unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

v91

Nehemiah

Copyrights & Licensing

unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

Copyright © 2022 by unfoldingWord

This work is made available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/ or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

unfoldingWord® is a registered trademark of unfoldingWord. Use of the unfoldingWord name or logo requires the written permission of unfoldingWord. Under the terms of the CC BY-SA license, you may copy and redistribute this unmodified work as long as you keep the unfoldingWord® trademark intact. If you modify a copy or translate this work, thereby creating a derivative work, you must remove the unfoldingWord® trademark.

On the derivative work, you must indicate what changes you have made and attribute the work as follows: “The original work by unfoldingWord is available from unfoldingword.org/utn”. You must also make your derivative work available under the same license (CC BY-SA).

If you would like to notify unfoldingWord regarding your translation of this work, please contact us at unfoldingword.org/contact/.

unfoldingWord® Translation Notes
Date: 2026-09-26
Version: v91
Published by: unfoldingWord®

unfoldingWord® Literal Text
Date: 2026-09-26
Version: v91
Published by: unfoldingWord®

unfoldingWord® Simplified Text
Date: 2026-09-26
Version: v91
Published by: unfoldingWord®

unfoldingWord® Hebrew Bible
Date: 2026-08-14

Version: v3.0.0
Published by: unfoldingWord®

unfoldingWord® Translation Academy
Date: 2026-09-26
Version: v91
Published by: unfoldingWord®

unfoldingWord® Translation Words
Date: 2026-09-26
Version: v91
Published by: unfoldingWord®

unfoldingWord® Translation Words Links
Date: 2026-09-26
Version: v91
Published by: unfoldingWord®

Table of Contents

unfoldingWord® Translation Notes - Nehemiah **15**

Nehemiah Introduciton 15
Nehemiah 1 18
Nehemiah 2 51
Nehemiah 3 99
Nehemiah 4 156
Nehemiah 5 201
Nehemiah 6 248
Nehemiah 7 290
Nehemiah 8 383
Nehemiah 9 431
Nehemiah 10 523
Nehemiah 11 585
Nehemiah 12 644
Nehemiah 13 726

Appendex: unfoldingWord® Translation Academy **806**

Abstract Nouns 807
Active or Passive 811
Aside 815
Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information 818
Background Information 824
Biblical Distance 829
Biblical Money 834
Connect — Contrast Relationship 838
Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship 842
Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship 847
Connect — Sequential Time Relationship 851
Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship 855
Connecting Words and Phrases 858

Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding 865
Double Negatives 871
Doublet 876
Ellipsis 880
Exclamations 885
Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ 890
First, Second or Third Person 892
Forms of You 895
Forms of ‘You’ — Singular 897
Fractions 900
Hebrew Months 904
How to Translate Names 909
Hyperbole 917
Idiom 924
Introduction of a New Event 928
Introduction of New and Old Participants 935
Litotes 940
Merism 943
Metaphor 946
Metonymy 957
Numbers 961
Oath Formulas 966
Order of Events 972
Ordinal Numbers 976
Parallelism 980
Personification 985
Possession 989
Rhetorical Question 996
Simile 1003
Symbolic Action 1008
Synecdoche 1012
Translate Unknowns 1014
When Masculine Words Include Women 1020

Appendex: unfoldingWord® Translation Words **1024**

Aaron 1025
Abijah 1027
Abraham, Abram 1028
Adonijah 1030
adversary, enemy 1031
advice, advise, advisor, counsel, counselor, counsels 1032
afflict, affliction, distress 1033
age, era, time 1035
Ai 1036
alien, foreigner, sojourn 1037
altar 1038
amen, truly 1040
Ammon, Ammonite 1042
Amorite 1043
appoint, appointed 1045
Arabia, Arabian 1047
armor, armory 1048
Artaxerxes 1049
Asaph 1050
Ashdod, Azotus 1051
assembly, assemble, congregation, meeting, gather, community 1052
Assyria, Assyrian, Assyrian Empire 1054
authority 1056
Azariah 1058
Babylon, Babylonia, Babylonian 1059
Balaam 1061
Baruch 1062
Bashan 1063
bear, bearer, bore, borne, produce, produced 1064
bear, bears, bore, borne, bearer, bearing, carry 1065
Beersheba 1066
beloved 1067
Benjamin, Benjaminite 1069

Bethel 1070
Bethlehem, Ephrathah 1072
blasphemy, blaspheme, blasphemous 1074
bless, blessed, blessing 1076
blot out, wipe out 1078
bow and arrow, a bow 1079
bow, bow down, kneel, bend, bend the knee 1080
bread 1082
breastplate, breastpiece 1084
burnt offering, offering by fire 1085
call, called 1086
call, called 1087
call, called, call out, called out 1088
camel 1089
Canaan, Canaanite 1090
captive, captivate, captivity, catch 1092
cast out, driving out, throw out 1094
Chaldea, Chaldean 1096
chief, leader 1097
chosen, choose, chosen people, Chosen One, elect 1098
cistern, well 1100
city of David 1102
column, pillar 1103
compassion, compassionate 1105
confess, confession 1106
consecrate, consecrated, consecration 1108
consume, devour 1109
contempt, contemptible, not worth listening to 1111
corrupt, corrupted, corruption, incorruptibility, depraved 1112
court, courtyard 1113
covenant 1115
covenant faithfulness, covenant loyalty, covenant love 1118
cow, bull, calf, cattle, heifer, ox 1119
cry, cry out, outcry 1121
cupbearer 1122

curse, cursed, cursing 1123
Daniel 1125
Darius 1126
David 1127
day 1129
declare, proclaim, announce 1131
dedicate, dedication, established, devoted 1133
defile, defiled, desecrate 1134
delight 1136
deliver, deliverer, deliverance, delivered 1137
desecrate, desecrated 1139
desert, wilderness 1140
desolate, desolated, desolation, deserted, desolator 1141
destroy, destruction, annihilate 1143
disperse, dispersion, scatter, distributed 1144
donkey, mule 1145
dung, manure 1146
earth, land 1147
Egypt, Egyptian 1149
Elam, Elamites 1151
Eleazar 1152
Eliakim 1153
enslave, slave, bondservant, bondage, bound, bond, bonds, young man, young men, young woman, young women 1154
Ephraim, Ephraimite 1156
eternity, everlasting, eternal, forever 1157
Euphrates River, the River 1160
evil, wicked, wickedness, unpleasant 1161
ewe, ram, sheep, sheepfold, sheepshearer, sheepskin 1163
exalt, exalted, exaltation 1165
exile, exiled 1166
Ezra 1168
faithful, faithfulness, trustworthy 1169
faithless, unfaithful, unfaithfulness 1171
family, household 1173

famine 1174
fast, fasting 1175
fear, afraid, frighten 1177
feast, feasting 1179
fig 1181
firstborn 1182
firstfruit, firstfruits 1184
flock, herd 1186
forgive, forgiven, forgiveness, pardon, pardoned 1187
forsake, forsaken, leave 1189
fountain, source, spring 1191
frankincense 1192
fruit, fruitful, unfruitful 1193
gate, gate bar, gatekeeper, gatepost, gateway 1194
Gibeon, Gibeonite 1196
Gilead, Gileadite 1197
Gilgal 1198
gird, girded, wrapped around, tied up, belt, tuck in belt, put belt around 1199
Girgashites 1200
glory, glorious, glorify 1201
God 1204
god, false god, goddess, idol, idolater, idolatrous, idolatry 1207
gold, golden 1210
good, right, pleasant, better, best, goodness 1211
govern, governor, proconsul, Tirshatha 1213
grace, gracious 1215
grain, grainfields 1217
grape, grapevine 1218
grave, gravedigger, tomb, burial place 1219
Hananiah 1221
harp, harpist 1222
heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly 1223
Hebrew 1225
Hebron, Kiriath Arba 1226
Heshbon 1227

Hezekiah 1228
high priest, chief priest 1229
Hilkiah 1231
Hittite 1232
holy city 1233
Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit 1234
holy, holiness, unholy, sacred 1236
horn, horned, shofar 1239
horse, warhorse, horseback, stallion, steed, mare 1240
horseman 1241
Hoshea 1242
house 1243
house of David 1244
house of God, your house, his house, Yahweh's house, a house for my name, the house for my name, the house, a house, a house of Yahweh 1245
house, household, house of Israel, house of David 1247
household, house 1248
image, carved image, cast metal image, figure, carved figure, statue 1249
incense 1251
inherit, inheritance, heir 1252
iniquity 1254
interpret, interpretation, interpreter 1256
Israel, Israelites 1257
Jebus, Jebusite 1259
Jeremiah 1260
Jericho 1262
Jerusalem 1264
Jew, Jewish 1266
Joab 1268
Joel 1269
Jonathan 1270
Joshua 1271
joy, joyful, rejoice, glad 1273
Judah 1275
Judea, Judah 1276

judge, judgment 1278
just, justice, unjust, injustice, justify, justification 1280
king, kingship 1283
kingdom 1285
know, knew, knowledge, known, unknown, distinguish 1287
labor, labors, labored, laboring, laborer, work, hard work 1289
law, law of Moses, law of Yahweh, law of God 1290
law, principle 1292
Levi, Levite 1293
livestock, animals 1295
loins 1296
lord, Lord, master, sir 1297
lots, casting lots 1300
love, beloved 1301
man of God 1304
manna 1305
memorial, memorial offering 1306
mercy, merciful 1307
messenger 1309
might, mighty, mighty works 1310
miracle, wonder, sign 1312
Mishael 1314
Mizpah 1315
Moab, Moabite 1316
mock, mocker, mockery, ridicule, scoff at, laughingstock 1317
month, monthly 1319
Mordecai 1320
Moses 1321
mourn, mourner, weeping 1323
multiply, multiplied, multiplication 1324
nation 1325
Nebuchadnezzar 1327
Nehemiah 1329
new moon 1330
noble, nobleman, royal official 1331

oath, vow, swear, swearing, swear by, sworn 1332
Obadiah 1334
Og 1335
oil 1336
olive 1337
ordinance, regulation, requirement, strict law, custom 1338
oversee, overseer, keeper 1339
palace, house 1341
palm 1342
people of God 1343
Perizzite 1345
Persia, Persians 1346
Pharaoh, king of Egypt 1347
plea, plead, please, beg, implore 1349
plunder, plundered, spoil, spoils 1350
possess, possessed, possession, dispossess 1351
praise, praised, praiseworthy 1353
pray, prayer 1355
priest, priesthood 1357
profane, profaned 1359
promise, promised 1360
Promised Land 1362
prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess 1364
prostrate 1366
proud, pride, prideful, boast, boastful, boasting 1367
province, provincial 1369
provoke, provoked, provocation 1370
pure, purify, purification 1371
queen 1373
Ramah 1374
rebel, rebellion, rebellious, rebelliousness 1375
receive, welcome, taken up, acceptance 1377
redeem, redeemer, redemption 1379
reign, rule 1381
remnant 1382

repent, repentance 1383
report, reported, tell, reputation 1385
restore, restoration 1386
righteous, righteousness, unrighteous, unrighteousness, upright, uprightness 1388
Rimmon 1392
rule, reign, ruler, prefect, official, leader 1393
Sabbath 1395
sackcloth 1397
sacrifice, offering 1398
Samaria, Samaritan 1400
sanctuary 1402
save, saved, safe, salvation, rescue 1404
Savior, savior 1407
scribe 1409
Sea of Reeds, Red Sea 1411
seal, sealed, unsealed 1412
seed 1414
seek, search, look for 1416
seize, seizure, capture 1417
servant, serve, maidservant, young man, young women 1418
shame, ashamed, disgrace, humiliate, reproach 1420
shield 1423
Sihon 1424
silver 1425
sin offering, purification offering 1426
sin, sinful, sinner, sinning 1427
Sinai, Horeb 1430
slay, slain, slaughter, kill, murder 1432
Solomon 1433
spear, spearmen 1435
statute 1436
stone, stoning 1437
storehouse 1439
stronghold, fortification, fortress, citadel 1440
sword, swordsmen 1442

tax, tribute, taxation, taxpayer, tax collector 1444
temple, house, house of God 1446
tenth, tithe 1448
testimony, testify, witness, eyewitness, evidence 1449
to minister, ministry 1452
tongue, language 1454
trouble, disturb, stir up, distress, hardship, calamity 1456
trumpet, trumpeter 1458
trust, trusted, trustworthy, trustworthiness 1459
tunic 1461
Tyre, Tyrians 1462
understand, understanding, thinking 1463
Ur 1464
Uriah 1465
Uzziah, Azariah 1467
vineyard 1468
wadi 1469
watch (biblical time) 1470
watchtower, tower 1471
wine, wineskin, new wine 1472
winepress 1474
wrath, fury 1475
Yahweh of hosts, Yahweh of armies, God of armies, God of hosts, host of heaven, host of the heavens, Lord of hosts 1477
Yahweh, Yah 1478
year 1481
Zadok 1482
Zechariah (OT) 1483
Zedekiah 1484
Zerubbabel 1485

unfoldingWord® Translation Notes - Nehemiah

Introduction to Nehemiah

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Nehemiah

1. Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem and inspects the walls (1:1–2:20)
2. The people rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (3:1–4:23)
3. Nehemiah helps the poor and provides an unselfish example (5:1–19)
4. Enemies try to slow down the work, but the people finish the walls (6:1–19)
5. Nehemiah lists the people who returned from exile (7:6–73)
6. Ezra reads the law of Yahweh and the people respond (8:1–10:39)
7. Nehemiah lists the people who lived in and around Jerusalem (11:1–36)
8. Nehemiah lists the priests and Levites (12:1–26)
9. The people dedicate the walls of Jerusalem (12:27–47)
10. Nehemiah corrects problems (13:1–31)

What is the Book of Nehemiah about?

A Jew named Nehemiah lived in Persia and worked for King Artaxerxes. Nehemiah received a report that the walls around Jerusalem were broken down. Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem to help rebuild the city walls. The walls around the city helped protect the city against armies and invaders.

How should the title of this book be translated?

The Book of Nehemiah is named for a Jewish leader named Nehemiah. Translators can use the traditional title “Nehemiah.” Or they may choose a more complete title, such as “The Book about Nehemiah.” (See: How to Translate Names)

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Why were Israelites not allowed to marry people from other nations?

Foreigners worshiped many false gods. Yahweh did not allow his people to marry foreigners. He knew this would cause the people of Israel to worship false gods. (See: god, false god, goddess, idol, idolater, idolatrous, idolatry)

Did all of the people of Israel return to their homeland?

Many of the Jews remained in Babylon instead of returning to the Promised Land. Many of them were successful in Babylon and desired to remain there. However, this meant that they were unable to worship Yahweh in Jerusalem as their ancestors had done. (See: Promised Land)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How does the Book of Nehemiah use the term “Israel”?

The Book of Nehemiah uses the term “Israel” to refer to the kingdom of Judah. It was mostly made up of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. The other ten tribes had ended their loyalty to any kings descended from David. God had allowed the Assyrians to conquer the other ten tribes and take them into exile around 275 years earlier. As a result, they mixed with other people groups and did not return to the land of Israel. (See: Israel, Israelites)

Are the events in the Book of Nehemiah told in the order that they actually happened?

Some of the events in the Book of Nehemiah are told in an order that is different than the order in which they actually happened so that the events can be grouped by theme.

Translators should pay attention to notes that signal when events are probably out of chronological order.

Nehemiah 1

Nehemiah 1 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

“The words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah:”

This phrase serves as an introduction to this entire book.

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Repentance

This chapter is a single long record of Nehemiah’s repentance on behalf of the people of Israel. (See: repent, repentance)

Translation Issues in This Chapter

I

In this book, the word “I” always refers to Nehemiah.

Israel

In this book, “Israel” probably does not refer to the northern kingdom of Israel. Neither does it likely refer to the twelve tribes of Israel. Instead, it is probably a reference to Israel in the sense of the surviving people group from the southern kingdom of Judah. At Nehemiah’s time, these would be the people from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin who survived the destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon in 586 BC and the exile of many of them to Babylon. The other tribes had already been scattered throughout the entire Near East where most of them lost their identity as Israel.

Nehemiah 1:1

ULT	UST
The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah: And it happened in the month of Kislev, in year 20, that I myself was in Susa the citadel.	*I am Nehemiah, son of Hacaliah. {I am writing this account.} My story begins in the month of Kislev during the twentieth year of the reign of King Artaxerxes {over the Persian Empire}. I was in the capital city of Susa.*

ULT **Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah**
UST I am Nehemiah, son of Hacaliah
(נְחֶמְיָה בֶּן־חֲכַלְיָה)

Nehemiah is the name of a man, and Hacaliah is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **And it happened**
UST My story begins
(וַיְהִ֡י)

This is a common way of beginning a historical story. Use a natural way of beginning a story about something that actually happened. Alternate translation: [My story begins]

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT **in the month of Kislev**
UST in the month of Kislev
(בְּחֹ֙דֶשׁ־כִּסְלֵ֔ו)

Kislev is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar.

Support Reference: Hebrew Months

ULT **in year 20**
UST during the twentieth year of the reign of King Artaxerxes {over the Persian Empire}
(שְׁנַ֣ת עֶשְׂרִ֔ים)

This is referring to the number of years that Artaxerxes had been reigning as king. You can include this information if you want to make this clear. Most scholars consider this to be the year 445 BC. Alternate translation: [in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes, King of Persia]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **in Susa the citadel**
> UST in the capital city of Susa
> (בְּשׁוּשַׁן הַבִּירָה)

A **citadel** is a fortified castle or palace, usually inside a city. In this case, the city in which this palace was located was also called Susa, because the city was associated with the palace. Since this was where the kings of Persia lived, it was the capital city of their empire. Alternate translation: [the capital city of Susa]

Support Reference: Metonymy

> ULT **in Susa**
> UST in … Susa
> (בְּשׁוּשַׁן)

This was the name of a royal city of the Persian kings.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

> ULT **the citadel**
> UST the capital city of
> (הַבִּירָה)

This means a “castle” or “palace” or “stronghold,” usually inside a city, where a king would live.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Nehemiah	I am Nehemiah
in the month of	in the month of Kislev
in year	during the … year
the citadel	the capital city of

Nehemiah 1:2

ULT	UST
And Hanani, one of my brothers, came, he and men from Judah. And I asked them about the Jews who escaped, who were left behind from the captivity, and about Jerusalem.	*Hanani, one of my brothers, came to see me, along with some other people from the province of Judah. I asked them about the Jews who had escaped and remained in Judah {many years earlier} when soldiers had forced many Jews to go {to Babylon}. I also asked about {the condition of} the city of Jerusalem.*

ULT Hanani
UST Hanani
(חֲנָנִי)

This is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT Hanani, one
UST Hanani, one
(חֲנָנִי אֶחָד)

The term **brother** is often used in this book, but here it most likely means that Hanani was Nehemiah's biological brother.

