unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

v90

Ruth

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rebuke, reprove 300
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renown, renowned, famous 301
report, reported, tell, reputation 302
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unfoldingWord® Translation Notes - Ruth

Ruth Introduction

Introduction to Ruth

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Ruth

1. Naomi goes to Moab with her family (1:1–5)
2. Ruth comes to Bethlehem with Naomi (1:6–22)
3. Boaz helps Ruth as she gleans (2:1–23)
4. Boaz and Ruth at the threshing floor (3:1–18)
5. Ruth becomes the wife of Boaz (4:1–16)
6. Obed born to Ruth and Boaz; the genealogy of David (4:13–22)

What is the book of Ruth about?

This book is about a non-Israelite woman named Ruth. It tells how she came to join the people of Yahweh. The book also explains how Ruth became an ancestor of King David.

How should the title of this book be translated?

This book traditionally has the title **Ruth** because she is the main person in it. If the church prefers, you could use a fuller title such as **The Book About Ruth**. (See: How to Translate Names)

When did the events in the book of Ruth occur?

The story of Ruth is set during the time when there were judges in Israel. This was after the people of Israel had entered into the land of Canaan, but before they had a king. The judges were men and women whom God chose to help the Israelites defeat their enemies. These leaders usually continued to help the people by deciding disputes among them. They also helped the people make important decisions. Many of these leaders served all the people of Israel, but some of them may have served only certain tribes.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Why does Scripture include a book about a woman from the foreign land of Moab?

In a period when Israel was often unfaithful to Yahweh, a woman from Moab showed great faith in him. The Israelites' frequent lack of faith in Yahweh is contrasted with the faith of this woman from a foreign land. This shows us that God is the God of all people, not just of Israel. (See: faithful, faithfulness, trustworthy)

What important marriage custom is found in the book of Ruth?

Israelites practiced what is called "levirate marriage." In this custom, the closest male relative of a man who died without any children was obligated to provide for his widow by marrying her. Usually this would be one of the man's brothers. Any children born to them were to be regarded as children of the dead man. They did this so that the dead man would have descendants. If the closest relative did not marry the woman, another relative could fulfill this obligation.

What was a "kinsman-redeemer"?

A person's close relative or relatives were expected to act as "kinsmen-redeemers" (2:20 ULT) for him or her. They were responsible to provide for a relative in need, fulfill obligations of levirate marriage, and buy back land into the family that had been sold to someone outside of the family. In the book of Ruth, Boaz is one such kinsman-redeemer.

What was "gleaning" in the book of Ruth?

In Israel, poor people were allowed to follow after the men who harvested a field. These gleaners picked up stalks of grain that the harvesters missed or dropped. In this way, poor people were able to find some food. Ruth became a gleaner in a field belonging to Boaz.

What is covenant faithfulness or covenant loyalty?

A covenant is a formal, binding agreement between two parties that one or both parties must fulfill. Covenant faithfulness or covenant loyalty is when a person does what they said they would do according to the covenant that they had made. God made a covenant with Israel in which he promised that he would love and be faithful to the Israelites. The Israelites were to do the same toward him and toward each other.

The book of Ruth shows that what kinsmen-redeemers do for their relatives is part of Israel's duties according to God's covenant with them. The story of Boaz, Ruth, and Naomi gives examples to all of Israel of the good effects of covenant faithfulness. (See: covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, covenant love)

What function did city gates have in the ancient Near East?

City gates in the time of Boaz were meeting places for the city elders. Elders were honored men who decided business matters and legal matters together. The city walls were thick, especially at the entryways, and the gates had guard towers beside and above them. Therefore, the gateway opening provided a large shady area for public meetings and there were places for important people to sit. For this reason, Boaz and the other elders sat in the gateway.

Some English Bible versions speak of Boaz sitting at the city gate, but it may be best for translators to make clear that Boaz sat in the city gateway.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How does the book of Ruth change from one topic to another topic?

The book of Ruth often changes to new topics or new parts of the story. The ULT uses various words to indicate these changes, such as “so,” “then,” and “now.” Translators should use the ways most natural in their own languages to signal these changes.

Ruth 1

Ruth 1 Introduction

Ruth 1 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

It happened in the days when the judges ruled

The events of this book occur during the period of Judges. The book is concurrent with the book of Judges. To understand the historical context of the book, the translator may wish to review the book of Judges.

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Women without a husband or children

In the ancient Near East, if a woman lacked a husband or sons, she was considered to be in a dire circumstance. She would not have been able to provide for herself. This is why Naomi told her daughters to remarry.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Contrast

The actions of Ruth the Moabite are intended to contrast with the actions of Naomi the Jew. Ruth shows great faith in Naomi's God, while Naomi does not trust in Yahweh. (See: faith and trust, trusted, trustworthy, trustworthiness)

Ruth 1:1

ULT	UST
Now it happened in the days of the ruling of the judges that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man from Bethlehem of Judah went to live in the fields of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons.	*During the time that judges ruled {Israel}, there was a famine in that country. A man from the town of Bethlehem in the region of Judah {in the country of Israel} left there and went to live for a while in the country of Moab. His wife and his two sons went with him.*

ULT **Now it happened**
UST During the time that
(וַיְהִי׀)

The author is using the phrase **Now it happened** to introduce a new event in the story. Use a word, phrase, or other method in your language that is natural for introducing a new event. Alternate translation: [It was]

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT **in the days of the ruling of the judges**
UST During the time that judges ruled
(בִּימֵי֙ שְׁפֹ֣ט הַשֹּׁפְטִ֔ים)

The phrase **in the days of** indicates the time period during which the famine happened. The famine probably lasted for years, not just days. Use a natural form in your language for introducing the time during which another event happened. Alternate translation: [in the time when the judges ruled]

Support Reference: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

ULT **in the land**
UST Israel & in that country
(בָּאָ֑רֶץ)

This phrase, **in the land**, refers to the land of Israel. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [in the land of Israel]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **a certain man**
UST A man
(אִ֤ישׁ)

This is a common way of introducing a character into a story. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a new participant in a story.

Support Reference: Introduction of New and Old Participants

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in the days of	During the time that
the ruling of	ruled
the judges	judges
a famine	a famine
from Bethlehem of	from the town of Bethlehem
Judah	in the region of Judah {in the country of Israel
Moab	Moab

Ruth 1:2

ULT	UST
And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion, Ephrathites from Bethlehem of Judah. So they traveled to the fields of Moab and lived there.	*The man's name was Elimelech and his wife's name was Naomi. The names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. All of them were part of the clan of Ephrathah, from Bethlehem in Judah. They came to the land of Moab and stayed there.*

ULT **Ephrathites**
UST All of them were part of the clan of Ephrathah
(אֶפְרָתִ֔ים)

The term **Ephrathites** refers to the people from the clan of Ephrathah, people who lived in the area around Bethlehem. Alternate translation: [from the clan of Ephrathah]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Ephrathites	All of them were part of the clan of Ephrathah
from Bethlehem of	from Bethlehem
Judah	in Judah
Moab	Moab

Ruth 1:3

ULT	UST
Then Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died. And she was left, she and her two sons.	*Then Naomi's husband, Elimelech, died, and Naomi had only her two sons with her.*

ULT And she was left, she and her two sons
UST and Naomi had only her two sons with her
(וַתִּשָּׁאֵר הִיא וּשְׁנֵי בָנֶיהָ)

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: [Naomi and her two sons remained in Moab without him]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

Ruth 1:4

ULT	UST
And they took wives for themselves from the women of Moab; the name of the first woman was Orpah, and the name of the second woman was Ruth. And they lived there for about ten years.	*{Eventually,} the sons married women from Moab. The name of one woman was Orpah, and the name of the other woman was Ruth. But after Naomi and her sons had lived in Moab for about ten years,*

ULT And they took wives for themselves
UST Eventually,} the sons married women
(וַיִּשְׂאוּ לָהֶם נָשִׁים)

The phrase **took wives for themselves** is an idiom that means that they married women. They did not take women by force or take women who were already married to other men.

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT the name of the first woman was Orpah, and the name of the second woman was Ruth
UST The name of one woman was Orpah, and the name of the other woman was Ruth
(שֵׁם הָאַחַת עָרְפָּה וְשֵׁם הַשֵּׁנִית רוּת)

If your language must distinguish which woman married which son, you can say that Orpah married Kilion and that Ruth married Mahlon. Alternate translation: [the name of the woman who married Kilion was Orpah, and the name of the woman who married Mahlon was Ruth]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
from the women of Moab	from Moab
Ruth	was Ruth
years	years

Ruth 1:5

ULT	UST
And the two of them, Mahlon and Kilion, also died, and the woman was left without her two children or her husband.	*Mahlon and Kilion also died. So then Naomi was alone without her husband or her two sons.*

ULT and the woman was left without her two children or her husband

UST So then Naomi was alone without her husband or her two sons
(וַתִּשָּׁאֵר הָאִשָּׁה מִשְּׁנֵי יְלָדֶיהָ וּמֵאִישָׁהּ)

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [and the woman was alone without her husband or her two sons] or [and Naomi remained widowed and childless]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

Ruth 1:6

ULT	UST
Then she arose, she and her daughters-in-law, and she returned from the fields of Moab, for she had heard in a field of Moab that Yahweh had visited his people, giving them bread.	*{One day} while Naomi was in Moab, she heard someone say that Yahweh had helped his people {in Israel} and that now they had plenty of food. So she got ready to return {to Bethlehem} with her daughters-in-law.*

ULT **Then she arose, she and her daughters-in-law, and she returned**
UST she got ready to return & with her daughters-in-law
(וַתָּקָם הִיא֙ וְכַלֹּתֶ֔יהָ וַתָּשָׁב)

This part of the sentence forms an introductory summary of what will happen in the following section. It does not relate events in the timeline of the story. If your language does not use introductory summaries like this, you can translate these actions as events. Alternate translation: [Then she, along with her daughters-in-law, prepared to return]

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT **Then she arose, she and her daughters-in-law, and she returned**
UST she got ready to return & with her daughters-in-law
(וַתָּקָם הִיא֙ וְכַלֹּתֶ֔יהָ וַתָּשָׁב)

The verbs **arose** and **returned** are singular, and refer to Naomi. This shows that Naomi is the main character who takes the initiative in these actions. However, her daughters-in-law are included. If your language requires plural verbs when more than one person is included in an action, you can use them here. Alternate translation: [Then she and her daughters-in-law arose and returned]

Support Reference: Introduction of New and Old Participants

ULT **and her daughters-in-law**
UST with her daughters-in-law
(וְכַלֹּתֶ֔יהָ)

Alternate translation: [and the women who had married her sons]

ULT for she had heard in a field of Moab that Yahweh had visited his people, giving them bread
UST One day} while Naomi was in Moab, she heard someone say that Yahweh had helped his people {in Israel} and that now they had plenty of food. So
(כִּי שָׁמְעָה֙ בִּשְׂדֵ֣ה מוֹאָ֔ב כִּי־פָקַ֥ד יְהוָ֖ה אֶת־עַמּ֑וֹ לָתֵ֥ת לָהֶ֖ם לָֽחֶם)

Naomi first heard about Yahweh visiting his people and then decided to return to Bethlehem, so it might be more natural to put this information first, as in the UST.

Support Reference: Information Structure

ULT she had heard in a field of Moab
UST One day} while Naomi was in Moab, she heard someone say
(שָׁמְעָה֙ בִּשְׂדֵ֣ה מוֹאָ֔ב)

It is implied that the news came from Israel. Alternate translation: [while she was in the region of Moab, she had heard from someone who came from Israel]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT had visited his people
UST had helped his people {in Israel
(פָקַ֥ד & אֶת־עַמּ֑וֹ)

Here, **visited** is an idiom that means “taken care of.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have this meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [had relieved the hunger of his people] or [had come through for his people]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT giving them bread
UST and that now they had plenty of food
(לָתֵ֥ת לָהֶ֖ם לָֽחֶם)

Here, **bread** refers to food in general. Alternate translation: [giving them abundant harvests, so that they had plenty of food.]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Moab	to Bethlehem
Moab	One day} while Naomi was in Moab
Yahweh	Yahweh
his people	his people {in Israel
bread	plenty of food

Ruth 1:7

ULT	UST
So she went out from the place where she had been {living} there, and her two daughters-in-law {were} with her. And they traveled on the road to return to the land of Judah.	*She and her two daughters-in-law left the place where she had been living and they started to walk along the road back to Judah.*

ULT And they traveled on the road
UST and they started to walk along the road
(וַתֵּלַכְנָה בַּדֶּרֶךְ)

Alternate translation: [And they walked along the road]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the land of	Judah
Judah	Judah

Ruth 1:8

ULT	UST
Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go, return, each woman to the house of her mother. May Yahweh act with you in covenant faithfulness as you have acted with the dead and with me.	*Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Each of you should turn around and go back to live with your mother. I am asking Yahweh to be as faithful to you as you have been to your dead husbands and to me.*

ULT to her two daughters-in-law
UST to her two daughters-in-law
(לִשְׁתֵּי כַלֹּתֶיהָ)

Alternate translation: [to her two sons’ wives] or [to the widows of her two sons]

ULT Go, return, each woman
UST Each of you should turn around and go back
(לֵכְנָה שֹּׁבְנָה אִשָּׁה)

Since Naomi is speaking to two people, the form of address would be dual here, if your language uses that form.

Support Reference: Forms of ‘You’ — Dual/Plural

ULT Go, return, each woman to the house of her mother
UST Each of you should turn around and go back to live with your mother
(לֵכְנָה שֹּׁבְנָה אִשָּׁה לְבֵית אִמָּהּ)

If this custom seems strange to your readers, you could include a footnote to explain it, such as: “According to the custom of the ancient Hebrews, a young widow could either stay with the family of her deceased husband or return to live with her parents until she married again.”

ULT to the house of her mother
UST to live with your mother
(לְבֵית אִמָּהּ)

Alternate translation: [to the home of your mother]

> ULT **May Yahweh act with you in covenant faithfulness as you have acted with the dead and with me**
> UST I am asking Yahweh to be as faithful to you as you have been to your dead husbands and to me
> (יעשה יְהוָה עִמָּכֶם חֶסֶד כַּאֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתֶם עִם־הַמֵּתִים וְעִמָּדִי)

Naomi is asking God to bless Orpah and Ruth. Use a natural form for a blessing in your language. Alternate translation: [I pray that Yahweh will show you covenant faithfulness such as you have shown to the dead and to me.]

Support Reference: Blessings

> ULT **with the dead**
> UST to your dead husbands
> (עִם־הַמֵּתִים)

The writer is using the adjective **dead** as a noun to mean those who have died. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [toward your husbands, who died,]

Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

> ULT **in covenant faithfulness**
> UST faithful
> (חֶסֶד)

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: [loyally and faithfully]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
to the house of	to live with
Yahweh	Yahweh
in covenant faithfulness	faithful

Ruth 1:9

ULT	UST
May Yahweh grant to you that you shall find rest, each woman in the house of her husband.” Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and cried.	*I am asking Yahweh to allow each of you to have another husband with whom you will have a secure home.” Then she kissed each of them, and they cried aloud.*

ULT **May Yahweh grant to you that you shall find**
UST I am asking Yahweh to allow & of you to have
(יִתֵּן יְהוָה לָכֶם וּמְצֶאן)

Here, Naomi continues her blessing. Use a natural form for a blessing in your language. Alternate translation: [May Yahweh give you] or [I pray that Yahweh will allow you to have]

Support Reference: Blessings

ULT **that you shall find rest**
UST to have & secure
(וּמְצֶאן מְנוּחָה)

The word **rest** here does not refer to sitting down to rest. It means a place where these women would belong, a home for them, which would include the security that comes through marriage. Alternate translation: [a safe and stable home]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **in the house of her husband**
UST another husband with whom you will have a & home
(בֵּית אִישָּׁהּ)

This means with new husbands, not with their previous husbands, who died, or with someone else’s husband. The word **house** refers to both a physical house that belongs to the husband and to the protection from shame and poverty that a husband provides. Alternate translation: [in her own husband’s household]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **and they lifted up their voices and cried**
UST and they cried aloud
(וַתִּשֶּׂאנָה קוֹלָן וַתִּבְכֶּינָה)

To lift up the voice is an idiom for speaking or crying loudly. Alternate translation: [and they cried loudly] or [and they wept bitterly]

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Yahweh	Yahweh
in the house of	with & you will have a & home
Then she kissed	Then she kissed

Ruth 1:10

ULT	UST
But they said to her, “Rather, we will return with you to your people.”	*They each said, “No! We will return with you to your relatives.”*

ULT we will return
UST We will return
(נָשׁוּב)

When Orpah and Ruth said **we**, they were referring to themselves and not Naomi. So languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of **we** would use the exclusive form here.

Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’

ULT But they said
UST They each said
(וַתֹּאמַרְנָה)

The word **But** here indicates a strong contrast between what Naomi said and what the daughters-in-law are about to say. In your translation, indicate this strong contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Nevertheless, they said]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT Rather
UST No
(כִּי)

The daughters-in-law use the word **Rather** here to indicate a strong contrast between what Naomi wants them to do and what they propose to do. In your translation, indicate this strong contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Instead of that]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT with you
UST with you
(אִתָּךְ)

The word **you** is singular here because it refers to Naomi.

Support Reference: Forms of ‘You’ — Singular

Ruth 1:11

ULT	UST
But Naomi said, “Turn back, my daughters! Why would you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb, that they may become husbands for you?	*But Naomi said, “No, my daughters. Return home. It will not do any good for you to come with me! It is not possible for me to have more sons who could become your husbands.*

ULT **But Naomi said**
UST But Naomi said
(וַתֹּאמֶר נָעֳמִי)

The word **But** here indicates a strong contrast between what the daughters-in-law said and what Naomi is about to say. In your translation, indicate this strong contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [However, Naomi said]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **my daughters**
UST my daughters
(בְּנֹתַי)

Orpah and Ruth are Naomi’s daughters-in-law, but here and in the next two verses she calls them **my daughters** as a term of affection. If your language would not do that, you can express the affection in another way. Alternate translation: [my beloved daughters-in-law]

ULT **Why would you go with me**
UST It will not do any good for you to come with me
(לָמָּה תֵּלַכְנָה עִמִּי)

Naomi is using the question form here to convince the young women of her own conviction. 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: [It does not make sense for you to go with me.] or [You should not go with me!]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

> **ULT Do I still have sons in my womb, that they may become husbands for you**
> **UST** It is not possible for me to have more sons who could become your husbands
> (הָעֽוֹד־לִ֥י בָנִ֛ים בְּמֵעַ֖י וְהָיוּ לָכֶ֣ם לַאֲנָשִֽׁים)

Naomi is using the question form to make the point that she cannot have other sons for the young women to marry. 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: [You know that I cannot have any more sons who could become your husbands.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in my womb	to have

Ruth 1:12

ULT	UST
Turn back, my daughters, go! For I am too old to belong to a husband. If I said I have hope, and if I belonged to a husband even tonight, and even if I would give birth to sons,	*You should go back, my daughters. It is too late for me to have another husband. Even if I thought that I could have another husband, and was married even tonight and had more sons,*

ULT I am too old to belong to a husband
UST It is too late for me to have another husband
(זָקַנְתִּי מִהְיוֹת לְאִישׁ)

The implication is that Naomi cannot again marry and provide them with husbands. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I am too old to marry again and bear more children]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT If I said I have hope, and if I belonged to a husband even tonight, and even if I would give birth to sons
UST Even if I thought that I could have another husband, and was married even tonight and had more sons
(כִּי אָמַרְתִּי יֶשׁ־לִי תִקְוָה גַּם הָיִיתִי הַלַּיְלָה לְאִישׁ וְגַם יָלַדְתִּי בָנִים)

This rhetorical question begins here and continues into the next verse. Naomi uses this question to emphasize that she cannot provide other sons for them to marry. 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: [Even if it were possible that I could expect to marry right away and also give birth to sons right away]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT I would give birth to sons
UST had more sons
(יָלַדְתִּי בָנִים)

Alternate translation: [I were to bear sons] or [I were to deliver baby boys]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
I am too old	It is too late for me
hope	that I could have another husband

Ruth 1:13

ULT	UST
would you therefore wait until the time when they are grown? Would you for this reason keep yourselves from belonging to a husband? No, my daughters! For it is exceedingly bitter for me, more than for you, that the hand of Yahweh has gone out against me.”	*you would not wait until they grew up! You could not remain unmarried until then! No, my daughters, Yahweh has done very bad things to me, causing me to grieve very much. But your lives do not need to be as bad as mine.”*

ULT would you therefore wait until the time when they are grown? Would you for this reason keep yourselves from belonging to a husband

UST you would not wait until they grew up! You could not remain unmarried until then

(הֲלְהֵן | תִּשַּׂבֵּרְנָה עַד אֲשֶׁר יִגְדָּלוּ הֲלְהֵן תֵּעָגֵנָה לְבִלְתִּי הֱיוֹת לְאִישׁ)

Naomi completes the rhetorical question she began in the previous verse and immediately asks another rhetorical question which emphasizes the same meaning. Alternate translation: [you would not wait until they were grown up so that you could marry them. You would need to marry a husband before then.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT would you therefore wait until the time when they are grown? Would you for this reason keep yourselves from belonging to a husband

UST you would not wait until they grew up! You could not remain unmarried until then

(הֲלְהֵן | תִּשַּׂבֵּרְנָה עַד אֲשֶׁר יִגְדָּלוּ הֲלְהֵן תֵּעָגֵנָה לְבִלְתִּי הֱיוֹת לְאִישׁ)

This idea refers to the custom among the ancient Hebrews that, if a married man died, one of his brothers would marry the man’s widow. See the book introduction for more explanation. If it would be helpful, you could put some of this information in a footnote.

