worldly” describes the evil values and behaviors of people living in this world.

- In its most general sense, the term “world” refers to the heavens and the earth, as well as everything in them.
- In many contexts, “world” actually means “people in the world.”
- Sometimes it is implied that this refers to the evil people on earth or the people who do not obey God.
- The apostles also used “world” to refer to the selfish behaviors and corrupt values of the people living in this world. This can include self-righteous religious practices which are based on human efforts.
- People and things characterized by these values are said to be “worldly.”

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “world” could also be translated as “universe” or “people of this world” or “corrupt things in the world” or “evil attitudes of people in the world.”
- The phrase “all the world” often means “many people” and refers to the people living in a certain region. For example, “all the world came to Egypt” could be translated as “many people from the surrounding countries came to Egypt” or “people from all the countries surrounding Egypt came there.”
- Another way to translate “all the world went to their hometown to be registered in the Roman census” would be “many of the people living in regions ruled by the Roman empire went…”
- Depending on the context, the term “worldly” could be translated as “evil” or “sinful” or “selfish” or “ungodly” or “corrupt” or “influenced by the corrupt values of people in this world.”
- The phrase “saying these things in the world” can be translated as “saying these things to the people of the world.”
- In other contexts, “in the world” could also be translated as “living among the people of the world” or “living among ungodly people.”

(See also: corrupt, heaven, Rome, godly)

### Bible References:

- 1 John 2:15
- 1 John 4:5
- 1 John 5:5

- John 1:29
- Matthew 13:36-39

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H0776, H2309, H2465, H5769, H8398, G10930, G28860, G28890, G36250

## Psalms References:

9:8; 17:14; 18:15; 19:4; 24:1; 33:8; 49:1; 50:12; 77:18; 89:11; 90:2; 93:1; 96:10; 96:13; 97:4; 98:7; 98:9

# wrath, fury

### Definition:

Wrath is an intense anger that is sometimes long-lasting. The Bible describes both people and God as experiencing intense anger. When speaking about God's "wrath," make sure the word or phrase used to translate this term does not refer to a sinful fit of rage (which might be true of a human person).

- In the Bible, "wrath" often refers to God's righteous judgment of sin and punishment of people who rebel against him.
- The "wrath of God" can also refer to his judgment and punishment for sin.
- God's wrath is the righteous penalty for those who do not repent of their sin.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways this term could be translated include "intense anger" or "righteous judgment" or "anger."
- God's wrath is just and holy. When talking about God's wrath, make sure the word or phrase used to translate this term does not refer to a sinful human rage.

(See also: judge, sin)

### Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 1:8-10
- 1 Timothy 2:8-10
- Luke 3:7
- Luke 21:23
- Matthew 3:7
- Revelation 14:10
- Romans 1:18
- Romans 5:9

### Word Data:

- Strong's: H0639, H2197, H2528, H2534, H2740, H3707, H3708, H5678, H7107, H7109, H7110, H7265, H7267, G23720, G37090, G39490, G39500

## Psalms References:

2:5; 37:8; 38:1; 59:13; 76:10; 78:31; 78:38; 78:49; 79:6; 85:3; 88:7; 89:46; 90:7; 90:9; 90:11; 102:10; 106:23

# wrong, wronged, wrongdoer, mistreat, hurt, hurtful

### Definition:

To “wrong” someone means to treat that person unjustly and dishonestly.

- The term “mistreat” means to act badly or roughly toward someone, causing physical or emotional harm to that person.
- The term “hurt” is more general and means to “cause someone harm in some way.” It often has the meaning of “physically injure.”
- Depending on the context, these terms could also be translated as “do wrong to” or “treat unjustly” or “cause harm to” or “treat in a harmful way” or “injure.”

### Bible References:

- Acts 7:26
- Exodus 22:21
- Genesis 16:5
- Luke 6:28
- Matthew 20:13-14
- Psalms 71:13

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0205, H0816, H2248, H2250, H2255, H2257, H2398, H2554, H2555, H3238, H3637, H4834, H5062, H5142, H5230, H5627, H5753, H5766, H5791, H5792, H5916, H6031, H6087, H6127, H6231, H6485, H6565, H6586, H7451, H7489, H7563, H7665, H7667, H7686, H8133, H8267, H8295, G00910, G00920, G00930, G00950, G02640, G08240, G09830, G09840, G15360, G16260, G16510, G17270, G19080, G25560, G25580, G25590, G26070, G30760, G30770, G37620, G41220, G51950, G51960

## Psalms References:

7:3; 15:4; 40:14; 41:7; 52:1; 71:4; 71:24; 105:15; 106:6; 139:24

# Yahweh of hosts, Yahweh of armies, God of armies, God of hosts, host of heaven, host of the heavens, Lord of hosts

### Definition:

The terms “Yahweh of hosts” and “God of hosts” are titles that express God’s authority over the thousands of angels who obey him.