ULT he and men
UST along with some other people … them
(הוּא וַאֲנָשִׁים)

This was a delegation that had come from one Jewish community to visit another Jewish community in another part of the world. So it's possible that it included women as well as men. Alternate translation: [along with some other people]

Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT from Judah
UST from the province of Judah
(מִיהוּדָה)

Judah was formerly the southern kingdom of the Israelites. It was now a Persian province. Alternate translation: [the province of Judah]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the Jews who escaped, who were left behind from the captivity**
UST the Jews who had escaped and remained in Judah {many years earlier} when soldiers had forced many Jews to go {to Babylon}
(הַיְּהוּדִ֔ים הַפְּלֵטָ֖ה אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁאֲרָ֣ה מִן־הַשִּׁבְיָ֑)

These two phrases mean the same thing. Nehemiah uses them together for clarity to describe one particular group of people, and perhaps also to express his particular concern for them. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [the Jews who had escaped the exile]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **the Jews who escaped, who were left behind from the captivity**
UST the Jews who had escaped and remained in Judah {many years earlier} when soldiers had forced many Jews to go {to Babylon}
(הַיְּהוּדִ֔ים הַפְּלֵטָ֖ה אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁאֲרָ֣ה מִן־הַשִּׁבְיָ֑)

These two phrases refer to the same group of people. This could mean: (1) the few Jews who were taken as exiles to Babylon but who later were able to return and live in Jerusalem or (2) the few Jews who had escaped from those who were trying to take them into exile in Babylon and so remained in Jerusalem. It is probably best to translate this in a way that can include both groups. Alternate translation: [the Jews who had escaped the exile and who remained in Jerusalem]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the captivity**
UST many years earlier} when soldiers had forced many Jews to go {to Babylon}
(הַשִּׁבְיָ֑)

Captivity is an abstract noun that refers to the Jews being taken away from their homeland. Judah had been conquered by the Babylonians about 150 years before this. At that time, the Babylonians took many people away from Judah and relocated them to different parts of their empire. About 50 years later, the Persian Empire conquered Babylon and so the Babylonian empire became the Persian empire. The Jews who had been captured by Babylon now lived in Persia, although some had since returned to Judah. You can translate the idea of **captivity** with a phrase such as “the time when the Jews were taken away” or “the time when soldiers forced many Jews to go to Babylon”

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT and about Jerusalem
UST also … about {the condition of} the city of Jerusalem
(וְעַל־יְרוּשָׁלִָ֑ם)

Jerusalem had been the capital city of the kingdom of Judah. Nehemiah was asking specifically about the physical condition of the buildings and walls in the city, in addition to asking about the welfare of the Jewish community in Judah. Alternate translation: [about the condition of Jerusalem]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
from Judah	from the province of Judah
the Jews	the Jews
the captivity	many years earlier} when soldiers had forced many Jews to go {to Babylon}
Jerusalem	{the condition of} the city of Jerusalem

Nehemiah 1:3

ULT	UST
And they said to me, "The ones left behind, who were left behind from the captivity there in the province, are in great evil and in reproach. And the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire."	*They said to me, "The Jews who escaped the exile and remained in the province of Judah are in a desperate situation. {The Babylonian soldiers} broke down the wall of Jerusalem {to get into the city}, and {they} burned down all of its gates. The people {living there} are defenseless."*

ULT **The ones left behind, who were left behind from the captivity**
UST The Jews who escaped the exile and remained … The people {living there}
(הַנִּשְׁאָרִים אֲשֶׁר־נִשְׁאֲרוּ מִן־הַשִּׁבְיָ֔ה)

These two statements mean similar things. Nehemiah says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to show his concern for this group. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [the Jews who escaped the exile and remained]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **in the province**
UST in the province of Judah
(בַּמְּדִינָ֑ה)

Here **province** refers to Judah as an administrative district within the Persian Empire. Hanani is describing Judah by referring to something associated with it, its status as a province. Alternate translation: [in the province of Judah] or [in Judah]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **are in great evil and in reproach**
UST are in a desperate situation … are defenseless
(בְּרָעָ֣ה גְדֹלָ֔ה וּבְחֶרְפָּ֑ה)

Difficulty and **reproach** mean similar things. Hanani uses them together to emphasize what a desperate situation the people are in. You do not need to repeat both words in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [in a perilous situation]

Support Reference: Doublet

> ULT **are in great evil and in reproach**
> UST are in a desperate situation … are defenseless
> (בְּרָעָה גְדֹלָה וּבְחֶרְפָּה)

The abstract noun **difficulty** refers to a situation that is very hard for the people to live in. It describes a situation that is dangerous and insecure for the people in it. You can translate this idea with an adjective such as “bad.” Alternate translation: [in a very bad situation]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

> ULT **and in reproach**
> UST are in a desperate situation … are defenseless
> (וּבְחֶרְפָּה)

Reproach is an abstract noun that describes how other people would see the situation of the Jews. The situation would lead them to say bad things about them. you could translate this idea with a verb such as “mock.” Alternate translation: [and people are mocking them.]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

> ULT **And the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire**
> UST {The Babylonian soldiers} broke down the wall of Jerusalem {to get into the city}, and {they} burned down all of its gates
> (וְחוֹמַת יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם מְפֻרֶצֶת וּשְׁעָרֶיהָ נִצְּתוּ בָאֵשׁ)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: [armies have broken open the wall of Jerusalem and have set its gates on fire]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

> ULT **And the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire**
> UST {The Babylonian soldiers} broke down the wall of Jerusalem {to get into the city}, and {they} burned down all of its gates
> (וְחוֹמַת יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם מְפֻרֶצֶת וּשְׁעָרֶיהָ נִצְּתוּ בָאֵשׁ)

The implication is that the people are now defenseless. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [The people living there have no protection.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **have been burned with fire**
> UST {they} burned down
> (נִצְּתָ֥ו בָאֵֽשׁ)

If saying that something is burned **with fire** is redundant in your language, you can just say, **completely burned**. Alternate translation: [burned down]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the captivity	escaped the exile and remained … living there
in the province	in the province of Judah
are in … evil	are in a desperate situation … are defenseless
and in reproach	are in a desperate situation … are defenseless
Jerusalem	Jerusalem … the city
and its gates	and … all of its gates

Nehemiah 1:4

ULT	UST
And it happened that, when I heard these words, I sat down and wept, and I mourned for days. And I was fasting and praying before the face of the God of heaven.	*When I heard about these things, I sat down and cried. I could not stop mourning for days. I went without food, and I prayed to the God who is in heaven.*

ULT **And it happened that**
UST When I heard
(וַיְהִי׀)

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next episode in his story. You do not need to represent it this way in your translation, but use a natural way to introduce a new episode in the story. Alternate translation: [So the next thing I did]

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT **when I heard these words**
UST When I heard about these things
(כְּשָׁמְעִי ׀ אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה)

Here **words** refers to the things that were described by the words. Alternate translation: [after hearing about these things]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **I sat down and wept**
UST I sat down and cried
(יָשַׁבְתִּי֙ וָאֶבְכֶּה)

Sitting down likely means that Nehemiah stopped going about his usual business because he was so overcome by grief. Alternate translation: [I could do nothing else but grieve]

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT **and I mourned for days**
UST I could not stop mourning for days
(וָאֶתְאַבְּלָה יָמִים)

This means that Nehemiah kept on grieving. He did not get over being upset. The term “days” here suggests “many days” and it is a figurative expression for “a long time.” Alternate translation: [I could not stop mourning for a long time.]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **fasting and praying**
UST went without food, and … prayed
(צָֽם וּמִתְפַּלֵּ֔ל)

Fasting means going without food. This was something that Jews often did in connection with prayer. It allowed them to concentrate on their prayers, and it showed how important those prayers were. Alternate translation: [I went without food, and I prayed]

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT **and praying before the face of**
UST and … prayed to
(וּמִתְפַּלֵּ֔ל לִפְנֵ֖י)

Here **face** is a metonym for the action of seeing, which is a figurative way of referring to a person's notice or attention to something. Nehemiah is saying that he prayed in order to bring these matters to God's notice or attention. Alternate translation: [and I prayed to]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the God of heaven**
UST the God who is in heaven
(אֱלֹהֵ֥י הַשָּׁמָֽיִם)

Alternate translation: [God, who is in heaven]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and I mourned	I could not stop mourning
for days	for days
fasting	went without food
and praying	and … prayed
the God of	the God who is in
heaven	heaven

Nehemiah 1:5

ULT	UST
And I said, "Ah! Yahweh, the God of heaven, the great and fearsome God, who keeps the covenant and covenant faithfulness to those who love him and to those who keep his commandments:	*I said, "O Yahweh, you are the God who is in heaven. You are the great and awesome God. You always keep your promises faithfully to those who love you and obey your commandments.*

ULT **And I said**
UST I said
(וָאֹמַר)

Here Nehemiah tells what he prayed. Alternate translation: [Then I prayed]

ULT **Ah**
UST O
(אָנָּא)

Nehemiah uses this word to call on God with strong feeling. Alternate translation: [O]

Support Reference: Exclamations

ULT **Yahweh**
UST Yahweh
(יְהוָה)

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the God of heaven**
UST you are the God who is in heaven
(אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם)

Since Nehemiah is addressing God directly, you can use "you" forms in your translation if that is natural. They should be singular but also respectful. Alternate translation: [you are the God who is in heaven]

Support Reference: Forms of You

> ULT **the great and fearsome God**
> UST You are the great and awesome God
> (הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא)

Great and **fearsome** mean similar things. Nehemiah uses them together to emphasize how much respect God deserves. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. However, there is a slight difference in meaning, and you could also bring that out in your translation. “Great” refers to how powerful God is objectively. “Fearsome” reflects how people should respond to God’s greatness subjectively. They should “fear” God. This does not mean that they should be afraid of him, but that they should show him respect and reverence. Alternate translation: [the great and awesome God] or [the God who deserves total respect]

Support Reference: Doublet

> ULT **who keeps the covenant and covenant faithfulness**
> UST You always keep your promises faithfully
> (שֹׁמֵר הַבְּרִית וָחָסֶד)

Covenant and **covenant faithfulness** mean similar things. Nehemiah says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to emphasize how certain it is that God will keep his promises. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. However, there is a slight difference in meaning, and you could bring that out in your translation even if you combine the phrases. The “covenant” is God’s promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their descendants. “Covenant faithfulness” is a character quality of God. He is inwardly disposed to keep all of his promises, and so he always does so faithfully. Therefore, you could say something like, “Because of who you are, you always keep your promises faithfully.”

Support Reference: Parallelism

> ULT **to those who love him and to those who keep his commandments**
> UST to those who love you and obey your commandments
> (לְאֹהֲבָיו וּלְשֹׁמְרֵי מִצְוֹתָיו)

Nehemiah is not describing two different groups. These phrases mean similar things. The repetition is used for clarity and emphasis. Nehemiah says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to express that those who love God show this by keeping his commandments. You can translate this so that it is clear that these words describe one group. Alternate translation: [those who love you and keep your commandments]

Support Reference: Parallelism

> ULT **to those who love him and to those who keep his commandments**
> UST to those who love you and obey your commandments
> (לְאֹהֲבָיו וּלְשֹׁמְרֵי מִצְוֹתָיו)

Since Nehemiah is speaking to Yahweh, the pronouns “him” and “his” can be translated as “you” and “your.” Alternate translation: [who love you and keep your commandments]

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Yahweh	Yahweh
the God of	you are the God who is in
heaven	heaven
and fearsome	and awesome
the … God	You are the … God
the covenant	always … your promises faithfully
and covenant faithfulness	always … your promises faithfully
to those who love him	to those who love you

Nehemiah 1:6

ULT	UST
Please let your ear be attentive and your eyes opened to listen to the prayer of your servant that I am praying before your face today, day and night, on account of the sons of Israel, your servants. And I am confessing on account of the sins of the sons of Israel that we have sinned against you. Even I and the house of my father, we have sinned.	*Now please pay careful attention and listen to my prayer that I am praying to you now, as I have been constantly, for the people of Israel, your chosen people. I must confess the sins that we, the people of Israel, have committed against you. Both I and my family have also sinned.*

ULT **Please let your ear be attentive and your eyes opened**
UST Now please pay careful attention
(תִּהְיֶ֤ינָא אָזְנְךָ֙ קַשֻּׁבֹ֔ת וְעֵינֶ֖יךָ פְּתֻח֑וֹת)

These two phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to urge God to pay attention to him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [pay attention to me,] otherwise "please listen to me and look at me."

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **your ear … attentive**
UST Now please pay careful attention
(אָזְנְךָ֙ קַשֻּׁבֹ֔ת)

This request for God's ear to be attentive refers to the action of listening. In this context, Nehemiah is asking God to listen to his prayer, with the intention that God would do something about the bad situation in Jerusalem.

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **and your eyes opened**
UST Now please pay careful attention
(וְעֵינֶ֖יךָ פְּתֻח֑וֹת)

This request for God's eyes to be open refers to the action of seeing. Seeing is a metaphor meaning knowledge, perception, notice, attention, or judgment. In this case, Nehemiah is asking God to pay attention both to him and to the problem in Jerusalem.

Support Reference: Metonymy

> ULT **the prayer of your servant**
> UST my prayer
> (תְּפִלַּ֣ת עַבְדְּךָ֗)

Nehemiah uses the word servant to refer to himself. This is how a person would address a superior in order to show humility and respect. Alternate translation: [my prayer]

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

> ULT **am praying before your face**
> UST am praying to you
> (מִתְפַּלֵּ֤ל לְפָנֶיךָ֙)

Here **face** is a metonym for the action of seeing, which is figurative way of referring to a person's notice or attention to something. Nehemiah is repeating the fact that he is praying in order to bring these matters to God's notice or attention. Alternate translation: [praying to you]

Support Reference: Metonymy

> ULT **today**
> UST now
> (הַיּ֔וֹם)

This does not necessarily mean on this particular day, but at this time. Alternate translation: [right now]

Support Reference: Idiom

> ULT **today, day and night**
> UST now, as … have been constantly
> (הַיּ֣וֹם יוֹמָ֔ם וָלַ֖יְלָה)

When Nehemiah says that he has prayed both during the day and during the night, he means that he has also prayed at all times in between, that is, constantly. However, he does not mean that he has prayed non-stop all day long and all night long, without doing any other activities such as sleeping or eating. Alternate translation: [constantly,] otherwise "during the day and at night"

Support Reference: Merism

ULT **the sons of Israel**
UST the people of Israel
(בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here **sons** means **descendants**. Alternate translation: [on behalf of the people of Israel]

Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **your servants**
UST your chosen people
(עֲבָדֶיךָ)

In this context, the word **servants** refers to the special role that the people of Israel had in the world as a model community of God's followers. Alternate translation: [your chosen people]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **And … am confessing on account of the sins of the sons of Israel that we have sinned against you**
UST must confess the sins that we, the people of Israel, have committed against you
(וּמִתְוַדָּה עַל־חַטֹּאות בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר חָטָאנוּ לָךְ)

Here again **sons** means **descendants** and the phrase refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: [I must confess the sins that we, the people of Israel, have committed against you]

Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **Even I and the house of my father, we have sinned**
UST Both I and my family have also sinned
(וַאֲנִי וּבֵית־אָבִי חָטָאנוּ)

Among the Israelites, the expression **father's house** or **house of the father** originally described an extended-family group who lived together. It later came to be used more generally to refer to a larger clan within a tribe. In this expression, the word **house** describes all the people descended from a particular person. The term views all of those descendants as if they were one household living together. However, since Nehemiah is stressing his sense of personal responsibility here and identifying closely with the people in this group, he may be using the term in its original sense to refer to his nearest relatives. Alternate translation: [Both I and my family have also sinned]

Support Reference: Metonymy

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Please	Now please pay careful attention

ULT	UST
prayer of	my prayer
the … your servant	my prayer
am praying	am praying
day	as … have been constantly
Israel	Israel
your servants	your chosen people
And … am confessing	must confess
the sins of	the sins
Israel	Israel
we have sinned	have committed
and the house of	and my family
we have sinned	have also sinned

Nehemiah 1:7

ULT	UST
With extreme corruption we have acted corruptly against you. And we have not kept the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments that you commanded Moses your servant.	*We have acted very wickedly toward you. {Many years ago} you gave us your Law through your servant Moses. But we have not obeyed your Law.*

ULT **With extreme corruption we have acted corruptly against you**
UST We have acted very wickedly toward you
(חָבַל חָבַלְנוּ לָךְ)

The repetition here is used for emphasis. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. you could combine them into one phrase, with a word like **very** to convey emphasis. Alternate translation: [We have acted very corruptly toward you]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **With extreme corruption we have acted corruptly against you**
UST We have acted very wickedly toward you
(חָבַל חָבַלְנוּ לָךְ)

You can translate the idea of the abstract noun **corruption** with a verb such as **sinned**. Alternate translation: [We have sinned very much against you]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments**
UST your Law … your Law
(אֶת־הַמִּצְוֹת וְאֶת־הַחֻקִּים וְאֶת־הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים)

These three words mean basically the same thing. Nehemiah uses the repetition to emphasize how comprehensively the Israelites have disobeyed what God commanded them through Moses. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them into a single phrase. Alternate translation: [the law of Moses] otherwise “the commands and rules and laws” (Note: A doublet can involve the use of more than two words.)

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT that you commanded Moses your servant
UST {Many years ago} you gave us … through your servant Moses
(אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָ אֶת־מֹשֶׁה עַבְדֶּךָ)

Moses was the great leader who brought the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt centuries before and gave them God's law. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [that you gave us many years ago through your servant Moses.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
With extreme corruption	We have acted very wickedly
the statutes	your Law … your Law
the judgments	your Law … your Law
Moses	through … Moses
your servant	your servant

Nehemiah 1:8

ULT	UST
Please remember the word that you commanded Moses your servant, saying, 'If you yourselves act unfaithfully, I myself will scatter you among the peoples.	*Please call to mind the promise that you made to your servant Moses. You told him, 'If you Israelites do not obey my commandments, I will take you from your land and make you live among the other nations.*

ULT **Please remember**
UST Please call to mind
(זְכָר־נָא)

Here **remember** is an idiom that means to think about someone and consider what action you can take on their behalf. Nehemiah is not suggesting that God has forgotten the promise he made to Moses. Alternate translation: [Please think about]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the word that you commanded Moses your servant**
UST the promise that you made to your servant Moses … him
(אֶת־הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָ אֶת־מֹשֶׁה עַבְדֶּךָ)

The pronouns **you** and **your** refer to God and so are singular.

Support Reference: Forms of 'You' — Singular

ULT **the word**
UST the promise
(אֶת־הַדָּבָר)

This refers to a promise that God made while giving the law to the people of Israel through Moses. Alternate translation: [the promise]

ULT **If you yourselves act unfaithfully**
UST If you Israelites do not obey my commandments
(אַתֶּם תִּמְעֲלוּ)

The pronouns **you** and **yourselves** refer to the Israelite people, and so they are plural. Alternate translation: [If you Israelites]

Support Reference: Forms of You

> ULT **If you yourselves act unfaithfully**
> UST If you Israelites do not obey my commandments
> (אַתֶּם תִּמְעֲלוּ)

Here infidelity in marriage is used as a figurative description of the people of Israel not keeping God's commandments. Alternate translation: [If you Israelites do not keep my commandments]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **I … will scatter you among the peoples**
> UST will take you from your land and make you live among the other nations
> (אָפִיץ אֶתְכֶם בָּעַמִּים)

The implication is that God would do this to punish the Israelites for breaking his commandments. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [as a punishment, I will take you from your land and make you live among the other nations]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Please	Please
Moses	to … Moses … him
your servant	your servant
If you … act unfaithfully	do not obey my commandments
I … will scatter	will take … from your land and make … live

Nehemiah 1:9

ULT	UST
But if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, although your banished ones are at the extremity of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause my name to dwell there.'	*But if you become loyal to me again and start obeying my commandments once more, then I will bring you back to {your homeland of Judah}. That is the place {from} which I chose to start making myself famous throughout the world. I will do this no matmatter how far you have been taken away.'*

ULT **But if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, although your banished ones are**
UST But if you become loyal to me again and start obeying my commandments once more, then … no matter how far you have been taken away
(וְשַׁבְתֶּם אֵלַי וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם מִצְוֹתַי וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם אִם־יִהְיֶה נִדַּחֲכֶם)

The pronouns **you** and **your** refer to the Israelite people, so they are plural.

Support Reference: Forms of You

ULT **But if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, although your banished ones are**
UST But if you become loyal to me again and start obeying my commandments once more, then … no matter how far you have been taken away
(וְשַׁבְתֶּם אֵלַי וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם מִצְוֹתַי וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם אִם־יִהְיֶה נִדַּחֲכֶם)

Return is a figurative way of saying "become loyal again." Alternate translation: [If you become loyal to me again]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and keep my commandments and do them**
UST and start obeying my commandments
(וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם מִצְוֹתַי וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם)

These two statements mean similar things. They are used together for emphasis. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [start obeying my commandments once more]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **your banished ones**
UST no matter how far you have been taken away
(נִדַּחֲכֶם)

This refers to the exile. Alternate translation: [all of you who were taken away]

ULT **at the extremity of heaven**
UST no matter how far you have been taken away
(בִּקְצֵה הַשָּׁמָיִם)

This means “the most distant point under the sky.” In this culture the sky was understood to be a solid dome with a flat earth beneath it. The phrase is describing a point beyond which no one could go any farther because they would have reached the edge of the dome of the sky. This is an overstatement because even from the perspective of this culture, no one could really reach such a point. Alternate translation: [places very far away]

Support Reference: Hyperbole

ULT **I will gather them and bring them**
UST I will bring you back … I will do this
(אֲקַבְּצֵם והבואתים)

Since God is actually addressing the Israelites here, you can say “you” in the plural. Alternate translation: [I will bring you back]

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT **I will gather them and bring them**
UST I will bring you back … I will do this
(אֲקַבְּצֵם והבואתים)

These two statements mean similar things. They are used together to emphasize that God will definitely keep this promise. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine the phrases. Alternate translation: [I will bring you back]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **to the place where I have chosen to cause my name to dwell there**
UST to {your homeland of Judah}. That is the place {from} which I chose to start making myself famous throughout the world
(אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר בָּחַרְתִּי לְשַׁכֵּן אֶת־שְׁמִי שָׁם)

Here God's name is spoken of as if it were capable of living in a place. The phrase indicates the place from which God chose to start making himself famous throughout the world. You can say something like that as an alternate translation.