ULT it is exceedingly bitter for me

UST causing me to grieve very much

(מַר־לִי מְאֹד)

Here, bitterness is a metaphor for grief. Alternate translation: [it is a great grief for me]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **the hand of Yahweh has gone out against me**
> UST Yahweh has done very bad things to me
> (יְצָאָ֥ה בִֽי־יַד־יְהוָֽה)

Here, **hand** represents the power of God. 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 power of Yahweh has caused terrible things to happen to me]

Support Reference: Metonymy

> ULT **the hand of Yahweh has gone out against me**
> UST Yahweh has done very bad things to me
> (יְצָאָ֥ה בִֽי־יַד־יְהוָֽה)

The implication is that Yahweh caused the deaths of Naomi's family. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Yahweh has taken away our husbands]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Yahweh	Yahweh

Ruth 1:14

ULT	UST
Then they lifted up their voices and cried again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.	*Then Ruth and Orpah cried loudly again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law {goodbye and left}, but Ruth stayed with Naomi.*

ULT Then they lifted up their voices and cried
UST Then Ruth and Orpah cried loudly
(וַתִּשֶּׂ֥נָה קוֹלָ֖ן וַתִּבְכֶּ֑ינָה)

Here, **they lifted up their voices** is an idiom meaning that they expressed themselves loudly. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, use an idiom from your language that does have that meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Then they wailed and wept loudly]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT but Ruth clung to her
UST but Ruth stayed with Naomi
(וְר֥וּת דָּבְקָ֖ה בָּ֑הּ)

This could mean: (1) Ruth refused to leave Naomi. Alternate translation: [but Ruth would not leave her] or (2) Ruth physically held on to Naomi and would not let go of her. Alternate translation: [but Ruth held on to her]

Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Then & kissed	kissed & goodbye and left
but Ruth	but Ruth

Ruth 1:15

ULT	UST
Then she said, “Behold, your sister-in-law has turned back to her people and to her god. Go back after your sister-in-law.”	*Naomi said to her, “Look! Your sister-in-law is going back to her relatives and to the god that she worshiped {previously}! Go back with her!”*

ULT **Behold**
UST Look
(הִנֵּה)

Naomi is using the term **Behold** to focus Ruth’s attention on what she is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Listen] or [You know]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **your sister-in-law**
UST Your sister-in-law
(יְבִמְתֵּךְ)

Naomi is using the phrase **your sister-in-law** to refer to Orpah, the widow of Ruth’s deceased husband’s brother. Use the natural term in your language to refer to that relationship. Alternate translation: [the widow of your husband’s brother] or [Orpah]

Support Reference: Introduction of New and Old Participants

ULT **her people**
UST her relatives
(עַמָּהּ)

Here, Naomi is using the possessive form to describe the **people** to whom Orpah belongs. If your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this in another way. Alternate translation: [the clan that she came from]

Support Reference: Possession

ULT **her god**
UST the god that she worshiped {previously
(אֱלֹהֶיהָ)

Here, Naomi is using the possessive form to describe the **god** of the Moabites that Orpah and Ruth used to worship before they married Naomi’s sons and began to worship Yahweh. If your language would not use the possessive form to express the relationship between Orpah and this god, you could express this in another way. Alternate translation: [the god that they worship]

Support Reference: Possession

> ULT **her god**
> UST the god that she worshiped {previously
> (אֱלֹהֶיהָ)

The word translated here as **god** is plural, but Hebrew quite commonly uses the plural when referring to a deity. Here it probably refers to the god of the Moabites named Chemosh, as it does in 1 Kings 11:33. If the Bible commonly used in your area uses a plural here, you may choose to do so too. Alternate translation: [her gods]

Support Reference: Unusual Uses of the Plural

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
her god	the god that she worshiped {previously

Ruth 1:16

ULT	UST
But Ruth said, “Do not press me to forsake you, to turn back from behind you. For to where you go, I will go, and in where you stay, I will stay. Your people {are} my people, and your God {is} my God.	*But Ruth replied, “No! Please do not insist that I abandon you and stop taking care of you! Wherever you travel, I will travel too. Wherever you live, I will live too. Your relatives will be my relatives, and I will worship the God whom you worship.*

ULT **and in where you stay**
UST Wherever you live
(וּבַאֲשֶׁר תָּלִ֖ינִי)

Alternate translation: [and where you live]

ULT **to forsake you, to turn back from behind you**
UST abandon you and stop taking care of you
(לְעָזְבֵ֥ךְ לָשׁ֖וּב מֵאַחֲרָ֑יִךְ)

The phrase **turn back from behind you** further defines the phrase **forsake you**. Ruth is using the two phrases together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could use a single phrase and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [to forget my commitment to remain loyal to you]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **Your people {are} my people, and your God {is} my God**
UST Your relatives will be my relatives, and I will worship the God whom you worship
(עַמֵּ֥ךְ עַמִּ֖י וֵאלֹהַ֥יִךְ אֱלֹהָֽי)

With these phrases, Ruth completely identifies herself with the culture and religion of Naomi, an Israelite. The original does not have any verbs, so if your language requires verbs here, choose the ones that best communicate this. Alternate translation: [Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Ruth	Ruth
to forsake you	abandon you
and your God	and & the God whom you worship
is} my God	I will worship

Ruth 1:17

ULT	UST
In the place where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May Yahweh do thus to me, and thus may he add, if death separates between me and between you."	*Wherever you die, there I will die, and they will bury me there. May Yahweh punish me severely if I leave you even after we die."*

ULT May Yahweh do thus to me, and thus may he add
UST May Yahweh punish me severely
(כֹּה֩ יַעֲשֶׂ֨ה יְהוָ֤ה לִי֙ וְכֹ֣ה יֹסִ֔יף)

Ruth uses this oath formula to show that she is very committed to doing what she says. She calls down a curse on herself, asking God to punish her if she does not do what she has said she would do. In keeping with the custom, she did not express what that punishment would be. Use a natural way in your language to express an oath. Alternate translation: [May Yahweh strike me dead, and may he do more, and may he do even more]

Support Reference: Oath Formulas

ULT if death separates between me and between you
UST if I leave you even after we die
(כִּ֥י הַמָּ֖וֶת יַפְרִ֥יד בֵּינִ֖י וּבֵינָֽךְ)

This could mean: (1) even death cannot overcome Ruth's commitment to Naomi. This could be a form of hyperbole or simply a way to restate her commitment to be buried in the same place as Naomi is buried. Alternate translation: [if even death separates us from each other]; (2) the only thing that can separate Ruth from Naomi would be the death of one of them. Alternate translation: [if anything other than death separates us from each other] or [if I leave you while you and I are both still alive]

Support Reference: Hyperbole

ULT separates between me and between you
UST I leave you
(יַפְרִ֥יד בֵּינִ֖י וּבֵינָֽךְ)

This phrase is an idiom that means "separates you and me." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have this meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [separates the two of us] or [comes between us]

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
I will be buried	they will bury me
Yahweh	Yahweh

Ruth 1:18

ULT	UST
Then she saw that she was determined to go with her, and she refrained from speaking to her.	*When Naomi realized that Ruth had firmly resolved to go with her, Naomi stopped urging Ruth to return home.*

ULT and she refrained from speaking to her
UST Naomi stopped urging Ruth to return home
(וַתֶּחְדַּל לְדַבֵּר אֵלֶיהָ)

This phrase expresses the result of the previous phrase. You may want to indicate this by using a connector that introduces a result. Alternate translation: [so she refrained from speaking to her further]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT and she refrained from speaking to her
UST Naomi stopped urging Ruth to return home
(וַתֶּחְדַּל לְדַבֵּר אֵלֶיהָ)

In this phrase, **she** refers to Naomi, and **her** refers to Ruth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use their names here. Also, this does not mean that Naomi was angry with Ruth or that she no longer spoke to her at all. It only means that she stopped trying to persuade Ruth to leave her. Alternate translation: [so Naomi stopped trying to persuade Ruth]

Support Reference: Pronouns

Ruth 1:19

ULT	UST
So the two of them traveled until they came to Bethlehem. And it happened, as they were entering Bethlehem, the entire town was agitated on account of them. And the women said, “Is this Naomi?”	*So the two women continued walking until they came to the town of Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, many people in the town began talking loudly about them. Many women of the town exclaimed, “It is hard to believe that this is Naomi!”*

ULT **And it happened**
UST QUOTE_NOT_FOUND: וַיְהִי
(וַיְהִי)

And it happened introduces a new event in the story. Use a word, phrase, or other method in your language that is natural for introducing a new event. Alternate translation: [And it came about]

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT **as they were entering Bethlehem**
UST When they arrived in Bethlehem
(כְּבֹאָנָה בֵּית לָחֶם)

This phrase provides background information about their arrival to help readers understand what happens next in the story. In your translation, present this information in a way that makes it clear that this is background information. Alternate translation: [while Naomi and Ruth were still walking into Bethlehem]

Support Reference: Connect — Background Information

ULT **the entire town**
UST many people in the town
(כָּל־הָעִיר)

Here, **town** represents the people who live there. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [everyone who lived there]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the entire town**
UST many people in the town
(כָּל־הָעִיר)

The word **entire** here is a generalization for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different way to express the emphasis. Many of the residents of the town were excited, but not all of the residents may have been excited by this news. Alternate translation: [most of the residents]

Support Reference: Hyperbole

ULT Is this Naomi
UST It is hard to believe that this is Naomi
(הֲזֹאת נָעֳמִי)

The writer is using a rhetorical question to emphasize the reaction of the people to Naomi's condition upon her return. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or an exclamation. Because it had been many years since Naomi lived in Bethlehem and now she no longer has her husband and two sons, it is likely that the women were expressing shock that this woman was actually Naomi. Alternate translation: [This must be Naomi, but I do not see her family!]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Bethlehem	the town of Bethlehem
Bethlehem	Bethlehem

Ruth 1:20

ULT	UST
But she said to them, “Do not call me Naomi. Call me Mara, for the Almighty has acted exceedingly bitterly to me.	*Naomi said to them, “You should not call me Naomi anymore, since it means ‘pleasant.’ Instead, call me Mara, because it means ‘bitter.’ God Almighty has made my life very bitter.*

ULT Do not call me Naomi
UST You should not call me Naomi anymore, since it means ‘pleasant
(אַל־תִּקְרֶאנָה לִי נָעֳמִי)

The name **Naomi** means “delight” or “pleasantness.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could include this information in the text or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [It is no longer appropriate to call me Naomi, the Pleasant One.]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT Mara
UST Mara, because it means ‘bitter
(מָרָא)

The name **Mara** means “bitter.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could include this information in the text or in a footnote. Alternate translation: [Mara, the Bitter One]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
call	You should & call & anymore
Call	Instead, call
the Almighty	God Almighty

Ruth 1:21

ULT	UST
As for me, I went out full, but Yahweh has brought me back empty. Why would you call me Naomi? But as for Yahweh, he has testified against me, and the Almighty has done evil to me.”	*When I left, I had everything I could want, but Yahweh has brought me back with nothing. Do not call me Naomi. Yahweh has opposed me. Almighty God has treated me badly.”*

ULT **As for me, I went out full, but Yahweh has brought me back empty**
UST When I left, I had everything I could want, but Yahweh has brought me back with nothing
(אֲנִי֙ מְלֵאָ֣ה הָלַ֔כְתִּי וְרֵיקָ֖ם הֱשִׁיבַ֣נִי יְהוָ֑ה)

Here, Naomi is speaking of herself as a container that can be **full** or **empty**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [As for me, I went out with a complete family, but Yahweh has brought me back with no one]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Why would you call me Naomi**
UST Do not call me Naomi
(לָ֣מָּה תִקְרֶ֔אנָה לִ֖י נָעֳמִ֑י)

Naomi is using the question form to emphasize that there is no reason to call her Naomi. 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: [There is no reason to call me Naomi!]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **But as for Yahweh, he has testified against me, and the Almighty has done evil to me**
UST Yahweh has opposed me. Almighty God has treated me badly
(וַיהוָ֥ה עָנָ֖ה בִּ֑י וְשַׁדַּ֖י הֵרַ֥ע לִֽי)

These two statements say the same thing using different words to emphasize the idea that God has made Naomi’s life very hard. Both **Yahweh** and **the Almighty** refer to God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine the statements to show that the second statement is not saying a new thing. Alternate translation: [But as for Yahweh, the Almighty God, he has opposed me and treated me badly.]

Support Reference: Parallelism

> ULT **he has testified against me**
> UST has opposed me
> (עָנָה בִּי)

Here Naomi is speaking of **Yahweh** as if he were a witness who caused her to be punished for a crime. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he has brought punishment on me]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **has done evil to me**
> UST has treated me badly
> (הֵרַע לִי)

Alternate translation: [has brought calamity on me] or [has brought tragedy to me]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Yahweh	Yahweh
would you call	call
But as for Yahweh	Yahweh
he has testified	has opposed
and the Almighty	Almighty God
has done evil	has treated & badly

Ruth 1:22

ULT	UST
So Naomi returned, with Ruth the Moabite woman her daughter-in-law, with her, the woman who returned from the fields of Moab. And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the harvest of barley.	*So that is how Naomi returned home along with her daughter-in-law Ruth, the woman from Moab. When they arrived in Bethlehem, it was the season for people there to begin harvesting their crops of barley.*

ULT **So Naomi returned, with Ruth the Moabite woman her daughter-in-law, with her, the woman who returned from the fields of Moab**
UST So that is how Naomi returned home along with her daughter-in-law Ruth, the woman from Moab
(וַתָּשָׁב נָעֳמִי וְרוּת הַמּוֹאֲבִיָּה כַלָּתָהּ עִמָּהּ הַשָּׁבָה מִשְּׂדֵי מוֹאָב)

This sentence provides a brief summary and conclusion of the story so far. It does not provide new information or new events in the story. Your language may have its own way of showing that this is the end of a section of a story. Follow that way here.

Support Reference: End of Story

ULT **And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the harvest of barley**
UST When they arrived in Bethlehem, it was the season for people there to begin harvesting their crops of barley
(וְהֵמָּה בָּאוּ בֵּית לָחֶם בִּתְחִלַּת קְצִיר שְׂעֹרִים)

This sentence provides background information to help readers understand what happens next in the story. In your translation, present this information in a way that makes it clear that this is background information.

Support Reference: Background Information

ULT **at the beginning of the harvest of barley**
UST it was the season for people there to begin harvesting their crops of barley
(בִּתְחִלַּת קְצִיר שְׂעֹרִים)

The phrase **the harvest of barley** can be translated with a verbal phrase if that would be helpful in your language. Alternate translation: [when the farmers were just beginning to harvest barley] or [when the farmers started harvesting the barley]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
with Ruth	Ruth
the Moabite woman	the woman from Moab
Moab	home
Bethlehem	Bethlehem
the harvest of	for people there & harvesting
barley	their crops of barley

Ruth 2

Ruth 2 Introduction

Ruth 2 Chapter Introduction

Translation Issues in This Chapter

“a man of great worth” (2:1)

This phrase describes Boaz as having good attributes, but in a very general way. The phrase could describe a man who is physically strong and able, wealthy, or of good, godly character, or all of those things. From the context of the story, we can see that Boaz has land, servants who respect him, and he lives in a way that honors God, so it seems that this phrase is describing his wealth and character. Think about how you would describe someone like this in your language.

“Do not go to glean in another field” (2:8)

Boaz said this because he could not guarantee Ruth’s safety in another person’s field. It seems that not everyone was as gracious and obedient to the law of Moses as was Boaz. (See: grace, gracious and law, law of Moses, law of Yahweh, law of God)

“kinsman-redeemer” (2:20)

A “kinsmen-redeemer” was a male relative who was responsible to provide for any close member of the same clan who was in need, fulfill obligations of levirate marriage, and buy back land into the family that had been sold to someone outside of the family. See the book introduction for more information.

Ruth 2:1

ULT	UST
Now Naomi had a relative of her husband, a man of great worth from the clan of Elimelech. And his name {was} Boaz.	*There was a man {there} who was a relative of Naomi's {dead} husband, Elimelech. He was rich and important, and a member of the same clan to which Elimelech belonged. The man's name was Boaz.*

ULT **Now Naomi had a relative of her husband**
UST There was a man {there} who was a relative of Naomi's {dead} husband, Elimelech
(וְלְנָעֳמִי מידע לְאִישָׁהּ)

Verse 1 gives background information about Boaz so that the reader will understand who he is. In your translation, present this information in a way that makes it clear that this is background information.

Support Reference: Background Information

ULT **Now Naomi had a relative of her husband**
UST There was a man {there} who was a relative of Naomi's {dead} husband, Elimelech
(וְלְנָעֳמִי מידע לְאִישָׁהּ)

This phrase begins the introduction of **Boaz** as a new participant in the story. If your language has its own way of introducing new participants, you could use it here in your translation.

Support Reference: Introduction of New and Old Participants

ULT **a man of great worth**
UST He was rich and important
(אִישׁ גִּבּוֹר חַיִל)

The expression **a man of great worth** describes Boaz as a person who was prosperous and well known in his community, with a good reputation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent idiom from your language or state this plainly. See the chapter introduction for more information. Alternate translation: [a prominent, wealthy man]

Support Reference: Idiom

> **ULT** **from the clan of Elimelech**
> **UST** and a member of the same clan to which Elimelech belonged
> (מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת אֱלִימֶלֶךְ)

The use of the term **clan** here means that Boaz was related to Elimelek but did not have the same parents as Elimelek. The text is not saying that the clan was named after Elimelek or that Elimelek was the patriarch or leader of the clan, but only that Elimelek and Boaz belonged to the same clan.

Support Reference: Kinship

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
from the clan of	and a member of the same clan
Boaz	Boaz

Ruth 2:2

ULT	UST
And Ruth, the Moabite woman, said to Naomi, “Please, I want to go to the field and glean heads of grain after the one in whose eyes I find favor.” And she said to her, “Go, my daughter.”	*Ruth (the woman from Moab) said to Naomi, “Let me go to the fields and pick up the grain that the harvesters leave behind. I will go behind any harvester who allows me to do so.” Naomi replied, “Go ahead, my daughter.”*

ULT **Ruth, the Moabite woman**
UST Ruth (the woman from Moab
(רוּת הַמּוֹאֲבִיָּה)

Here the writer reintroduces Ruth after giving background information about someone else. If your language has its own way of reintroducing old participants when it resumes a story, you could use it here in your translation. Alternate translation: [the same Moabite woman, Ruth]

Support Reference: Introduction of New and Old Participants

ULT **the Moabite woman**
UST the woman from Moab
(הַמּוֹאֲבִיָּה)

Alternate translation: [from the country of Moab]

ULT **the one in whose eyes I find favor**
UST who allows me to do so
(אֲשֶׁר אֶמְצָא־חֵן בְּעֵינָיו)

The idiom **in whose eyes I find favor** means “whoever will approve of me.” Ruth speaks of gaining someone’s favor as gaining permission, kindness, or approval. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [anyone who gives me permission] or [whoever will be kind to me]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **my daughter**
UST my daughter
(בִּתִּי)

Ruth was caring for Naomi as if she were her own mother, and Naomi addressed Ruth affectionately as her daughter. If it would be helpful in your language, use the term in your language that would indicate this kind of close relationship between two women.

Support Reference: Kinship

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Ruth	Ruth
the Moabite woman	the woman from Moab
and glean	and pick up
heads of grain	the grain that the harvesters leave behind
favor	allows me to do so

Ruth 2:3

ULT	UST
So she left and went to glean in the field after the reapers. And her chance chanced upon the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelek.	*So Ruth went. When she got to the fields, she followed the harvesters and picked up grain. The part of the field that she was working in just happened to belong to Boaz, Elimelek's relative.*

ULT **And her chance chanced upon**
UST just happened
(וַיִּקֶר מִקְרֶהָ)

The phrase, **her chance chanced upon** indicates that Ruth did not know whose field she was in. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Being unaware of who owned the field, Ruth came to]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **was from the clan of Elimelek**
UST Elimelek's relative
(מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת אֱלִימֶלֶךְ)

The use of the term **clan** here means that Boaz was related to Elimelek but did not have the same parents as Elimelek. The text is not saying that the clan was named after Elimelek or that Elimelek was the patriarch or leader of the clan.

Support Reference: Kinship

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
to glean	she & and picked up grain
the reapers	the harvesters
belonging to Boaz	to belong to Boaz
was from the clan of	s relative

Ruth 2:4

ULT	UST
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.”	*Just then, Boaz arrived from Bethlehem! He greeted the harvesters, “May Yahweh be with you!” They replied, “May Yahweh bless you!”*

ULT Then behold
UST Just then
(וְהִנֵּה)

The writer is using the term **behold** to alert us to the important event of Boaz arriving at the field and seeing Ruth for the first time. Your language may have a comparable way of calling attention to this event that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Then look]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT coming from Bethlehem
UST arrived from Bethlehem
(בָּא מִבֵּית לָחֶם)

Here the writer uses the present tense in past narration in order to call attention to an important event in the story. If it would not be natural to do that in your language, you could use the past tense and call attention to the event in another way. Alternate translation: [appeared, coming from Bethlehem]

Support Reference: Irregular Use of Tenses

ULT Yahweh be with you
UST May Yahweh be with you
(יְהוָה עִמָּכֶם)

This is a blessing used as a greeting. Use a form for this that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I ask Yahweh to be with you]

Support Reference: Blessings

ULT May Yahweh bless you
UST May Yahweh bless
(יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה)

This is a blessing used as a greeting. Use a form for this that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I ask Yahweh to do good things for you]

Support Reference: Blessings

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Boaz	Boaz
from Bethlehem	from Bethlehem
to the reapers	the harvesters
Yahweh	Yahweh
Yahweh	Yahweh
May & bless you	May & bless

Ruth 2:5

ULT	UST
Then Boaz said to his servant who was set over the reapers, “Who does this young woman belong to?”	*Then Boaz {saw Ruth, and} asked his foreman, “Who is that young woman related to?”*

ULT **who was set over**
UST his foreman
(הַנִּצָּב עַל)

Here, **set over** is an idiom that means “managing.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have this meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [who was overseeing] or [who was in charge of]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Who does this young woman belong to**
UST Who is that young woman related to
(לְמִי הַנַּעֲרָה הַזֹּאת)

In that culture, women were under the authority of their male relatives. Boaz was asking whom Ruth’s husband or father might be. He did not think that Ruth was a slave.