- The term “host” or “hosts” is a word that refers to a large number of something, such as an army of people or the massive number of stars. It can also refer to all the many spirit beings, including evil spirits. The context makes it clear what is being referred to.
- Phrases similar to “host of the heavens” refer to all the stars, planets and other heavenly bodies.
- In the New Testament, the phrase, “Lord of hosts” means the same as “Yahweh of hosts” but it cannot be translated that way since the Hebrew word “Yahweh” is not used in the New Testament.

### Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “Yahweh of hosts” could include, “Yahweh, who rules all the angels” or “Yahweh, the ruler over armies of angels” or “Yahweh, the ruler of all creation.”
- The phrase “of hosts” in the terms “God of hosts” and “Lord of hosts” would be translated the same way as in the phrase “Yahweh of hosts” above.
- Certain churches do not accept the literal term “Yahweh” and prefer to use the capitalized word, “LORD” instead, following the tradition of many Bible versions. For these churches, a translation of the term “LORD of hosts” would be used in the Old Testament for “Yahweh of hosts.”

(See also: angel, authority, God, lord, Lord, Lord YahwehYahweh)

### Bible References:

- Zechariah 13:2

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0430, H3068, H6635, G29620, G45190

## Psalms References:

24:10; 46:7; 46:11; 48:8; 59:5; 80:4; 80:7; 80:14; 80:19; 84:1; 84:3; 84:8; 84:12; 89:8

# Yahweh, Yah

### Definition:

The term "Yahweh" is God's personal name in the Old Testament. The specific origin of this name is unknown, but it is probably derived from the Hebrew verb meaning, "to be."

- Following tradition, many Bible versions use the term "LORD" or "the LORD" to represent "Yahweh." This tradition resulted from the fact that historically, the Jewish people became afraid of mispronouncing Yahweh's name and started saying "Lord" every time the term "Yahweh" appeared in the text. Modern Bibles write "LORD" with all capital letters to show that this represents God's personal name and to distinguish it from "Lord" which is a different Hebrew word.
- The ULT and UST texts always translate this term as "Yahweh," in agreement with the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.
- The term "Yahweh" never occurs in the original text of the New Testament; only the Greek term for "Lord" is used, even when quoting the Old Testament.
- In the Old Testament, when God spoke about himself, he would often use his name instead of a pronoun.
- "Yah" is a shortened form of the name Yahweh that occurs in poetry and praise (e.g. Hallelujah = "Praise Yah"), and in some Hebrew names (e.g. Zechariah = "Yah remembers").

### Translation Suggestions:

- "Yahweh" could be translated by a word or phrase that means "I am" or "existing one" or "the one who is" or "he who is present."
- This name could also be written in a way that is similar to how "Yahweh" is spelled, or how it sounds in your language.
- Some church denominations prefer not to use the term "Yahweh" and instead use the traditional rendering, "LORD." An important consideration is that this may be confusing when read aloud because it will sound the same as the title "Lord." Some languages may have an affix or other grammatical marker that could be added to distinguish "LORD" as a name (Yahweh) from "Lord" as a title.
- In most cases it is good to keep the name Yahweh where it occurs in the text, but some translations may decide to use only a pronoun in some places to make the text more natural and clear.
- An introduction of a quote from Yahweh could be something like, "This is what Yahweh says."

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: God, Lord)

**Bible References:**

- 1 Kings 21:20
- 1 Samuel 16:7
- Daniel 9:3
- Ezekiel 17:24
- Genesis 2:4
- Genesis 4:3-5
- Genesis 28:13
- Hosea 11:12
- Isaiah 10:4
- Isaiah 38:8
- Job 12:10
- Joshua 1:9
- Lamentations 1:5
- Leviticus 25:35
- Malachi 3:4
- Micah 2:5
- Micah 6:5
- Numbers 8:11
- Psalm 124:3
- Ruth 1:21
- Zechariah 14:5

**Examples from the Bible stories:**

- 9:14 God said, “I AM WHO I AM. Tell them, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’ Also tell them, ‘I am **Yahweh**, the God of your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is my name forever.’”
- 13:4 Then God gave them the covenant and said, “I am **Yahweh**, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship other gods.”
- 13:5 “Do not make idols or worship them, for I, **Yahweh**, am a jealous God.”
- 16:1 The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of **Yahweh**, the true God.
- 19:10 Then Elijah prayed, “O **Yahweh**, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, show us today that you are the God of Israel and that I am your servant.”