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **to the place where I have chosen to cause my name to dwell there**
UST to {your homeland of Judah}. That is the place {from} which I chose to start making myself famous throughout the world
(אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר בָּחַרְתִּי לְשַׁכֵּן אֶת־שְׁמִי שָׁם)

This phrase refers initially to Jerusalem because that was where God chose to put his temple. You could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [to Jerusalem, where I have chosen for my name to remain]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **to the place where I have chosen to cause my name to dwell there**
UST to {your homeland of Judah}. That is the place {from} which I chose to start making myself famous throughout the world
(אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר בָּחַרְתִּי לְשַׁכֵּן אֶת־שְׁמִי שָׁם)

Nehemiah is actually using this phrase to refer to all of Judah. As the book explains later, when the Jews returned there, they each settled in their own former towns, though one in ten of them were recruited to live in Jerusalem. So Judah is being described by something associated with it, the capital city. Alternate translation: [to your homeland of Judah.]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **my name**
UST to start making myself famous throughout the world
(אֶת־שְׁמִי)

Here, **name** is a figurative way of referring to the fame or reputation of a person. Their fame is described by something associated with it, how well known their name is and how people react to hearing it. Alternate translation: [reputation]

Support Reference: Metonymy

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
heaven	no matter how far you have been taken away
I will gather them	I will bring you back … I will do this
I have chosen	I chose

Nehemiah 1:10

ULT	UST
And they are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great power and by your strong hand.	*We are your chosen people, whom you rescued {from slavery in Egypt}. {You did that easily because} you are so very powerful.*

ULT **And they are your servants and your people**
UST We are your chosen people
(וְהֵם עֲבָדֶיךָ וְעַמֶּךָ)

The word **they** refers to the Israelite people. Since Nehemiah is speaking on their behalf and including himself, you could say “we” in your translation, If it would be helpful in your language. If your language marks the distinction, “we” should not include the addressee. Alternate translation: [we are your servants, your chosen people]

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT **And they are your servants and your people**
UST We are your chosen people
(וְהֵם עֲבָדֶיךָ וְעַמֶּךָ)

As in 1:6, **servants** refers to the special role that the people of Israel had as a model community of God’s followers. So these two phrases are basically saying the same thing. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [we are your chosen people]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **whom you redeemed**
UST whom you rescued {from slavery in Egypt}
(אֲשֶׁר פָּדִיתָ)

This is a reference to the way God delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. Alternate translation: [you rescued us from slavery in Egypt]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **by your great power and by your strong hand**
UST {You did that easily because} you are so very powerful
(בְּכֹחֲךָ הַגָּדוֹל וּבְיָדְךָ הַחֲזָקָה)

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Nehemiah uses the repetition to emphasize the intensity of Yahweh's power. Alternate translation: [by your very great strength]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **and by your strong hand**
UST {You did that easily because} you are so very powerful
(וּבְיָדְךָ הַחֲזָקָה)

Here, **hand** represents a person's power, strength, or ability.

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
your servants	your chosen people
you redeemed	you rescued {from slavery in Egypt}

Nehemiah 1:11

ULT	UST
Ah! My Lord, please let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant and to the prayer of your servants, the ones who delight to fear your name. And please cause your servant to succeed today, and give him mercies before the face of this man.” Now as for me, I was a cupbearer for the king.	*O my Lord, please pay careful attention to my prayer and to the prayers of {my fellow Israelites}. We are eager to honor you. Please grant that the king {will agree to the request that I hope to make soon}.” At that time, I was {an important official who served the wine at} the king’s {table}.*

ULT **Ah**
UST O
(אָנָּא)

As in 1:5, Nehemiah uses this word to call on God with strong feeling. Alternate translation: [O]

Support Reference: Exclamations

ULT **My Lord, please let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant**
UST my Lord, please pay careful attention to my prayer
(אֲדֹנָי תְּהִי נָא אָזְנְךָ֤ קַשֻּׁבָה֙ אֶל־תְּפִלַּ֣ת עַבְדְּךָ֔)

Nehemiah calls himself a **servant** and he calls God his **Lord** because this is how a person in his culture would address a superior in order to show humility and respect. See how you translated this in 1:6.

ULT **My Lord**
UST my Lord
(אֲדֹנָי)

This term in Hebrew can be understood as either a noun with a pronoun suffix (“my Lord”) or as a simple title (“Lord”).

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **please let your ear be attentive**
UST please pay careful attention
(תְּהִי נָא אָזְנְךָ֤ קַשֻּׁבָת֙)

As in 1:6, this phrase refers to the action of listening. Alternate translation: [please pay careful attention.]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the prayer of your servant**
UST my prayer
(תְּפִלַּ֣ת עַבְדְּךָ֔)

Alternate translation: [to my prayer]

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT **the prayer of your servants**
UST the prayers of {my fellow Israelites}
(תְּפִלַּ֣ת עֲבָדֶ֗יךָ)

Here, **servants** refers to the rest of the Israelite people who were also praying for Yahweh to act on behalf of his people and on behalf of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [and to the prayers of my fellow Israelites]

ULT **the ones who delight to fear your name**
UST We are eager to honor you
(הַחֲפֵצִ֣ים לְיִרְאָ֔ה אֶת־שְׁמֶ֖ךָ)

Here, **name** represents Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: [who are glad to honor you] or [who are eager to uphold your reputation]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the ones who delight**
UST We are eager to honor you
(הַחֲפֵצִ֣ים)

To delight in doing something means to be glad to do it and to want to do it.

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **to fear**
UST We are eager to honor you
(לְיִרְאָה)

As in 1:5, **fear** means to show respect and reverence.

ULT **And please cause your servant to succeed today, and give him mercies**
UST Please grant that the king {will agree to the request that I hope to make soon}
(וְהַצְלִיחָה־נָּא לְעַבְדְּךָ הַיּוֹם וּתְנֵהוּ לְרַחֲמִים)

Once again Nehemiah calls himself a **servant** to show respect to a superior. He then refers to himself in the third person ("give him") to express humility before God. Alternate translation: [make me successful today and let the king be merciful to me]

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT **And please cause your servant to succeed today, and give him mercies**
UST Please grant that the king {will agree to the request that I hope to make soon}
(וְהַצְלִיחָה־נָּא לְעַבְדְּךָ הַיּוֹם וּתְנֵהוּ לְרַחֲמִים)

These two statements mean similar things. Nehemiah says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to emphasize how important it is for him to have God's help. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [grant that the king will have mercy on me]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **today**
UST Please grant that the king {will agree to the request that I hope to make soon}
(הַיּוֹם)

This does not necessarily mean on this same day. Rather, Nehemiah is praying that God will give him the opportunity to speak with the king soon about helping the Jews in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [soon]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT and give him mercies
UST Please grant that the king {will agree to the request that I hope to make soon}
(וּתְנֵהוּ לְרַחֲמִים)

Here, **him** refers to Nehemiah, who refers to himself in the third person to express his humility before God.

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT before the face of this man
UST Please grant that the king {will agree to the request that I hope to make soon}
(לִפְנֵי הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה)

Here, **face** is a figurative way of referring to the action of seeing, and seeing is a figurative way of describing knowledge, perception, notice, attention, or judgment. In this context, Nehemiah is asking God to cause the king to make a favorable decision in response to a request he plans to make. Alternate translation: [Please grant that the king will agree to the request that I am going to make.]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT this man
UST Please grant that the king {will agree to the request that I hope to make soon}
(הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה)

As we will discover in the next chapter, **this man** refers to Artaxerxes, the king of Persia. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [the king]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT Now as for me, I was a cupbearer for the king
UST At that time, I was {an important official who served the wine at} the king's {table}
(וַאֲנִי הָיִיתִי מַשְׁקֶה לַמֶּלֶךְ)

This is background information about Nehemiah's role in the king's court. Your language may have a special way to mark background information. As a "cupbearer," it was Nehemiah's duty to serve the wine at the king's table, but he was much more than a waiter or butler. When the king gave him this assignment, this showed that he trusted Nehemiah completely to protect him from being poisoned. Nehemiah's work also allowed him to see the king frequently and get to know him. So this was an important office. Alternate translation: [At that time, I was an important official who served the wine at the king's table.]

Support Reference: Background Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
My Lord	my Lord
please	please pay careful attention
the prayer of	my prayer
your servant	my prayer
the prayer of	prayers of
your servants	the … my fellow Israelites
the ones who delight	We are eager to honor you
to fear	We are eager to honor you
please	Please grant that the king {will agree to the request that I hope to make soon}
your servant	Please grant that the king {will agree to the request that I hope to make soon}
mercies	Please grant that the king {will agree to the request that I hope to make soon}
a cupbearer	an important official who served the wine
for the king	at} the king's {table}

Nehemiah 2

Nehemiah 2 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

This chapter begins the account of the construction of the wall. Many scholars believe these chapters teach valuable lessons on leadership (Nehemiah 2–6).

Special concepts in this chapter

Nehemiah's character

Apparently, Nehemiah's character made an impression on the king. It was very unusual for a king to be so concerned with one of his servants. (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

Cultural Customs

In ancient Persia, people thought it was important for their conquered peoples to retain and practice their own cultural customs. It was thought that this independence promoted peace in their vast kingdom. The rebuilding of Jerusalem may have been seen as a way to allow for the Jewish cultural practices.

Yahweh's control

Yahweh is seen as very powerful. He is able to provide for his people even through a foreign king. (See: people of God)

Nehemiah 2:1

ULT	UST
And it happened that, in the month of Nisan, in year 20 of Artaxerxes the king, wine was before his face. And I lifted the wine, and I gave it to the king, and I was not unpleasant before his face.	*I prayed like this for four months. Then one day in the month of Nisan, still in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes, something happened. {When it was time to serve} the wine, I took some and gave it to the king. I had never before looked sad in his presence.*

ULT **And it happened that**
UST I prayed like this for four months. Then one day … something happened
(וַיְהִי)

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next event in his story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses. Alternate translation: [Then one day]

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT **in the month of Nisan, in year 20 of Artaxerxes the king**
UST in the month of Nisan, still in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes
(בְּחֹדֶשׁ נִיסָן שְׁנַת עֶשְׂרִים לְאַרתַּחְשַׁסְתְּא הַמֶּלֶךְ)

Since there were twelve months in the Hebrew calendar, and it was still the same year in the reign of Artaxerxes, this means that four months had gone by since Hanani came and spoke with Nehemiah. The implication is that Nehemiah had been praying all this time in the way described in chapter 1. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [I prayed like this for four months]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **in the month of Nisan**
UST in the month of Nisan
(בְּחֹדֶשׁ נִיסָן)

Nisan is the name of the first month of the Hebrew calendar.

Support Reference: Hebrew Months

ULT **in year 20 of Artaxerxes the king**
UST still in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes
(שְׁנַת עֶשְׂרִים לְאַרְתַּחְשַׁסְתְּא הַמֶּלֶךְ)

This is referring to the number of years that Artaxerxes had been reigning as king. Alternate translation: [in year 20 of the reign of Artaxerxes as the king of Persia]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT **wine was before his face**
UST {When it was time to serve} the wine
(יַיִן לְפָנָיו)

Him means King Artaxerxes. Alternate translation: [when it was time to serve him the wine]

ULT **wine was before his face**
UST {When it was time to serve} the wine
(יַיִן לְפָנָיו)

Here, **face** is a figurative way of referring to the presence of a person. This sentence means that a time had come when Nehemiah needed to serve wine to the king.

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **And I lifted the wine, and I gave it to the king**
UST I took some and gave it to the king
(וָאֶשָּׂא אֶת־הַיַּיִן וָאֶתְּנָה לַמֶּלֶךְ)

Alternate translation: [I poured a cup of wine and gave it to the king]

ULT **and I was not unpleasant before his face**
UST I had never before looked sad in his presence
(וְלֹא־הָיִיתִי רַע לְפָנָיו)

In this context, **unpleasant** refers to a person looking sad or upset. Alternate translation: [I did not look sad in his presence]

Support Reference: Idiom

> ULT **and I was not**
> UST I had never before looked
> (וְלֹא־הָיִיתִי)

The context suggests that **I was not** actually means **I had never been**. It seems that King Artaxerxes always wanted his officials to be cheerful in his presence. That is why Nehemiah became afraid when the king asked him why he was sad. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say "I had never been"

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **was before his face**
> UST {When it was time to serve} the wine
> (לְפָנָיו)

Here, **face** is a figurative way of referring to the presence of a person. Alternate translation: [in his presence]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in the month of	in the month of
in year	still in the … year
of Artaxerxes	of the reign of Artaxerxes
the king	of the reign of Artaxerxes
wine	{When it was time to serve} the wine
the wine	some
to the king	to the king

Nehemiah 2:2

ULT	UST
And the king said to me, "Why is your face unpleasant? Now as for you, you are not sick. This is nothing except unpleasantness of heart." And I was extremely much afraid.	*{No one was supposed to look unhappy in the king's presence. But the king noticed that I did look sad.} So he asked me, "Why are you sad? I can tell that you are not sick. You must be unhappy about something." This made me very afraid.*

ULT **And the king said to me**
UST {No one was supposed to look unhappy in the king's presence. But the king noticed that I did look sad.} So he asked me … I
(וַיֹּאמֶר֩ לִ֨י הַמֶּ֜לֶךְ)

The king must have noticed that Nehemiah looked sad because he asked about it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [But the king noticed that on this day I did look sad. So he asked me]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Why is your face unpleasant**
UST Why are you sad
(מַדּ֥וּעַ ׀ פָּנֶ֗יךָ רָעִ֫ים)

The king refers to Nehemiah by one part of him, his **face**, because the face shows one's emotions. Alternate translation: [Why are you sad]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **Why is your face unpleasant**
UST Why are you sad
(מַדּ֥וּעַ ׀ פָּנֶ֗יךָ רָעִ֫ים)

As in 2:1, **unpleasant** refers to a person looking sad or upset. Alternate translation: [Why are you sad]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Now as for you, you are not sick**
UST can tell that you are not sick
(וְאַתָּה֮ אֵינְךָ֪ חוֹלֶ֫ה)

Alternate translation: [I can tell that you are not sick.]

> ULT **This is nothing except unpleasantness of heart**
> UST You must be unhappy about something
> (אֵין זֶה כִּי־אִם רַע לֵב)

This phrase means **sadness of heart**. The king speaks as if Nehemiah's heart were a living thing capable of having emotions. Alternate translation: [You must be very sad inside]

Support Reference: Personification

> ULT **This is nothing except unpleasantness of heart**
> UST You must be unhappy about something
> (אֵין זֶה כִּי־אִם רַע לֵב)

You can state this in a positive form: Alternate translation: [This can only be sadness]

Support Reference: Double Negatives

> ULT **And I was extremely much afraid**
> UST This made me very afraid
> (וָאִירָא הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד)

The implication is that Nehemiah was very afraid because no one was supposed to look unhappy in the king's presence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [This made me very afraid, because no one was supposed to look unhappy in the king's presence]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the king	the king … the king … he … I
And I was … afraid	This made me very afraid

Nehemiah 2:3

ULT	UST
And I said to the king, "May the king live to eternity! Why should not my face be unpleasant, when the city, the house of the graves of my fathers, is desolate, and its gates have been consumed by fire."	*I replied to the king, "Your Majesty, I hope you will live {a very long time}! {I am sorry, but I cannot help being sad.} I am sad because the city of Jerusalem, the place where my ancestors are buried, lies in ruins. {Our enemies} have burned down its gates."*

ULT **May the king live to eternity**
UST Your Majesty, I hope you will live {a very long time}
(הַמֶּ֥לֶךְ לְעוֹלָ֖ם יִחְיֶ֑ה)

Nehemiah is showing honor to King Artaxerxes. Here, **to eternity** is an exaggeration that refers to a long life. Alternate translation: [Long live the king] or [May you have a long life]

Support Reference: Hyperbole

ULT **May the king live to eternity**
UST Your Majesty, I hope you will live {a very long time}
(הַמֶּ֥לֶךְ לְעוֹלָ֖ם יִחְיֶ֑ה)

Nehemiah addresses the king in the third person as a sign of respect. You can indicate this respect by adding an expression such as "Your Majesty."

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT **Why should not my face be unpleasant**
UST I am sorry, but I cannot help being sad
(מַדּ֣וּעַ לֹא־יֵרַ֤ע פָּנַי֙)

Nehemiah is making a statement, not asking a question. He does not expect the king to give him reasons why he should not be sad. Instead, he is using the question form for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: [I am sorry, but I cannot help being sad]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **Why should not my face be unpleasant**
UST I am sorry, but I cannot help being sad
(מַדּוּעַ לֹא־יֵרַע פָּנָי)

Nehemiah refers to himself by one part of him, his **face**, because the face shows one's emotions. Alternate translation: [I have very good reasons to be sad]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **Why should not my face be unpleasant**
UST I am sorry, but I cannot help being sad
(מַדּוּעַ לֹא־יֵרַע פָּנָי)

Here, **unpleasant** refers to a person looking sad or upset. Alternate translation: [I have very good reasons to be sad]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the city … is desolate**
UST the city of Jerusalem … lies in ruins
(הָעִיר & חֳרֵבָה)

The city means Jerusalem. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [the city of Jerusalem … lies in ruins]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the house of the graves of my fathers**
UST the place where my ancestors are buried
(בֵּית־קִבְרוֹת אֲבֹתַי)

Here, **house** is a figurative way of referring to a place. Alternate translation: [the place where my ancestors are buried]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the house of the graves of my fathers**
UST the place where my ancestors are buried
(בֵּית־קִבְרוֹת אֲבֹתַי)

Here, **fathers** means **ancestors**. Alternate translation: [the place where my ancestors are buried]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **and its gates have been consumed by fire**
UST {Our enemies} have burned down its gates
(וּשְׁעָרֶיהָ אֻכְלוּ בָאֵשׁ)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [fire has destroyed its gates] or [our enemies have burned its gates]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
to the king	to the king
the king	Your Majesty … you
to eternity	a very long time
the house of	the place where
the graves of	are buried
is desolate	lies in ruins
and its gates	its gates
have been consumed	{Our enemies} have burned down

Nehemiah 2:4

ULT	UST
And the king said to me, "For what is this you are seeking?" And I prayed to the God of heaven.	*The king replied to me, "What do you want {me to do for you}?" {Before I answered him}, I prayed to the God who is in heaven.*

ULT For what is this you are seeking
UST What do you want {me to do for you}
(עַל־מַה־זֶּה אַתָּה מְבַקֵּשׁ)

Alternate translation: [What do you want me to do for you]

ULT And I prayed
UST {Before I answered him}, I prayed
(וָאֶתְפַּלֵּל)

The implication is that Nehemiah prayed to God before he answered the king. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Before I answered him, I prayed]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT the God of heaven
UST the God who is in heaven
(אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמָיִם)

Alternate translation: [the God who is in heaven]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the king	The king
are seeking	What do you want {me to do for you}
And I prayed	{Before I answered him}, I prayed
the God of	the God who is in
heaven	heaven

Nehemiah 2:5

ULT	UST
And I said to the king, "If it is good to the king, and if your servant is good before your face, that you would send me to Judah, to the city of the graves of my fathers, and I will build it."	*Then I replied to the king, "If it seems like a good {idea} to you, and if you are pleased with me, then {please} allow me to go to Judah, to Jerusalem. {I would like} to {help my people} rebuild the city where my ancestors are buried."*

ULT **And I said to the king**
UST Then I replied to the king
(וָאֹמַר לַמֶּלֶךְ)

Alternate translation: [Then I replied to the king]

ULT **If it is good to the king**
UST If it seems like a good {idea} to you
(אִם־עַל־הַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב)

This is an idiom that means, "If it seems good in your judgment"

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **If it is good to the king**
UST If it seems like a good {idea} to you
(אִם־עַל־הַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב)

Nehemiah speaks to the king in third person as a form of respect. Alternate translation: [If it seems good in your judgment]

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT **and if your servant is good before your face**
UST and if you are pleased with me
(וְאִם־יִיטַב עַבְדְּךָ לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here, **face** could be referring to the king himself by naming one part of him. What he thought and felt about Nehemiah's request would become evident in his face first, so that would be an appropriate part of him to use to represent all of him. Another possibility is that **face** means the presence of a person. Alternate translation: [if you are pleased with me] or [as I stand here before you]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **and if your servant is good before your face**
UST and if you are pleased with me
(וְאִם־יִיטַב עַבְדְּךָ לְפָנֶיךָ)

Nehemiah refers to himself as **your servant** to show his submission to the king.