Support Reference: Kinship

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Boaz	Boaz
to his servant	his foreman
the reapers	his foreman

Ruth 2:6

ULT	UST
Then the servant who was set over the reapers answered and said, “She is a young Moabite woman, the woman who came back with Naomi from the land of Moab.	*The foreman replied, “She is the young woman from Moab who accompanied Naomi when she returned from there.*

ULT Then & answered and said
UST The foreman replied
(וַיַּ֨עַן & וַיֹּאמֶר)

The two words **answered** and **said** express a single idea. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this idea in a different way. Alternate translation: [Then … answered him by saying] or [Then … said]

Support Reference: Hendiadys

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the servant	The foreman replied
the reapers	The foreman replied
Moabite	from Moab
from the land of	from there
Moab	from there

Ruth 2:7

ULT	UST
And she said, ‘Please let me glean and gather among the bundles of grain after the reapers.’ And she came and has continued from then, in the morning, until now. This is her resting in the house a little.”	*The woman said to me, ‘Please let me pick up the grain that the men who are harvesting leave behind.’ {I allowed her to do so.} She has worked since early this morning until recently, when she rested for a short time under the shelter.”*

ULT **And she said, ‘Please let me glean and gather among the bundles of grain after the reapers**
UST The woman said to me, ‘Please let me pick up the grain that the men who are harvesting leave behind
(וַתֹּאמֶר אֲלַקֳטָה־נָּא וְאָסַפְתִּי בָעֳמָרִים אַחֲרֵי הַקּוֹצְרִים)

If your language would not use a direct quotation inside of a direct quotation, you could translate this second direct quotation as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: [She asked me if she could glean and gather among the bundles of grain after the reapers]

Support Reference: Quotes within Quotes

ULT **Please let me glean and gather**
UST Please let me pick up
(אֲלַקֳטָה־נָּא וְאָסַפְתִּי)

The two words **glean** and **gather** express a single idea. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this idea in a different way. Alternate translation: [Please let me glean by gathering]

Support Reference: Hendiadys

ULT **in the house**
UST under the shelter
(הַבַּיִת)

Here, **the house** was a temporary shelter or garden hut in the field that provided shade from the sun where the workers could rest. Alternate translation: [in the hut] or [in the shed]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
let me glean	Please let me pick up
among the bundles of grain	the grain
the reapers	that the men who are harvesting
in the house	under the shelter

Ruth 2:8

ULT	UST
Then Boaz said to Ruth, “Will you not listen, my daughter? Do not go to glean in another field, and do not even go away from here, but thusly stick closely to my young female workers.	*Then Boaz {walked over to where Ruth was and} said to Ruth, “Young lady, please listen to me. You do not need to go to any other field or anywhere else to gather grain. You should stay right here with my servant girls.*

ULT **Will you not listen, my daughter**
UST Young lady, please listen to me
(הֲלֹוא שְׁמַעַתְּ בִּתִּי)

Boaz is using the question form to draw Ruth’s attention to what he will say to her. 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: [Listen to me, my daughter!] or [Note well what I am telling you, my daughter!]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **my daughter**
UST Young lady
(בִּתִּי)

Boaz’s use of the term, **my daughter** was a kind way to address a younger woman. Ruth was not the actual daughter of Boaz, but he was treating her kindly and respectfully. Use the term that communicates kindness and respect from a man to a younger woman in your language.

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Boaz	Boaz
Ruth	Ruth
to glean	to gather grain
my young female workers	my servant girls

Ruth 2:9

ULT	UST
Keep your eyes on the field where they are reaping and follow behind them. Have I not instructed the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the waterpots and drink from what the young men draw.”	*Watch where the men are harvesting and follow along behind my servant girls. I have told the men {who are harvesting} not to molest you. Whenever you are thirsty, go and get some water to drink from the jars that the men have filled.”*

ULT **Keep your eyes on the field**
UST Watch where
(עֵינַ֤יִךְ בַּשָּׂדֶה)

Here, the word **eyes** represents the capability of a person to see, watch or observe. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Watch only the field] or [Pay attention only to the field]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **behind them**
UST behind my servant girls
(אַחֲרֶ֖יהָן)

Here, **them** is feminine and refers back to the “young female workers” in verse 8. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a word or phrase that makes that clear. Alternate translation: [behind the women]

Support Reference: Pronouns

ULT **Have I not instructed the young men not to touch you**
UST I have told the men {who are harvesting} not to molest you
(הֲלֹ֣וא צִוִּ֔יתִי אֶת־הַנְּעָרִ֖ים לְבִלְתִּ֣י נָגְעֵ֑ךְ)

Boaz is using the question form to emphasize his hospitality—that he had already made provision to help Ruth. 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: [I have given the men strict instructions not to interfere with you.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

> ULT **the young men**
> UST the men {who are harvesting
> (אֶת־הַנְּעָרִים)

The writer assumes that his readers will understand the implications of a woman toiling in a field near young male workers. You can include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the workmen]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **not to touch you**
> UST not to molest you
> (לְבִלְתִּי נְגָעֵךְ)

The writer is referring to harm or sexual assault in a polite way by using the phrase **touch you**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use a polite way of referring to this in your language, or you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [not to assault you sexually]

Support Reference: Euphemism

> ULT **from what the young men draw**
> UST that the men have filled
> (מֵאֲשֶׁר יִשְׁאֲבוּן הַנְּעָרִים)

Alternate translation: [from water pulled up from the well by the workmen]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Keep & on the field	where
they are reaping	the men are harvesting
I & instructed	I have told
the young men	the men {who are harvesting
the young men	the men

Ruth 2:10

ULT	UST
Then she fell on her face and bowed down to the ground and said to him, “Why have I found favor in your eyes that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?”	*Then she knelt before him {in respect} with her forehead touching the ground. She exclaimed, “Why are you being so kind to me? I did not think that you would pay any attention to me, since I am a foreigner!”*

ULT **Then she fell on her face and bowed down to the ground**
UST Then she knelt before him {in respect} with her forehead touching the ground
(וַתִּפֹּ֤ל עַל־פָּנֶ֙יהָ֙ וַתִּשְׁתַּ֣חוּ אָ֔רְצָה)

These are two descriptions of a single action. The writer may be 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 she prostrated herself before him]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **Then she fell on her face and bowed down to the ground**
UST Then she knelt before him {in respect} with her forehead touching the ground
(וַתִּפֹּ֤ל עַל־פָּנֶ֙יהָ֙ וַתִּשְׁתַּ֣חוּ אָ֔רְצָה)

The action of falling **on her face** and bowing **down to the ground** was a symbol of respect and reverence. She was showing honor to Boaz out of gratefulness for what he had done for her. It was also a posture of humility. If this would not be clear to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: [Then she prostrated herself before him to show gratitude and honor]

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT **Then she fell on her face and bowed down to the ground**
UST Then she knelt before him {in respect} with her forehead touching the ground
(וַתִּפֹּ֤ל עַל־פָּנֶ֙יהָ֙ וַתִּשְׁתַּ֣חוּ אָ֔רְצָה)

The idiom **fell on her face** means that she bowed low with her face to the ground. If your readers would misunderstand this, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Then she bowed low, with her face to the ground]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Why have I found favor in your eyes that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner**
UST Why are you being so kind to me? I did not think that you would pay any attention to me, since I am a foreigner
(מַדּוּעַ מָצָ֤אתִי חֵן֙ בְּעֵינֶ֔יךָ לְהַכִּירֵ֑נִי וְאָ֥נֹכִ֖י נָכְרִיָּֽה)

Ruth's question expresses surprise and also explicitly states the reason why she is surprised by Boaz's kindness. It is a contrast from her expectations. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a contrast. In some languages you may need to make part of her question a statement. Alternate translation: [Why have I found favor in your eyes? Israelites never show Moabites this sort of kindness.] or [People never show foreigners this sort of kindness.]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **have I found favor in your eyes**
UST are you being so kind to me
(מָצָ֤אתִי חֵן֙ בְּעֵינֶ֔יךָ)

The phrase **found favor in your eyes** is an idiom that means that you have approved of someone. Ruth speaks of Boaz's kindness to her as his favor or approval of her. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [have you shown kindness to me]

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and bowed down	Then she knelt before him {in respect} with her forehead touching
favor	are you being so kind to me
a foreigner	am a foreigner

Ruth 2:11

ULT	UST
Then Boaz answered and said to her, “It has been fully reported to me everything that you have done with your mother-in-law after the death of your husband. You left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and you came to a people whom you did not know the day before yesterday.	*Boaz replied, “People have told me everything that you have done for your mother-in-law since your husband died. They told me that you left your parents and your homeland, and that you came here to live among people whom you did not know previously.*

ULT **Then Boaz answered and said**
UST Boaz replied
(וַיַּ֥עַן בֹּ֖עַז וַיֹּ֣אמֶר)

Both **answered** and **said** describe the same action. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use only one verb for this, as in the UST. Alternate translation: [Then Boaz responded]

Support Reference: Hendiadys

ULT **It has been fully reported**
UST People have told
(הֻגֵּ֤ד הֻגַּד)

The words **It has been fully reported** translate a verb that is repeated twice to emphasize the fullness of the report. If your language can repeat words for emphasis, it would be appropriate to use that construction here in your translation.

Support Reference: Reduplication

ULT **It has been fully reported to me**
UST People have told me
(הֻגֵּ֤ד הֻגַּד לִי֙)

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [People have fully reported to me]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **and you came to a people**
UST and that you came here to live among people
(וַתֵּלְכִ֗י אֶל־עַ֛ם)

With the words **you came to a people**, Boaz is referring to Ruth coming to dwell with Naomi in a village and community, a country and religion that she did not know.

Support Reference: Metonymy

> ULT **the day before yesterday**
> UST previously
> (תְּמוֹל שִׁלְשׁוֹם)

Here, **the day before yesterday** is an idiom that means “recently.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have this meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [before] or [a little while ago]

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Boaz	Boaz replied
It has been & reported	People have told
you & know	you did & know

Ruth 2:12

ULT	UST
May Yahweh reward your work, and may your full wages come from Yahweh, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge."	*I pray that Yahweh will fully repay you for what you have done. Yes, may Yahweh, the God of Israel, the one whom you are trusting to protect you, reward you in full."*

ULT **your work**
UST you for what you have done
(פָּעֳלֵךְ)

The implication is that her **work** was the good things she had done, everything Boaz had just described. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [your good deeds.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and may your full wages come from Yahweh**
UST Yes, may Yahweh & reward you in full
(וּתְהִי מַשְׂכֻּרְתֵּךְ שְׁלֵמָה מֵעִם יְהוָה)

This clause and the previous clause mean basically the same thing. The second clause 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 clauses in a way that shows that the second clause is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [that is, may you receive everything that you deserve from Yahweh]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **under whose wings you have come for refuge**
UST the one whom you are trusting to protect you
(אֲשֶׁר־בָּאת לַחֲסוֹת תָּחַת־כְּנָפָיו)

Here, **under whose wings** is a metaphor that uses the picture of a mother bird gathering her chicks under her wings to protect them as a way to describe God's protection for those who trust in him. Alternate translation: [in whose safe care you have placed yourself]

Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Yahweh	Yahweh
May & reward	I pray that & will fully repay
your work	you for what you have done
Yahweh	Yahweh
the God of	the God of
Israel	Israel
for refuge	you are trusting to protect you

Ruth 2:13

ULT	UST
Then she said, “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. But as for me, I am not even like one of your female servants.”	*She replied, “Sir, I hope I will continue to please you. You have comforted me by speaking so kindly to me, your servant, and yet I am not even {worthy to be} one of your servant girls!”*

ULT **May I find favor in your eyes**
UST I hope I will continue to please you
(אֶמְצָא־חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ)

Here **find favor in your eyes** is an idiom that means to be approved of or to be found to be pleasing. Alternate translation: [May you continue to approve of me] or [May you continue to be pleased with me]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **my lord**
UST Sir
(אֲדֹנִי)

Ruth speaks to Boaz using a respectful title, **my lord**. Use a form for addressing someone respectfully in your language. Boaz is not Ruth’s master, but he is the owner of the field where she is gleaning. He is also a Jew and a prominent man in the city. Therefore, Ruth is honoring him by calling him her **lord**, and speaking of herself as his servant. Alternate translation: [sir] or [master]

Support Reference: Politeness

ULT **to the heart of your female servant**
UST so kindly to me, your servant
(עַל־לֵב שִׁפְחָתֶךָ)

Ruth is speaking about herself in the third person. If this would not be natural in your language, you could use the first person form. Alternate translation: [to the heart of me, your female servant]

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT **to the heart of**
UST so kindly to me
(עַל־לֵב)

Here, **the heart** represents the inner thoughts and emotions of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different metaphor or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to the liver of] or [with kindness to] or [in an encouraging way to]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT your female servant
UST your servant
(שִׁפְחָתֶֽךָ)

Ruth is referring to herself as Boaz's servant to show respect to him. She is not actually one of his servants. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make that clear. Alternate translation: [one who is as lowly as a servant]

Support Reference: Politeness

ULT But as for me, I am not even like one of your female servants
UST and yet I am not even {worthy to be} one of your servant girls
(וְאָנֹכִי֙ לֹ֣א אָהְיֶ֔ה כְּאַחַ֖ת שִׁפְחֹתָֽיִךְ)

Ruth is expressing surprise and gratitude that Boaz is treating her as if she belongs among his workers, which she does not. She is being very humble, admitting that she does not even have the status of a servant before him. Use a form for addressing someone respectfully in your language. Alternate translation: [But I do not even have the status of being one of your servant girls]

Support Reference: Politeness

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
favor	I hope I will continue to please you
my lord	Sir
your female servant	your servant
your female servants	your servant girls

Ruth 2:14

ULT	UST
Then, at the time of the meal, Boaz said to her, “Come here and eat from the bread, and dip your piece in the vinegar.” So she sat beside the reapers, and he offered to her some roasted grain. And she ate and she was satisfied, and she had some left over.	*When it was time to eat, Boaz said to Ruth, “Come over here {and get some food}. Take some of this bread and dip it in the vinegar and eat it.” So she {came and} sat down with the harvesters. Then he gave her some roasted grain. She ate all {the food} that she wanted and had some left over.*

ULT **at the time of the meal**
UST When it was time to eat
(לְעֵת הָאֹכֶל)

Alternate translation: [at the time of the midday meal]

ULT **Come here and eat from the bread, and dip your piece in the vinegar**
UST Come over here {and get some food}. Take some of this bread and dip it in the vinegar and eat it
(גְּשִׁי הֵלֹם וְאָכַלְתְּ מִן־הַלֶּחֶם וְטָבַלְתְּ פִּתֵּךְ בַּחֹמֶץ)

The verbs in this sentence are imperatives that communicate a gracious invitation rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates a gracious invitation. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please come, and help yourself to the bread and dip it in the vinegar]

Support Reference: Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **and eat from the bread, and dip your piece in the vinegar**
UST and get some food}. Take some of this bread and dip it in the vinegar and eat it
(וְאָכַלְתְּ מִן־הַלֶּחֶם וְטָבַלְתְּ פִּתֵּךְ בַּחֹמֶץ)

It would be necessary to dip the bread and then eat it, so it might be more natural in your language to put the information about dipping the bread first. Alternate translation: [and dip some of this bread in the vinegar and eat it]

Support Reference: Information Structure

ULT and dip your piece in the vinegar
UST and dip it in the vinegar
(וְטָבַלְתְּ פִּתֵּךְ בַּחֹמֶץ)

This was a simple meal eaten in the field. People would sit on the ground around a cloth that had a bowl of wine vinegar on it and pieces of broken bread. They would take a piece of bread and dip it in the wine vinegar to add flavor before they ate it. The Israelites made vinegar from grape juice that was fermented beyond the point of being wine. At the vinegar stage, the juice becomes very sour and acidic. Alternate translation: [and please dip your piece of bread in the wine vinegar first]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Boaz	Boaz
the bread	this bread
the reapers	the harvesters
some roasted grain	some roasted grain

Ruth 2:15

ULT	UST
Then she got up to glean. Then Boaz commanded his young men, saying, “Let her glean even among the bundles, and do not shame her.	*After she stood up to go back to work, Boaz ordered his workers, “Even if she gathers some grain near the bundles of grain {that you have cut}, do not tell her to stop doing that.*

ULT Then Boaz commanded his young men
UST Boaz ordered his workers
(וַיְצַ֤ו בֹּעַז֙ אֶת־נְעָרָ֔יו)

When Boaz spoke to his workers, it is likely that Ruth was far enough away that she did not hear Boaz’s instructions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could include this information. Alternate translation: [Then Boaz privately instructed his young men]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT even among the bundles
UST Even if & near the bundles of grain {that you have cut
(גַּ֚ם בֵּ֣ין הָעֳמָרִ֔ים)

Here, the word **even** lets the workers know that they are to do above and beyond what they normally do. People who were gleaning were normally forbidden from working close to the harvested grain because then it would be easy for them to steal from the grain that was already harvested. But Boaz instructs his workers to let Ruth glean close to the bundles of harvested grain. Alternate translation: [among the bundles as well]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT and do not shame her
UST do not tell her to stop doing that
(וְלֹ֥א תַכְלִימֻֽוהָ)

Boaz is referring to shaming Ruth by scolding her verbally. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [and do not shame her by saying that she should stop]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
to glean	to go back to work
Boaz	Boaz
his young men	his workers
Let her glean	she gathers some grain
shame her	do & tell her to stop doing that

Ruth 2:16

ULT	UST
Even be sure to pull some out from the bundles for her and leave it for her to glean, and do not rebuke her!”	*Even more than that, I want you to pull out some stalks of grain from the bundles and leave them {on the ground} for her to pick up—and do not scold her.”*

ULT **Even**
UST Even more than that
(וְגַם)

Here Boaz goes another step beyond what is normal and tells his workers to also drop on the ground some of the grain that they had harvested for Ruth to pick up. Alternate translation: [Not only that, but also]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **and do not rebuke her**
UST and do not scold her
(וְלֹא תִגְעֲרוּ־בָהּ)

Alternate translation: [and do not cause her shame] or [and do not speak harshly to her]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
for her to glean	to pick up
rebuke	do & scold

Ruth 2:17

ULT	UST
So she gleaned in the field until the evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley.	*So Ruth gathered grain in the field until evening. Then she threshed the barley that she had gathered{, to separate the kernels from the stalks}. The barley kernels were enough to fill a large basket.*

ULT **Then she beat out**
UST Then she threshed the barley & to separate the kernels from the stalks
(וַתַּחְבֹּט)

Ruth would have beaten the barley stalks with a big stick until the kernels of edible grain came off. She would then keep only the kernels of grain. Alternate translation: [She beat the edible kernels of grain off of the stalks from]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **about an ephah of**
UST to fill a large basket
(כְּאֵיפָה)

An **ephah** is a unit of measurement equal to about 22 liters. Use the normal measurement for grain in your language. Alternate translation: [about 22 liters of] or [over half a bushel of]

Support Reference: Biblical Volume

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
So she gleaned	So Ruth gathered grain
she had gleaned	she had gathered
barley	The barley kernels

Ruth 2:18

ULT	UST
And she lifted it up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. Then she took out and gave to her what she had left over after she was satisfied.	*She carried it back to town and showed her mother-in-law how much she had gathered. Ruth also gave her mother-in-law the roasted grain that she had left over after she had eaten all that she had wanted {at lunchtime}.*

ULT **And she lifted it up and went into the city**
UST She carried it back to town
(וַתִּשָּׂא֙ וַתָּבֹ֔א הָעִ֑יר)

It is implied that Ruth carried the grain home.

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
she had gleaned	she had gathered

Ruth 2:19

ULT	UST
Then her mother-in-law said to her, “Where did you glean today and where did you work? May the one who noticed you be blessed.” Then she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked. And she said, “The name of the man with whom I worked today {is} Boaz.”	*Her mother-in-law asked her, “Where did you gather all this grain today? In whose field did you work? I pray that God will bless the man who was so kind to you.” Then Ruth told her about the person with whom she had worked. She said, “The name of the man who owns the field where I worked today is Boaz.”*

ULT **Where did you glean today and where did you work**
UST Where did you gather all this grain today? In whose field did you work
(אֵיפֹה לִקַּטְתְּ הַיּוֹם וְאָנָה עָשִׂית)

Naomi asked the same thing in two different ways to show that she was very excited and interested in knowing what had happened to Ruth that day. If it is not natural in your language to show excitement and interest by repeating a question, then use a more natural form. Alternate translation: [Wow, whose field did you work in today]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **May the one who noticed you be blessed**
UST I pray that God will bless the man who was so kind to you
(יְהִי מַכִּירֵךְ בָּרוּךְ)

Naomi is asking God to bless Boaz. You could express this as either a blessing or a prayer. Use whichever way is more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [God, bless the one who noticed Ruth today]

Support Reference: Blessings

ULT **May the one who noticed you be blessed**
UST I pray that God will bless the man who was so kind to you
(יְהִי מַכִּירֵךְ בָּרוּךְ)

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 God bless the one who noticed you]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **the one who noticed you**
UST the man who was so kind to you
(מַכִּירֵךְ)

The writer is using the term **noticed** to mean that the person not only saw Ruth but also did something kind for her. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one who helped you]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **Then she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked. And she said, “The name of the man with whom I worked today {is} Boaz**
UST Then Ruth told her about the person with whom she had worked. She said, “The name of the man who owns the field where I worked today is Boaz
(וַתַּגֶּד לַחֲמוֹתָהּ אֵת אֲשֶׁר־עָשְׂתָה עִמּוֹ וַתֹּאמֶר שֵׁם הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי עִמּוֹ הַיּוֹם בֹּעַז)

These two sentences mean basically the same thing. The second sentence repeats the meaning of the first, while using different words in order to emphasize the importance of this information for the story. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine the sentences or connect them in a way that shows that the second sentence is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [Then she told her mother-in-law that the name of the man with whom she had worked that day was Boaz] or [Then she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked. She said, “The name of the man with whom I worked today is Boaz.”]