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H3050, H3068, H3069

## Psalms References:

1:2; 1:6; 2:2; 2:7; 2:11; 3:1; 3:3; 3:4; 3:5; 3:7; 3:8; 4:3; 4:5; 4:6; 4:8; 5:1; 5:3; 5:6; 5:8; 5:12; 6:1; 6:2; 6:3; 6:4; 6:8; 6:9; 7:front; 7:1; 7:3; 7:6; 7:8; 7:17; 8:1; 8:9; 9:1; 9:7; 9:9; 9:10; 9:11; 9:13; 9:16; 9:19; 9:20; 10:1; 10:3; 10:12; 10:16; 10:17; 11:1; 11:4; 11:5; 11:7; 12:1; 12:3; 12:5; 12:6; 12:7; 13:1; 13:3; 13:6; 14:2; 14:4; 14:6; 14:7; 15:1; 15:4; 16:2; 16:5; 16:7; 16:8; 17:1; 17:13; 17:14; 18:front; 18:1; 18:2; 18:3; 18:6; 18:13; 18:15; 18:18; 18:20; 18:21; 18:24; 18:28; 18:31; 18:41; 18:46; 18:49; 19:7; 19:8; 19:9; 19:14; 20:1; 20:5; 20:6; 20:7; 20:9; 21:1; 21:7; 21:9; 21:13; 22:8; 22:19; 22:23; 22:26; 22:27; 22:28; 23:1; 23:6; 24:1; 24:3; 24:5; 24:8; 25:1; 25:4; 25:6; 25:7; 25:8; 25:10; 25:11; 25:12; 25:14; 25:15; 26:1; 26:2; 26:6; 26:8; 26:12; 27:1; 27:4; 27:6; 27:7; 27:8; 27:10; 27:11; 27:13; 27:14; 28:1; 28:5; 28:6; 28:7; 28:8; 29:1; 29:2; 29:3; 29:4; 29:5; 29:7; 29:8; 29:9; 29:10; 29:11; 30:1; 30:2; 30:3; 30:4; 30:7; 30:8; 30:10; 30:12; 31:1; 31:5; 31:6; 31:9; 31:14; 31:17; 31:21; 31:23; 31:24; 32:2; 32:5; 32:10; 32:11; 33:1; 33:2; 33:4; 33:5; 33:8; 33:10; 33:11; 33:12; 33:13; 33:18; 33:20; 33:22; 34:1; 34:2; 34:3; 34:4; 34:6; 34:7; 34:8; 34:9; 34:10; 34:11; 34:15; 34:16; 34:17; 34:18; 34:19; 34:22; 35:1; 35:5; 35:6; 35:9; 35:10; 35:22; 35:24; 35:27; 36:front; 36:5; 36:6; 37:3; 37:4; 37:5; 37:7; 37:9; 37:17; 37:18; 37:20; 37:23; 37:24; 37:28; 37:33; 37:34; 37:39; 37:40; 38:1; 38:15; 38:21; 39:4; 39:12; 40:1; 40:3; 40:4; 40:5; 40:9; 40:11; 40:13; 40:16; 41:1; 41:2; 41:3; 41:4; 41:10; 41:13; 42:8; 46:8; 47:2; 47:5; 48:1; 50:1; 54:6; 55:16; 55:22; 56:10; 58:6; 59:3; 59:5; 59:8; 64:10; 68:4; 68:16; 68:18; 68:20; 68:26; 69:13; 69:16; 69:31; 69:33; 70:1; 70:5; 71:1; 73:28; 74:18; 75:8; 76:11; 77:11; 78:4; 78:21; 79:5; 80:4; 80:19; 81:15; 83:16; 83:18; 84:2; 84:8; 85:1; 85:7; 85:8; 85:12; 86:1; 86:6; 86:11; 86:17; 87:2; 87:6; 88:1; 88:9; 88:13; 88:14; 89:1; 89:5; 89:6; 89:8; 89:15; 89:18; 89:46; 89:51; 89:52; 90:13; 91:2; 91:9; 92:1; 92:4; 92:5; 92:8; 92:9; 92:15; 93:1; 93:3; 93:4; 93:5; 94:1; 94:3; 94:5; 94:7; 94:11; 94:12; 94:14; 94:17; 94:18; 94:22; 94:23; 95:1; 95:3; 95:6; 96:1; 96:2; 96:4; 96:5; 96:7; 96:8; 96:9; 96:10; 96:13; 97:1; 97:5; 97:8; 97:9; 97:10; 97:12; 98:1; 98:2; 