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT **that you would send me to Judah**
UST then {please} allow me to go to Judah
(אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁלָחֵנִי אֶל־יְהוּדָה)

Nehemiah is really asking for permission to go, rather than asking the king to send him. But as a sign of respect, he speaks as if the king would be taking the initiative. Alternate translation: [please allow me to go to Judah]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the city of the graves of my fathers**
UST Jerusalem … the city where my ancestors are buried
(עִיר קִבְרוֹת אֲבֹתַי)

This is similar to 2:3. Alternate translation: [the city where my ancestors are buried]

ULT **and I will build it**
UST {I would like} to {help my people} rebuild
(וְאֶבְנֶנָּה)

Nehemiah does not plan to do all of the building himself, but he will be the leader of the work. Alternate translation: [that I and my people may rebuild it]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
to the king	to the king
it is good	it seems like a good {idea} to you
the king	it seems like a good {idea} to you
your servant	and if you are pleased with me
is good	and if you are pleased with me
Judah	Judah
the graves of	are buried

Nehemiah 2:6

ULT	UST
And the king said to me, with the queen sitting beside him, "Until when will be your journey? And when will you return?" And it was good before the face of the king, and he sent me, and I gave to him a time.	*{I was able to speak freely because this was a private meal,} with the queen sitting next to the king. The king asked me, "How long would you be away?" I told him how long I would be gone. That was acceptable to him, and he gave me permission to go. So I told him what day {I wanted to leave}.*

ULT **with the queen sitting beside him**
UST {I was able to speak freely because this was a private meal,} with the queen sitting next to the king
(וְהַשֵּׁגַל ׀ יוֹשֶׁבֶת אֶצְלוֹ)

This detail indicates that this was a private meal, since the queen probably did not attend public banquets with the king. The implication is that the private meal gave Nehemiah the opportunity to speak freely. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. See UST. Alternate translation: [This was a private meal, with the queen sitting next to the king]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Until when will be your journey? And when will you return**
UST How long would you be away
(עַד־מָתַי יִהְיֶה מַהֲלָכֶךָ וּמָתַי תָּשׁוּב)

These two phrases mean the same thing. The king says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to show that he is genuinely interested in Nehemiah's situation. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [How long would you be away?]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **And it was good before the face of the king, and he sent me**
UST I told him how long I would be gone. That was acceptable to him, and he gave me permission to go
(וַיִּיטַב לִפְנֵי־הַמֶּלֶךְ וַיִּשְׁלָחֵנִי)

The implication is that Nehemiah told the king how long he would need to be away. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [I told him how long I would be gone. That was acceptable to him, and he gave me permission to go]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And it was good**
UST I told … how long I would be gone. That was acceptable
(וַיִּיטַב)

As in verse 5, this is an idiom that means, "If it seems like a good idea to you." Alternate translation: [That was acceptable]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **before the face of the king**
UST him … to him … he
(לִפְנֵי־הַמֶּלֶךְ)

Nehemiah refers to the king by one part of him, his **face**, likely because the face shows one's emotions. Alternate translation: [to him]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **and he sent me**
UST and … gave me permission to go
(וַיְשַׁלְּחֵנִי)

As in 2:5, Nehemiah was really asking for permission to go, rather than asking the king to send him. But as a sign of respect, he speaks as if the king took the initiative. Alternate translation: [he gave me permission to go]

ULT **and I gave to him a time**
UST So I told him what day {I wanted to leave}
(וָאֶתְּנָה לוֹ זְמָן)

Alternate translation: [I told him what day I wanted to leave]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the king	The king
with the queen	{I was able to speak freely because this was a private meal,} with the queen sitting next to the king
And it was good	I told … how long I would be gone. That was acceptable
the king	him … him … he

Nehemiah 2:7

ULT	UST
And I said to the king, "If it is good to the king, let letters be given to me for the governors of Beyond-the-River, that they will bring me across as far as where I enter into Judah;	*I also said to the king, "If it seems like a good {idea} to you, {please} give me letters {that I can show} to the governors of {the province} Beyond the River. In these letters, {please tell them} to give me {safe} passage through their province to Judah.*

ULT **And I said**
UST I also said
(וָאוֹמַר)

Alternate translation: [I also said]

ULT **If it is good to the king**
UST If it seems like a good {idea} to you
(אִם־עַל־הַמֶּלֶךְ טוֹב)

Alternate translation: [If it seems like a good idea to you]

ULT **to the king**
UST to the king
(לַמֶּלֶךְ)

Nehemiah addresses the king in the third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: [to you]

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT **let letters be given to me**
UST {please} give me letters
(אִגְּרוֹת יִתְּנוּ־לִי)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [please give me letters]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT for the governors of
UST {that I can show} to the governors of
(עַל־פַּחֲוֹת)

Alternate translation: [that I can show to the governors]

ULT Beyond-the-River
UST {the province} Beyond the River
(עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר)

This is the name of the Persian province that lay west of the Euphrates River. Alternate translation: [the province Beyond the River]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT that they will bring me across as far as where I enter into Judah
UST In these letters, {please tell them} to give me {safe} passage through their province to Judah
(אֲשֶׁר יַעֲבִירוּנִי עַד אֲשֶׁר־אָבוֹא אֶל־יְהוּדָה)

Nehemiah's request is not for these governors to provide him with transportation. Nehemiah explains in 2:9 that the king did that for him. These letter would instead request the governors to allow him safe passage through their provinces. Alternate translation: [Please tell them to give me safe passage through their provinces to Judah]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
to the king	to the king
it is good	If it seems like a good {idea} to you
the king	If it seems like a good {idea} to you
the governors of	the governors of
the-River	{the province} Beyond the River
Judah	Judah

Nehemiah 2:8

ULT	UST
and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the forest that belongs to the king, that he will give to me timbers to lay the beams of the gates of the citadel, which is for the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house into which I will enter." And the king gave to me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.	*{Please} also {write} a letter {for me} to Asaph, the man who takes care of your royal forest {in that area}. {Please tell} him to give me timber to make the beams to support the gates of the fortress that is near the temple. {Please} also {tell him to give me timber} for the city wall and for the house that I will live in." God was with me and helping me, and so the king agreed to {all of} my {requests}.*

ULT and a letter to Asaph
UST {Please} also {write} a letter {for me} to Asaph … him
(וְאִגֶּרֶת אֶל־אָסָף)

Nehemiah is continuing his requests to the king. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [Please also write a letter to Asaph for me]

ULT Asaph
UST Asaph … him
(אָסָף)

This is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT the keeper of
UST the man who takes care of
(שֹׁמֵר)

Alternate translation: [the man who takes care of]

ULT the forest that belongs to the king
UST your royal forest {in that area}
(הַפַּרְדֵּס אֲשֶׁר לַמֶּלֶךְ)

The implication is that this forest was near where Nehemiah was going to need the wood. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [your royal forest in that area]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **the forest that belongs to the king**
> UST your royal forest {in that area}
> (הַפַּרְדֵּס אֲשֶׁר לַמֶּלֶךְ)

Nehemiah addresses the king in the third person as a sign of respect. Alternate translation: [your royal forest]

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

> ULT **that he will give to me timbers**
> UST Please tell … to give me timber
> (אֲשֶׁר יִתֵּן־לִי עֵצִים)

Alternate translation: [Please tell him to give me timber]

> ULT **the citadel, which is for the house**
> UST the fortress that is near the temple
> (הַבִּירָה אֲשֶׁר־לַבַּיִת)

As in 1:1, **citadel** refers to a fortress or stronghold. “House” here describes the temple as the “house” where God lives. Alternate translation: [the fortress that is near the temple]

Support Reference: Metonymy

> ULT **and for the house into which I will enter**
> UST and for the house that I will live in
> (וְלַבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר־אָבוֹא אֵלָיו)

Alternate translation: [and for the house that I will live in]

> ULT **And the king gave to me**
> UST and … the king agreed to {all of} my {requests}
> (וַיִּתֶּן־לִי הַמֶּלֶךְ)

Alternate translation: [The king agreed to all of my requests]

> ULT **according to the good hand of my God upon me**
> UST God was with me and helping me … so
> (כְּיַד־אֱלֹהַי הַטּוֹבָה עָלָי)

Here, **hand** represents strength, power, control, or action. In this context, the expression means that God acted toward Nehemiah in a positive and favorable manner. Alternate translation: [because God's favor was upon me]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **according to the good hand of my God upon me**
> UST God was with me and helping me … so
> (כְּיַד־אֱלֹהַי הַטּוֹבָה עָלָי)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could give this explanation (the reason) before the result that it accounts for, using a connecting word like "so." Alternate translation: [God's favor was upon me, and so the king agreed to all of my requests]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Asaph	Asaph … him
the keeper of	the man who takes care of
belongs to the king	your royal
the gates of	the gates of
the citadel	the fortress
for the house	near the temple
and for the house	and for the house
the king	the king
good	God was with me and helping me … so
my God	God was with me and helping me … so

Nehemiah 2:9

ULT	UST
And I came to the governors of Beyond-the-River, and I gave to them the letters of the king. And the king sent with me officers of the army and horsemen.	*{When I left to travel to Judah,} the king sent along some army officers and soldiers riding on horses {to protect me}. When I reached {the province} Beyond the River, I went {to see} its governors. I showed them the letters the king had given me, {and they gave me safe passage}.*

ULT And I came to the governors of Beyond-the-River
UST When I reached {the province} Beyond the River, I went {to see} its governors
(וָאָבוֹא אֶל־פַּחֲוֹת עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר)

Alternate translation: [When I reached the province Beyond the River, I went to see its governors]

ULT Beyond-the-River
UST {the province} Beyond the River
(עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר)

This is the name of a Persian province. See how you translated it in 2:7.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT and I gave to them the letters of the king
UST I showed them the letters the king had given me, {and they gave me safe passage}
(וָאֶתְּנָה לָהֶם אֵת אִגְּרוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ)

Alternate translation: [I showed them the letters the king had given me.]

ULT and I gave to them the letters of the king
UST I showed them the letters the king had given me, {and they gave me safe passage}
(וָאֶתְּנָה לָהֶם אֵת אִגְּרוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ)

The implication is that when the governors saw the letters from the king, they allowed Nehemiah safe passage. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly.
Alternate translation: [and they gave me safe passage]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And the king sent with me officers of the army and horsemen**
UST When I left to travel to Judah,} the king sent along some army officers and soldiers riding on horses {to protect me}
(וַיִּשְׁלַ֤ח עִמִּי֙ הַמֶּ֔לֶךְ שָׂרֵ֥י חַ֖יִל וּפָרָשִֽׁים)

The implication is that the king did this when Nehemiah left for Judah, and that the purpose was to protect him on his journey. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [When I left to travel to Judah, the king sent along some army officers and soldiers riding on horses to protect me]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And the king sent with me officers of the army and horsemen**
UST When I left to travel to Judah,} the king sent along some army officers and soldiers riding on horses {to protect me}
(וַיִּשְׁלַ֤ח עִמִּי֙ הַמֶּ֔לֶךְ שָׂרֵ֥י חַ֖יִל וּפָרָשִֽׁים)

You can put this information first because it happened before Nehemiah showed his letters to the governors.

Support Reference: Order of Events

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the governors of	its governors
the-River	{the province} Beyond the River
the king	the king
the king	{When I left to travel to Judah,} the king
and horsemen	and soldiers riding on horses

Nehemiah 2:10

ULT	UST
And Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah, the servant, the Ammonite, heard. And it was evil to them, a great evil, that someone had come to seek good for the sons of Israel.	*{One of the people I showed my letters to was} Sanballat the Horonite. {He was the governor of Samaria, the area right next to Judah.} He and his deputy, Tobiah the Ammonite, became very upset when they learned that someone had come to help the people of Israel. {They did not want to see Judah become strong again, because that would be a threat to Samaria.}*

ULT **And Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah, the servant, the Ammonite, heard**
UST {One of the people I showed my letters to was} Sanballat the Horonite. {He was the governor of Samaria, the area right next to Judah.} He and his deputy, Tobiah the Ammonite
(וַיִּשְׁמַע סַנְבַלַּט הַחֹרֹנִי וְטֹובִיָּה הָעֶבֶד הָעַמֹּנִי)

Sanballat was the governor of Samaria, the area right next to Judah. So he was one of the people Nehemiah would have shown a letter from the king authorizing his trip. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [This was how Sanballat the Horonite and his deputy Tobiah the Ammonite learned]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Sanballat the Horonite**
UST Sanballat the Horonite … He
(סַנְבַלַּט הַחֹרֹנִי)

Sanballat is the name of a man, and Horonite is the name of his people group.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and Tobiah … the Ammonite**
UST and … Tobiah the Ammonite
(וְטֹובִיָּה & הָעַמֹּנִי)

Tobiah is the name of a man, and Ammonite is the name of his people group. Tobiah's name occurs over a dozen times in the book of Nehemiah. It will be helpful to your readers if you translate it consistently each time.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and Tobiah, the servant**
UST and his deputy, Tobiah
(וְטֽוֹבִיָּה֙ הָעֶ֔בֶד)

From the role that Tobiah plays in the book, this phrase seems to indicate that he was the official who served directly under Sanballat. Alternate translation: [Tobiah, his deputy]

ULT **And it was evil to them, a great evil, that someone had come to seek good for the sons of Israel**
UST became very upset when they learned that someone had come to help the people of Israel. {They did not want to see Judah become strong again, because that would be a threat to Samaria … }
(וַיֵּ֣רַע לָהֶ֗ם רָעָה֙ גְּדוֹלָ֔ה אֲשֶׁר־בָּ֥א אָדָ֖ם לְבַקֵּ֣שׁ טוֹבָ֑ה לִבְנֵ֖י יִשְׂרָאֵֽל)

The implication is that Sanballat and Tobiah did not want to see Judah become strong again because that would be a threat to the power and influence of Samaria. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly.

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And it was evil to them, a great evil**
UST became very upset when they learned … They did not want to see Judah become strong again, because that would be a threat to Samaria
(וַיֵּ֣רַע לָהֶ֗ם רָעָה֙ גְּדוֹלָ֔ה)

Here **evil** means “bad,” so this expression is the opposite of “if it is good to you” in 2:5 and 2:7. Alternate translation: [They thought it was a bad thing, a very bad thing]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **And it was evil to them, a great evil**
UST became very upset when they learned … They did not want to see Judah become strong again, because that would be a threat to Samaria
(וַיֵּ֣רַע לָהֶ֗ם רָעָה֙ גְּדוֹלָ֔ה)

These two short phrases mean almost the same thing. Nehemiah uses them together for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them. Alternate translation: [they became very upset] or [they did not like it at all]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **that someone had come to seek good for the sons of Israel**
UST that someone had come to help the people of Israel
(אֲשֶׁר־בָּא אָדָם לְבַקֵּשׁ טוֹבָה לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

To seek good for means "to help." Alternate translation: [that someone had come to help the people of Israel]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **for the sons of Israel**
UST the people of Israel
(לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

As in 1:6, **sons** means "descendants." Alternate translation: [the people of Israel]

Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the servant	his deputy
the Ammonite	the Ammonite
And it was evil	became very upset when they learned … They did not want to see Judah become strong again, because that would be a threat to Samaria
a … evil	became very upset when they learned … They did not want to see Judah become strong again, because that would be a threat to Samaria
to seek	to help
good	to help
Israel	Israel

Nehemiah 2:11

ULT	UST
And I came to Jerusalem, and I was there three days.	*But I made it {safely} to Jerusalem {despite their opposition}. I stayed there for three days,*

ULT And I came to Jerusalem
UST But I made it {safely} to Jerusalem {despite their opposition}
(וָאָבוֹא אֶל־יְרוּשָׁלִָם)

Here the text might be implying that Nehemiah made it safely to Jerusalem anyway, despite the opposition of Sanballat and Tobiah. Alternate translation: [But I made it safely to Jerusalem despite their opposition.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT and I was there three days
UST I stayed there for three days
(וָאֱהִי־שָׁם יָמִים שְׁלֹשָׁה)

This phrase seems to look ahead to the next verse, and you could translate it that way and make it the start of the next sentence. Alternate translation: [After I had been there for three days]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Jerusalem	Jerusalem
days	for … days

Nehemiah 2:12

ULT	UST
And I arose in the night, myself and a few men with me, and I did not tell anyone what my God had been giving to my heart to do for Jerusalem. Now there was no animal with me except the animal upon which I was riding.	*I did not say {publicly} what God was leading me to do for Jerusalem. Instead, I got up {secretly} in the night {to inspect the city walls}. I brought {only} a few other men with me. {So that we could work quietly,} the only animal I brought with me was the one that I was riding.*

ULT And I arose in the night

UST Instead, I got up {secretly} in the night {to inspect the city walls}

(וָאָקוּם ׀ לַּיְלָה)

The implication is that Nehemiah went out to inspect the city walls, as described in 1:13–15. The implication is also that he did this at night so that no one would know he was doing it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [I got up secretly in the night to inspect the city walls.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT myself and a few men with me

UST I brought {only} a few other men with me

(אֲנִי֙ וַאֲנָשִׁ֣ים ׀ מְעַט֮ עִמִּי֒)

The word **men** here could conceivably include both men and women. However, for a nighttime mission through the ruins of the city walls, it's likely that Nehemiah brought along only other men. So in this context you could use a word that indicates that. Alternate translation: [I brought only a few other men with me.]

Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT and I did not tell anyone what my God had been giving to my heart to do for Jerusalem

UST I did not say {publicly} what God was leading me to do for Jerusalem

(וְלֹא־הִגַּ֣דְתִּי לְאָדָ֗ם מָ֚ה אֱלֹהַ֣י נֹתֵ֔ן אֶל־לִבִּ֖י לַעֲשׂ֣וֹת לִירוּשָׁלִָ֑ם)

Probably Nehemiah told at least some people, since he brought a few men with him when he went out to inspect the walls. So "not … anyone" might be an exaggeration that emphasizes the secrecy Nehemiah maintained. Alternate translation: [I did not say publicly what God had led me to do for Jerusalem.]

Support Reference: Hyperbole

ULT and I did not tell anyone what my God had been giving to my heart to do for Jerusalem
UST I did not say {publicly} what God was leading me to do for Jerusalem
(וְלֹא־הִגַּדְתִּי לְאָדָם מָה אֱלֹהַי נֹתֵן אֶל־לִבִּי לַעֲשׂוֹת לִירוּשָׁלִָם)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could give this explanation before describing Nehemiah's nighttime mission, because it is the reason that explains the result of him maintaining so much secrecy.

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT what my God had been giving to my heart to do
UST what God was leading me to do
(מָה אֱלֹהַי נֹתֵן אֶל־לִבִּי לַעֲשׂוֹת)

Here, Nehemiah's **heart** represents his thoughts and will. Alternate translation: [what God had inspired me to do] or [what God had led me to do]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT Now there was no animal with me
UST {So that we could work quietly,} the only animal I brought with me was
(וּבְהֵמָה אֵין עִמִּי)

The implication is that this was another measure to maintain secrecy. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [To keep things quiet, there were no other animals with me]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
I did … tell	I did … say
my God	God
for Jerusalem	for Jerusalem
Now … animal	animal
the animal	the one

Nehemiah 2:13

ULT	UST
And I went out at the gate of the valley at night, even to the face of the spring of the dragon, and to the gate of dung. And I was looking intently at the walls of Jerusalem, seeing that they were broken down, and its gates had been consumed by fire.	*That night we went out through the Valley Gate and went past the Dragon Well to the Rubbish Gate. We made a careful inspection of the walls of Jerusalem. We {noted where our enemies} had broken down the walls, and {where} they had burned up the wooden gates.*

ULT **And I went out**
UST we went out … went
(וָאֵצֵאָה)

Even though he brought a few men with him, Nehemiah says "I" because he was the primary person conducting this inspection. In this narrative, he represents the entire group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say "we" in your translation to express this meaning. If your language makes this distinction, "we" would not include the addressee.