Support Reference: Parallelism

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
did you glean	did you gather all this grain
did you work	did you work
blessed	God will bless
Then she told	Then Ruth told
she had worked	she had worked
I worked	who owns the field where I worked
Boaz	is Boaz

Ruth 2:20

ULT	UST
Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May he be blessed by Yahweh, who has not forsaken his covenant faithfulness with the living and with the dead.” Naomi also said to her, “That man is close to us. He is one of our kinsman-redeemers.”	*Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May Yahweh bless him! Yahweh has continued to act faithfully toward {us} who are still living, and to {our husbands} who have died.” Then Naomi said, “That man is a close relative {of Elimelek}. In fact, he is one of those responsible for taking care of our family.”*

ULT **May he be blessed by Yahweh**
UST May Yahweh bless him
(בָּרוּךְ הוּא לַיהוָֹה)

Naomi is asking God to bless Boaz. You could express this as either a blessing or a prayer, in whichever way is more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [I pray that he will be blessed by Yahweh]

Support Reference: Blessings

ULT **May he be blessed by Yahweh**
UST May Yahweh bless him
(בָּרוּךְ הוּא לַיהוָֹה)

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 use an active form, you may need to start a new sentence afterward, as in the UST.

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **who has not forsaken**
UST Yahweh has continued to act
(אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עָזַב)

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 word **forsaken**. Alternate translation: [who has continued to be loyal to]

Support Reference: Double Negatives

ULT **who has not forsaken**
UST Yahweh has continued to act
(אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עָזַב)

Here, **who** could refer to: (1) **Yahweh**, who has continued to be faithful to the living and the dead by acting through Boaz. (2) Boaz, who is showing faithfulness to Naomi’s family by helping Ruth.

Support Reference: Pronouns

ULT **with the living**
UST toward {us} who are still living
(אֶת־הַחַיִּים)

Naomi is using the adjective **living** as a noun to mean those who continue to live, referring to herself and Ruth. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [with the people who are still living]

Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **and with the dead**
UST and to {our husbands} who have died
(וְאֶת־הַמֵּתִים)

Naomi is using the adjective **dead** as a noun to mean those who have died. She is referring to her husband and sons. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [and with the people who have already died]

Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **That man is close to us. He is one of our kinsman-redeemers**
UST That man is a close relative {of Elimelek}. In fact, he is one of those responsible for taking care of our family
(קָרוֹב לָנוּ הָאִישׁ מִגֹּאֲלֵנוּ הוּא)

These two sentences mean basically the same thing. The second sentence repeats the meaning of the first using different words in order to emphasize the importance of this information for the story. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine the sentences or connect them in a way that shows that the second sentence is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: [That man is closely related to us, which means that he is one of our kinsman-redeemers] or [That man is closely related to us. Yes, he is one of our kinsman-redeemers]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **one of our kinsman-redeemers**
UST In fact & one of those responsible for taking care of our family
(מִגֹּאֲלֵנוּ)

A kinsman-redeemer was a close male relative who had the responsibility to take care of any widows in the family. If one of his brothers died childless, he had the responsibility to marry the widow if she was still of child-bearing age, to raise a child for his brother. He would also reacquire the land his relatives had lost due to poverty and redeem family members who had sold themselves into slavery. See the book introduction for more information.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
May & be blessed	May & bless
by Yahweh	Yahweh
has & forsaken	has continued to act
his covenant faithfulness	faithfully
one of our kinsman-redeemers	In fact & one of those responsible for taking care of our family
one of our kinsman-redeemers	In fact & one of those responsible for taking care of our family

Ruth 2:21

ULT	UST
Then Ruth the Moabite woman said, “In addition, he said to me, ‘You should keep close by the servants who belong to me until the time when they have finished all of the harvest that belongs to me.’”	*Then Ruth, the woman from Moab, said, “He also told me to stay with his workers until they are done bringing in all his grain from the field.”*

ULT **In addition, he said to me**
UST He also told me
(גַּם | כִּי־אָמַר אֵלַי)

The implication is that what follows is beyond what anyone would have expected a landowner to say to Ruth. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [He even said to me]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **he said to me, ‘You should keep close by the servants who belong to me until the time when they have finished all of the harvest that belongs to me**
UST He & told me to stay with his workers until they are done bringing in all his grain from the field
(אָמַר אֵלַי עִם־הַנְּעָרִים אֲשֶׁר־לִי תִּדְבָּקִין עַד אִם־כִּל ו אֶת כָּל־הַקָּצִיר אֲשֶׁר־לִי)

If your language would not use a direct quotation inside of a direct quotation, you could translate the second direct quotation as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: [He said that I should keep close by his servants until they have finished all of his harvest]

Support Reference: Quotes within Quotes

ULT **You should keep close by the servants who belong to me**
UST to stay with his workers
(עִם־הַנְּעָרִים אֲשֶׁר־לִי תִּדְבָּקִין)

The implication is that Boaz wants to protect and provide for Ruth. Boaz was expressing confidence that his workers would not harm Ruth. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I want you to glean safely, near my field workers,]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Ruth	Ruth
the Moabite woman	the woman from Moab
the servants	workers
the harvest	bringing in & grain from the field

Ruth 2:22

ULT	UST
Then Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, “It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young female workers, so that they do not harm you in any other field.”	*Naomi replied to her daughter-in-law Ruth, “My daughter, it will be good for you to go {to his field} with his servant girls, because if you go to someone else’s field, someone might assault you.”*

ULT you go out with
UST you to go {to his field} with
(תֶּצְאִי֙ עִם)

Alternate translation: [you work with] or [you glean alongside]

ULT so that they do not harm you
UST because if & someone might assault you
(וְלֹ֥א יִפְגְּעוּ־בָ֖ךְ)

Here, **they** refers to anyone in general. Alternate translation: [so that someone does not harm you] or [so that no one would hurt you]

Support Reference: Pronouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Ruth	Ruth
It is good	it will be good
his young female workers	his servant girls

Ruth 2:23

ULT	UST
So she stayed close by the young female workers of Boaz to glean until the harvest of barley and the harvest of wheat were finished. And she lived with her mother-in-law.	*So Ruth worked alongside of Boaz's servant girls. She gathered heads of grain until the workers had finished harvesting both the barley and the wheat. {During that time,} she continued to live with Naomi.*

ULT So she stayed close
UST So Ruth worked alongside of & She
(וַתִּדְבַּ֖ק)

Here, **So** 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: [Because of these instructions, she stayed close] or [Therefore, Ruth continued to work]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT until the harvest of barley and the harvest of wheat were finished
UST until the workers had finished harvesting both the barley and the wheat
(עַד־כְּלוֹת֙ קְצִ֣יר־הַשְּׂעֹרִ֔ים וּקְצִ֖יר הַחִטִּ֑ים)

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: [until Boaz's workers had harvested all of the barley and the wheat]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
by the young female workers of	s servant girls
Boaz	Boaz
to glean	gathered heads of grain
the harvest of	harvesting
barley	the barley
and the harvest of	both & and
wheat	the wheat

Ruth 3

Ruth 3 Introduction

Ruth 3 Chapter Introduction

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Boaz’s integrity

Boaz showed great integrity in this chapter by not having sexual relations with Ruth until they were married. He was also concerned with preserving Ruth’s good reputation. Displaying Boaz’s good character is an important point in this chapter.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

So that it may be well with you

Naomi wanted Ruth to have a secure home with a good husband who would care for her. She could see that Boaz would be the best husband for her. She also thought that Boaz, as a kinsman-redeemer, had an obligation to marry her. This could be true because, even though Ruth was a Gentile by birth, she had become part of Naomi’s family and part of the nation of Israel. (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

Ruth 3:1

ULT	UST
Then Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, “My daughter, shall I not seek a resting place for you, that will be good for you?	*One day, Naomi said to Ruth, “My daughter, I want to arrange for you to have a secure home with a good husband.*

ULT Then Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her
UST One day, Naomi said to Ruth
(וַתֹּ֣אמֶר לָ֔הּ נָעֳמִ֖י חֲמוֹתָֽהּ)

The writer is using the word translated **Then** to introduce the next part of the story, in which Ruth asks Boaz to perform the role of kinsman-redeemer for her and Naomi. Use a word, phrase, or other method in your language that is natural for introducing a new event. Alternate translation: [After some time, Naomi, Ruth’s mother-in-law, said to her]

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT her mother-in-law
UST Naomi
(חֲמוֹתָֽהּ)

Naomi is the mother of Ruth’s dead husband, and thus, is Ruth’s **mother-in-law**. Alternate translation: [the mother of Ruth’s dead husband]

Support Reference: Kinship

ULT Naomi, her mother-in-law
UST Naomi
(נָעֳמִ֖י חֲמוֹתָֽהּ)

Naomi is Ruth’s **mother-in-law**. If it is not natural to include both the name and the relationship term in your language, choose the one that refers to Naomi most naturally. Alternate translation: [Ruth’s mother-in-law]

Support Reference: Kinship

ULT her mother-in-law
UST Naomi
(חֲמוֹתָֽהּ)

In this verse, **her** refers to Ruth. Alternate translation: [Ruth’s mother-in-law]

Support Reference: Pronouns

ULT **My daughter**
UST My daughter
(בִּתִּ֑י)

Ruth became Naomi's daughter-in-law by marrying Naomi's son. But here Naomi calls her **My daughter** to show that she loves her as much as she would love her own daughter. Use a form of address in your language that shows that Naomi loves Ruth as she would love a daughter. Alternate translation: [My dear one]

Support Reference: Kinship

ULT **shall I not seek a resting place for you, that will be good for you**
UST I want to arrange for you to have a secure home with a good husband
(הֲלֹ֤א אֲבַקֶּשׁ־לָךְ֙ מָנ֔וֹחַ אֲשֶׁ֥ר יִֽיטַב־לָֽךְ)

Naomi is using the question form to cause Ruth to think of her future. Here, Naomi uses this question to tell Ruth what she plans to do. 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: [I must look for a place for you to rest, in a place that will be good for you.] or [I must find a husband to care for you, who will be good to you.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **a resting place**
UST to have a secure home
(מָנ֔וֹחַ)

Here, Naomi is speaking of a permanent home as **a resting place**. This does not mean a place to rest temporarily from being tired. It means a place of permanent comfort and security in a good home with a husband. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a permanent home] or [a husband]

Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
shall I & seek	I want to arrange
will be good	with a good husband

Ruth 3:2

ULT	UST
So now, is not Boaz our relative, the one with whose young female workers you have been working? Behold, he will be winnowing barley at the threshing floor tonight.	*Now, you have been working with Boaz's servant girls. As you know, he is a close relative of ours. So listen carefully. Tonight he will be at the place where they thresh the barley. He will be separating the grain from the chaff.*

ULT **So now**
UST Now
(וְעַתָּה)

Naomi's rhetorical question in 3:1 gave the reason for the plan that she is about to tell to Ruth in verses 3:2–4. Use a connector in your language that marks what follows as a planned result of what was said before. Alternate translation: [Because of that, I have been thinking.]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **is not Boaz our relative, the one with whose young female workers you have been working**
UST you have been working with Boaz's servant girls. As you know, he is a close relative of ours
(הֲלֹא בֹעַז מֹדַעְתָּנוּ אֲשֶׁר הָיִית אֶת־נַעֲרוֹתֶיו)

Naomi uses the question form here to remind Ruth of something she had already told her (See 2:20). If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: [as you know, Boaz, the one with whose young female workers you have been working, is our relative.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **the one with whose young female workers you have been working**
UST you have been working with & s servant girls
(אֲשֶׁר הָיִית אֶת־נַעֲרוֹתֶיו)

The implication is that Boaz owned the fields where Ruth worked together with these young women, not that Boaz owned the young women. You could clarify this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the one who owns the fields where you have been working with the other female workers]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Behold**
UST So listen carefully
(הִנֵּה)

Naomi is using the term **Behold** to focus Ruth's attention on what she is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Look]

Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Boaz	Boaz & he
young female workers	s servant girls
you have been working	you have been working
will be winnowing	will be separating the grain from the chaff
barley	the barley
at the threshing floor	will be at the place where they thresh

Ruth 3:3

ULT	UST
Now wash yourself and anoint yourself and put on your cloak, and go down to the threshing floor. Do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking.	*Bathe yourself and put on some perfume. Put on your full outer cloak. Then go down to the place where they thresh the grain. But do not let him know that you are there until he has finished his {evening} meal.*

ULT and anoint yourself
UST and put on some perfume
(וְסַכְתְּ)

Alternate translation: [rub sweet-smelling oil on yourself]

ULT and go down to the threshing floor
UST Then go down to the place where they thresh the grain
(וירדתי הַגֹּרֶן)

A **threshing floor** is an open, flat area where workers could thresh and winnow grain. It would be outside of the city, which was high on a hill, and thus, one would go “down” to it. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of agricultural site, you could use the name of something similar in your area or you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [and leave the city to go to the flat place where he will thresh and winnow his grain]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT eating and drinking
UST his {evening} meal
(לֶאֱכֹל וְלִשְׁתּוֹת)

If it would be unnatural to express these details of a meal in your language, you could use a more natural phrase. Alternate translation: [his supper]

Support Reference: When to Keep Information Implicit

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and anoint yourself	and put on some perfume
to the threshing floor	to the place where they thresh the grain
make yourself known	do & let & know that you are there

Ruth 3:4

ULT	UST
And let it be, when he lies down, know the exact place where he is lying. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down. Then he, himself, will tell you what you should do."	*When he lies down {to sleep}, pay attention to where he lies down. Then go {over to him}, uncover his feet, and lie down {there}. {When he wakes up,} he will be the one to tell you what to do {next}."*

ULT **And let it be**
UST When he lies down {to sleep
(וְיִהְיֶ֗ה)

The phrase **And let it be** introduces the next series of specific instructions that Naomi is about to give to Ruth. Use a form in your language that introduces a series of instructions, or omit the phrase if your language does not do this. Use a colon to replace the comma. Alternate translation: [Do this:]

Support Reference: Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **and uncover his feet**
UST uncover his feet
(וְגָלִ֣ית מַרְגְּלֹתָ֔יו)

To **uncover his feet** means to remove the cloak or blanket covering his feet, and probably also his legs. This action by a woman was probably a symbolic action that was interpreted as a proposal of marriage. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could include this information in a footnote.

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT **his feet**
UST his feet
(מַרְגְּלֹתָ֔יו)

The word translated **feet** could be used as a euphemism for a man's private parts, but here it refers to the man's feet or legs. If your language has a word that works in this way, you can use it here. Otherwise, use a word for "feet" or "legs" and consider putting this information in a footnote.

Support Reference: Euphemism

ULT **Then he, himself, will tell you what you should do**
UST When he wakes up,} he will be the one to tell you what to do {next
(וְה֣וּא יַגִּ֔יד לָ֖ךְ אֵ֣ת אֲשֶׁר־תַּעֲשִׂ֑ין)

The specific custom of that time is unclear, but Naomi appears to believe that Boaz will understand Ruth's action as a proposal of marriage. Boaz will then either accept or reject her offer. If it would be helpful, you could include this information in a footnote.

> **ULT** **Then he, himself, will tell**
> **UST** When he wakes up,} he will be the one to tell
> (וְהוּא֙ יַגִּ֣יד)

Here, the word **himself** emphasizes that Boaz will decide what happens next, not Naomi or Ruth. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this significance. Alternate translation: [Then it will be Boaz who will tell]

Support Reference: Reflexive Pronouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	pay attention
he & will tell	to tell

Ruth 3:6

ULT	UST
So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to everything that her mother-in-law had instructed her.	*So she went down to the place where people thresh the grain. There she did everything that her mother-in-law had told her to do.*

ULT and did according to everything that her mother-in-law had instructed her

UST she did everything that her mother-in-law had told her to do
(וַתַּעַשׂ כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־צִוַּתְהָ חֲמוֹתָהּ)

This statement summarizes the actions that Ruth will do in 3:7. If people misunderstand from this that Ruth did these actions in 3:6 and then did them again in 3:7, then you could translate this sentence as **and she obeyed her mother-in-law**. Or if it would make the order of events more clear, you could move this sentence to the end of 3:7, then combine the verse numbers as a verse bridge (6–7).

Support Reference: Information Structure

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
to the threshing floor	to the place where people thresh the grain. There
had instructed her	had told her to do

Ruth 3:7

ULT	UST
And Boaz ate and drank, and his heart was good, and he went to lie down at the end of the pile of grain. Then she came secretly and uncovered his feet and lay down.	*{This is what happened:} When Boaz finished eating and drinking, he was feeling good. He went over to the far end of the grain pile, lay down there{, and went to sleep}. Then Ruth stealthily approached him. She took the covering off his feet and lay down {there}.*

ULT and his heart was good
UST he was feeling good
(וַיִּיטַב לִבּוֹ)

Here **heart** stands for “emotions” or “disposition.” Boaz’s emotions or feelings were good. This does not imply that Boaz was drunk. Alternate translation: [and he felt good] or [and he was in a good mood]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT Then she came secretly
UST Then Ruth stealthily approached him
(וַתָּבֹא בַלָּט)

Alternate translation: [Then she sneaked in] or [Then she came in so quietly that no one could hear her]

ULT and uncovered his feet
UST She took the covering off his feet
(וַתְּגַל מַרְגְּלֹתָיו)

See how you translated **feet** in 3:4. Alternate translation: [and removed the covering from his legs]

Support Reference: Euphemism

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Boaz	Boaz
and & was good	he was feeling good
the pile of grain	to the far end of the grain pile

Ruth 3:8

ULT	UST
Then it happened in the middle of the night that the man was startled and turned over. And behold, a woman was lying at his feet!	*In the middle of the night, he woke up suddenly. He sat up and was amazed to find a woman lying at his feet!*

ULT **Then it happened in the middle of the night that**
UST In the middle of the night
(וַיְהִי֙ בַּחֲצִ֣י הַלַּ֔יְלָה)

This clause gives information about when the next event in the story happened. Use a natural way in your language to give background information. Alternate translation: [Hours later, in the middle of the night,]

Support Reference: Background Information

ULT **the man was startled**
UST he woke up suddenly
(וַיֶּחֱרַ֣ד הָאִ֔ישׁ)

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. It is not clear what startled Boaz. Perhaps he suddenly felt the cold air on his feet or legs. Alternate translation: [the man startled]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **And behold**
UST and was amazed to find
(וְהִנֵּ֥ה)

Here the word **behold** shows that what follows was very surprising to Boaz. Use your language's way of expressing surprise. Alternate translation: [And much to his surprise]

Support Reference: Exclamations

Ruth 3:9

ULT	UST
And he said, “Who are you?” Then she said, “I am Ruth, your female servant. So spread the edge of your cloak over your female servant, for you are a kinsman-redeemer.”	*He asked her, “Who are you?” She replied, “I am your servant, Ruth. Since you are the one responsible for my dead husband’s family, please make me secure by marrying me.”*

ULT your female servant & your female servant
UST your servant & me
(אֲמָתֶֽךָ & אֲמָתְךָ)

Ruth was not one of Boaz’s servants, but she referred to herself as Boaz’s servant as a polite way to express respect to Boaz. Use your language’s way of expressing humility and respect. Alternate translation: [your humble handmaid] … “your humble handmaid”

Support Reference: Politeness

ULT So spread the edge of your cloak over your female servant
UST please make me secure by marrying me
(וּפָרַשְׂתָּ כְנָפֶךָ֙ עַל־אֲמָתְךָ֔)

This was a cultural idiom for marriage. Alternate translation: [Please marry me]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT a kinsman-redeemer
UST the one responsible for my dead husband’s family
(גֹּאֵ֥ל)

See how you translated this term in 2:20.