98:4; 98:5; 98:6; 98:9; 99:1; 99:2; 99:5; 99:6; 99:8; 99:9; 100:1; 100:2; 100:3; 100:5; 101:1; 101:8; 102:1; 102:12; 102:15; 102:16; 102:18; 102:19; 102:21; 102:22; 103:1; 103:2; 103:6; 103:8; 103:13; 103:17; 103:19; 103:20; 103:21; 103:22; 104:1; 104:16; 104:24; 104:31; 104:33; 104:34; 104:35; 105:1; 105:3; 105:4; 105:7; 105:19; 105:45; 106:1; 106:2; 106:4; 106:16; 106:25; 106:34; 106:40; 106:47; 106:48; 107:1; 107:2; 107:6; 107:8; 107:13; 107:15; 107:19; 107:21; 107:24; 107:28; 107:31; 107:43; 108:3; 109:14; 109:15; 109:20; 109:21; 109:26; 109:27; 109:30; 110:1; 110:2; 110:4; 111:1; 111:2; 111:4; 111:10; 112:1; 112:7; 113:1; 113:2; 113:3; 113:4; 113:5; 113:9; 115:1; 115:9; 115:10; 115:11; 115:12; 115:13; 115:14; 115:15; 115:16; 115:17; 115:18; 116:1; 116:4; 116:5; 116:6; 116:7; 116:9; 116:12; 116:13; 116:14; 116:15; 116:16; 116:17; 116:18; 116:19; 117:1; 117:2; 118:1; 118:4; 118:5; 118:6; 118:7; 118:8; 118:9; 118:10; 118:11; 118:12; 118:13; 118:14; 118:15; 118:16; 118:17; 118:18; 118:19; 118:20; 118:23; 118:24; 118:25; 118:26; 118:27; 118:29; 119:1; 119:12; 119:31; 119:33; 119:41; 119:52; 119:55; 119:57; 119:64; 119:65; 119:75; 119:89; 119:107; 119:108; 119:126; 119:137; 119:145; 119:149; 119:151; 119:156; 119:159; 119:166; 119:169; 119:174; 120:1; 120:2; 121:2; 121:5; 121:7; 121:8; 122:4; 123:2; 123:3; 124:1; 124:2; 124:6; 124:8; 125:1; 125:2; 125:4; 125:5; 126:1; 126:2; 126:3; 126:4; 127:1; 127:3; 128:1; 128:4; 128:5; 129:4; 129:8; 130:1; 130:3; 130:5; 130:7; 131:1; 131:3; 132:1; 132:2; 132:5; 132:8; 132:11; 132:13; 133:3; 134:1; 134:2; 134:3; 135:1; 135:2; 135:3; 135:4; 135:5; 135:6; 135:13; 135:14; 135:19; 135:20; 135:21; 136:1; 137:4; 137:7; 138:4; 138:5; 138:6; 138:8; 139:1; 139:4; 139:21; 140:1; 140:4; 140:6; 140:7; 140:8; 140:12; 141:1; 141:3; 141:8; 142:1; 142:5; 143:1; 143:7; 143:9; 143:11; 144:1; 144:3; 144:5; 144:15; 145:3; 145:8; 145:9; 145:10; 145:14; 145:17; 145:18; 145:20; 145:21; 146:1; 146:2; 146:5; 146:7;

146:8; 146:9; 146:10; 147:1; 147:2; 147:6; 147:7; 147:11; 147:12; 147:20; 148:1; 148:5; 148:7; 148:13; 148:14; 149:1; 149:4; 149:9; 150:1

# year

**Definition:**

When used literally, the term “year” in the Bible refers to a period of time lasting 354 days. This is according to the lunar calendar system which is based on the time it takes for the moon to go around the earth.