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **at the gate of the valley**
UST through the Valley Gate
(בְּשַׁעַר־הַגַּיְא)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [at the Valley Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **even to the face of the spring of the dragon**
UST and … past the Dragon Well
(וְאֶל־פְּנֵי עֵין הַתַּנִּין)

Here, **face** means the front of an object. This means that the group passed in front of the well. Alternate translation: [we went past the Dragon Well]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the spring of the dragon**
UST the Dragon Well
(עֵין הַתַּנִּין)

This is the name of a spring-fed well outside Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Dragon Well]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and to the gate of dung**
UST to the Rubbish Gate
(וְאֶל־שַׁעַר הָאַשְׁפֹּת)

This is the name of another one of the gates of Jerusalem. It seems that rubbish was removed from the city through this gate. Alternate translation: [the Rubbish Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **And I was looking intently at the walls of Jerusalem, seeing**
UST We made a careful inspection of the walls of Jerusalem
(וְאֶהְיֶ֣ה שֹׁבֵ֔ר בְּחוֹמֹ֖ת יְרוּשָׁלַ֑͏ִם)

Alternate translation: [We made a careful inspection of the walls of Jerusalem]

ULT **that they and its gates had been consumed by fire**
UST We {noted where our enemies} had broken down the walls, and {where} they had burned up the wooden gates
(אֲשֶׁר־מפרוצים וּשְׁעָרֶ֖יהָ אֻכְּל֥וּ בָאֵֽשׁ)

You can use active forms to express the meaning of these two passive verbs. Alternate translation: [which our enemies had broken open, and the wooden gates which they had destroyed with fire]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
at the gate of	through … Gate
the spring of	the … Well
the gate of	the … Gate
dung	Rubbish
Jerusalem	Jerusalem
and its gates	the wooden gates

ULT	UST
had been consumed	they had burned up

Nehemiah 2:14

ULT	UST
And I crossed to the gate of the spring and to the pool of the king, but there was no place for the animal under me to pass.	*Then we came to the Fountain Gate and the Royal Pool. {The opening there was so narrow that} the animal I was riding could not get through.*

ULT **the gate of the spring**
UST the Fountain Gate
(שַׁעַר הָעַיִן)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Fountain Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the pool of the king**
UST the Royal Pool
(בְּרֵכַת הַמֶּלֶךְ)

This is the name of a pool outside Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Royal Pool]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **but there was no place for the animal under me to pass**
UST {The opening there was so narrow that} the animal I was riding could not get through
(וְאֵין־מָקוֹם לַבְּהֵמָה לַעֲבֹר תַּחְתָּי)

Alternate translation: [The opening there was so narrow that the animal I was riding could not get through]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the gate of	the … Gate
the spring	Fountain
the king	Royal
for the animal	the animal

Nehemiah 2:15

ULT	UST
And I was going up by the wadi at night, and I was looking intently at the wall. And I turned back, and I came in at the gate of the valley, and I returned.	*So we followed {the path of} the {Kidron} Brook, {even though} it was night. {From there} we were able to look {up} at the wall {and see its condition}. {This route} brought us back {to where we started}. We re-entered {the city} through the Valley Gate, and I went back {home without being seen}.*

ULT **And I was going up by the wadi at night, and I was looking intently at the wall. And I turned back, and I came in at the gate of the valley, and I returned**

UST So we followed {the path of} the {Kidron} Brook, {even though} it was night. {From there} we were able to look {up} at the wall {and see its condition}. {This route} brought us back {to where we started}. We re-entered {the city} through the Valley Gate, and I went back {home without being seen}

(וָאֶהְיֶ֥ה עֹלֶ֛ה בַּנַּ֖חַל לַ֣יְלָה וָאֶהְיֶ֑ה שֹׁבֵ֖ר בַּחוֹמָ֣ה וָאָשׁ֔וּב וָאָבֹ֖א בְּשַׁ֥עַר הַגַּ֖יְא וָאָשֽׁוּב׃)

Nehemiah continues to speak of himself as representative of the whole group. Alternate translation: [Then we came to]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **And I was going up by the wadi at night, and I was looking intently at the wall. And I turned back, and I came in at the gate of the valley, and I returned**

UST So we followed {the path of} the {Kidron} Brook, {even though} it was night. {From there} we were able to look {up} at the wall {and see its condition}. {This route} brought us back {to where we started}. We re-entered {the city} through the Valley Gate, and I went back {home without being seen}

(וָאֶהְיֶ֥ה עֹלֶ֛ה בַּנַּ֖חַל לַ֣יְלָה וָאֶהְיֶ֑ה שֹׁבֵ֖ר בַּחוֹמָ֣ה וָאָשׁ֔וּב וָאָבֹ֖א בְּשַׁ֥עַר הַגַּ֖יְא וָאָשֽׁוּב׃)

Nehemiah is saying that because they could not continue going along the wall, they had to take a different route. You could use an introductory word like “so” to indicate this. Alternate translation: [So we followed the path of the Kidron Brook]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **And I was going up**
UST So we followed {the path of}
(וָאֶהִי עֹלֶה)

Nehemiah continues to speak of himself as representative of the whole group. Alternate translation: [So we followed]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **by the wadi**
UST the {Kidron} Brook
(בַּנַּחַל)

This refers to the Kidron Brook, which runs along the eastern side of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Kidron Brook]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **at night**
UST {even though} it was night
(לַּיְלָה)

The implication may be “even though it was night.” The slippery, uneven ground of the path along the brook would have been more dangerous in the dark. (Nehemiah is writing a chronicle of all the things he did to help the Jews, and he records specific things that required risk or sacrifice.) Alternate translation: [even though it was night.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and I was looking intently at the wall**
UST From there} we were able to look {up} at the wall {and see its condition}
(וָאֶהְיֶ֥ה שֹׁבֵ֖ר בַּחוֹמָֽה)

The implication is that from the brook they were able to look up at the wall and see its condition. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [From there we were able to look up at the wall and see its condition.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And I turned back**
UST This route} brought us back {to where we started}
(וָאָשׁוּב)

This likely means not that Nehemiah turned around, but that this route brought him and the other men back to where they started. So they were able to go all the way around the city and inspect the entire wall. Alternate translation: [This route brought us back to where we started.]

ULT **And I turned back**
UST This route} brought us back {to where we started}
(וָאָשׁוּב)

The other men with Nehemiah also followed him. Alternate translation: [This route brought us back to where we started.]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **and I came in at the gate of the valley**
UST We re-entered {the city} through the Valley Gate
(וָאָבֹוא בְּשַׁעַר הַגֵּיא)

Alternate translation: [We re-entered the city through the Valley Gate]

ULT **at the gate of the valley**
UST through the Valley Gate
(בְּשַׁעַר הַגֵּיא)

See how you translated the name of this gate in 2:13. Alternate translation: [the Valley Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and I returned**
UST and I went back {home without being seen}
(וָאָשׁוּב)

Here the expression probably means “and I went back home.” The implication is that no one had seen him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [and I went back home without being seen.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
by the wadi	the {Kidron} Brook

ULT	UST
at the gate of	through the … Gate

Nehemiah 2:16

ULT	UST
Now the prefects did not know where I had gone or what I was doing. And until this time I had not yet told the Jews, or the priests, or the nobles, or the prefects, or the rest of the doers of the work.	*The city officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing. To that point I had not said {anything about it} to the Jewish leaders, the priests, the leading citizens, or the city officials. {I had not approached} anyone {about} doing the work {of rebuilding the walls}.*

ULT Now the prefects
UST The city officials
(וְהַסְּגָנִים)

Alternate translation: [the city officials]

ULT until this time I had not yet told
UST To that point I had not said {anything about it} … I had not approached
(עַד־כֵּן לֹא הִגַּדְתִּי)

The implication is that Nehemiah had not yet told anyone that he was planning to repair the walls. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [had not yet told … that I was planning to repair the walls.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT And … the Jews, or the priests, or the nobles, or the prefects
UST to the Jewish leaders, the priests, the leading citizens, or the city officials
(וְלַיְּהוּדִים וְלַכֹּהֲנִים וְלַחֹרִים וְלַסְּגָנִים)

The implication seems to be that Nehemiah had not said anything privately about his plans to any particular group of leaders. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [I had not even said anything about it privately to the Jewish leaders, the priests, the leading citizens, or the city officials]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And … the Jews**
UST to the Jewish leaders
(וְלַיְהוּדִים)

While this expression means “the Jewish people” in most of the book, in the contexts here and in 5:17 it seems to mean “the Jewish leaders.” Nehemiah is describing some members of this people group, its leaders, as if they were the whole group. Alternate translation: [the Jewish leaders]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **or the rest of the doers of the work**
UST anyone {about} doing the work {of rebuilding the walls}
(וּלְיֶתֶר עֹשֵׂה הַמְּלָאכָה)

This seems to refer to the people who would later rebuild the walls. Alternate translation: [the others who would later do the work of rebuilding the walls]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Now the prefects	The city officials
did … know	did … know
And … the Jews	to the Jewish leaders
or the priests	the priests
or the nobles	the leading citizens
or the prefects	or the city officials
the work	the work {of rebuilding the walls}

Nehemiah 2:17

ULT	UST
And I said to them, "You see the evil that we are in, that Jerusalem is desolate and its gates have been burned by fire. Come, and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be a reproach."	*{But} now I said to them, "You see what a desperate situation we are in. You see that Jerusalem lies in ruins, and {our enemies} have burned down its gates. {We need to} do something {about this!} {I challenge all of you to} join me in rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem. Then we will not have to feel ashamed any more."*

ULT **And I said to them**
UST {But} now I said to them
(וְאוֹמַר אֲלֵהֶם)

This might imply a contrast between what Nehemiah did previously (kept quiet) and what he did now (told everyone). You could use a word like "but" to indicate this. Alternate translation: [But now I said to them]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **You see the evil that we are in**
UST You see what a desperate situation we are in. You see
(אַתֶּם רֹאִים הָרָעָה אֲשֶׁר אֲנַחְנוּ בָּהּ)

As in 1:3, here the abstract noun **evil** does not refer to something morally bad, but to a difficult situation. You can translate this idea with an adjective such as "desperate." Alternate translation: [You see what a desperate situation we are in]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **You see the evil**
UST You see … a desperate situation … You see
(אַתֶּם רֹאִים הָרָעָה)

Here **you** is plural, referring to all the people mentioned in 2:16.

Support Reference: Forms of You

ULT **Jerusalem is desolate and its gates have been burned by fire**
UST Jerusalem lies in ruins, and {our enemies} have burned down its gates
(יְרוּשָׁלַ֙͏ִם חֳרֵבָ֔ה וּשְׁעָרֶ֖יהָ נִצְּת֥וּ בָאֵֽשׁ)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning here using active forms. Alternate translation: [Jerusalem lies in ruins, and our enemies have burned down its gates]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **Jerusalem is desolate and its gates have been burned by fire**
UST Jerusalem lies in ruins, and {our enemies} have burned down its gates
(יְרוּשָׁלַ֙͏ִם חֳרֵבָ֔ה וּשְׁעָרֶ֖יהָ נִצְּת֥וּ בָאֵֽשׁ)

The implication is, “We need to do something about this!” If it would be helpful in your language, you could add something like that explicitly.

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Come, and let us build the wall of Jerusalem**
UST {We need to} do something {about this!} {I challenge all of you to} join me in rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem
(לְכ֣וּ וְנִבְנֶ֔ה אֶת־חוֹמַ֖ת יְרוּשָׁלָֽ͏ִם)

Come does not mean “come over to this place” but “come on, let’s do this!” Nehemiah is issuing both an invitation and a public challenge to everyone who is listening. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could translate his words in a way that reflects this. Alternate translation: [I challenge all of you to join me in rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem.]

ULT **and we will no longer be a reproach**
UST Then we will not have to feel ashamed any more
(וְלֹא־נִהְיֶ֥ה עֹ֖וד חֶרְפָּֽה)

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **reproach**, you can express the same idea with an adjective such as “ashamed.” Alternate translation: [so we will no longer be ashamed]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the evil	a desperate situation
Jerusalem	Jerusalem

ULT	UST
is desolate	lies in ruins
and its gates	and {our enemies} have burned down its gates
Jerusalem	Jerusalem
a reproach	ashamed

Nehemiah 2:18

ULT	UST
And I declared to them the hand of my God, that it was good upon me, and also the words of the king that he had spoken to me. And they said, "We will rise up and build." And they strengthened their hands for good.	*Then I told them how God had been with me and had been helping me. I also told them how the king had given me permission to come. {When they heard this,} they said, "Let's get going and start building!" They encouraged one another {and committed themselves} to the project.*

ULT **the hand of my God, that it was good upon me**
UST how God had been with me and had been helping me
(אֶת־יַ֣ד אֱלֹהַ֔י אֲשֶׁר־הִיא֙ טוֹבָ֣ה עָלַ֔י)

Here hand is a metaphor meaning strength, power, control, or action. In this context, it means that God had been acting toward Nehemiah in a positive and favorable manner. See how you translated the similar expression in 2:8. Alternate translation: [God's favor had been upon me] or [God had been helping me]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the words of the king that he had spoken to me**
UST how the king had given me permission to come
(דִּבְרֵ֥י הַמֶּ֖לֶךְ אֲשֶׁ֣ר אָמַר־לִ֑י)

Alternate translation: [I also told them how the king had given me permission to come.]

ULT **We will rise up and build**
UST Let's get going and start building
(נָקֽוּם וּבָנִ֔ינוּ)

The implication is that the people responded this way after they heard all that God had done for Nehemiah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [When they heard this, they said, 'Let's get going and begin building!']

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **We will rise up and build**
UST Let's get going and start building
(נָקוּם וּבָנִינוּ)

In this context, **rise up** means to begin something. This was an enthusiastic response. Alternate translation: [Let's get going and start building!]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **And they strengthened their hands for good**
UST They encouraged one another {and committed themselves} to the project
(וַיְחַזְּקוּ יְדֵיהֶם לַטּוֹבָה)

The phrase "strengthened their hands" means that they encouraged one another. "For good" refers to the rebuilding project, which they recognized would be a great benefit. Alternate translation: [So they prepared themselves to do this good work]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **their hands**
UST They encouraged one another
(יְדֵיהֶם)

Hand in this context represents a person's strength or power. Alternate translation: [they prepared themselves]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And I declared	Then I told … I … told
my God	how God had been with me and had been helping me
was good	how God had been with me and had been helping me
the king	how the king had given me permission to come
for good	{and committed themselves} to the project

Nehemiah 2:19

ULT	UST
And Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah, the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian heard, and they mocked us, and they despised us. And they said, "What is this thing that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?"	*Then Sanballat the Horonite, his deputy Tobiah the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian heard {that we had started to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem}. They ridiculed us mercilessly. They said, "What you are doing is not going to amount to anything! {But} you should not be rebelling against the king {like that}!"*

ULT Sanballat the Horonite
UST Sanballat the Horonite
(סַנְבַלַּט הַחֹרֹנִי)

Sanballat is the name of a man, and Horonite is the name of his people group. See how you translated this in 2:10.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT and Tobiah … the Ammonite
UST Tobiah the Ammonite
(וְטֹבִיָּה & הָעַמּוֹנִי)

Tobiah is the name of a man, and Ammonite is the name of his people group.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT and Tobiah, the servant
UST his deputy Tobiah
(וְטֹבִיָּה ו הָעֶבֶד)

See how you translated this in 2:10. Alternate translation: [Tobiah, his deputy]

ULT and Geshem the Arabian
UST and Geshem the Arabian
(וְגֶשֶׁם הָעַרְבִי)

Geshem is the name of a man, and Arabian is the name of his people group.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **And … heard**
UST Then … heard {that we had started to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem}
(וַיִּשְׁמַע)

The implication is that these men learned that the Jews in Jerusalem had started to rebuild the city walls. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [learned that we had started to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and they mocked us, and they despised us**
UST They ridiculed us mercilessly
(וַיִּלְעֲגוּ לָנוּ וַיִּבְזוּ עָלֵינוּ)

These two statements mean similar things. Nehemiah says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to emphasize how contemptuous and dismissive these enemies were being. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [they ridiculed us mercilessly,] otherwise “they made fun of us and ridiculed us”

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **What is this thing that you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king**
UST What you are doing is not going to amount to anything! {But} you should not be rebelling against the king {like that}
(מָה־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם עֹשִׂים הַעַל הַמֶּלֶךְ אַתֶּם מֹרְדִים)

These enemies are not asking questions that they expect Nehemiah to answer. They are using the question form to mock him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate their words as statements. Alternate translation: [What you are doing is not going to amount to anything! But you should not be rebelling against the king!]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **What is this thing that you are doing**
UST What you are doing is not going to amount to anything
(מָה־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם עֹשִׂים)

The implication is that this **thing** is really “nothing” at all. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [What you are doing is not going to amount to anything!]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the servant	his deputy
the Ammonite	the Ammonite
the Arabian	the Arabian
and they mocked	They ridiculed us mercilessly
rebelling	should not be rebelling … like that
the king	the king

Nehemiah 2:20

ULT	UST
And I returned them a word, and I said to them: "The God of heaven, he will cause us to succeed, and we ourselves, his servants, will rise up and build. But for you there is neither share nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem."	*But I answered them {firmly}. I said, "The God who is in heaven is the one who will enable us to complete this project. We are his chosen people. We are going to start rebuilding. But you have absolutely nothing to do with what happens in Jerusalem."*

ULT **And I returned them a word, and I said to them**
UST But I answered them {firmly}. I said
(וָאָשִׁיב אוֹתָם דָּבָר וָאוֹמַר לָהֶם)

This might imply a contrast between the intimidation his enemies wanted him to feel and the courage that God gave him. You could use a word like "but" to indicate this contrast. Alternate translation: [But in response I said]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And I returned them a word, and I said to them**
UST But I answered them {firmly}. I said
(וָאָשִׁיב אוֹתָם דָּבָר וָאוֹמַר לָהֶם)

These two statements mean similar things. Nehemiah says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to emphasize how firmly he responded to these enemies. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [But I answered them firmly]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **The God of heaven, he will cause us to succeed**
UST The God who is in heaven is the one who will enable us to complete this project
(אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם הִוא יַצְלִיחַ לָנוּ)

Alternate translation: [The God who is in heaven will enable us to complete this project.]

ULT **and we ourselves, his servants, will rise up and build**
UST We are his chosen people. We are going to start rebuilding
(וַאֲנַחְנוּ עֲבָדָיו נָקוּם וּבָנִינוּ)

As in 1:6, the word **servants** refers to the special role that the people of Israel had in the world as a model community of God's followers. Alternate translation: [we are his chosen people, and we are going to begin rebuilding]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **we … will rise up and build**
UST We are going to start rebuilding
(נָקוּם וּבָנִינוּ)

As in 2:18, **rise up** means to begin something. Alternate translation: [going to begin rebuilding]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **But for you there is neither share nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem**
UST But you have absolutely nothing to do with what happens in Jerusalem
(וְלָכֶם אֵין־חֵלֶק וּצְדָקָה וְזִכָּרוֹן בִּירוּשָׁלָם)

The terms **share**, **right**, and **memorial** all mean something similar. Nehemiah uses them together for emphasis. The meanings are not entirely certain. "Share" may suggest that the Samaritans are not part of the community. "Right" may mean that they have no legal basis to say what should happen in Jerusalem. "Memorial" could mean that they had have no role in the city's history, or that there is no record of their Israelite ancestry. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these terms. Alternate translation: [But you have absolutely nothing to do with what happens in Jerusalem.] (Note: A doublet can involve the use of more than two terms.)

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **But for you there is neither share nor right nor memorial in Jerusalem**
UST But you have absolutely nothing to do with what happens in Jerusalem
(וְלָכֶם אֵין־חֵלֶק וּצְדָקָה וְזִכָּרוֹן בִּירוּשָׁלָם)

Depending on their meaning, the terms “share,” “right,” and “memorial” may be abstract nouns. If so, you could translate the idea behind them with a phrase that expresses their overall meaning. Alternate translation: [But you have absolutely nothing to do with what happens in Jerusalem.]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
The God of	The God who is in
heaven	heaven
his servants	his chosen people
nor memorial	have absolutely nothing to do with
in Jerusalem	what happens in Jerusalem

Nehemiah 3

Nehemiah 3 Chapter Introduction

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Priests

The priests worked on rebuilding the city. Normally, the priests were exempt from this type of work. Because they helped, it emphasizes that this is a holy work and something done for Yahweh. (See: priest, priesthood; and holy, holiness, unholy, sacred; and Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

Cooperation

Everyone worked on this project. Many names are mentioned to emphasize the cooperation between the different families. Each was given a section of the wall to rebuild.

Nehemiah 3:1

ULT	UST
And Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brothers the priests, and they built the gate of sheep. They themselves consecrated it and erected its doors. And they consecrated it as far as the tower of the hundred and as far as the tower of Hananel.	*{These are the names of the people who helped to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem.} Eliashib the Supreme Priest and his fellow priests began by rebuilding the Sheep Gate. They dedicated this gate {to God, as a symbolic way of dedicating the entire wall.} Then they set the doors of the Sheep Gate in place. They rebuilt the wall as far as the Tower of 100 Soldiers and {beyond that} to the Tower of Hananel. Then they dedicated that part of the wall {to God} as well.*

ULT **And Eliashib the high priest rose up**
UST {These are the names of the people who helped to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem.} Eliashib the Supreme Priest … began
(וַיָּקָם אֶלְיָשִׁיב֩ הַכֹּהֵ֨ן הַגָּד֜וֹל)

This chapter records the names of the people who repaired the wall of Jerusalem, and it describes what parts of the wall they worked on. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly at the start of the chapter. (In this book Nehemiah records everything he did to help the people of Judah, and he prays that God will remember him and bless him for what he did. We see in this chapter that he also wants God to remember and bless everyone else who helped.) Alternate translation: [These are the names of the people who helped to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem. Now Eliashib the high priest rose up]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And … rose up**
UST These are the names of the people who helped to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem … began
(וַיָּקָם)

As in 2:18, **rise up** here means to begin something. Alternate translation: [began to]

Support Reference: Idiom

> ULT **Eliashib**
> UST Eliashib
> (אֶלְיָשִׁיב)

This is the name of a man. It occurs about a dozen times in the book of Nehemiah. It will be helpful to your readers if you translate it consistently each time.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

> ULT **the high priest**
> UST the Supreme Priest
> (הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל)

This means that Eliashib was the leader of the priests who conducted worship in the temple and performed many other religious and community functions. Alternate translation: [the priest who was in charge in the temple]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

> ULT **with his brothers the priests**
> UST and his fellow priests
> (וְאֶחָיו הַכֹּהֲנִים)

Here, **brother** could mean Eliashib's biological brothers, but more likely it refers to the rest of the priests. Alternate translation: [with his fellow priests]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **and they built**
> UST by rebuilding
> (וַיִּבְנוּ)

It is clear from the context that they were not building something brand new. Rather, they were rebuilding the walls that had been knocked down. This expression occurs several times in this chapter. It would be helpful to your readers to translate it consistently. Alternate translation: [rebuilt.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the gate of sheep**
UST the Sheep Gate
(אֶת־שַׁעַר הַצֹּאן)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Sheep Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **They themselves consecrated it**
UST They dedicated this gate {to God, as a symbolic way of dedicating the entire wall … } … they … They
(הֵמָּה קִדְּשׁוּהוּ)

Consecrate means to set something apart for a special purpose. The Sheep Gate was the gate closest to the temple. By dedicating it to God, the priests were symbolically dedicating the entire wall to God. The rebuilt wall would define and protect the city of Jerusalem as the place from which God had chosen to start making himself famous throughout the world, as described in 1:9.