Support Reference: Kinship

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Ruth	am & Ruth
your female servant	your servant
your female servant	me
a kinsman-redeemer	the one responsible for my dead husband’s family
a kinsman-redeemer	the one responsible for my dead husband’s family

Ruth 3:10

ULT	UST
Then he said, “Blessed be you by Yahweh, my daughter! You have made your covenant faithfulness better at the end than at the beginning by not going after the young men, either poor or rich.	*Boaz replied, “May Yahweh bless you, my dear! Previously, you were very faithful to your mother-in-law, but you are acting even more faithfully now by not chasing after a young man to marry, whether rich or poor.*

ULT **Blessed be you by Yahweh**
UST May Yahweh bless you
(בְּרוּכָה אַתְּ לַיהוָה)

Use a natural form for a blessing in your language. Alternate translation: [A blessing from Yahweh on you]

Support Reference: Blessings

ULT **my daughter**
UST my dear
(בִּתִּי)

See how you translated **my daughter** in 2:8. Boaz uses this phrase again here to communicate kindness and respect from a man to a younger woman. Use an appropriate phrase in your language. Alternate translation: [little one]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **You have made your covenant faithfulness better at the end than at the beginning**
UST Previously, you were very faithful to your mother-in-law, but you are acting even more faithfully now
(הֵיטַבְתְּ חַסְדֵּךְ הָאַחֲרוֹן מִן־הָרִאשׁוֹן)

By marrying Naomi’s relative who is a kinsman-redeemer, Ruth would also provide for Naomi, honor Naomi’s son, and continue Naomi’s family line. Boaz considers this to be Ruth’s greatest demonstration of faithfulness to Naomi. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could put this information in a footnote. Alternate translation: [You are demonstrating even more loving kindness now than before]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **at the beginning**
> UST Previously, you were very faithful to your mother-in-law
> (הָרִאשֹׁון)

Boaz is using the phrase **at the beginning** to refer to the way that Ruth had earlier provided for her mother-in-law by staying with her and gleaning grain for food for both of them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [when you first came here with Naomi]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **by not going after**
> UST by not chasing after
> (לְבִלְתִּי־לֶכֶת אַחֲרֵי)

Boaz is praising Ruth for **not going after** the young men, by which he means that Ruth could have ignored Naomi's need and looked for a young and handsome husband for herself outside of Elimelek's relatives, but she did not. Alternate translation: [because you have not looked for marriage among]

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Blessed be	May & bless
by Yahweh	Yahweh
your covenant faithfulness	but you are acting & faithfully
You have made & better	but you are acting & faithfully

Ruth 3:11

ULT	UST
So now, my daughter, do not be afraid! Everything that you say, I will do for you; for the whole gate of my people knows that you are a woman of worth.	*Now, my dear, I will do everything that you asked. Do not be afraid, because everyone in this town knows that you are an honorable woman.*

ULT **So now**
UST Now
(וְעַתָּה)

So now indicates that what came before in verse 3:10 is the reason for what follows here in verse 11. Use a natural connector for introducing a result. Alternate translation: [Therefore]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **my daughter**
UST my dear
(בִּתִּי)

See how you translated this in 2:8 and 3:10. Boaz uses this expression as a sign of kindness and respect toward Ruth as a younger woman. Use the form of address that would be appropriate in your language.

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the whole gate of my people**
UST everyone in this town
(כָּל־שַׁעַר עַמִּי)

Here, **gate** represents the people who gather at the gate. The gate was an area of the city where people gathered to do business, and the leaders met there to make decisions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [all the important people of my city]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **a woman of worth**
UST are an honorable woman
(אֵשֶׁת חַיִל)

Alternate translation: [a woman of good character] or [a good woman]

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
be afraid	Do & be afraid
the & gate of	in this town
knows	knows

Ruth 3:12

ULT	UST
And now, it is indeed true that I am a kinsman-redeemer, but there is also a kinsman-redeemer nearer than I.	*However, while it is true that I am one of Elimelek's close relatives and, therefore, could be responsible {for you and Naomi}, there is another man who is a closer relative than I am. {He is the one who is actually responsible for you.}*

ULT **And now**
UST However
(וְעַתָּה)

The phrase **And now** indicates that what follows is something else important that Ruth should pay attention to, as well as what Boaz introduced by saying "So now" in 3:11. Alternate translation: [Another thing you must know]

Support Reference: Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **but & also**
UST another
(וְגַם)

The connector **but** indicates a contrast between Boaz's willingness to marry Ruth 3:11 and the possibility of another man marrying her instead 3:12. The contrast can be indicated here or at the beginning of the verse, as in the UST. Alternate translation: [even so] or [nonetheless]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **a kinsman-redeemer & a kinsman-redeemer**
UST one of Elimelek's close relatives and, therefore, could be responsible {for you and Naomi & man & relative & He is the one who is actually responsible for you
(גֹּאֵל & גֹּאֵל)

See how you translated **kinsman-redeemer** in 2:20. This term refers to the male relative who was closest in family relationship to a man who died and who had the responsibility to help his widow.

Support Reference: Kinship

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
a kinsman-redeemer	one of Elimelek’s close relatives and, therefore, could be responsible {for you and Naomi
a kinsman-redeemer	one of Elimelek’s close relatives and, therefore, could be responsible {for you and Naomi
a kinsman-redeemer	man & relative & He is the one who is actually responsible for you
a kinsman-redeemer	man & relative & He is the one who is actually responsible for you

Ruth 3:13

ULT	UST
Stay here tonight. And when it is morning, if he will redeem you, good, let him redeem. But if he does not want to redeem you, then I will redeem you myself, as Yahweh lives. Lie down until morning.”	*You stay here for the rest of the night. Tomorrow morning I will tell this man about you. If he says that he will take care of you, fine, he can marry you. But if he is unwilling to take care of you, I solemnly promise that, as surely as Yahweh lives, I will marry you and take care of you myself. So stay here until it is morning.”*

ULT **if he will redeem you**
UST If he says that he will take care of you
(אִם־יִגְאָלֵךְ)

The implication of the word **redeem** is that in this culture it means “marry according to our custom concerning widows.” Boaz is referring to the expectation that the closest male relative of Ruth’s dead husband would marry her and raise a son to carry on the dead man’s family name. You could include some of this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [if he will take care of you] or [if he will redeem you, that is, marry you]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **then I will redeem you myself**
UST I & I will marry you and take care of you myself
(וּגְאַלְתִּיךְ אָנֹכִי)

Boaz uses the word **myself** to emphasize that he was committed to taking care of Ruth. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this emphasis. Alternate translation: [then I will certainly redeem you]

Support Reference: Reflexive Pronouns

ULT **as Yahweh lives**
UST solemnly promise that, as surely as Yahweh lives
(חַי־יְהוָה)

The phrase **as Yahweh lives** is an oath formula. This was a common Hebrew vow that obligated the speaker to perform what he said. Use a natural way in your language to express an oath. Alternate translation: [as surely as Yahweh lives] or [I swear by the life of Yahweh]

Support Reference: Oath Formulas

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
he will redeem you	he says that he will take care of you
good	fine
let him redeem	he can marry you
to redeem you	to take care of you
then I will redeem you	I will marry you and take care of you
Yahweh	Yahweh

Ruth 3:14

ULT	UST
So she lay at his feet until the morning, but she got up before a man could recognize his friend. And he said, “Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor.”	*Then Boaz added, “It would be best if no one knew that a woman came here.” So she lay at his feet until early morning and got up {to leave} before {it was light enough that} people would be able to recognize her.*

ULT **So she lay at his feet**
UST So she lay at his feet
(וַתִּשְׁכַּב מרגלתו)

The implication of **So she lay at his feet** is that although Ruth and Boaz were alone together all night, they did not sin sexually. You can include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Ruth slept at the feet of Boaz]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **before a man could recognize his friend**
UST before {it was light enough that} people would be able to recognize her
(בטרום יַכִּיר אִישׁ אֶת־רֵעֵהוּ)

The idiom **before a man could recognize his friend** means that it was very early in the morning, before there was enough light to recognize the face of a familiar person. 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: [before you could see your hand in front of your face] or [while it was still quite dark]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **And he said**
UST Then Boaz added
(וַיֹּאמֶר)

Boaz probably said this before Ruth lay down to sleep. If it would be helpful in your language, you could move this to the beginning of the verse, as in the UST, or indicate that this happened before Ruth lay down. Alternate translation: [She did this because Boaz had said]

Support Reference: Information Structure

> ULT **Do not let it be known**
> UST It would be best if no one knew
> (אַל־יִוָּדַע)

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: [Do not let anyone know]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
his friend	people & her
let it be known	It would be best if & knew
to the threshing floor	here

Ruth 3:15

ULT	UST
Then he said, “Bring the cloak that is on you and hold it.” So she held it. And he measured six of barley and put it on her. Then he went into the city.	*Then Boaz said to her, “Bring your shawl over here and hold it out.” When she did that, he poured a generous amount of barley into it and put it on her back. Then he went into town.*

ULT **the cloak**
UST shawl
(הַמִּטְפַּחַת)

A **cloak** was a long, thick outer garment usually made of cloth. Your language and culture may have a term for such a piece of clothing that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [the cape] or [the coat]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **six of barley**
UST a generous amount of barley
(שֵׁשׁ־שְׂעֹרִים)

The actual amount is not stated. There is no word referring to the container that Boaz filled six times with barley. The original readers probably knew how big this container was, but we do not. The total amount was enough to be considered generous, yet not too much for Ruth to carry alone. Most scholars think that the total amount was around 25 to 30 kilograms. Alternate translation: [six measures of barley]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **and put it on her**
UST and put it on her back
(וַיָּשֶׂת עָלֶיהָ)

The writer 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 if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [into it and then put the cloak full of barley on Ruth’s back]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **Then he went into the city**
UST Then he went into town
(וַיָּבֹא הָעִיר)

Many ancient manuscripts read **he went**, referring to Boaz. The ULT follows that reading. Other ancient manuscripts read “she went,” referring to Ruth. 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

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
of barley	a generous amount of barley

Ruth 3:16

ULT	UST
Then she came to her mother-in-law, and she said, “Who are you, my daughter?” Then she told her everything that the man had done for her.	*When Ruth arrived home, her mother-in-law asked her, “How did things turn out for you, my daughter?” Then Ruth told her all that Boaz had said and done for her.*

ULT **Who are you**
UST How did things turn out for you
(מִי־אַתְּ)

Naomi’s question to Ruth, **“Who are you, my daughter?”** appears to be an idiom that probably asks about her current status. In other words, it is likely that Naomi is asking if Ruth is now betrothed to be married. Alternate translation: [How is it with you] or [How did it go for you]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **my daughter**
UST my daughter
(בִּתִּי)

Ruth is actually Naomi’s daughter-in-law, but Naomi calls her **my daughter** as an endearment. Use an appropriate endearment in your language, if there is one. Alternate translation: [my dear one] or [my daughter-in-law]

Support Reference: Kinship

ULT **everything that the man had done for her**
UST all that Boaz had said and done for her
(אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה־לָהּ הָאִישׁ)

Most of what **the man had done for her** was verbal. That is, the main thing was that Boaz promised Ruth that he would make sure that she and Naomi were taken care of. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate that what Boaz did included the things that he said to her. Alternate translation: [everything that the man had promised to do for her]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Then she told	Then Ruth told

Ruth 3:17

ULT	UST
And she said, “He gave to me these six of barley, for he said, ‘You must not go empty to your mother-in-law.’”	*She also said to Naomi, “He gave me all this barley, saying, ‘I do not want you to return to your mother-in-law with nothing.’”*

ULT **six of barley**
UST all this barley
(שֵׁשׁ־הַשְּׂעֹרִים)

See how you translated this in 3:15. Alternate translation: [six measures of barley]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **for he said, ‘You must not go empty to your mother-in-law**
UST saying, ‘I do not want you to return to your mother-in-law with nothing
(כִּי אָמַר אַל־תְּבוֹאִי רֵיקָם אֶל־חֲמוֹתֵךְ)

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: [saying to me that I should not go empty to my mother-in-law]

Support Reference: Quotes within Quotes

ULT **You must not go empty**
UST I do not want you to return & with nothing
(אַל־תְּבוֹאִי רֵיקָם)

To **go empty** is an idiom that means to go to someone with nothing to offer that person. Alternate translation: [You must not go empty-handed] or [Do not go with nothing] or [You must take something]

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
of barley	all this barley

Ruth 3:18

ULT	UST
Then she said, “Sit, my daughter, until the time when you know how the matter falls. For the man will not rest unless he has finished this matter today.”	*Then Naomi said, “My daughter, just wait here until we see what happens. That man will work hard on this matter until he has resolved it today.”*

ULT **Sit**
UST just wait here
(שֵׁבִי)

Here, **Sit** is an idiom that means to wait patiently and calmly. If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have this meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Stay quiet] or [Be patient]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **my daughter**
UST My daughter
(בִּתִּי)

See how you translated this in 1:11–13; 2:2, 2:8, 2:22; 3:1, 3:10, 3:11, 3:16.

Support Reference: Politeness

ULT **how the matter falls**
UST what happens
(אֵיךְ יִפֹּל דָּבָר)

Here, **how the matter falls** is an idiom that means “what is going to happen.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have this meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [how the situation will turn out] or [what will happen]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the man will not rest unless**
UST That man will work hard on this matter until
(לֹא יִשְׁקֹט הָאִישׁ כִּי־אִם)

Naomi is using a figure of speech here that expresses a strongly positive meaning by using a negative word, **not**, together with **rest**, which is the opposite of the intended meaning. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the positive meaning and strengthen it another way. Alternate translation: [the man will diligently pursue this until]

Support Reference: Litotes

> ULT **unless he has finished this matter**
> UST until he has resolved it
> (כִּי־אִם־כִּלָּה הַדָּבָר)

Here, **this matter** refers to the need of the two women for a kinsman-redeemer. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [unless he has resolved our problem] or [until he gets us a kinsman-redeemer]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
you know	we see

Ruth 4

Ruth 4 Introduction

Ruth 4 Chapter Introduction

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

King David

Despite being a Moabitess, Ruth became an ancestress of David. David was Israel's greatest king. It may be surprising that a Gentile would become a part of such an important lineage, but it reminds us that God loves all people. Ruth had great faith in Yahweh. This shows us that God welcomes all who trust in him.

"You also acquire Ruth the Moabite woman"

With the privilege of using the family's land came the responsibility to take care of the widows of the family. Therefore, the relative who wanted to use Naomi's land had to also help Ruth to have a son who would carry on the family name and inheritance and provide for her.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

"In earlier times in Israel"

Verse seven of chapter four is a comment made by the writer of the text. This indicates that there was a considerable period of time between the events that occurred and the time when they were written down, during which customs had changed. Consider how to indicate that this is a comment about the story rather than a part of the story.

Ruth 4:1

ULT	UST
Now Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there. And behold, the kinsman-redeemer was passing by, the same man about whom Boaz had spoken earlier. And he said, “Turn aside and sit down here, a certain person.” So he turned aside and sat down.	*Meanwhile, Boaz went up to {the place inside} the town gate {where people conducted their official business}. He sat down there. Just as he had hoped, the man responsible for Naomi’s family came along, the man whom Boaz had mentioned earlier. Boaz called out to him by name and said, “Come over here and sit down.” So the man came over and sat down.*

ULT Now Boaz had gone up to the gate
UST Meanwhile, Boaz went up to {the place inside} the town gate {where people conducted their official business
(וּבֹעַז עָלָה הַשַּׁעַר)

The writer is using this clause to introduce the next part of the story, in which Boaz takes the leading role as kinsman-redeemer and marries Ruth. Use a word, phrase, or other method in your language that is natural for introducing a new event. Alternate translation: [As for Boaz, he went up to the town gate]

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT to the gate
UST to {the place inside} the town gate {where people conducted their official business
(הַשַּׁעַר)

The original readers knew that **the gate** was the place inside the entrance to the town where community business was publicly conducted. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [to the gathering place inside the gateway of the town]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT And behold
UST Just as he had hoped
(וְהִנֵּה)

The writer is using the term **behold** to focus our attention on the important event of Boaz seeing the exact person whom he wanted to see walking by. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: [And amazingly] or [To his delight]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the kinsman-redeemer**
UST the man responsible for Naomi’s family
(הַגֹּאֵל)

The term **kinsman-redeemer** specifically refers to the closest living male relative to Elimelek. If your language has a specific word for such a person, it would be appropriate to use it here. See how you translated **kinsman-redeemer** in 2:20.

Support Reference: Kinship

ULT **And he said, “Turn aside and sit down here, a certain person**
UST Boaz called out to him by name and said, “Come over here and sit down
(וַיֹּאמֶר סוּרָה שְׁבָה־פֹּה פְּלֹנִי אַלְמֹנִי)

In many languages, **a certain person** is an awkward and unnatural way for someone to address another person. A way to make this more natural could be to turn this into an indirect quotation. A combination of indirect and direct quotation is also possible, as in the UST. Alternate translation: [Boaz called to this certain person and asked him to turn aside and sit down there]

Support Reference: Direct and Indirect Quotations

ULT **a certain person**
UST by name
(פְּלֹנִי אַלְמֹנִי)

Boaz did not actually say **a certain person**; instead, he called the kinsman-redeemer by his name. This is an idiom that means a specific person, but the name is not given. The narrator has substituted this general term for the person’s name either because he did not want to give the specific name or because the man’s name had been forgotten. If your language has an idiom to refer to a specific person without using his name, use that here. Alternate translation: [so-and-so] or [such a one]

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Now Boaz	Meanwhile, Boaz
to the gate	to {the place inside} the town gate {where people conducted their official business
the kinsman-redeemer	the man responsible for Naomi’s family
the kinsman-redeemer	the man responsible for Naomi’s family
Boaz	Boaz

Ruth 4:2

ULT	UST
Then he took ten men from the elders of the city and said, “Sit down here.” So they sat down.	*Boaz then gathered ten of the older, well-respected men from the town and said {to them}, “Please sit here {so you can witness our business}.” So they sat down.*

ULT **Then he took ten men**
UST Boaz then gathered ten & men
(וַיִּקַּח עֲשָׂרָה אֲנָשִׁים)

Alternate translation: [Then he chose ten men]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
from the elders of	of the older, well-respected & from

Ruth 4:3

ULT	UST
Then he said to the kinsman-redeemer, “Naomi, the woman who has returned from the fields of Moab, is selling the portion of the field that belonged to our brother Elimelek.	*Then Boaz said to the man responsible for Naomi’s family, “The part of the field that belonged to our relative Elimelek is for sale. Naomi, who recently returned from Moab, is selling it.*

ULT our brother
UST belonged to our relative
(לְאָחִינוּ)

Here the term **brother** is used in the broad sense to mean a male relative of an extended family. If your language has a word for this, it would be appropriate to use it here.

Support Reference: Kinship

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
to the kinsman-redeemer	to the man responsible for Naomi’s family
to the kinsman-redeemer	to the man responsible for Naomi’s family
Moab	Moab

Ruth 4:4

ULT	UST
Now as for me, I said that I should uncover your ear, saying, 'Buy!' in the presence of those who are sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem {it}, redeem {it}. But if you will not redeem {it}, then tell me so that I may know, for there is no one to redeem {it} besides you, and I am after you." Then he said, "I will redeem {it} myself."	*I thought that I should tell you {about it} and suggest that you buy {the field} while the people who are sitting here are listening, including these leaders of our people. If you want to buy it back into the family, then do so. But if you do not want to buy it back, then let me know, because you are the closest relative to Elimelek, and I am next after you." The man replied, "No, I will buy it!"*

ULT **I said that**
UST thought that
(אָמַ֣רְתִּי)

Here, **said** refers to something that Boaz said to himself in his own mind. Alternate translation: [I said to myself that] or [I felt that]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **I should uncover your ear**
UST I should tell you {about it
(אֶגְלָ֥ה אָזְנְךָ֖)

I should uncover your ear is an idiom that means "I should tell you" or "I should let you know." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have this meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I should inform you]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **in the presence of those who are sitting here**
UST while the people who are sitting here are listening
(נֶ֣גֶד הַיֹּשְׁבִ֔ים)

Having these men as witnesses would make the transaction legal and binding. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [before these witnesses]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **If you will redeem {it**
UST If you want to buy it back into the family
(אִם־תִּגְאַ֣ל)

Here, Boaz is asking about the man's willingness to redeem the property. Use a natural way to express this in your language. Alternate translation: [If you are willing to buy it back to keep it in the family]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **there is no one to redeem {it} besides you, and I am after you**
UST you are the closest relative to Elimelek, and I am next after you
(אֵין זוּלָתְךָ לִגְאֹל וְאָנֹכִי אַחֲרֶיךָ)

In some languages, it may be confusing to say these things together: (1) there is no one to redeem the land besides you, (2) I can redeem the land after you. It may appear that Boaz is making a statement and then contradicting it. If so, you could say this differently. Alternate translation: [you are the first in line to redeem it, and I am the next one in line]

Support Reference: Connect — Exception Clauses

ULT **I will redeem {it} myself**
UST No, I will buy it
(אָנֹכִי אֶגְאָל)

The man uses the word **myself** here to emphasize that he will do it and no one else. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this significance. Alternate translation: [I will be the one who redeems it]

Support Reference: Reflexive Pronouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the elders of	including these leaders of our people
you will redeem {it	you want to buy it back into the family
redeem {it	then do so
you will & redeem {it	you do & want to buy it back
then tell	then let
so that I may know	know
to redeem {it	you are the closest relative to Elimelek
I will redeem {it	will buy it

Ruth 4:5

ULT	UST
Then Boaz said, “On the day of your buying the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite woman, the wife of the dead, in order to raise up the name of the dead over his inheritance.”	*Then Boaz told him, “When you buy the land from Naomi, you will also need to marry Ruth, our deceased relative’s widow from Moab, in order that she may have a son who will inherit the property and who will continue Elimelek’s family line.”*

ULT **On the day of**
UST When
(בְּיוֹם)

Here, **On the day** is an idiom that means “at the time.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have this meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [At the hour] or [At the same time]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **from the hand of Naomi**
UST from Naomi
(מִיַּד נָעֳמִי)

Boaz is using one part of a person, the **hand of Naomi**, to represent Naomi herself and her legal possession of the land. 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 Naomi]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **you also acquire Ruth**
UST you will also need to marry Ruth
(וְּמֵאֵת רוּת קנית)

Boaz is using the term **acquire** to mean that the man must marry the Moabite woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you must also marry Ruth]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the wife of the dead**
UST our deceased relative’s widow
(אֶשֶׁת־הַמֵּת)

Alternate translation: [the widow of Elimelek’s son who died]

ULT **in order to raise up the name of the dead over his inheritance**
UST in order that she may have a son who will inherit the property and who will continue Elimelek's family line
(לְהָקִים שֵׁם־הַמֵּת עַל־נַחֲלָתוֹ)

Here, **raise up the name of the dead over** is an idiom that means "supply an heir for." If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have this meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [so that she may give birth to a son to inherit the property and carry on her dead husband's family name]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the dead & the dead**
UST our deceased relative & and who will continue Elimelek's family line
(הַמֵּת & הַמֵּת)

Boaz is using the adjective **dead** as a noun to mean the one who died. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the man who died ... the dead man]

Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Boaz	Boaz
Ruth	Ruth
the Moabite woman	from Moab
his inheritance	who will inherit the property