- A year in the modern-day solar calendar lasts 365 days divided into twelve months, based on the amount of time it takes for the earth to travel around the sun.
- In both calendar systems a year has twelve months. But an extra thirteenth month is sometimes added to the year in the lunar calendar to make up for the fact that a lunar year is eleven days less than a solar year. This helps keep the two calendars more in line with each other.
- In the Bible, the term “year” is also used in a figurative sense to refer to a general time when a special event takes place. Examples of this include, “the year of Yahweh” or “in the year of drought” or “the favorable year of the Lord.” In these contexts, “year” could be translated as “time” or “season” or “time period.”

(See also: month)

**Bible References:**

- 2 Kings 23:31
- Acts 19:8-10
- Daniel 8:1
- Exodus 12:2

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H3117, H7620, H7657, H8140, H8141, G17630, G20940

## Psalms References:

31:10; 61:6; 65:11; 77:5; 78:33; 90:4; 90:9; 90:10; 90:15; 95:10; 102:24; 102:27

# zeal, zealous

### Definition:

The terms “zeal” and “zealous” refer to being strongly devoted to supporting a person or idea.

- Zeal includes having strong desire and actions that promote a good cause. It is often used to describe someone who faithfully obeys God and teaches others to do that too.
- Being zealous includes putting intense effort into doing something and continuing to persevere in that effort.
- The “zeal of the Lord” or the “zeal of Yahweh” refers to God’s strong, persistent actions to bless his people or to see justice done.

### Translation Suggestions:

- To “be zealous” could also be translated by, “be strongly diligent” or “make an intense effort.”
- The term “zeal” could also be translated as “energetic devotion” or “eager determination” or “righteous enthusiasm.”
- The phrase, “zeal for your house” could be translated, “strongly honoring your temple” or “fervent desire to take care of your house.”

### Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 12:31
- 1 Kings 19:9-10
- Acts 22:3
- Galatians 4:17
- Isaiah 63:15
- John 2:17-19
- Philippians 3:6
- Romans 10:1-3

### Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7065, H7068, G22050, G22060, G22070, G60410

## Psalms References:

69:9; 119:139

# Zebulun

**Definition:**

Zebulun was Jacob's tenth son. He was Leah's sixth son. His descendants became one of the tribes of Israel.

- The tribe descended from him was known as the "tribe of Zebulun" or "Zebulun."
- The meaning of the name Zebulun is unknown, but it is similar to a Hebrew word probably meaning "to honor" or "to dwell."
- The tribe of Zebulun settled in northwest Canaan, bordered by the lands of Naphtali, Issachar, Manasseh, and Asher.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: twelve tribes of Israel, Jacob, Leah)

**Bible References:**

- Exodus 1:1-5
- Genesis 30:20
- Isaiah 9:1
- Judges 4:10
- Matthew 4:13
- Matthew 4:16

**Word Data:**

- Strong's: H2074, H2075, G21940

## Psalms References:

68:27

# Zion, Mount Zion

**Definition:**

Originally, the term “Zion” or “Mount Zion” referred to a stronghold or fortress that King David captured from the Jebusites. Both these terms became other ways of referring to Jerusalem.

- Mount Zion and Mount Moriah were two of the hills that the city of Jerusalem was located on. Later, “Zion” and “Mount Zion” became used as general terms to refer to both of these mountains and to the city of Jerusalem. Sometimes they also referred to the temple that was located in Jerusalem. (See: metonymy)
- David named Zion, or Jerusalem, the “City of David.” This is different from David’s hometown, Bethlehem, which was also called the City of David.
- The term “Zion” is used in other figurative ways, to refer to Israel or to God’s spiritual kingdom or to the new, heavenly Jerusalem that God will create.

(See also: Abraham, David, Jerusalem, **Bethlehem**, **Jebusites**)

**Bible References:**

- **1 Chronicles 11:5**
- **Amos 1:2**
- **Jeremiah 51:35**
- Psalm 76:1-3
- **Romans 11:26**

**Word Data:**

- Strong’s: H6726

## Psalms References:

2:6; 9:11; 9:14; 14:7; 20:2; 48:2; 48:11; 48:12; 50:2; 51:18; 53:6; 65:1; 69:35; 74:2; 76:2; 78:68; 84:7; 87:2; 87:5; 97:8; 99:2; 102:13; 102:16; 102:21; 110:2; 125:1; 126:1; 128:5; 129:5; 132:13; 133:3; 134:3; 135:21; 137:1; 137:3; 146:10; 147:12; 149:2