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT **They themselves consecrated it**
UST They dedicated this gate {to God, as a symbolic way of dedicating the entire wall … } … they … They
(הֵמָּה קִדְּשׁוּהוּ)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say explicitly that by dedicating the Sheep Gate to God, the priests were symbolically dedicating the entire wall to God. Alternate translation: [They dedicated this gate to God as a symbolic way of dedicating the entire wall.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and erected its doors**
UST Then … set the doors of the Sheep Gate in place
(וַיַּעֲמִידוּ דְּלָתֶיהָ)

Its refers to the Sheep Gate. **Erected** means “set up” or “set in place.” This expression occurs several times in this chapter. It would be helpful to your readers to translate it consistently. Alternate translation: [set the doors in place.]

ULT **And they consecrated it as far as the tower of the hundred and as far as the tower of Hananel**
UST rebuilt the wall as far as the Tower of 100 Soldiers and {beyond that} to the Tower of Hananel. Then they dedicated that part of the wall {to God} as well
(וַיְקַדְּשׁוּהוּ עַד מִגְדַּל הַמֵּאָה קִדְּשׁוּהוּ עַד מִגְדַּל חֲנַנְאֵל)

In this record of people who helped rebuild the wall, Nehemiah is writing more of a list than a narrative, so he often leaves out one or more words that a sentence normally would have in order to be complete. This sentence seems to mean, "They rebuilt the wall as far as the Tower of the Hundred, and beyond that to the Tower of Hananel. Then they dedicated that part of the wall to God as well." You could say something like that if it would be helpful to your readers.

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **the tower of the hundred … the tower of Hananel**
UST the Tower of 100 Soldiers … the Tower of Hananel
(מִגְדַּל הַמֵּאָה & מִגְדַּל חֲנַנְאֵל)

These are the names of two of the towers on the Jerusalem wall. Alternate translation: [the Tower of the Hundred … the Tower of Hananel]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the tower of the hundred**
UST the Tower of 100 Soldiers
(מִגְדַּל הַמֵּאָה)

It is not clear why this tower had this name. The tower could have been 100 cubits high (about 150 feet or about 45 meters), or 100 soldiers may have been stationed there. Since the reason is unknown, it might be best just to call this the "Tower of the Hundred." However, if it would be confusing to your readers not to explain the meaning of the number, you suggest one of these possibilities. Alternate translation: [The Tower of the Hundred Soldiers] or [The Hundred-Cubit Tower.]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the high priest	the Supreme Priest
the priests	priests
the gate of	the … Gate
sheep	Sheep
They … consecrated it	

ULT	UST
	dedicated this gate {to God, as a symbolic way of dedicating the entire wall … }
they consecrated it	Then they dedicated that part of the wall {to God} as well
the tower of	the Tower of
the tower of	the Tower of

Nehemiah 3:2

ULT	UST
And the men of Jericho built at his hand. And Zaccur the son of Imri built at his hand.	*Next to them, people from Jericho rebuilt {part of the wall}. Next to them, Zaccur, the son of Imri, rebuilt {part of the wall}.*

ULT And … built at his hand
UST Next to them … rebuilt {part of the wall}
(וְעַל־יָדָו֙ בָּנָ֔וּ)

Here, **at his hand** is a figurative way of saying "beside him" or "next to him." This expression occurs several times in this chapter. It would be helpful to your readers to translate it consistently. Alternate translation: [next to them]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT the men of Jericho
UST people from Jericho
(אַנְשֵׁ֥י יְרֵחֽוֹ)

The word **men** here can include women, and it does seem to include them in this context. Elsewhere in this chapter, 3:12 tells us that "Shallum and his daughters repaired part of the wall." So we know that both men and women worked on this project. Alternate translation: [people from Jericho]

Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT Jericho
UST Jericho
(יְרֵחֽוֹ)

Jericho is the name of one of the cities in Judah. We see from this chapter that several cities and towns sent work parties to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT Zaccur the son of Imri
UST Zaccur, the son of Imri
(זַכּ֖וּר בֶּן־אִמְרִֽי)

Zaccur is the name of a man, and Imri is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Jericho	Jericho

Nehemiah 3:3

ULT	UST
And the sons of Hassenaah built the gate of fish. They themselves laid its beams and erected its doors, its bolts, and its bars.	*The sons of Hassenaah rebuilt the Fish Gate. They framed it with {wooden} beams, they set its doors in place, and they installed bolts and bars {for locking the gate}.*

ULT **Hassenaah**
UST Hassenaah
(הַסְּנָאָה)

Hassenaah is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the gate of fish**
UST the Fish Gate
(שַׁעַר הַדָּגִים)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Fish Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and erected its doors, its bolts, and its bars**
UST set its doors in place, and … installed bolts and bars {for locking the gate}
(וַיַּעֲמִידוּ דַּלְתֹתָיו מַנְעוּלָיו וּבְרִיחָיו)

This expression occurs several times in this chapter. It would be helpful to your readers to translate it consistently. Alternate translation: [They framed it with wooden beams, they set its doors in place, and they installed bolts and bars]

ULT **its bolts, and its bars**
UST bolts and bars
(מַנְעוּלָיו וּבְרִיחָיו)

Bolts and bars locked the gates securely. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [bolts and bars for locking the gate]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the gate of	the … Gate

Nehemiah 3:4

ULT	UST
And Meremoth, the son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz, strengthened at their hand. And Meshullam, the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabel, strengthened at their hand. And Zadok the son of Baana strengthened at their hand.	*Next to them, Meremoth, the son of Uriah and grandson of Hakkoz, repaired {part of the wall}. Next to him, Meshullam, the son of Berekiah and grandson of Meshezabel, repaired {part of the wall}. Next to him, Zadok the son of Baana repaired {part of the wall}.*

ULT **strengthened … strengthened … strengthened**
UST repaired {part of the wall} … repaired {part of the wall} … repaired {part of the wall}
(הֶחֱזִיק & הֶחֱזִיק & הֶחֱזִיק)

Strengthened means "repaired." It refers to repairing the wall, although Nehemiah does not specify this. This expression occurs several times in this chapter. It would be helpful to your readers to translate it consistently. Alternate translation: [repaired the next section of the wall]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **Meremoth, the son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz**
UST Meremoth, the son of Uriah and grandson of Hakkoz
(מְרֵמוֹת בֶּן־אוּרִיָּה בֶּן־הַקּוֹץ)

Meremoth is the name of a man, Uriah is the name of his father, and Hakkoz is the name of his grandfather. Alternate translation: [Meremoth, the son of Uriah and grandson of Hakkoz]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Meshullam, the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabel**
UST Meshullam, the son of Berekiah and grandson of Meshezabel
(מְשֻׁלָּם בֶּן־בֶּרֶכְיָה בֶּן־מְשֵׁיזַבְאֵל)

Meshullam is the name of a man, Berechiah is the name of his father, and Meshezabel is the name of his grandfather. Alternate translation: [Meshullam, the son of Berekiah and grandson of Meshezabel]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

> ULT **Zadok the son of Baana**
> UST Zadok the son of Baana
> (צָדוֹק בֶּן־בַּעֲנָא)

Zadok is the name of a man, and Baana is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Zadok	Zadok
Uriah	Uriah

Nehemiah 3:5

ULT	UST
And the Tekoites strengthened at their hand, but their nobles did not bring their necks to the service of their lords.	*Next to him, some people from Tekoa repaired {part of the wall}. But the leading citizens of Tekoa were too proud to do the work that the leaders {of Judah had asked them to do}.*

ULT the Tekoites strengthened
UST some people from Tekoa repaired {part of the wall}
(הֶחֱזִיקוּ הַתְּקוֹעִים)

These phrases refer to repairing the wall. Alternate translation: [Tekoites repaired the wall]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT the Tekoites
UST some people from Tekoa
(הַתְּקוֹעִים)

Tekoa is the name of one of the cities in Judah that sent a work party to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. The Tekoites are the people who came from this city. Alternate translation: [some people from Tekoa]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT but their nobles
UST But the leading citizens of Tekoa
(וַאֲדִירֵיהֶם)

Here Nehemiah is indicating a contrast between what these people should have done and what they actually did. You can use a word like “but” to indicate this. Alternate translation: [But the leading citizens of Tekoa]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT did not bring their necks to the service of their lords
UST were too proud to do the work that the leaders {of Judah had asked them to do}
(לֹא־הֵבִיאוּ צַוָּארָם בַּעֲבֹדַת אֲדֹנֵיהֶם)

Nehemiah does not state the reason why the nobles did not do the work, but it is implied. Alternate translation: [were too proud to do the work]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **did not bring their necks to the service of their lords**
UST were too proud to do the work that the leaders {of Judah had asked them to do}
(לֹא־הֵבִיאוּ צַוָּארָם בַּעֲבֹדַת אֲדֹנֵיהֶם)

Here, the **neck** represents the entire person, and specifically the person at work. The neck is likely associated with work because in this agrarian culture, draft animals would put their necks into yokes so that they could pull plows and drag loads. Alternate translation: [were too proud to do the work]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **to the service of their lords**
UST the work that the leaders {of Judah had asked them to do}
(בַּעֲבֹדַת אֲדֹנֵיהֶם)

Lords here most likely refers to the leaders of Judah, who had asked all the surrounding cities and towns to send work parties to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Another possibility is that the plural form of the word “lord” actually refers to God. Alternate translation: [the work that the leaders of Judah had asked them to do] or [the service of their Lord]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **to the service of**
UST the work
(בַּעֲבֹדַת)

Service is an abstract noun that refers to the work of rebuilding the wall. You can translate the idea behind it with a concrete noun such as “work.”

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
but their nobles	But the leading citizens of Tekoa
their lords	that the leaders {of Judah had asked them to do}

Nehemiah 3:6

ULT	UST
And Joiada the son of Paseah, and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah, strengthened the gate of old. They themselves laid its beams and erected its doors, its bolts, and its bars.	*Joiada the son of Paseah, and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah, repaired the Old Gate. They framed it with {wooden} beams, they set its doors in place, and they installed bolts and bars {for locking the gate}.*

ULT **the gate of old**
UST the Old Gate
(שַׁעַר הַיְשָׁנָה)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Old Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Joiada the son of Paseah**
UST Joiada the … Paseah … son of
(יְוֹיָדָע בֶּן־פָּסֵחַ)

Joiada is the name of a man, and Paseah is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah**
UST son of … and Meshullam the … Besodeiah
(וּמְשֻׁלָּם בֶּן־בְּסוֹדְיָה)

Meshullam is the name of a man, and Besodeiah is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the gate of	the … Gate

Nehemiah 3:7

ULT	UST
And Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, men of Gibeon and the Mizpah, strengthened at their hand, to the seat of authority of the governor of Beyond-the-River.	*Next to them, Melatiah from {the city of} Gibeon, Jadon from {the town of} Meronoth, and other men from Gibeon and from the {city of} Mizpah repaired {part of the wall}. They repaired it as far as the residence of the governor of {the province} Beyond the River.*

ULT **Melatiah the Gibeonite**
UST Melatiah from {the city of} Gibeon
(מְלַטְיָה הַגִּבְעֹנִי)

Melatiah is the name of a man. “Gibeonite” means that he was from the city of Gibeon.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and Jadon the Meronothite**
UST Jadon from {the town of} Meronoth
(וְיָדוֹן הַמֵּרֹנֹתִי)

Jadon is the name of a man. “Meronothite” probably means that he was from the town of Meronoth.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **men of Gibeon and the Mizpah**
UST and other men from Gibeon and from the {city of} Mizpah
(אַנְשֵׁי גִבְעוֹן וְהַמִּצְפָּה)

Gibeon and Mizpah were two of the cities in Judah that sent work parties to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [other people from Gibeon and from the city of Mizpah]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **to the seat of authority of the governor of Beyond-the-River**
UST as far as the residence of the governor of {the province} Beyond the River
(לְכִסֵּא פַּחַת עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר)

This is where the governor would have stayed when visiting Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [as far as the residence of the governor of the province Beyond the River]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the Gibeonite	from {the city of} Gibeon
Gibeon	Gibeon
and the Mizpah	and from the {city of} Mizpah
to the seat of authority of	as far as the residence of
the governor of	the governor of
the-River	{the province} Beyond the River

Nehemiah 3:8

ULT	UST
Uzziel, the son of Harhaiah, of the goldsmiths, strengthened at his hand. And Hananiah, a son of the perfumers, strengthened at his hand. And they restored Jerusalem as far as the broad wall.	*Next to them, Uzziel the son of Harhaiah repaired {part of the wall}. He was one of the goldsmiths, {the workers who made jewelry and other objects from gold}. Next to him, Hananiah repaired {part of the wall}. He was one of the workers who made perfumes. They rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall.*

ULT Uzziel, the son of Harhaiah
UST Uzziel the son of Harhaiah
(עֻזִּיאֵל בֶּן־חַרְהַיָּה)

Uzziel is the name of a man, and Harhaiah is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT of the goldsmiths
UST He was one of the goldsmiths, {the workers who made jewelry and other objects from gold}
(צֹרְפִֽים)

This means that Uzziel was one of the goldsmiths who worked in Jerusalem. A goldsmith is a person who makes jewelry and other objects from gold. The term “goldsmith” occurs several more times in the chapter, and if you include both the name and the definition here, that would help your readers understand it in its later occurrences. Alternate translation: [He was one of the goldsmiths, the workers who made jewelry and other objects from gold.]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT Hananiah
UST Hananiah
(חֲנַנְיָה)

Hananiah is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

> ULT **a son of the perfumers**
> UST He was one of the workers who made perfumes
> (בֶּן־הָרַקָּחִים)

Son of here is a figurative expression that indicates that a person shares the qualities of something. In this case, the book is describing someone who shares the quality of being a maker of perfume. Alternate translation: [one of the perfumers]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **And they restored Jerusalem as far as the broad wall**
> UST They rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall
> (וַיַּעַזְבוּ יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם עַד הַחוֹמָה הָרְחָבָה)

This is the name of one of the features of the Jerusalem wall. This may have been a place where the wall had been built thicker and stronger for strategic purposes. Alternate translation: [They rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Hananiah	Hananiah
And they restored	They rebuilt the wall
Jerusalem	of Jerusalem

Nehemiah 3:9

ULT	UST
And Rephaiah, the son of Hur, the administrator for half of the district of Jerusalem, strengthened at their hand.	*Next to them, Rephaiah the son of Hur repaired {part of the wall}. Rephaiah ruled half of the district of Jerusalem.*

ULT **And Rephaiah, the son of Hur, the administrator for half of the district of Jerusalem, strengthened at their hand**

UST Next to them, Rephaiah the son of Hur repaired {part of the wall}. Rephaiah ruled half of the district of Jerusalem

(וְעַל־יָדָם֙ הֶחֱזִ֣יק רְפָיָ֔ה בֶּן־חֽוּר֙ שַׂ֣ר חֲצִ֔י פֶּ֖לֶךְ יְרוּשָׁלָֽ͏ִם׃)

In this chapter, when Nehemiah names a person, then names their father, and then describes a role, it is the first person, not their father, who was in that role. It will be helpful to your readers if you make this clear. Alternate translation: [Next to them, Rephaiah the son of Hur repaired part of the wall. Rephaiah ruled half of the district of Jerusalem]

ULT **Rephaiah, the son of Hur**

UST Rephaiah the son of Hur … Rephaiah

(רְפָיָ֔ה בֶּן־חֽוּר֙)

Rephaiah is the name of a man, and Hur is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **half of the district of Jerusalem**

UST half of the district of Jerusalem

(חֲצִ֔י פֶּ֖לֶךְ יְרוּשָׁלָֽ͏ִם׃)

The city of Jerusalem and the surrounding area seem to have been divided into districts for administration. This is the name of one of those districts. Apparently it was so large and populous that it had been further divided into two parts, each with its own administrator. Alternate translation: [ruled half the district of Jerusalem]

Support Reference: Fractions

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Jerusalem	Jerusalem

Nehemiah 3:10

ULT	UST
And Jedaiah the son of Harumaph strengthened at their hand, even in front of his house. And Hattush the son of Hashabneiah strengthened at his hand.	*Next to him, Jedaiah the son of Harumaph repaired {the part of the wall} near his house. Next to him, Hattush the son of Hashabneiah repaired {part of the wall}.*

ULT Jedaiah the son of Harumaph
UST Jedaiah the son of Harumaph
(יְדָיָה בֶן־חָרוּמַף)

Jedaiah is the name of a man, and Harumaph is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT And … strengthened at their hand, even in front of his house
UST Next to him … repaired {the part of the wall} near his house
(וְעַל־יָדָם הֶחֱזִיק & וְנֶגֶד בֵּיתוֹ)

Alternate translation: [repaired the next part of the wall, which was in front his house]

ULT Hattush the son of Hashabneiah
UST Hattush the son of Hashabneiah
(חַטּוּשׁ בֶן־חַשַׁבְנְיָה)

Hattush is the name of a man, and Hashabneiah is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
his house	his house

Nehemiah 3:11

ULT	UST
Malkijah the son of Harim, and Hasshub the son of Pahath-Moab, strengthened a second section along with the tower of ovens.	*Malkijah the son of Harim and Hashub the son of Pahath-Moab repaired another section {of the wall}, along with the Tower of the Ovens.*

ULT a second section
UST another section {of the wall}
(מְדָּה שֵׁנִית)

This expression occurs six times in the chapter. Two of those times, someone who has been named earlier is said to have repaired "a second section," suggesting, "in addition to the one they did previously." But the other four times, the people have not been named earlier. So in those cases it might mean "a further section of the wall," beyond the one just described that someone else worked on. Both of these likely meanings could be accommodated by saying something like "another section of the wall"

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT Malkijah the son of Harim
UST Malkijah the son of Harim
(מַלְכִּיָּה בֶן־חָרִם)

Malkijah is the name of a man, and Malkijah is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT and Hasshub the son of Pahath-Moab
UST and Hashub the son of Pahath-Moab
(וְחַשּׁוּב בֶּן־פַּחַת מוֹאָב)

Hasshub is the name of a man, and Pahath-Moab is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT the tower of ovens
UST the Tower of the Ovens
(מִגְדַּל הַתַּנּוּרִים)

This is the name of one of the towers of the Jerusalem wall. Alternate translation: [the Tower of the Ovens]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the tower of	the Tower of

Nehemiah 3:12

ULT	UST
And Shallum, the son of Hallohesh, the administrator for half of the district of Jerusalem, strengthened at his hand, he and his daughters.	*Next to them, Shallum the son of Hallohesh repaired {part of the wall}. Shallum ruled the {other} half of the district of Jerusalem. His daughters worked with him on the repairs.*

ULT Shallum, the son of Hallohesh
UST Shallum the son of Hallohesh … Shallum
(שַׁלּוּם בֶּן־הַלּוֹחֵשׁ)

Shallum is the name of a man, and Hallohesh is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT the administrator for half of the district of Jerusalem
UST ruled the {other} half of the district of Jerusalem
(שַׂר חֲצִי פֶּלֶךְ יְרוּשָׁלָ͏ִם)

This is the name of one of the districts into which the city and the surrounding area were divided. Alternate translation, since the first half has already been named: [Shallum who ruled the other half of the district of Jerusalem]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT he and his daughters
UST His daughters worked with him on the repairs
(הוּא וּבְנוֹתָיו)

Alternate translation: [along with his daughters]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Jerusalem	Jerusalem

Nehemiah 3:13

ULT	UST
Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah strengthened the gate of the valley. They themselves built it and erected its doors, its bolts, and its bars, and a thousand cubits of the wall as far as the gate of dung.	*Hanun and some people from {the city of} Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They rebuilt the gate, they set its doors in place, and they installed bolts and bars {for locking the gate}. They also repaired 1500 feet of the wall, as far as the Rubbish Gate.*

ULT **the gate of the valley**
UST the Valley Gate
(אֵת שַׁעַר הַגַּיְא)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Valley Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Hanun**
UST Hanun
(חָנוּן)

This is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and the inhabitants of Zanoah**
UST and some people from {the city of} Zanoah
(וְיֹשְׁבֵי זָנוֹחַ)

Zanoah is the name of one of the cities in Judah that sent a work party to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the people from Zanoah]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and a thousand cubits**
UST also … 1500 feet
(וְאֶלֶף אַמָּה)

Depending on what would be most helpful to your readers, you could express this either in ancient or modern measurements, “1,000 cubits” or “460 meters” or “1,500 feet.”