Ruth 4:6

ULT	UST
Then the kinsman-redeemer said, “I am not able to redeem it for myself lest I damage my own inheritance. You redeem for yourself my right of redemption, for I am not able to redeem it.”	*Then the nearer relative said, “Then I cannot buy it back myself. If I did that, I would ruin my own son’s inheritance. You may be responsible for the land and the woman instead of me. I cannot do it.”*

ULT **I damage my own inheritance**
UST I would ruin my own son’s inheritance
(אַשְׁחִית אֶת־נַחֲלָתִי)

Here, **I damage my own inheritance** means that if the man marries Ruth, the property that he buys would belong to her son, not to his own children. In that way, he would be taking away from the wealth that his own children would inherit from him and giving it instead to the children that Ruth might bear. Alternate translation: [lest I take away from my own children’s inheritance.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **You redeem for yourself my right of redemption**
UST You may be responsible for the land and the woman instead of me
(גְּאַל־לְךָ אַתָּה אֶת־גְּאֻלָּתִי)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the ideas of **right** or **redemption**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [I will allow you to redeem the property for yourself]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the kinsman-redeemer	the nearer relative
the kinsman-redeemer	the nearer relative
to redeem it	Then & buy it back
my own inheritance	my own son’s inheritance
redeem	You may be responsible for the land and the woman
my right of redemption	instead of me
my right of redemption	instead of me
to redeem it	do it

Ruth 4:7

ULT	UST
Now this, formerly in Israel, concerning redemption and concerning exchange, to confirm any matter: a man took off his sandal and gave {it} to his friend. So this {was} the form of legal agreement in Israel.	*(At that time in Israel, people had a different way of redeeming {land} or exchanging {goods between them}. In order to make these matters legally binding, one man would take off one of his sandals and give it to the other man. That was the way people in Israel made final what they had agreed to do.)*

ULT **Now this**
UST At that time & people had a different way
(וְזֹאת)

The word **Now** marks what follows as background information that the writer wants the reader to know in order to understand the story. Use your language's way of giving background information in a story. Alternate translation: [You need to know this:]

Support Reference: Background Information

ULT **Now this**
UST At that time & people had a different way
(וְזֹאת)

Here some words are left out that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words if it would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [Now this was the custom]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **formerly**
UST At that time & people had a different way
(לְפָנִים)

The word **formerly** implies that this custom was no longer practiced when the book of Ruth was written. Use a word or phrase that has this meaning. Alternate translation: [in earlier times]

Support Reference: Background Information

ULT **to his friend**
UST to the other man
(לְרֵעֵהוּ)

The words **to his friend** refer to the person with whom a man was making the agreement. Alternate translation: [to the counterparty] or [to the man with whom he was making an agreement]

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in Israel	in Israel
redemption	of redeeming {land
to confirm	In order to make & legally binding
his sandal	one of his sandals
to his friend	to the other man
the form of legal agreement	was the way & made final what they had agreed to do
in Israel	people in Israel

Ruth 4:8

ULT	UST
So the kinsman-redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," and he took off his sandal.	*So after the relative said to Boaz, "You buy the field yourself," he took off one of his sandals {and gave it to Boaz}.*

ULT So the kinsman-redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," and he took off his sandal
UST So after the relative said to Boaz, "You buy the field yourself," he took off one of his sandals {and gave it to Boaz
(וַיֹּ֤אמֶר הַגֹּאֵל֙ לְבֹ֣עַז קְנֵה־לְךָ֔ וַיִּשְׁלֹ֖ף נַעֲלֽוֹ)

The events of the story start again here after the background information of verse 7. Use your language's way of starting to tell the events of the story again.

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT So the kinsman-redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," and he took off his sandal
UST So after the relative said to Boaz, "You buy the field yourself," he took off one of his sandals {and gave it to Boaz
(וַיֹּ֤אמֶר הַגֹּאֵל֙ לְבֹ֣עַז קְנֵה־לְךָ֔ וַיִּשְׁלֹ֖ף נַעֲלֽוֹ)

The word **So** at the beginning of this verse indicates that this event happened because of the custom described in the previous verse. If it would be clearer in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: [So the kinsman-redeemer took off his sandal and said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself"]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT and he took off his sandal
UST he took off one of his sandals {and gave it to Boaz
(וַיִּשְׁלֹ֖ף נַעֲלֽוֹ)

The writer assumes that his readers will understand that the kinsman-redeemer gave the sandal to Boaz. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. See the UST.

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the kinsman-redeemer	the relative
the kinsman-redeemer	the relative
to Boaz	to Boaz
his sandal	one of his sandals

Ruth 4:9

ULT	UST
Then Boaz said to the elders and to all the people, “You are witnesses today that I am buying from the hand of Naomi everything that belonged to Elimelek and everything that belonged to Kilion and Mahlon.	*Then Boaz said to the respected men and to all the other people who were there, “Today you have all seen that I have bought from Naomi all the property that belonged to Elimelek, Kilion, and Mahlon.*

ULT to the elders and to all the people
UST to the respected men and to all the other people who were there
(לַזְּקֵנִים וְכָל־הָעָם)

Here, **to the elders and to all the people** refers to all the people who were present at the meeting place, not to everyone in the town. The writer uses it here 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: [to everyone there, including the elders]

Support Reference: Hyperbole

ULT from the hand of Naomi
UST from Naomi
(מִיַּד נָעֳמִי)

The **hand of Naomi** represents Naomi. Since her husband and sons had died, the right to the property belonged to her. Alternate translation: [from Naomi]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT everything that belonged to Elimelek and everything that belonged to Kilion and Mahlon
UST all the property that belonged to Elimelek, Kilion, and Mahlon
(אֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר לֶאֱלִימֶלֶךְ וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר לְכִלְיוֹן וּמַחְלוֹן)

Alternate translation: [all the property that was formerly owned by Naomi’s deceased husband and sons]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Boaz	Boaz
to the elders & to	to the respected men
witnesses	have & seen

Ruth 4:10

ULT	UST
And also Ruth, the Moabite woman, the widow of Mahlon, I am acquiring as my wife, in order to raise up the name of the dead over his inheritance, so that the name of the dead will not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his place. Today you are witnesses!”	*I am also taking Ruth, Mahlon’s widow from Moab, to be my wife. This is in order that she may give birth to a son. Everyone will consider this son to be a descendant of Elimelek. This son will inherit the property and carry on Elimelek’s family name among his relatives and here in his hometown. Today you have seen and heard these things and can speak of them to anyone who asks about them.”*

ULT **And also**
UST also
(וְגַם)

This connecting phrase indicates that the people sitting at the gate are also witnesses to what follows. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [You are also witnesses that]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **in order to raise up the name of the dead over his inheritance**
UST This is in order that she may give birth to a son. Everyone will consider this son to be a descendant of Elimelek. This son will inherit the property
(לְהָקִים שֵׁם־הַמֵּת֙ עַל־נַחֲלָתֽוֹ)

See how you translated this phrase in 4:5. Alternate translation: [so that I might give her a son who will inherit the dead man’s property]

ULT **the dead & the dead**
UST This is in order that she may give birth to a son. Everyone will consider this son to be a descendant of Elimelek & Elimelek’s
(הַמֵּת֙ & הַמֵּ֔ת)

Boaz is using the adjective **dead** as a noun to mean the one who died. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. See how you translated it in 4:5. Alternate translation: [the man who died … the dead man]

Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **so that the name of the dead will not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his place**
UST and carry on Elimelek's family name among his relatives and here in his hometown
(וְלֹא־יִכָּרֵת שֵׁם־הַמֵּת מֵעִם אֶחָיו וּמִשַּׁעַר מְקוֹמוֹ)

Being forgotten is spoken of here as if one's name were being cut off from a list of one's people. Alternate translation: [so that he will not be forgotten by his brothers' descendants and by the people of this town]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **so that the name of the dead will not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his place**
UST and carry on Elimelek's family name among his relatives and here in his hometown
(וְלֹא־יִכָּרֵת שֵׁם־הַמֵּת מֵעִם אֶחָיו וּמִשַּׁעַר מְקוֹמוֹ)

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 **be cut off**. Alternate translation: [so that the name of the dead man will be preserved among his brothers and at the gate of his place]

Support Reference: Double Negatives

ULT **and from the gate of his place**
UST and here in his hometown
(וּמִשַּׁעַר מְקוֹמוֹ)

Here, **the gate** refers to the location where the leaders gathered and made important legal decisions for **his place**, which refers to his town. This location represents the people there. 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 the important people of his town]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **Today you are witnesses**
UST Today you have seen and heard these things and can speak of them to anyone who asks about them
(עֵדִים אַתֶּם הַיּוֹם)

Alternate translation: [You have seen and heard these things today and can speak of them tomorrow]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Ruth	Ruth
the Moabite woman	from Moab
his inheritance	This son will inherit the property
and from the gate of	and here in his hometown
witnesses	have seen and heard these things and can speak of them to anyone who asks about them

Ruth 4:11

ULT	UST
And all the people who were in the gate and the elders said, "{We are} witnesses! May Yahweh make this woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, the two who built up the house of Israel. Prosper in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem!	*All the respected men, and the others who were sitting at the town gate, agreed, and they said, "Yes, we have seen and heard. We pray that Yahweh will allow this woman, who will be coming into your home, to be like Rachel and Leah, the two who bore our ancestors and started our people, Israel. May you become great in the clan of Ephrathah and famous here in Bethlehem!*

ULT **the people who were in the gate**
UST and the others who were sitting at the town gate
(הָעָם אֲשֶׁר־בַּשָּׁעַר)

The implication is that **the people who were in the gate** are the same people who heard and observed the meeting between Boaz and the man who had been first as kinsman-redeemer. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the people who had observed Boaz's meeting with the first kinsman-redeemer]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **who is coming into your house**
UST who will be coming into your home
(הַבָּאָה אֶל־בֵּיתֶךָ)

This has both a literal and a figurative meaning. As Ruth marries Boaz, she will move into his physical house. "House" can be a metonym that represents "family," so this also refers to becoming part of Boaz's family by being his wife. Alternate translation: [who is becoming part of your family]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **May Yahweh make this woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, the two who built up the house of Israel**
UST We pray that Yahweh will allow this woman, who will be coming into your home, to be like Rachel and Leah, the two who bore our ancestors and started our people, Israel
(יִתֵּן יְהוָה אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה הַבָּאָה אֶל־בֵּיתֶךָ כְּרָחֵל | וּכְלֵאָה אֲשֶׁר בָּנוּ שְׁתֵּיהֶם אֶת־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, the people are asking God to bless Ruth. Their blessing continues for Ruth and Boaz through verse 12. You could express this as either a blessing or a prayer, in whichever way is more natural in your language. Alternate translation: [We ask Yahweh to make this woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, the two who built up the house of Israel]

Support Reference: Blessings

ULT **like Rachel and Leah, the two who built up the house of Israel**
UST like Rachel and Leah, the two who bore our ancestors and started our people, Israel
(כְּרָחֵל | וּכְלֵאָה֙ אֲשֶׁ֣ר בָּנ֔וּ שְׁתֵּיהֶ֖ם אֶת־בֵּ֣ית יִשְׂרָאֵ֑ל)

Rachel and **Leah** are the names of two women, the two wives of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. They are considered to be the female ancestors of the people of Israel. They had many children, so implied in this blessing is the request that God give Ruth many children. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [like Rachel and Leah, who bore many children who then became the nation of Israel]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **built up the house of Israel**
UST bore our ancestors and started our people, Israel
(בָּנ֔וּ אֶת־בֵּ֣ית יִשְׂרָאֵ֑ל &)

Here the people are speaking of the nation of **Israel** as if it were a **house**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [bore many children who then became the nation of Israel]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Prosper in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem**
UST May you become great in the clan of Ephrathah and famous here in Bethlehem
(וַעֲשֵׂה־חַ֥יִל בְּאֶפְרָ֖תָה וּקְרָא־שֵׁ֥ם בְּבֵֽית לָֽחֶם)

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 area around the town of Bethlehem was known as Ephrathah, and that became another name for the town. Presumably, this name came from the Israelite clan that settled in and around the city of Bethlehem. 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: [May you prosper among your clan of Ephrathah, yes, may you be important in Bethlehem]

Support Reference: Parallelism

> **ULT Prosper in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem**
> **UST** May you become great in the clan of Ephrathah and famous here in Bethlehem
> (וְעֲשֵׂה־חַיִל בְּאֶפְרָתָה וּקְרָא־שֵׁם בְּבֵית לָחֶם)

The verbs here are command forms, but they communicate the good desire of the people rather than commands. They serve to continue the blessing while shifting it from Ruth to Boaz. Use the style of blessing that is appropriate in your language. Alternate translation: [And you, Boaz, may you prosper among your clan of Ephrathah, yes, may you be important in Bethlehem]

Support Reference: Imperatives — Other Uses

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in the gate	were sitting at the town gate
and the elders	the respected men
We are} witnesses	Yes, we have seen and heard
Yahweh	Yahweh
your house	your home
like Rachel	like Rachel
and Leah	and Leah
the house of Israel	our people, Israel
Israel	Israel
Prosper	May you become great
in Ephrathah	in the clan of Ephrathah
and be renowned	and famous
in Bethlehem	here in Bethlehem

Ruth 4:12

ULT	UST
And may your house become like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, from the seed that Yahweh gives you from this young woman.”	*We pray that your family will be like the family of your ancestor Perez, son of Judah and Tamar, because of the many descendants that Yahweh will give to you and this young woman.”*

ULT **And may your house become like the house of Perez**
UST We pray that your family will be like the family of your ancestor Perez
(וִיהִ֤י בֵיתְךָ֙ כְּבֵ֣ית פֶּ֔רֶץ)

Here, **house** represents the people who might live in a house plus all of their descendants. Perez had many descendants who became large clans in Israel, including the clan of Ephrathah. Also, many of his descendants became important 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: [And may your clan become like the clan of Perez]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **from the seed that Yahweh gives you**
UST because of the many descendants that Yahweh will give to you
(מִן־הַזֶּ֗רַע אֲשֶׁ֨ר יִתֵּ֧ן יְהוָ֛ה לְךָ֖)

The people are asking for a blessing from Yahweh, that through Ruth he would give Boaz many children who would do good things, just as Yahweh did for Perez. Use the form of blessing that is appropriate in your language.

Support Reference: Blessings

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
your house	your family
like the house of	like the family of
Tamar	and Tamar
bore	son
to Judah	of Judah
the seed	the many descendants
Yahweh	Yahweh

Ruth 4:13

ULT	UST
So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife, and he went in to her. Then Yahweh gave her conception, and she bore a son.	*So Boaz married Ruth and had sexual relations with her. Yahweh enabled her to become pregnant, and she gave birth to a son.*

ULT So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife
UST So Boaz married Ruth
(וַיִּקַּח בֹּעַז אֶת־רוּת וַתְּהִי־לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה)

These two clauses mean basically the same thing. The second clause 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 clauses into one clause. Alternate translation: [So Boaz took Ruth home to be his wife]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT So Boaz took Ruth
UST So Boaz married Ruth
(וַיִּקַּח בֹּעַז אֶת־רוּת)

The word translated as **So** indicates that Boaz did what he said he would do in verse 4:10. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that what follows is a reason for what came before. This phrase does not imply any form of violence. Along with the following phrase, it simply means that Boaz married Ruth. Use a connecting word that indicates that this action by Boaz is a result of the agreement in verse 4:10.

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT and he went in to her
UST and had sexual relations with her
(וַיָּבֹא אֵלֶיהָ)

The phrase, **he went in to her** is a polite way of referring to sexual intercourse. Use a polite way of referring to this in your language, or, if it is not offensive, you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: [and he slept with her]

Support Reference: Euphemism

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Boaz	So Boaz married Ruth
Ruth	So Boaz married Ruth
Yahweh	Yahweh
conception	to become pregnant
and she bore	and she gave birth to

Ruth 4:14

ULT	UST
Then the women said to Naomi, “Blessed be Yahweh, who has not left you today without a kinsman-redeemer. May his name be renowned in Israel!	*The women of Bethlehem said to Naomi, “Praise Yahweh for giving you a man to preserve your family today. We pray to Yahweh that people throughout Israel will greatly respect him.*

ULT **the women**
UST The women of Bethlehem
(הַנָּשִׁים)

These are **the women** of the town as mentioned in 1:19. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [the women of the town]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Blessed be Yahweh**
UST Praise Yahweh
(בָּרוּךְ יְהוָֹה)

The women are praising God for what he has done for Naomi and Ruth. If it does not make sense in your language to “bless” God, use a word like “praise” or “we give thanks.” Alternate translation: [We give thanks to Yahweh]

Support Reference: Blessings

ULT **has not left you today without a kinsman-redeemer**
UST giving you a man to preserve your family today
(לֹא הִשְׁבִּית לָךְ גֹּאֵל הַיּוֹם)

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 preposition **without**. Alternate translation: [has provided you today with a kinsman to redeem you]

Support Reference: Double Negatives

ULT **May his name be renowned**
UST We pray to Yahweh that & greatly respect him
(וְיִקָּרֵא שְׁמוֹ)

This is a blessing, stating that the women desire that Naomi’s grandson will have a good reputation and character. Use the form of blessing that is appropriate in your language. Alternate translation: [May Yahweh make him a great man]

Support Reference: Blessings

> ULT **May his name be renowned in Israel**
> UST We pray to Yahweh that people throughout Israel will greatly respect him
> (וְיִקָּרֵא שְׁמוֹ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **name** represents the son's person and 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: [May he become a great man in Israel]

Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Blessed be	Praise
Yahweh	Yahweh
a kinsman-redeemer	a man to preserve your family
a kinsman-redeemer	a man to preserve your family
May & be renowned	We pray to Yahweh that
in Israel	people throughout Israel will

Ruth 4:15

ULT	UST
Now he will be for you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you, has borne him—she who is better to you than seven sons.”	*Your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who has been better to you than if you had seven sons, has given birth to him. Therefore, he will make you feel young again, and he will take care of you when you become old.”*

ULT **a restorer of life**
UST feel young again
(לְמֵשִׁיב נָפֶשׁ)

This phrase, **a restorer of life**, refers to how Naomi will again experience joy and hope in her life as a result of having this grandson. Alternate translation: [one who brings joy to you again] or [one who will make you feel young and strong again]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and a nourisher of your old age**
UST and he will take care of you when you become old
(וּלְכַלְכֵּל אֶת־שֵׂיבָתֵךְ)

Here, **old age** represents Naomi when she is old. 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 he will provide for you when you become old]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **For**
UST Therefore
(כִּי)

For indicates that what follows this word gives the reason for what came before it. Here, **For** indicates that what follows (the fact that Ruth has borne him) is the reason for the women’s confident prediction of his character. Use a connection word or other way to indicate that the second sentence of this verse explains the first one. Alternate translation: [We know this because] or [It is certain because]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

> **ULT is better to you than seven sons**
> **UST** has been better to you than if you had seven sons
> (טוֹבָה לְךָ מִשִּׁבְעָה בָּנִים)

In this culture, the number **seven** represented the idea of completeness or perfection. This is a way to praise Ruth for how she has provided for Naomi by bearing a grandson for her by Boaz, when Naomi's husband and sons could not provide for her because they had died. Alternate translation: [better to you than any son] or [worth more to you than many sons]

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
a restorer of	feel young again
your old age	you when you become old
loves you	loves you
has borne him	has given birth to him
is better	has been better

Ruth 4:16

ULT	UST
And Naomi took the child and put him on her lap, and she became his nurse.	*Then Naomi picked up the baby and held him closely and became a second mother to him.*

ULT And Naomi took the child
UST Then Naomi picked up the baby
(וַתִּקַּח נָעֳמִי אֶת־הַיֶּלֶד)

The phrase **And Naomi took the child** does not mean that she took him away from Ruth in any hostile way. This probably indicates that Naomi held the child for a kind of ceremony of adoption.