Support Reference: Biblical Distance

> ULT **the gate of dung**
> UST the Rubbish Gate
> (שַׁעַר הָאַשְׁפּוֹת)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Dung Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the gate of	Gate
the gate of	the … Gate
dung	Rubbish

Nehemiah 3:14

ULT	UST
And Malkijah, the son of Recab, the administrator for the district of Beth-Hakkerem, strengthened the gate of dung. He himself was building it and erecting its doors, its bolts, and its bars.	*Malkijah. The son of Rechab, repaired the Rubbish Gate. Malkijah ruled the district of Beth-Hakkerem. He rebuilt the gate, he set its doors in place, and he installed bolts and bars {for locking the gate}.*

ULT **the gate of dung**
UST the Rubbish Gate
(שַׁעַר הָאַשְׁפּוֹת)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Dung Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Malkijah, the son of Recab**
UST Malkijah. The son of Rechab … Malkijah
(מַלְכִּיָּה בֶן־רֵכָב)

Malkijah is the name of a man, and Recab is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the district of Beth-Hakkerem**
UST the district of Beth-Hakkerem
(פֶּלֶךְ בֵּית־הַכֶּרֶם)

This is the name of one of the districts into which the city and the surrounding area were divided.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
gate of	the … Gate
the … dung	Rubbish

Nehemiah 3:15

ULT	UST
And Shallun, the son of Kol-Hozeh, the administrator for the district of the Mizpah, strengthened the gate of the spring. He himself was building it and covering it and erecting its doors, its bolts, and its bars, and the wall of the pool of Shelach at the garden of the king even as far as the stairs descending from the city of David.	*Shallun the son of Kol-Hozeh repaired the Fountain Gate. Shallun ruled the district of Mizpah. He rebuilt the gate and put a roof over it, he set its doors in place, and he installed bolts and bars {for locking the gate}. Near the Pool of Siloam he also repaired the wall next to the royal garden, as far as the steps that went down from the City of David.*

ULT **the gate of the spring**
UST the Fountain Gate
(שַׁעַר הָעַיִן)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Fountain Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Shallun, the son of Kol-Hozeh**
UST Shallun the son of Kol-Hozeh … Shallun
(שַׁלֻּון בֶּן־כָּל־חֹזֶה)

Shallun is the name of a man, and Kol-Hozeh is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the district of the Mizpah**
UST the district of Mizpah
(פֶּלֶךְ הַמִּצְפָּה)

This is the name of one of the districts into which the city and the surrounding area were divided.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **He himself was building it and covering it**
UST He rebuilt the gate and put a roof over it, he … he … he
(הוּא יִבְנֶנּוּ וְיִסְרָלֶנּוּ)

Alternate translation: [He rebuilt the gate and put a roof over it]

ULT the wall of the pool of Shelach
UST Near the Pool of Siloam … also … the wall
(חוֹמַ֥ת בְּרֵכַ֖ת הַשֶּׁ֑לַח)

Alternate translation: [the wall that surrounded the Pool of Siloam]

ULT at the garden of the king even as far as the stairs descending from the city of David
UST next to the royal garden, as far as the steps that went down from the City of David
(לְגַן־הַמֶּ֔לֶךְ וְעַד־הַמַּעֲל֖וֹת הַיֹּרְדֹ֥ת מֵעִ֖יר דָּוִֽיד)

Alternate translation: [next to the royal garden, as far as the steps that went down from the City of David.]

ULT from the city of David
UST from the City of David
(מֵעִ֖יר דָּוִֽיד)

This was one part of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the City of David]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the gate of	the … Gate
the Mizpah	Mizpah
the spring	Fountain
the king	royal
from the city of David	from the City of David

Nehemiah 3:16

ULT	UST
After him, Nehemiah, the son of Azbuk, the administrator for half of the district of Beth-Zur, strengthened as far as in front of the graves of David, and as far as the pool that was made, and as far as the house of the mighty men.	*Next to him, Nehemiah the son of Azbuk repaired {the wall} as far as the place opposite the tombs in {the City of} David, to the reservoir that the people had made and the army barracks. Nehemiah ruled half of the district of Beth-Zur.*

ULT **Nehemiah, the son of Azbuk**
UST Nehemiah the son of Azbuk … Nehemiah
(נְחֶמְיָה בֶן־עַזְבּוּק)

Nehemiah is the name of a man, and Azbuk is the name of his father. (This is not the same Nehemiah who wrote this book.)

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the district of Beth-Zur**
UST the district of Beth-Zur
(פֶּלֶךְ בֵּית־צוּר)

This is the name of one of the districts into which the city and the surrounding area were divided.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **as far as in front of the graves of David, and as far as the pool that was made, and as far as the house of the mighty men**
UST as far as the place opposite the tombs in {the City of} David, to the reservoir that the people had made and the army barracks
(עַד־נֶגֶד קִבְרֵי דָוִיד וְעַד־הַבְּרֵכָה הָעֲשׂוּיָה וְעַד בֵּית הַגִּבֹּרִים)

Alternate translation: [as far as the place opposite the tombs in the City of David, to the reservoir that the people had made and the army barracks]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Nehemiah	Nehemiah … Nehemiah
the graves of	the tombs in
David	{the City of} David
the house of	barracks

ULT	UST
the mighty men	the army

Nehemiah 3:17

ULT	UST
After him, the Levites strengthened: Rehum the son of Bani; at his hand, Hashabiah, the administrator for half of the district of Keilah, strengthened for his district;	*Next to him, some Levites repaired {parts of the wall}. One of them was Rehum the son of Bani. Next to them, Hashabiah, who ruled half of the district of Keilah, repaired {a section of the wall} on behalf of the people of his district.*

ULT After him, the Levites strengthened
UST Next to him, some Levites repaired {parts of the wall}
(אַחֲרָיו הֶחֱזִיקוּ הַלְוִיִּם)

The Levites were descendants of Levi. They had the special assignment of helping the priests. Alternate translation: [Next to him, some Levites repaired parts of the wall.]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT Rehum the son of Bani
UST One of them was Rehum the son of Bani
(רְחוּם בֶּן־בָּנִי)

Rehum is the name of a man, and Bani is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT Rehum the son of Bani
UST One of them was Rehum the son of Bani
(רְחוּם בֶּן־בָּנִי)

It seems clear from the context that Rehum was a Levite. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [One of them was Rehum the son of Bani.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT Hashabiah
UST Hashabiah
(חֲשַׁבְיָה)

Hashabiah is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT at his hand, Hashabiah … strengthened for his district
UST Next to them, Hashabiah … repaired {a section of the wall} on behalf of the people of his district
(עַל־יָדוֹ חֲשַׁבְיָה חָזַק לְפִלְכוֹ &)

This does not mean that Hashabiah repaired this part of the wall for the benefit of his district, but rather that he did it leading a work party from his district. Alternate translation: [led a work party from his district that repaired the next section of the wall]

ULT half of the district of Keilah
UST half of the district of Keilah
(חֲצִי־פֶלֶךְ קְעִילָה)

This is the name of one of the districts into which the city and the surrounding area were divided.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the Levites	some Levites

Nehemiah 3:18

ULT	UST
after him, their brothers strengthened, Binnui, the son of Henadad, the administrator for half of the district of Keilah.	*{Some other Levites} repaired the next {section of the wall}. Next to them, Binnui the son of Henadad, who ruled the other half of the district of Keilah, repaired {more of the wall}.*

ULT their brothers strengthened
UST {Some other Levites} repaired … repaired
(הֶחֱזִיקוּ אֲחֵיהֶם)

As in 3:1, **brother** could mean the biological brothers of the Levites mentioned in 3:17. However, more likely it means other Levites. Alternate translation: [some other Levites repaired more of the wall]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT Binnui, the son of Henadad, the administrator for half of the district of Keilah
UST Next to them, Binnui the son of Henadad, who ruled the other half of the district of Keilah
(בִּנּוּי בֶּן־חֵנָדָד שַׂר חֲצִי פֶּלֶךְ קְעִילָה)

Here Nehemiah does not say “at their hand” (next to them) or “strengthened” (repaired another section of the wall). Once again he is leaving out some of what a complete sentence would be expected to contain. you could fill in this information. Alternate translation: [Next to them, Binnui the son of Henadad, who ruled the other half of the district of Keilah, repaired more of the wall.]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT Binnui, the son of Henadad
UST Next to them, Binnui the son of Henadad
(בִּנּוּי בֶּן־חֵנָדָד)

Binnui is the name of a man, and Henadad is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the administrator for half of the district of Keilah**
UST who ruled the other half of the district of Keilah
(שַׂר חֲצִי פֶּלֶךְ קְעִילָה)

This is the name of one of the districts into which the city and the surrounding area were divided.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 3:19

ULT	UST
And at his hand, Ezer, the son of Jeshua, the administrator for the Mizpah, was strengthening a second section opposite the ascent to the armory at the angle.	*Next to him, Ezer the son of Jeshua repaired another section {of the wall}. Ezer ruled the {city of} Mizpah. {He started} from a place in front of the steps that went up to the building for storing weapons, {and he finished} at the place where the wall bends slightly.*

ULT **Ezer, the son of Jeshua**
UST Ezer the son of Jeshua … Ezer … He … he
(עֶזֶר בֶּן־יֵשׁוּעַ)

Ezer is the name of a man, and Jeshua is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the administrator for the Mizpah**
UST ruled the {city of} Mizpah
(שַׂר הַמִּצְפָּה)

Since the district of Mizpah is mentioned in 3:15, this probably means the city of Mizpah.
Alternate translation: [Ezer ruled the city of Mizpah]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **And … was strengthening a second section**
UST repaired another section {of the wall} … started … and … finished
(וַיְחַזֵּק & מִדָּה שֵׁנִית)

Alternate translation: [repaired another section]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT **opposite the ascent to the armory at the angle**
UST from a place in front of the steps that went up to the building for storing weapons … at the place where the wall bends slightly
(מִנֶּגֶד עֲלֹת הַנֶּשֶׁק הַמִּקְצֹעַ)

Alternate translation: [He started from the place in front of the steps that went up to the armory, and he finished at the place where the wall bends slightly.]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the Mizpah	the {city of} Mizpah

ULT	UST
the armory	the building for storing weapons

Nehemiah 3:20

ULT	UST
After him, Baruch the son of Zabbai burned, and strengthened a second section from the angle as far as the opening of the house of Eliashib the high priest.	*Next to him, Baruch the son of Zabbai repaired another section with great enthusiasm, from the bend in the wall as far as the door of the house of Eliashib the Supreme Priest.*

ULT **Baruch the son of Zabbai**
UST Baruch the son of Zabbai
(בָּרוּךְ בֶּן־זַבּי)

Baruch is the name of a man, and Zabbai is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **burned**
UST with great enthusiasm
(הָֽחֱרָה)

Here, **burned** is probably a figurative way of saying that Baruch worked with great enthusiasm. You could say that as an alternate translation.

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and strengthened a second section**
UST repaired another section
(הָֽחֱזִיק & מִדָּה שֵׁנִית)

Alternate translation: [repaired another section]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT **from the angle as far as the opening of the house of Eliashib the high priest**
UST from the bend in the wall as far as the door of the house of Eliashib the Supreme Priest
(מִן־הַמִּקְצוֹעַ עַד־פֶּתַח בֵּית אֶלְיָשִׁיב הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל)

Alternate translation: [from the bend in the wall as far as the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Baruch	Baruch
the house of	the house of

ULT	UST
the high priest	the Supreme Priest

Nehemiah 3:21

ULT	UST
After him, Meremoth, the son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz, strengthened a second section, from the opening of the house of Eliashib even as far as the end of the house of Eliashib.	*Next to him, Meremoth, the son of Uriah and grandson of Hakkoz, repaired another section, from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of that house.*

ULT Meremoth, the son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz
UST Meremoth, the son of Uriah and grandson of Hakkoz
(מְרֵמֹות בֶּן־אוּרִיָּה בֶּן־הַקּוֹץ)

Meremoth is the name of a man, Uriah is the name of his father, and Hakkoz is the name of his grandfather. See how you translated these names in 3:4.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT strengthened a second section
UST repaired another section
(חִזֵּק & מִדָּה שֵׁנִית)

Alternate translation: [repaired another section]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT from the opening of the house of Eliashib even as far as the end of the house of Eliashib
UST from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of that house
(מִפֶּתַח בֵּית אֶלְיָשִׁיב וְעַד־תַּכְלִית בֵּית אֶלְיָשִׁיב)

Alternate translation: [from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of his house]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the house of	the house of
the house of	house

Nehemiah 3:22

ULT	UST
And after him, the priests, the men of the valley, strengthened.	*Next to him, some priests from the area around {Jerusalem} repaired {a section of the wall}.*

ULT the priests, the men of the valley
UST some priests from the area around {Jerusalem}
(הַכֹּהֲנִים אַנְשֵׁי הַכִּכָּר)

Jerusalem is up on a mountain, so the area around it would be “the valley.” Alternate translation: [some priests from the area around Jerusalem]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the priests	some priests

Nehemiah 3:23

ULT	UST
After him, Benjamin and Hasshub strengthened in front of their house. After him, Azariah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, strengthened beside his house.	*Next to them, Benjamin and Hasshub repaired {a section} opposite their house. Azariah, the son of Maaseiah and grandson of Ananiah, repaired the next {section}, beside his house.*

ULT Benjamin and Hasshub strengthened in front of their house
UST Benjamin and Hasshub repaired {a section} opposite their house
(הֶחֱזִיק בִּנְיָמִן וְחַשּׁוּב נֶגֶד בֵּיתָם)

Alternate translation: [repaired a section opposite their house]

ULT Benjamin and Hasshub
UST Benjamin and Hasshub
(בִּנְיָמִן וְחַשּׁוּב)

Benjamin and Hasshub are the names of men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT strengthened beside his house
UST repaired … beside his house
(הֶחֱזִיק & אֵצֶל בֵּיתוֹ)

Alternate translation: [repaired the next section, beside his house]

ULT Azariah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah
UST Azariah, the son of Maaseiah and grandson of Ananiah
(עֲזַרְיָה בֶן־מַעֲשֵׂיָה בֶן־עֲנַנְיָה)

Azariah is the name of a man, Maaseiah is the name of his father, and Ananiah is the name of his grandfather.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
their house	their house
Azariah	Azariah
his house	his house

Nehemiah 3:24

ULT	UST
After him: Binnui the son of Henadad strengthened a second section from the house of Azariah as far as the angle and as far as the corner;	*Next to him, Binnui the son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah to the bend in the wall as far as the bulwark.*

ULT strengthened a second section
UST repaired another section
(הֶחֱזִיק & מִדָּה שֵׁנִית)

Alternate translation: [repaired another section]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT Binnui the son of Henadad
UST Binnui the son of Henadad
(בִּנּוּי בֶּן־חֲנָדָד)

Binnui is the name of a man, and Henadad is the name of his father. See how you translated these names in 3:18.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT from the house of Azariah as far as the angle and as far as the corner
UST from the house of Azariah to the bend in the wall as far as the bulwark
(מִבֵּית עֲזַרְיָה עַד־הַמִּקְצוֹעַ וְעַד־הַפִּנָּה)

Alternate translation: [from the house of Azariah to the bend in the wall as far as the bulwark]

ULT Azariah
UST Azariah
(עֲזַרְיָה)

Azariah is a man, the same one mentioned in verse 23.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
from the house of	from the house of
Azariah	Azariah

Nehemiah 3:25

ULT	UST
Palal the son of Uzai, from opposite the angle and the tower projecting from the upper house of the king which is by the court of the guard; after him, Pedaiah the son of Parosh.	*{Next to him,} Palal the son of Uzai {repaired a section}. He began at the place opposite the bend in the wall {where} the watchtower is taller than the upper palace that King {Solomon built}. That is near the courtyard where the guards live. Next to him, Pedaiah the son of Parosh {repaired a section}.*

ULT Palal the son of Uzai

UST {Next to him,} Palal the son of Uzai {repaired a section}. He
(פָּלָל בֶּן־אוּזַי)

Palal is the name of a man, and Uzai is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT from opposite the angle and the tower projecting

UST began at the place opposite the bend in the wall {where} the watchtower is taller
(מִנֶּגֶד הַמִּקְצוֹעַ וְהַמִּגְדָּל הַיּוֹצֵא)

Here again, Nehemiah leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: [He began at the place opposite the bend in the wall where the watchtower is taller than]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT from the upper house of the king

UST than the upper palace that King {Solomon built}
(מִבֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ הָעֶלְיוֹן)

Here, it is likely that **house** means palace, referring to where the king had lived. Alternate translation: [the upper palace of the king]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT which is by the court of the guard

UST That is near the courtyard where the guards live
(אֲשֶׁר לַחָצֵר הַמַּטָּרָה)

Alternate translation: [That is near the place where the guards stayed]

> ULT **Pedaiah the son of Parosh**
> UST Pedaiah the son of Parosh {repaired a section}
> (פְּדָיָה בֶן־פַּרְעֹשׁ)

Pedaiah is the name of a man, and Parosh is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

> ULT **Pedaiah the son of Parosh**
> UST Pedaiah the son of Parosh {repaired a section}
> (פְּדָיָה בֶן־פַּרְעֹשׁ)

Once again Nehemiah leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: [Next to him, Pedaiah the son of Parosh repaired a section]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and the tower	{where} the watchtower
from the … house of	than the … palace that King {Solomon built}
the king	than the … palace that King {Solomon built}
is by the court of	is near the courtyard

Nehemiah 3:26

ULT	UST
And the Nethinim were dwelling in the Ophel, as far as in front of the gate of water to the east and the projecting tower.	*The temple servants who lived on Ophel {Hill} {repaired the wall} as far as the eastern side of the Water Gate, {where there is} a tall tower.*

ULT And the Nethinim were dwelling in the Ophel, as far as in front of the gate of water to the east and the projecting tower

UST The temple servants who lived on Ophel {Hill} {repaired the wall} as far as the eastern side of the Water Gate, {where there is} a tall tower

(וְהַנְּתִינִים הָיוּ יֹשְׁבִים בָּעֹפֶל עַד נֶגֶד שַׁעַר הַמַּיִם לַמִּזְרָח וְהַמִּגְדָּל הַיּוֹצֵא)

Yet again Nehemiah leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: [The temple servants who lived on Ophel Hill repaired the wall as far as the eastern side of the Water Gate where there is a tall tower]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT And the Nethinim

UST The temple servants

(וְהַנְּתִינִים)

The term **Nethinim** describes servants who worked in the temple. Alternate translation: [the temple servants]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT in the Ophel

UST on Ophel {Hill}

(בָּעֹפֶל)

This is probably the name of a geographic feature, a fortified extension of the hill that the Jerusalem temple was located on. Alternate translation: [Ophel Hill]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT the gate of water

UST the Water Gate

(שַׁעַר הַמַּיִם)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Water Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT and the projecting tower
UST {where there is} a tall tower
(וְהַמִּגְדָּל הַיּוֹצֵא)

The phrase refers to a tall tower that juts out from the wall. Alternate translation: [a tall tower]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the gate of	the … Gate
and the … tower	{where there is} a … tower

Nehemiah 3:27

ULT	UST
After him, the Tekoites strengthened a second section from in front of the high projecting tower even as far as the wall of the Ophel.	*Next to them, the people from Tekoa repaired another section, from opposite the very tall watchtower as far as the wall at Ophel {Hill}.*

ULT strengthened a second section
UST repaired another section
(הֶחֱזִיקוּ & מִדָּה שֵׁנִית)

Alternate translation: [repaired another section of the wall]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT the Tekoites
UST the people from Tekoa
(הַתְּקוֹעִים)