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT and she became his nurse
UST and became a second mother to him
(וַתְּהִי־לוֹ לְאֹמֶנֶת)

Alternate translation: [and she took care of him]

Ruth 4:17

ULT	UST
So the neighbor women called out a name for him, saying, “A son has been born to Naomi.” And they called his name Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.	*The women who were living nearby said, “It is as though Naomi now has a son!” They named him Obed. Later, Obed became the father of Jesse, who became the father of {King} David.*

ULT **So the neighbor women called out a name for him, saying & And they called his name Obed**
UST The women who were living nearby said & They named him Obed
(וַתִּקְרֶאנָה לוֹ הַשְּׁכֵנוֹת שֵׁם לֵאמֹר & וַתִּקְרֶאנָה שְׁמוֹ עוֹבֵד)

These two clauses mean basically the same thing. The first phrase introduces the naming event, and the second repeats it in order to report the event. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine the clauses that both refer to calling out a name. Alternate translation: [Then the women of the neighborhood said … And they called him Obed]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **A son has been born to Naomi**
UST It is as though Naomi now has a son
(יֻלַּד־בֵּן לְנָעֳמִי)

A son has been born to Naomi is an idiom that means “Naomi now has a grandson, a male in her family line.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have this meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Naomi now has a male heir again]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **And they called his name Obed**
UST They named him Obed
(וַתִּקְרֶאנָה שְׁמוֹ עוֹבֵד)

Here, **called his name** is an idiom that means “named.” If this phrase does not have that meaning in your language, you could use an idiom from your language that does have this meaning or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [And they called him Obed] or [And they gave him the name Obed]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **He was the father of Jesse**
UST Later, Obed became the father of Jesse
(הוּא אֲבִי־יִשַׁי)

Here the term **father** specifically refers to a male parent. It may be necessary to make it clear that much time passed between the births of Obed, Jesse, and David. Alternate translation: [Later, Obed fathered a son, Jesse]

Support Reference: Kinship

ULT **the father of David**
UST who became the father of {King} David
(אֲבִי דָוִד)

Though **King** is not stated, it was clear to the original audience that this David was King David. Alternate translation: [who later became the father of King David]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the neighbor women	The women who were living nearby
So & called out	The women who were living nearby
has been born	It is as though & now
And they called	They named him
Jesse	Jesse
David	King} David

Ruth 4:18

ULT	UST
Now these are the generations of Perez: Perez fathered Hezron;	*Here is a list of the descendants of Perez: Perez's son was Hezron.*

ULT **the generations of Perez**
UST a list of the descendants of Perez
(תּוֹלְדוֹת פֶּרֶץ)

Because it was mentioned earlier that Perez was the son of Judah, the writer continues listing the family line that came from Perez. Verse 4:17 was the end of the story about Naomi and Ruth, and verse 4:18 begins a final section that lists the family line of the clan of Ephrathah, showing how important Obed was as the grandfather of King David. Use a connecting word that signals that this is a new section. You may also need to make it clear that this verse refers to a much earlier time than the time period of the story. Alternate translation: [the successive descendants of our clan, starting with Perez]

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT **Perez fathered Hezron**
UST Perez's son was Hezron
(פֶּרֶץ הוֹלִיד אֶת־חֶצְרוֹן)

Perez and **Hezron** are the names of men. Use forms of these names that are natural in your language.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the generations of	a list of the descendants of

Ruth 4:19

ULT	UST
and Hezron fathered Ram; and Ram fathered Amminadab;	*Hezron's son was Ram. Ram's son was Amminadab.*

ULT and Hezron & Ram & Amminadab
UST Hezron & Ram & Amminadab
(וְחֶצְרוֹן & אֶת־רָם & אֶת־עַמִּינָדָב)

Hezron, **Ram**, and **Amminidab** are the names of men. Use forms of these names that are natural in your language.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Ruth 4:20

ULT	UST
and Amminadab fathered Nahshon; and Nahshon fathered Salmon;	*Amminadab's son was Nahshon. Nahshon's son was Salmon.*

> ULT **and Amminadab & and Nahshon & Salmon**
> UST Amminadab & Nahshon & Salmon
> (וְעַמִּינָדָב & וְנַחְשׁוֹן & אֶת־שַׂלְמָה)

Amminidab, **Nahshon**, and **Salmon** are the names of men. Use forms of these names that are natural in your language.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Ruth 4:22

ULT	UST
and Obed fathered Jesse; and Jesse fathered David.	*Obed's son was Jesse. Jesse's son was {King} David.*

ULT David
UST King} David
(אֶת־דָּוִד)

See the note about **David** on 4:17. Alternate translation: [King David]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Jesse	Jesse
and Jesse	Jesse
David	King} David

Appendix: Translation Academy

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:13

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**.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:8 Ruth 1:22 Ruth 4:6

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:3 Ruth 1:5 Ruth 2:11 Ruth 2:19 Ruth 2:20 Ruth 2:23 Ruth 3:8 Ruth 3:14

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:20 Ruth 4:10 Ruth 4:14

Doublet

Description

We are using the word “doublet” to refer to two words or phrases that are used together and either mean the same thing or mean very close to the same thing. Often they are joined with the word “and.” Unlike Hendiadys, in which one of the words modifies the other, in a doublet the two words or phrases are equal and are used to emphasize or intensify the one idea that is expressed by the two words or phrases.

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!”

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:16 Ruth 2:10

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:16 Ruth 3:15 Ruth 3:15 Ruth 3:17 Ruth 4:7

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.”

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:9 Ruth 3:4 Ruth 3:7 Ruth 4:13

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!”

Ruth References:

Ruth 3:8

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:10

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:1 Ruth 1:6 Ruth 1:12 Ruth 1:13 Ruth 2:3 Ruth 2:9 Ruth 2:12 Ruth 2:15 Ruth 2:15 Ruth 2:18 Ruth 2:21 Ruth 2:21 Ruth 3 Introduction Ruth 3:2 Ruth 3:10 Ruth 3:10 Ruth 3:13 Ruth 3:14 Ruth 3:16 Ruth 3:18 Ruth 4:1 Ruth 4:4 Ruth 4:4 Ruth 4:6 Ruth 4:8 Ruth 4:10 Ruth 4:11 Ruth 4:11 Ruth 4:14 Ruth 4:17 Ruth 4:22

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 3:3

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 mouth and wisdom** … (Luke 21:15a ULT)
>
> > For I will give you **wise words** …

Walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you into **his own kingdom and glory**. (1 Thessalonians 2:12b ULT)

> You should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to **his own glorious kingdom**.

(2) Substitute the describing noun with a phrase that means the same thing.

> For I will give you **a mouth and wisdom** … (Luke 21:15a ULT)
>
> > for I will give you **words of wisdom**.

You should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you into **his own kingdom and glory**. (1 Thessalonians 2:12b ULT)

> You should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to **his own kingdom of glory**.

(3) Substitute the describing adjective with an adverb that means the same thing.

> If you are willing and obedient … (Isaiah 1:19a ULT)
>
> > If you are **willingly obedient** …

(4) Substitute other parts of speech that mean the same thing and show that one word or phrase describes the other.

> If you are willing and obedient … (Isaiah 1:19a ULT)

The adjective “obedient” can be substituted with the verb “obey.”

> if you **obey willingly** …

(4) and (5) If it is unclear that only one thing is meant, change the phrase so that this is clear.

> We look forward to receiving **the blessed hope and appearing of the glory** of **our great God and Savior Jesus Christ**. (Titus 2:13b ULT)

The noun “glory” can be changed to the adjective “glorious” to make it clear that Jesus’ appearing is what we hope for. Also, “Jesus Christ” can be moved to the front of the phrase and “great God and Savior” put into a relative clause that describes the one person, Jesus Christ.

> We look forward to receiving **what we are longing for, the blessed and glorious appearing** of **Jesus Christ, who is our great God and Savior**.

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:6 Ruth 2:7 Ruth 2:11

Hyperbole

Description

A speaker or writer can use exactly the same words to say something that he means as completely true, or as generally true, or as a hyperbole. This is why it can be hard to decide how to understand a statement. For example, the sentence below could mean three different things.

It rains here every night.

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:17 Ruth 1:19 Ruth 4:9

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**

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:4 Ruth 1:6 Ruth 1:9 Ruth 1:14 Ruth 1:17 Ruth 2:1 Ruth 2:2 Ruth 2:5 Ruth 2:8 Ruth 2:10 Ruth 2:10 Ruth 2:11 Ruth 2:13 Ruth 3:9 Ruth 3:10 Ruth 3:10 Ruth 3:11 Ruth 3:11 Ruth 3:14 Ruth 3:16 Ruth 3:17 Ruth 3:18 Ruth 3:18 Ruth 4:1 Ruth 4:4 Ruth 4:4 Ruth 4:5 Ruth 4:5 Ruth 4:5 Ruth 4:7 Ruth 4:15 Ruth 4:17 Ruth 4:17

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."

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:14 Ruth 3:4 Ruth 4:11

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!

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:6 Ruth 2:14 Ruth 3:6 Ruth 3:14

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.”

Ruth References:

Ruth 3:18

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:9 Ruth 1:13 Ruth 1:14 Ruth 1:15 Ruth 1:21 Ruth 1:21 Ruth 2:4 Ruth 2:12 Ruth 2:13 Ruth 3:1 Ruth 3:2 Ruth 4:1 Ruth 4:10 Ruth 4:11 Ruth 4:15

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:9 Ruth 1:13 Ruth 1:19 Ruth 2:9 Ruth 2:11 Ruth 2:19 Ruth 3:7 Ruth 3:11 Ruth 4:10 Ruth 4:11 Ruth 4:12 Ruth 4:14 Ruth 4:15

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**.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:8 Ruth 2:20 Ruth 2:20 Ruth 4:5 Ruth 4:10

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:21 Ruth 2:12 Ruth 2:19 Ruth 2:19 Ruth 2:20 Ruth 4:11 Ruth 4:13 Ruth 4:17

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**.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:15 Ruth 1:15

Pronouns

Description

Pronouns are words that people might use instead of using a noun when referring to someone or something. Some examples are “I,” “you,” “he,” “it,” “this,” “that,” “himself,” “someone,” and others. The personal pronoun is the most common type of pronoun.

Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns refer to people or things and show whether the speaker is referring to himself, the person he is speaking to, or someone or something else. The following are kinds of information that personal pronouns may provide. Other types of pronouns may give some of this information, as well.

Person

- First Person — The speaker and possibly others (I, me, we, us)
  - Exclusive and Inclusive “We”
- Second Person — The person or people that the speaker is talking to and possibly others (you)
  - Forms of You
- Third Person — Someone or something other than the speaker and those he is talking to (he, she, it, they)

Number

- Singular — one (I, you, he, she, it)
- Plural — more than one (we, you, they)
  - Singular Pronouns that Refer to Groups
- Dual — two (Some languages have pronouns specifically for two people or two things.)

Gender

- Masculine — he
- Feminine — she
- Neuter — it

Relationship to other words in the sentence

- Subject of the verb: I, you, he, she, it, we, they
- Object of the verb or preposition: me, you, him, her, it, us, them
- Possessor with a noun: my, your, his, her, its, our, their
- Possessor without a noun: mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, theirs

Other Types of pronouns

Reflexive Pronouns refer to another noun or pronoun in the same sentence: myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves.

- John saw **himself** in the mirror. The word “himself” refers to John.

Interrogative Pronouns are used to make a question that needs more than just a yes or no for an answer: what, which, who, whom, whose.

- **Who** built the house?

Relative Pronouns mark a relative clause. The relative pronouns, who, whom, whose, which and that give more information about a noun in the main part of the sentence. Sometimes, the relative adverbs when and where can also be used as relative pronouns.

- I saw the house **that John built**. The clause “that John built” tells which house I saw.
- I saw the man **who built the house**. The clause “who built the house” tells which man I saw.

Demonstrative Pronouns are used to draw attention to someone or something and to show distance from the speaker or something else. The demonstrative pronouns are: this, these, that, and those.

- Have you seen **this** here?
- Who is **that** over there?

Indefinite pronouns are used when no particular noun is being referred to. The indefinite pronouns are: any, anyone, someone, anything, something, and some. Sometimes a personal pronoun is used in a generic way to do this: you, they, he or it.

- He does not want to talk to **anyone**.
- **Someone** fixed it, but I do not know who.
- **They** say that **you** should not wake a sleeping dog.

In the last example, “they” and “you” just refer to people in general.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:18 Ruth 2:9 Ruth 2:20 Ruth 2:22 Ruth 3:1

Direct and Indirect Quotations

Description

There are two kinds of quotations: direct quotations and indirect quotations.

A direct quotation occurs when someone reports what another person said from the viewpoint of that original speaker. People usually expect that this kind of quotation will represent the original speaker’s exact words. In the example below, John would have said “I” when referring to himself, so the narrator, who is reporting John’s words, uses the word “I” in the quotation to refer to John. To show that these are John’s exact words, many languages put the words between quotation marks: “”.

- John said, “**I** do not know at what time **I** will arrive.”

An indirect quotation occurs when a speaker reports what someone else said, but in this case, the speaker is reporting it from his own point of view instead and not from the original person’s point of view. This kind of quotation usually contains changes in

pronouns, and it often includes changes in time, in word choices, and in length. In the example below, the narrator refers to John as “he” in the quotation and uses the word “would” to replace the future tense, indicated by “will.”

- John said that **he** did not know at what time **he** would arrive.

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:1

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.’”

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:7 Ruth 2:21 Ruth 3:17

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!

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:11

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**.”

Ruth References:

Ruth 3:4 Ruth 3:13 Ruth 4:4

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?

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:11 Ruth 1:11 Ruth 1:12 Ruth 1:13 Ruth 1:19 Ruth 1:21 Ruth 2:8 Ruth 2:9 Ruth 3:1 Ruth 3:2

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)
>
> > **A representative of the Pharisees** said to him …
>
> Then I looked on all the deeds that **my hands** had accomplished. (Ecclesiastes 2:11a ULT)
>
> > I looked on all the deeds that **I** had accomplished

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:6 Ruth 4:5 Ruth 4:9

Forms of 'You' — Dual/ Plural

Description

Some languages have a singular form of "you" for when the word "you" refers to just one person, and a plural form for when the word "you" refers to more than one person. Some languages also have a dual form of "you" for when the word "you" refers to only two people. Translators who speak one of these languages will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for "you" in their language. Other languages, such as English, have only one form, which people use regardless of how many people it refers to.

The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. These languages all have a singular form of "you" and a plural form of "you." When we read the Bible in those languages, the pronouns and verb forms show us whether the word "you" refers to one person or more than one person. However, they do not show us whether it refers to only two people or more than two people. When the pronouns do not show us how many people the word "you" refers to, we need to look at the context to see how many people the speaker was speaking to.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators who speak a language that has distinct singular, dual, and plural forms of "you" will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for "you" in their language.
- Many languages also have different forms of the verb depending on whether the subject is singular or plural. So even if there is no pronoun meaning "you," translators of these languages will need to know if the speaker was referring to one person or more than one.

Often the context will make it clear whether the word "you" refers to one person or more than one. If you look at the other pronouns in the sentence, they

will help you know how many people the speaker was addressing.

Examples From the Bible

> Then **James and John**, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him, saying to him, “Teacher, we desire that you to do for us whatever we ask you.” 36 So he said to them, “What do **you** want me to do for **you**?” (Mark 10:35-36 ULT)

Jesus is asking the two, James and John, what they want him to do for them. If the target language has a dual form of “you,” use that. If the target language does not have a dual form, then the plural form would be appropriate.

> Jesus sent out two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the village opposite us. As soon as **you** enter it, **you** will find a colt tied there, on which no one has yet sat. Untie it and bring it to me.” (Mark 11:1b-2 ULT)

The context makes it clear that Jesus is addressing two people. If the target language has a dual form of “you,” use that. If the target language does not have a dual form, then the plural form would be appropriate.

> James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are in the dispersion: Greetings. Consider it all joy, my brothers, when **you** experience various troubles. You know that the testing of **your** faith produces endurance. (James 1:1-3 ULT)

James wrote this letter to many people, so the word “you” refers to many people. If the target language has a plural form of “you,” it would be best to use it here.

Strategies for finding out how many people “you” refers to

(1) Look at the translationNotes to see if they tell whether “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
(2) Look at the UST to see if it says anything that would show you whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
(3) If you have a Bible that is written in a language that distinguishes “you” singular from “you” plural, see which form of “you” that Bible has in that sentence.
(4) Look at the context to see who the speaker was talking to and who responded.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_youdual.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:8

Forms of ‘You’ — Singular

Description

Some languages have a **singular** form of “you” for when the word “you” refers to just one person, and a **plural** form for when the word “you” refers to more than one person. Translators who speak one of these languages will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for “you” in their language. Other languages, such as English, have only one form, which people use regardless of how many people it refers to.

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:10

Connect — Exception Clauses

Exceptional Relationship

Description

Exceptional relationship connectors exclude one or more items or people from a group.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

English indicates exceptional relationships by first describing a group (Part 1) and then stating what is not in that group by using words like “except,” “but not,” “other than,” “besides,” “unless,” “however … not,” and “only” (Part 2). Some languages do not indicate in this way that one or more items or people are excluded from a group. Instead, they have other ways of doing this. In some languages this type of construction does not make sense because the exception in Part 2 seems to contradict the statement in Part 1. Translators need to understand who (or what) is in the group and who (or what) is excluded in order to be able to accurately communicate this in their language.

Examples From OBS and the Bible

> God told Adam that he could eat from **any** tree in the garden **except** from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (OBS Story 1 Frame 11)

> But if you will not redeem it, then tell me so that I may know, for there is **no one** to redeem it **besides** you, and I am after you. (Ruth 4:4b ULT)

> David attacked them from the twilight to the evening of the next day. **Not** a man escaped **except for** 400 young men, who rode on camels and fled. (1 Samuel 30:17 ULT)

> The man said, “Let me go, for the dawn is breaking.” Jacob said, “I will **not** let you go **unless** you bless me.” (Genesis 32:26 ULT)

Translation Strategies

If the way that Exceptional Clauses are marked in the source language is also clear in your language, then translate the Exceptional Clauses in the same way.

(1) Very often, the exception in Part 2 contradicts something that was negated in Part 1. In this case, the translator can phrase the same idea without the contradiction by deleting the negative and using a word like "**only**."
(2) Reverse the order of the clauses so that the exception is stated first, and then the larger group is named second.

Examples of Translation Strategy Applied

(1) Very often, the exception in Part 2 contradicts something that was negated in Part 1. In this case, the translator can phrase the same idea without the contradiction by deleting the negative and using a word like "**only**."

> David attacked them from the twilight to the evening of the next day. **Not a man escaped except for 400 young men**, who rode on camels and fled. (1 Samuel 30:17 ULT)

- Part 1: (**Not** a man escaped)
- Part 2: (**except for** 400 young men)

> > David attacked them from the twilight to the evening of the next day. **Only** 400 young men escaped; they rode on camels and fled.

> But if you will not redeem it, then tell me so that I may know, for there is **no one** to redeem it **besides** you, and I am after you. (Ruth 4:4 ULT)

> > But if you will not redeem it, then tell me so that I may know, for **you are first in line to redeem it {only you can redeem it}**, and I am after you.

> The man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." Jacob said, "I will **not** let you go **unless** you bless me." (Genesis 32:26 ULT)

> > The man said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." Jacob said, "I will let you go **only if** you bless me."

(2) Reverse the order of the clauses, so that the exception is stated first, and then the larger group is named second.

> God told Adam that he could eat from **any** tree in the garden **except** from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (OBS Story 1 Frame 11)

> > God told Adam that he could **not** eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but he could eat from **any other** tree in the garden.

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:4

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:10 Ruth 1:10 Ruth 1:11 Ruth 2:10 Ruth 3:12

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:18 Ruth 2:23 Ruth 3:2 Ruth 3:11 Ruth 4:8 Ruth 4:13 Ruth 4:15

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:19

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:1

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 3:12

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.”

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:8 Ruth 1:9 Ruth 2:4 Ruth 2:4 Ruth 2:19 Ruth 2:20 Ruth 3:10 Ruth 4:11 Ruth 4:12 Ruth 4:14 Ruth 4:14

Biblical Volume

Description

The following terms are the most common units of volume used in the Bible to state how much a certain container could hold. The containers and measurements are given for both liquids (such as wine) and dry solids (such as grain). The metric values are not exactly equal to the biblical measures. The biblical measures probably differed in exact amount from time to time and place to place. The equivalents below are an attempt to give an average measurement.

Type	Original Measure	Liters
Dry	omer	2 liters
Dry	ephah	22 liters
Dry	homer	220 liters
Dry	cor	220 liters
Dry	seah	7.7 liters
Dry	lethek	114.8 liters
Liquid	metrete	40 liters
Liquid	bath	22 liters
Liquid	hin	3.7 liters
Liquid	kab	1.23 liters
Liquid	log	0.31 liters

Translation Principles

- The people in the Bible did not use modern measures such as meters, liters, and kilograms. Using the original measures can help readers know that the Bible really was written long ago in a time when people used those measures.
- Using modern measures can help readers understand the text more easily.
- Whatever measures you use, it would be good, if possible, to tell about the other kinds of measures in the text or a footnote.

- If you do not use the biblical measures, try not to give the readers the idea that the measurements are exact. For example, if you translate one hin as “3.7 liters,” readers might think that the measurement is exactly 3.7 liters, not 3.6 or 3.8. It would be better to use a more approximate measure such as “three and a half liters” or “four liters.”
- When God tells people how much of something to use, and when people use those amounts in obedience to him, do not say “about” in the translation. Otherwise it will give the impression that God did not care exactly how much they used.

When the unit of measure is stated

Translation Strategies

(1) Use the measurements from the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See Copy or Borrow Words.)
(2) Use the metric measurements given in the UST. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.
(3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.
(4) Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note.
(5) Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a note.

Translation Strategies Applied

The strategies are all applied to Isaiah 5:10 below.

> For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only one bath, and one homer of seed will yield only an ephah. (Isaiah 5:10 ULT)

(1) Use the measurements from the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See Copy or Borrow Words.)

> “For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only one **bat**, and one **homer** of seed will yield only an **efa**.”

(2) Use the measurements given in the UST. Usually they are metric measurements. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

> “For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only **22 liters** and **220 liters** of seed will yield only **22 liters**.”

> “For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only **22**, and **ten baskets** of seed will yield only **one basket**.”

(3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.

> “For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only **six gallons**, and **six and a half bushels** of seed will yield only **20 quarts**.”

(4) Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note. The

following shows both measurements in the text.

> "For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only **one bath (six gallons)**, and **one homer (six and a half bushels)** of seed will yield only **an ephah (20 quarts)**."

(5) Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a note. The following shows the ULT measurements in footnotes.

> "For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only 22 liters[1], and 220 liters[2] of seed will yield only 22 liters[3]."

The footnotes would look like:

> [1] one bath
> [2] one homer
> [3] one ephah

When the unit of measure is implied

Sometimes the Hebrew does not specify a particular unit of volume but only uses a number. In these cases, many English versions, including the ULT and UST, add the word "measure."

> When you came to a heap of **20 measures** of grain, there were only **ten**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **50 measures** of wine, there were only 20. (Haggai 2:16 ULT)

Translation Strategies

(1) Translate literally by using the number without a unit.
(2) Use a generic word like "measure" or "quantity" or "amount."
(3) Use the name of an appropriate container, such as "basket" for grain or "jar" for wine.
(4) Use a unit of measure that you are already using in your translation.

Translation Strategies Applied

The strategies are all applied to Haggai 2:16 below.

> When you came to a heap of **20 measures** of grain, there were only **ten**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **fifty measures** of wine, there were only **20**. (Haggai 2:16 ULT)

(1) Translate literally by using the number without a unit.

> When you came to a heap of **20** of grain, there were only **ten**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **50** of wine, there were only **20**.

(2) Use a generic word like "measure" or "quantity" or "amount."

> When you came to a heap of **20 amounts** of grain, there were only **ten**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **fifty amounts** of wine, there were only **20**.

(3) Use the name of an appropriate container, such as "basket" for grain or "jar" for wine.

> When you came to a heap of **20 baskets** of grain, there were only **ten**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **50 jars** of wine, there were only **20**.

(4) Use a unit of measure that you are already using in your translation.

> When you came to a heap for **20 liters** of grain, there were only **ten liters**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **50 liters** of wine, there were only **20 liters**.

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:17

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:1 Ruth 2:2 Ruth 2:3 Ruth 2:5 Ruth 3:1 Ruth 3:1 Ruth 3:1 Ruth 3:9 Ruth 3:12 Ruth 3:16 Ruth 4:1 Ruth 4:3 Ruth 4:17

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
>
> > [1] This is the same man who was called Saul before Acts 13.

Ruth References:

Ruth Introduction Ruth 1:2 Ruth 1:20 Ruth 1:20 Ruth 4:18 Ruth 4:19 Ruth 4:20

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**

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:15

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:10 Ruth 3:4 Ruth 4:16

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,

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:4

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 3:15

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**

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:7 Ruth 2:14 Ruth 2:15 Ruth 2:16 Ruth 2:17 Ruth 2:20 Ruth 3:3 Ruth 3:15

Background Information

Description

When people tell a story, they normally tell the events in the order that they happened. This sequence of events makes up the storyline. The storyline is full of action verbs that move the story along in time. But sometimes a writer may take a break from the storyline and give some information to help his listeners understand the story better. This type of information is called background information. The background information might be about things that happened before the events he has already told about, or it might explain something in the story, or it might be about something that would happen much later in the story.

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."

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:22 Ruth 2:1 Ruth 3:8 Ruth 4:7 Ruth 4:7

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)

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:22

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 the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader**. This man came to Jesus at night. (John 3:1-2a ULT)

The author first introduced the new person and then told about what he did and when he did it. In some languages, it might be more natural to tell about the time first.

> 6 Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. 7 Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood. (Genesis 7:6-7 ULT)

Verse 6 is a statement of the events that happen in the rest of chapter 7. Chapter 6 already told about how God told Noah that there would be a flood, and how Noah prepared for it. Chapter 7 verse 6 introduces the part of the story that tells about Noah and his family and the animals going into

the ship, the rain starting, and the rain flooding the earth. Some languages might need to make it clear that this verse simply introduces the event, or move this verse after verse 7. Verse 6 is not one of the events of the story. The people went into the ship before the flood came.

Translation Strategies

If the information given at the beginning of a new event is clear and natural to your readers, consider translating it as it is in the ULT or UST. If not, consider one of these strategies:

(1) Put the information that introduces the event in the order that your people put it.
(2) If readers would expect certain information but it is not in the Bible, consider using an indefinite word or phrase to fill in that information, such as: "another time" or "someone."
(3) If the introduction is a summary of the whole event, use your language's way of showing that it is a summary.
(4) If it would be strange in the target language to give a summary of the event at the beginning, indicate that the event would actually happen later in the story.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Put the information that introduces the event in the order that your people put it.

> Now there was **a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader**. This man came to Jesus at night. (John 3:1-2a ULT)
>
> > There was a **man whose name was Nicodemus. He was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish Council**. One night he came to Jesus.
>
> > One night **a man named Nicodemus, who was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish Council**, came to Jesus.

> As he passed by, **he saw Levi the son of Alpheus, sitting** at the tax collector's tent, and he said to him … (Mark 2:14a ULT)
>
> > As he passed by, **Levi the son of Alpheus was sitting** at the tax collector's tent. Jesus saw him and and said to him …
>
> > As he passed by, **there was a man sitting** at the tax collector's tent. His name was Levi, and he was the son of Alpheus. Jesus saw him and said to him …
>
> > As he passed by, **there was a tax collector** sitting at the tax collector's tent. His name was Levi, and he was the son of Alpheus. Jesus saw him and said to him …

(2) If readers would expect certain information, but it is not in the Bible, consider using an indefinite word or phrase such as "another time," or "someone."

> Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. (Genesis 7:6 ULT) — If people expect to be told something about when the new event happened, the phrase “after that” can help them see that it happened after the events already mentioned.
>
> > **After that**, when Noah was 600 years old, the flood came upon the earth.

> **Again he began** to teach beside the sea. (Mark 4:1a ULT) — In chapter 3 Jesus was teaching at someone’s house. Readers may need to be told that this new event happened at another time, or that Jesus actually went to the sea.
>
> > **Another time** Jesus began to teach people again beside the sea.

> Jesus went to the sea and **began to teach people again** there.

(3) If the introduction is a summary of the whole event, use your language’s way of showing that it is a summary.

> Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. (Genesis 7:6 ULT)
>
> > **Now this is what happened when** Noah was 600 years old and the flood came upon the earth.

> **This part tells about what happened when** the flood came upon the earth. It happened when Noah was 600 years old.

(4) If it would be strange in the target language to give a summary of the event at the beginning, show that the event will actually happen later in the story.

> Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood. (Genesis 7:6-7 ULT)
>
> > **Now this is what happened when** Noah was 600 years old. Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives went into the ark together because **God had said that the waters of the flood would come**.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:1 Ruth 1:6 Ruth 1:19 Ruth 3:1 Ruth 4:1 Ruth 4:8 Ruth 4:18

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!

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:17 Ruth 3:13

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:1 Ruth 1:6 Ruth 1:15 Ruth 2:1 Ruth 2:2

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.

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:13 Ruth 2:13 Ruth 2:13 Ruth 3:9 Ruth 3:18

Appendix: Translation Words

Almighty

Definition:

The term “Almighty” literally means “all-powerful.” In the Bible, this term always refers to God.

- The titles “the Almighty” or “the Almighty One” refer to God and reveal that he has complete power and authority over everything.
- This term is also used to describe God in the titles “Almighty God” and “God Almighty” and “Lord Almighty” and “Lord God Almighty.”

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated as “All-powerful” or “Completely Powerful One” or “God, who is completely powerful.”
- Ways to translate the phrase “Lord God Almighty” could include “God, the Powerful Ruler” or “Powerful Sovereign God” or “Mighty God who is Master over everything.”

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: God, lord)

Bible References:

- Exodus 6:2-5
- Genesis 17:1
- Genesis 35:11-13
- Job 8:3
- Numbers 24:15-16
- Revelation 1:7-8
- Ruth 1:19-21

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7706, G38410

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:20 Ruth 1:21

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 3:3

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birthright

Definition:

The term “birthright” in the Bible refers to the honor, family name, and physical wealth that was normally given to the firstborn son in a family.

- The birthright of the firstborn son included a double portion of the father’s inheritance.
- A king’s firstborn son was normally given the birthright to rule after his father died.
- Esau sold his birthright to his younger brother Jacob. Because of this, Jacob inherited the blessing of the firstborn instead of Esau.
- The birthright also included the honor of having the family descendants traced through the firstborn son’s line.

Translation Suggestions:

- Possible ways to translate “birthright” could include, “rights and wealth of the firstborn son” or “family honor” or “privilege and inheritance of the firstborn.”

(See also: firstborn, inherit, descendant)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 5:1
- Genesis 25:34
- Genesis 43:33
- Hebrews 12:14-17

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1062, G44150

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:6

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:4 Ruth 2:19 Ruth 2:20 Ruth 3:10 Ruth 4:14

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:20 Ruth 1:20 Ruth 1:21 Ruth 4:17 Ruth 4:17

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

Ruth References:

Ruth Introduction Ruth 1:8 Ruth 2:20 Ruth 3:10

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:21

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1 Introduction

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth Introduction

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:15

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:2 Ruth 2:10 Ruth 2:13

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 3:11

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:16 Ruth 1:16 Ruth 2:12

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:22 Ruth 3:1 Ruth 3:7 Ruth 3:10 Ruth 3:13 Ruth 4:15

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2 Introduction

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:12

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:5 Ruth 4:6 Ruth 4:10

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:12 Ruth 4:7 Ruth 4:7 Ruth 4:11 Ruth 4:14

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2 Introduction

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:13

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:15

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:6

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:20 Ruth 3:9 Ruth 3:12 Ruth 3:12 Ruth 3:13 Ruth 3:13 Ruth 3:13 Ruth 3:13 Ruth 4:1 Ruth 4:3 Ruth 4:4 Ruth 4:4 Ruth 4:4 Ruth 4:4 Ruth 4:4 Ruth 4:6 Ruth 4:6 Ruth 4:6 Ruth 4:6 Ruth 4:6 Ruth 4:7 Ruth 4:8 Ruth 4:14

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:15

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:21 Ruth 4:9 Ruth 4:10 Ruth 4:11

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1 Introduction

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:6 Ruth 1:8 Ruth 1:9 Ruth 1:13 Ruth 1:17 Ruth 1:21 Ruth 1:21 Ruth 2:4 Ruth 2:4 Ruth 2:12 Ruth 2:12 Ruth 2:20 Ruth 3:10 Ruth 3:13 Ruth 4:11 Ruth 4:12 Ruth 4:13 Ruth 4:14

Bethlehem, Ephrathah

Definition:

Bethlehem was a small city in the land of Israel, near the city of Jerusalem. It was also known as “Ephrathah,” which was probably its original name.

- Bethlehem has been called the “city of David,” since King David was born there.
- The prophet Micah said that the Messiah would come from “Bethlehem Ephrathah.”
- Fulfilling that prophecy, Jesus was born in Bethlehem, many years later.
- The name “Bethlehem” means “house of bread” or “house of food.”

(See also: Caleb, David, Micah)

Bible References:

- Genesis 35:16
- John 7:42
- Matthew 2:6
- Matthew 2:16
- Ruth 1:2
- Ruth 1:21

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:2** David was a shepherd from the town of **Bethlehem**.
- **21:9** The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be born from a virgin. The prophet Micah said that he would be born in the town of **Bethlehem**.
- **23:4** Joseph and Mary had to make a long journey from where they lived in Nazareth to **Bethlehem** because their ancestor was David whose hometown was **Bethlehem**.
- **23:6** “The Messiah, the Master, has been born in **Bethlehem**!”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0376, H0672, H1035, G09650

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:1 Ruth 1:2 Ruth 1:19 Ruth 1:19 Ruth 1:22 Ruth 2:4 Ruth 4:11

Boaz

Definition:

Boaz was an Israelite man who lived during the time when there were judges ruled Israel. He married a Moabite woman named Ruth and became both the great grandfather of King David and an ancestor of Jesus Christ.

- He was a relative of an Israelite woman named Naomi who had returned to Israel after her husband and sons died in Moab.
- Boaz "redeemed" Naomi's widowed daughter-in-law Ruth by marrying her and giving her a future with a husband and children.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Moab, redeem, Ruth)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 2:12
- 2 Chronicles 3:17
- Luke 3:30-32
- Matthew 1:5
- Ruth 2:4

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1162

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:1 Ruth 2:3 Ruth 2:4 Ruth 2:5 Ruth 2:8 Ruth 2:11 Ruth 2:14 Ruth 2:15 Ruth 2:19 Ruth 2:23 Ruth 3:2 Ruth 3:7 Ruth 4:1 Ruth 4:1 Ruth 4:5 Ruth 4:8 Ruth 4:9 Ruth 4:13

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:17 Ruth 4:22

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:2 Ruth 4:11

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:17 Ruth 4:22 Ruth 4:22

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:12

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:1 Ruth 1:2 Ruth 1:7

Leah

Definition:

Leah was one of Jacob’s wives. She was the older sister of Rachel and the mother of six of Jacob’s sons: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. She was also the mother of Jacob’s daughter Dinah.

- The book of Genesis tells the story of how Leah’s father Laban tricked Jacob into marrying her before marrying Rachel.
- God abundantly blessed Leah by giving her many children, even though her husband Jacob loved Rachel more than her.
- Leah is the ancestral mother of both King David and Jesus.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Jacob, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Laban, Rachel, twelve tribes of Israel)

Bible References:

- Genesis 29:17
- Genesis 29:28
- Genesis 31:6
- Ruth 4:11

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3812

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:11

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:1 Ruth 1:2 Ruth 1:4 Ruth 1:6 Ruth 1:6 Ruth 1:22 Ruth 1:22 Ruth 2:2 Ruth 2:6 Ruth 2:6 Ruth 2:21 Ruth 4:3 Ruth 4:5 Ruth 4:10

Rachel

Definition:

Rachel was one of Jacob’s wives. She was the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, whose descendants became three of the twelve tribes of Israel.

- Rachel and her sister Leah were the daughters of Laban, Jacob’s uncle.
- For many years, Rachel was not able to have any children. Then God enabled her to give birth to Joseph.
- Years later, Rachel died as she gave birth to Benjamin. Jacob buried her near Bethlehem.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Bethlehem, Jacob, Laban, Leah, Joseph (OT), twelve tribes of Israel)

Bible References:

- Genesis 29:6
- Genesis 29:19-20
- Genesis 29:30
- Genesis 31:6
- Genesis 33:1-3
- Matthew 2:18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7354, G44780

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:11

Ruth

Definition:

Ruth was a Moabite woman who lived during the time when judges were leading Israel. In Moab, she married an Israelite man named Mahlon after his family had moved there because of a famine in Israel. Mahlon died, and some time after that she left Moab with her mother-in-law Naomi to return to the city of Bethlehem in Israel.

- Ruth was loyal to Naomi and worked hard to provide food for her.

- She also committed herself to serving the one true God of Israel.
- Ruth married an Israelite man named Boaz and gave birth to a son named Obed. Obed became the grandfather of King David, and King David was an ancestor of Jesus.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Bethlehem, Boaz, David, judge)

Bible References:

- Matthew 1:5
- Ruth 1:3-5
- Ruth 3:9
- Ruth 4:6

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7327, G45030

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:4 Ruth 1:14 Ruth 1:16 Ruth 1:22 Ruth 2:2 Ruth 2:8 Ruth 2:21 Ruth 2:22 Ruth 3:9 Ruth 4:5 Ruth 4:10 Ruth 4:13

Tamar

Definition:

Tamar is the name of several different women in the Old Testament. There are also several cities or other places that are named Tamar in the Old Testament.

- Tamar was the daughter-in-law of Judah. After Tamar became a widow, Judah fathered a son with Tamar, who continued the family name of her dead husband. The son's name was Perez, who became an ancestor of King David and of Jesus Christ.
- One of King David's daughters was named Tamar; she was the sister of Absalom. Her half-brother Amnon raped her and left her desolate.
- Absalom also had a daughter named Tamar.
- A city called "Hazezon Tamar" was the same as the city of Engedi on the western shore of the Salt Sea. There is also a "Baal Tamar," and general references to a place called "Tamar" which may have been different from the cities.

(See also: Absalom, ancestor, Amnon, David, ancestor, Judah, Salt Sea)

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 2:4
- 2 Samuel 13:2
- 2 Samuel 14:25-27
- Genesis 38:6-7
- Genesis 38:24
- Ruth 4:12
- Matthew 1:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1193, H2688, H8412, H8559

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:12

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:12 Ruth 4:15

barley

Definition:

The term “barley” refers to a kind of grain that is used to make bread.

- The barley plant has a long stalk with a head at the top where the seeds or grains grow.
- Barley does well in warmer weather so it is often harvested in spring or summer.
- When barley is threshed, the edible seeds are separated from the worthless chaff.
- Barley grain is ground up into flour, which is then mixed with water or oil to make bread.
- If barley is not known, this could be translated as “grain called barley” or “barley grain.”

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: grain, thresh, wheat)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:12-14
- Job 31:40
- Judges 7:14
- Numbers 5:15
- Revelation 6:6

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H8184, G29150, G29160

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:22 Ruth 2:17 Ruth 2:23 Ruth 3:2 Ruth 3:15 Ruth 3:17

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:12 Ruth 4:13 Ruth 4:15 Ruth 4:17

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:1

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:4

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:10

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:6 Ruth 2:14

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:17

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:1 Ruth 2:3

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 3:14 Ruth 4:7

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:13

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:7 Ruth 4:7

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:7 Ruth 2:6

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:2 Ruth 4:4 Ruth 4:9 Ruth 4:11

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:1

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:10

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:16 Ruth 2:20

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 3:11 Ruth 4:1 Ruth 4:10 Ruth 4:11

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:18

glean, gleaning, gleanings

Definition:

The term “glean” means to go through a field or orchard and

pick up whatever grain or fruit the harvesters have left behind.

- God commanded the Israelites to let the widows, poor people, and foreigners glean the leftover grain in order to provide food for themselves.
- Sometimes the owner of the field would allow the gleaners to go directly behind the harvesters to glean, which enabled them to glean much more of the grain. A clear example of how this worked is in the story of Ruth, who was generously allowed to glean among the harvesters in the fields of her relative Boaz.
- Other ways to translate “glean” can be “pick up” or “gather” or “collect.”

(See also: Boaz, grain, harvest, Ruth)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 24:21-22
- Isaiah 17:4-5
- Job 24:6
- Ruth 2:2
- Ruth 2:15

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3950, H3951, H5953, H5955

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:2 Ruth 2:3 Ruth 2:7 Ruth 2:8 Ruth 2:15 Ruth 2:15 Ruth 2:16 Ruth 2:17 Ruth 2:17 Ruth 2:18 Ruth 2:19 Ruth 2:23

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:2 Ruth 2:7 Ruth 2:14 Ruth 3:7

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:22 Ruth 2:3 Ruth 2:4 Ruth 2:5 Ruth 2:6 Ruth 2:7 Ruth 2:9 Ruth 2:14 Ruth 2:21 Ruth 2:23 Ruth 2:23

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:7

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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:

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:11 Ruth 4:12 Ruth 4:12

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:8 Ruth 1:9 Ruth 4:11

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:9 Ruth 3:6

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:1

kin, kinfolk, kindred, kinsman

Definition:

The term “kin” refers to a person’s blood relatives, considered as a group. The word

“kinsman” refers specifically to a male relative.

- “Kin” can only refer to a person’s close relatives, such as parents and siblings, or it can also include more distant relatives, such as an aunts, uncles, or cousins.
- In ancient Israel, if a man died, his nearest male relative was expected to marry his widow, manage his property, and help carry on his family name. This relative was called a “kinsman-redeemer.”
- This term “kin” could also be translated as “relative” or “family member.”

Bible References:

- Romans 16:9-11
- Ruth 2:20
- Ruth 3:9

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0251, H1350, H4129, H4130, H7138, H7607, G47730

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:20 Ruth 3:9 Ruth 3:12 Ruth 3:12 Ruth 4:1 Ruth 4:3 Ruth 4:6 Ruth 4:8 Ruth 4:14

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:9 Ruth 1:14

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 3:3 Ruth 3:4 Ruth 3:11 Ruth 3:14 Ruth 3:18 Ruth 4:4

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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:

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:11

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:12 Ruth 2:19 Ruth 2:19 Ruth 2:19 Ruth 3:2

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:17

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:11

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:16

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:12

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renown, renowned, famous

Definition:

The term "renown" refers to the greatness associated with being well known and having a

praiseworthy reputation. Something or someone is "renowned" if it has renown.

- A "renowned" person is someone who is well known and highly esteemed.
- "Renown" especially refers to a good reputation that is widely known over a long period of time.
- A city that is "renowned" is often well known for its wealth and prosperity.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term "renown" could also be translated as "fame" or "esteemed reputation" or "greatness that is well-known by many people."
- The term "renowned" could also be translated as "well known and highly esteemed" or "having an excellent reputation."
- The expression "May the Lord's name be renowned in Israel" could be translated as "May the Lord's name be well known and honored by the people of Israel."
- The phrase "men of renown" could be translated as "men well known for their courage" or "famous warriors" or "highly esteemed men."
- The expression "your renown endures through all generations" could be translated as "throughout the years people will hear about how great you are" or "your greatness is seen and heard by people in every generation."

(See also: honor)

Bible References:

- Genesis 6:4
- Psalms 135:12-14

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1984, H7121, H8034

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:11 Ruth 4:14

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:11 Ruth 2:19 Ruth 3:4 Ruth 3:16 Ruth 4:4

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:12

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:1

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:7 Ruth 4:8

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 4:12

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 3:1

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:5 Ruth 2:6 Ruth 2:8 Ruth 2:9 Ruth 2:9 Ruth 2:13 Ruth 2:13 Ruth 2:15 Ruth 2:21 Ruth 2:22 Ruth 2:23 Ruth 3:2 Ruth 3:9 Ruth 3:9

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:15

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thresh

Definition:

The terms “thresh” and “threshing” refer to the first part of the process of separating grain from the rest of the plant.

- Threshing a crop loosens the grain from the stalk. Afterwards the grain is “winnowed” to completely separate the seed from all unwanted materials, leaving only the part the grain that can be eaten.

- In Bible times, a “threshing floor” was a large flat rock or an area of packed-down dirt, giving a hard, level surface to crush the grain stalks and remove the grain.
- A “threshing cart” or “threshing wheel” was sometimes used to crush the grain and help separate it from the straw and chaff.
- A “threshing sledge” or “threshing board” was also used for separating grain. It was made of wooden boards that had sharp metal spikes on the end.

(See also: chaff, grain, winnow)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 3:1-3
- 2 Kings 13:7
- 2 Samuel 24:16
- Daniel 2:35
- Luke 3:17
- Matthew 3:12
- Ruth 3:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0212, H4173, H1637, H1758, H1786, H1869, H2251, G02480

Ruth References:

Ruth 3:2 Ruth 3:3 Ruth 3:6 Ruth 3:14

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:9

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 2:23

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

Ruth References:

Ruth 3:2

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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

Ruth References:

Ruth 1:11