Tekoa is the name of one of the cities in Judah that sent a work party to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. The Tekoites were the people who lived there. See how you translated this name in verse 3:5.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT from in front of the high projecting tower even as far as the wall of the Ophel
UST from opposite the very tall watchtower as far as the wall at Ophel {Hill}
(מִנֶּגֶד הַמִּגְדָּל הַגָּדוֹל הַיּוֹצֵא וְעַד חוֹמַת הָעוֹפֶל)

Alternate translation: [from opposite the very tall watchtower as far as the wall at Ophel Hill]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the … tower	the … watchtower

Nehemiah 3:28

ULT	UST
The priests strengthened from above the gate of horses, a man to the front of his house.	*A group of priests repaired {the wall} starting at the Horse Gate. Each one repaired {the section} in front of his own house.*

ULT The priests
UST A group of priests
(הַכֹּהֲנִֽים)

This does not mean all the priests. Nehemiah is using the name of the whole group to refer to part of it. Alternate translation: [a group of priests]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT from above the gate of horses
UST starting at the Horse Gate
(מֵעַ֥ל ׀ שַׁ֖עַר הַסּוּסִֽים)

The word **above** is used here because the houses of the priests were likely to have been located at a higher elevation than the Horse Gate. Alternate translation: [starting at the Horse Gate]

ULT the gate of horses
UST the Horse Gate
(שַׁ֖עַר הַסּוּסִֽים)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Horse Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT a man to the front of his house
UST Each one … {the section} in front of his own house
(אִ֥ישׁ לְנֶגֶד־בֵּיתֽוֹ)

Here **a man** means “each one.” Alternate translation: [Each one repaired the section in front of his own house.]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the gate of	the … Gate
horses	Horse
The priests	A group of priests

ULT	UST
his house	his own house

Nehemiah 3:29

ULT	UST
After him, Zadok the son of Immer strengthened in front of his house. And after him, Shemaiah, the son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the gate of the east, strengthened.	*Next to them, Zadok the son of Immer repaired {the section} in front of his house. Then Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah, who was the gatekeeper at the East Gate, repaired the next {section}.*

ULT **Zadok the son of Immer**
UST Zadok the son of Immer
(צָדוֹק בֶּן־אִמֵּר)

Zadok is the name of a man, and Immer is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Shemaiah, the son of Shecaniah**
UST Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah
(שְׁמַעְיָה בֶן־שְׁכַנְיָה)

Shemaiah is the name of a man, and Shecaniah is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the keeper of the gate of the east**
UST who was the gatekeeper at the East Gate
(שֹׁמֵר שַׁעַר הַמִּזְרָח)

Alternate translation: [the person who looked after the East Gate] or [the person who opened and closed the East Gate]

ULT **the gate of the east**
UST the East Gate
(שַׁעַר הַמִּזְרָח)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the East Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Zadok	Zadok
his house	his house
the keeper of	who was the gatekeeper at

ULT	UST
the gate of	the … Gate

Nehemiah 3:30

ULT	UST
After him, Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, with Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, strengthened a second section. After him, Meshullam the son of Berechiah strengthened in front of his chamber.	*Next to him, Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another section. Next to them, Meshullam the son of Berechiah repaired {the section} opposite the rooms {where} he {lived}.*

ULT **strengthened a second section**
UST repaired another section
(הֶחֱזִיק & מִדָּה שֵׁנִי)

Alternate translation: [repaired another section]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT **Hananiah the son of Shelemiah**
UST Hananiah the son of Shelemiah
(חֲנַנְיָה בֶן־שֶׁלֶמְיָה)

Hananiah is the name of a man, and Shelemiah is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **with Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph**
UST and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph
(וְחָנוּן בֶּן־צָלָף הַשִּׁשִּׁי)

Hanun is the name of a man, and Zalaph is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **sixth**
UST sixth
(הַשִּׁשִּׁי)

Alternate translation: [son number six]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT **Meshullam the son of Berechiah**
UST Meshullam the son of Berechiah
(מְשֻׁלָּם בֶּן־בֶּרֶכְיָה)

Meshullam is the name of a man, and Berechiah is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **in front of his chamber**
UST the section} opposite the rooms {where} he {lived}
(נֶגֶד נִשְׁכָּתוֹ)

Alternate translation: [in front of the rooms where he stayed]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Hananiah	Hananiah

Nehemiah 3:31

ULT	UST
After him, Malkijah, a son of the goldsmiths, strengthened as far as the house of the Nethinim and the merchants in front of the gate of mustering, even as far as the upper chamber of the corner.	*Malkijah, who was {another} one of the goldsmiths, repaired the next {section}, as far as the building used by the temple servants and the merchants. That building was opposite the Appointment Gate. He {rebuilt the wall} as far as the upper apartments {of this building}, which were on the corner.*

ULT **Malkijah**
UST Malkijah … He
(מַלְכִּיָּה)

Malkijah is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **a son of the goldsmiths**
UST who was {another} one of the goldsmiths
(בֶּן־הַצֹּרְפִֽים)

As in 3:8, this is a figurative way of saying that Malkijah was one of the goldsmiths. In this figure of speech, the "son of" something shares its qualities. Since the goldsmiths have been mentioned previously (in 3:8, where their work is described), you could say as an alternate translation. Alternate translation: [another one of the goldsmiths]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **as far as the house of the Nethinim and the merchants**
UST as far as the building used by the temple servants and the merchants. That building
(עַד־בֵּ֣ית הַנְּתִינִ֔ים וְהָרֹכְלִ֖ים)

Alternate translation: [as far as the building used by the temple servants and the merchants]

ULT **the gate of mustering**
UST the Appointment Gate
(שַׁ֣עַר הַמִּפְקָ֑ד)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. "Mustering" refers to soldiers assembling to go out to battle. Alternate translation: [the Mobilization Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **even as far as the upper chamber of the corner**
UST {rebuilt the wall} as far as the upper apartments {of this building}, which were on the corner
(וְעַד עֲלִיַּת הַפִּנָּה)

Alternate translation: [He built as far as the upper apartments of this building, which were on the corner.]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the house of	the building used by … That building
the gate of	the … Gate

Nehemiah 3:32

ULT	UST
And the goldsmiths and the merchants strengthened between the upper chamber of the corner to the gate of sheep.	*Some of the {other} goldsmiths, along with some merchants, repaired {the last section of the wall} from the corner apartments to the Sheep Gate.*

ULT And … strengthened between the upper chamber of the corner to the gate of sheep
UST repaired {the last section of the wall} from the corner apartments to the Sheep Gate
(וּבֵין עֲלִיַּת הַפִּנָּה לְשַׁעַר הַצֹּאן הֶחֱזִיקוּ)

This brings the description of the repairs back around to where they started. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this explicitly by saying "the last section." Alternate translation: [repaired the last section of the wall, from the corner apartments to the Sheep Gate]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT the goldsmiths and the merchants
UST Some of the {other} goldsmiths, along with some merchants
(הַצֹּרְפִים וְהָרֹכְלִים)

This does not mean all the goldsmiths and all the merchants. Nehemiah is once again using the names of whole groups to refer to parts of them. Alternate translation: [some of the other goldsmiths, along with some traders]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT to the gate of sheep
UST to the Sheep Gate
(לְשַׁעַר הַצֹּאן)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Sheep Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
to the gate of	to the … Gate
sheep	Sheep

Nehemiah 4

Nehemiah 4 Chapter Introduction

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Dedication

The people were so dedicated to rebuilding the walls that they worked with their weapons ready for battle right next to them. Even when they were threatened with an attack, they continued to trust in Yahweh. (See: trust, trusted, trustworthy, trustworthiness)

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Rhetorical Questions

Sanballat uses a series of rhetorical questions. These are intended to show his intense anger against the Israelites. (See: Rhetorical Question)

Nehemiah 4:1

ULT	UST
And it happened that, when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, it burned him, and he was very angry. And he mocked at the Jews.	*When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the {city} wall, he became furious, and he mocked the Jews.*

ULT **And it happened**
UST When
(וַיְהִי׀)

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next event in his story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses.

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT **Sanballat**
UST Sanballat
(סַנְבַלַּט)

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in 2:10.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **that … it burned him, and he was very angry**
UST he became furious
(וַיִּֽחַר לוֹ֙ וַיִּכְעַ֣ס הַרְבֵּ֔ה)

These two phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses the repetition to emphasize how angry Sanballat was. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases and say something like "he became furiously angry" or "he became very angry"

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **that … it burned him, and he was … angry**
UST he became furious
(וַיִּֽחַר לוֹ֙ וַיִּכְעַ֣ס)

Here Nehemiah says that Sanballat's anger was a fire that burned inside of him. Alternate translation: [he became furious]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And he mocked	and he mocked
the Jews	the Jews

Nehemiah 4:2

ULT	UST
And he spoke before the face of his brothers and the army of Samaria, and he said, "What are the feeble Jews doing? Will they restore for themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish in a day? Will they bring to life the stones from piles of dust, when they have been burned?"	*He spoke to the {other provincial} officials and army officers. He said, "These weak Jews will not be able to accomplish anything! They will never restore {the city! Their God} will not help them. They do not realize what a long time it would take to repair {that wall. The only way} they can get stones {is} by pulling them out of rubbish heaps. And {the Babylonians} burned {the city, so those} stones are probably weak {anyway}."*

ULT **And he spoke before the face of**
UST He spoke to
(וַיֹּאמֶר ו לִפְנֵי)

Here, **face** represents the presence of a person. The expression means that Sanballat was speaking personally to the other people who are named. Alternate translation: [He said to]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **his brothers**
UST the {other provincial} officials
(אֶחָיו)

Here, **brother** likely refers to Sanballat's fellow officials. Alternate translation: [the other provincial officials]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and the army of Samaria**
UST and army officers
(וְחֵיל שֹׁמְרוֹן)

Sanballat was not speaking to the entire army. Nehemiah is using all of something to mean part of it. He is referring to the officers of the army by the name of the entire army. Alternate translation: [the army officers]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **What are the feeble Jews doing? Will they restore for themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish in a day**
UST These weak Jews will not be able to accomplish anything! They will never restore {the city! Their God} will not help them. They do not realize what a long time it would take to repair {that wall … }
(מָה הַיְהוּדִים הָאֻמְלָלִים עֹשִׂים הֲיַעַזְבוּ לָהֶם הֲיִזְבָּחוּ הֲיַכְלִיּוּ בַּיּוֹם)

Sanballat actually is making a series of statements, not asking a series of questions. He does not expect the officials and officers to tell him what the Jews are doing and whether they will succeed. Instead, he is using the question form to mock the Jews. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the ideas in his questions as a series of statements. Alternate translation: [These feeble Jews can accomplish nothing. They will never restore the city for themselves. They will not offer sacrifices. They will not finish the work any time soon.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **Will they sacrifice**
UST { … Their God} will not help them
(הֲיִזְבָּחוּ)

The meaning of this phrase is not entirely clear. It could be that Sanballat is speaking of the Jews offering sacrifices to try to entice God to make their project successful. Alternate translation: [They will not get their God to help them]

ULT **Will they finish in a day**
UST They do not realize what a long time it would take to repair {that wall … }
(הֲיַכְלִיּוּ בַּיּוֹם)

In this context, the expression “day” means “a short time.” Alternate translation: [any time soon]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Will they bring to life the stones from piles of dust, when they have been burned**
UST The only way} they can get stones {is} by pulling them out of rubbish heaps. And {the Babylonians} burned {the city, so those} stones are probably weak {anyway}
(הֲיַחֲיִיּוּ אֶת־הָאֲבָנִים מֵעָרְמוֹת הֶעָפָר וְהֵמָּה שְׂרוּפוֹת)

Here Sanballat is speaking of stones as if they could come to life and stand up straight to form the wall. Alternate translation: [They will not be able to rebuild the city walls from useless stones that were burned and turned into rubble]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **from piles of dust, when they have been burned**
UST The only way} they can get stones {is} by pulling them out of rubbish heaps. And {the Babylonians} burned {the city, so those} stones are probably weak {anyway}
(מֵעָרְמוֹת הֶעָפָר וְהֵמָּה שְׂרוּפוֹת)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: [useless stones that someone has burned and turned into rubble]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Samaria	and army officers
the … Jews	These weak Jews will not be able to accomplish anything
Will they restore	They will never restore {the city … }
Will they sacrifice	{ … Their God} will not help them
in a day	They do not realize what a long time it would take to repair {that wall … }
the stones	{ … The only way} they can get stones {is} by pulling them out of rubbish heaps

Nehemiah 4:3

ULT	UST
And Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him. And he said, "Yes, if a fox goes up on what they are building, then he would break down their wall of stones!"	*Tobiah the Ammonite was standing beside Sanballat. He made fun of the Jews by saying, "Right! The wall that they are building {is so weak} that if a fox walked across the top {of it}, it would fall down!"*

ULT **And Tobiah the Ammonite**
UST Tobiah the Ammonite
(וְטוֹבִיָּה הָעַמּוֹנִי)

This is a man's name. See how you translated this in 2:10.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Yes**
UST Right
(גַּם)

This word indicates that Tobiah agrees with Sanballat and that he is going to say something to support him. Alternate translation: [That's right!]

ULT **if a fox goes up on what they are building, then he would break down their wall of stones**
UST The wall that they are building {is so weak} that if a fox walked across the top {of it}, it would fall down
(אֲשֶׁר־הֵם בּוֹנִים אִם־יַעֲלֶה שׁוּעָל וּפָרַץ חוֹמַת אַבְנֵיהֶם)

Tobiah probably does not believe that the wall would really fall down if a fox walked along the top of it. He is exaggerating to mock the work the Jews are doing. You could use a plain expression in your translation instead, such as, "It would not take much to make that wall fall over." However, Tobiah's expression is so colorful that you may want to retain it, but be sure that your readers understand he is exaggerating. Alternate translation: [Tobiah made fun of the Jews by saying, 'That wall they are building is so weak that if a fox climbed up on it, the stones would fall to the ground']

Support Reference: Hyperbole

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the Ammonite	the Ammonite

ULT	UST
their … stones	The wall … is so weak … it

Nehemiah 4:4

ULT	UST
Hear, our God, that we are a contempt, and cause their taunts to return on their heads! And give them for plunder in a land of captivity.	*{When I heard about what they were saying, I prayed to God and said,} "O our God, listen {to the way} they are mocking us! Make {them fail in their attempts to stop us,} so that {other} people will mock them! Allow their enemies to capture them and force them to go to a foreign land!*

ULT Hear, our God

UST {When I heard about what they were saying, I prayed to God and said,} "O our God, listen (שְׁמַע אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

Nehemiah starts talking directly to God at this point in the book. The implication is that he heard about what Sanballat and Tobiah were saying, and in response, he prayed the prayer that is recorded here in 2:4–5. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [When I heard about what they were saying, I prayed and said, 'Listen, our God']

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT Hear, our God

UST {When I heard about what they were saying, I prayed to God and said,} "O our God, listen (שְׁמַע אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

Nehemiah's prayer here is a particular type of aside. In an aside, someone who is speaking to or about one person or group will pause and speak confidentially to somebody else about them. Often an aside is spoken to the audience of a work about someone who is being addressed within the work. But in this case, Nehemiah pauses from addressing the audience that is hearing his story; he speaks confidentially to God in prayer about two of the characters in the story. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this is a prayer is distinct from the story by making it a direct quotation.

Support Reference: Aside

ULT **we are a contempt**
UST {to the way} they are mocking us
(הָיֵינוּ בוּזָה)

The abstract noun **contempt** refers to the way Sanballat and Tobiah regarded the Jews, which led them to make fun of the Jews. You can translate the idea behind this term with a verb like "mocking." Alternate translation: [our enemies are mocking us]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **and cause their taunts to return on their heads**
UST Make {them fail in their attempts to stop us,} so that {other} people will mock them
(וְהָשֵׁב חֶרְפָּתָם אֶל־רֹאשָׁם)

Return on his head is an idiom that means that what a person expected to happen to someone else happens to them instead. Alternate translation: [Make them people whom others will mock]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **And give them for plunder in a land of captivity**
UST Allow their enemies to capture them and force them to go to a foreign land
(וּתְנֵם לָבַזָּה בְּאֶרֶץ שִׁבְיָה)

As in 1:2, the abstract noun **captivity** refers to a conquering army forcing all or some of a captured population to move to a different place. You can translate the idea behind it with verbs such as "capture" and "force." Alternate translation: [Allow their enemies to capture them and force them to go to a foreign land]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
our God	O our God
a contempt	{to the way} they are mocking us
for plunder	Allow their enemies to capture them
captivity	and force them to go to a foreign land

Nehemiah 4:5

ULT	UST
And do not cover over their iniquity, and do not wipe out their sin from before your face, for they have provoked anger before the front of the builders.	*{They are guilty, and they have sinned against you.} Do not take away their guilt, and do not ignore their sin! {I am asking this} because they are also causing others to be angry at the people who are rebuilding the wall!"*

ULT **And do not cover over their iniquity, and do not wipe out their sin from before your face**

UST {They are guilty, and they have sinned against you.} Do not take away their guilt, and do not ignore their sin

(וְאַל־תְּכַס עַל־עֲוֹנָם וְחַטָּאתָם מִלְּפָנֶיךָ אַל־תִּמָּחֶה)

These two phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses the repetition to emphasize how guilty Sanballat and Tobiah are for opposing the work that God has sent him to do. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [do not ever forgive them]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **And do not cover over their iniquity**

UST They are guilty … Do not take away their guilt

(וְאַל־תְּכַס עַל־עֲוֹנָם)

Nehemiah speaks of a person's sins as if they were an object that could be physically hidden. Alternate translation: [do not forgive their sins]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and do not wipe out their sin**

UST and they have sinned … and do not ignore their sin

(וְחַטָּאתָם & אַל־תִּמָּחֶה)

Nehemiah speaks of a person's sins as if they were something written that could be erased. Alternate translation: [do not forget their sins]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **from before your face**
UST against you
(מִלִּפָּנֶיךָ)

Here, **face** means the action of seeing or a person's notice or attention. A person can see what is in front of their face, so in this case the expression means, "from where you can see it"

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **for they have provoked anger before the front of the builders**
UST {I am asking this} because they are also causing others to be angry at the people who are rebuilding the wall
(כִּי הִכְעִיסוּ לְנֶגֶד הַבּוֹנִים)

This expression could mean one of the following three things: (1) It could mean that they have made God angry by opposing the work he has commanded Nehemiah to do. Alternate translation: [they have made you become angry.] This possibility seems the most likely, since Nehemiah is praying that what these men are trying to do to others will happen to them. (2) It could mean that they have caused others to be angry at the people who are rebuilding the wall. Alternate translation: [they have caused others to be angry at the people who are rebuilding the wall.]; (3) It could mean that Sanballat and Tobiah have made the builders angry by mocking them. Alternate translation: [they have made the builders become angry]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
their iniquity	They are guilty … their guilt
do … wipe out	ignore
and … their sin	and they have sinned … and … their sin
they have provoked anger	they are also causing others to be angry

Nehemiah 4:6

ULT	UST
So we built the wall, and all the wall was joined together up to half of it. And the heart of the people was for working.	*But we kept building the wall, {and after some time,} we finished the wall around the whole city to about half the necessary height. Everyone was determined to accomplish this.*

ULT So we built the wall
UST But we kept building the wall
(וַנִּבְנָה אֶת־הַחוֹמָה)

As in chapter 3, it might be helpful to say "rebuilt." The Jews were not building something brand new. See the note to 3:1.

ULT and all the wall was joined together up to half of it
UST {and after some time,} we finished the wall around the whole city to about half the necessary height
(וַתִּקָּשֵׁר כָּל־הַחוֹמָה עַד־חֶצְיָהּ)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: [we filled in the breaks as high as halfway up the wall]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT and all the wall was joined together up to half of it
UST {and after some time,} we finished the wall around the whole city to about half the necessary height
(וַתִּקָּשֵׁר כָּל־הַחוֹמָה עַד־חֶצְיָהּ)

It appears from the context that this likely took some time and perseverance after Sanballat and Tobiah began to mock and oppose the project. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [after some time, we filled in the breaks]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT up to half of it
UST to about half the necessary height
(עַד־חֶצְיָהּ)

"Half" means one part out of two equal parts.

Support Reference: Fractions

ULT **And the heart of the people was for working**
UST Everyone was determined to accomplish this
(וַיְהִי לֵב לָעָם לַעֲשׂוֹת)

Here the **heart** represents the thoughts and the will of the people. Alternate translation: [Everyone was determined to accomplish this.]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
for working	to accomplish this

Nehemiah 4:7

ULT	UST
And it happened that, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the health of the walls of Jerusalem was going up and the breaks were beginning to be closed, it burned them extremely.	*But when Sanballat, Tobiah, the men from {the land of} Arabia, the men from {the nation of} Ammon, and the men from {the city of} Ashdod heard that we were continuing to repair the wall of Jerusalem and to fill in the gaps, they became furious.*

ULT **And it happened**
UST But
(וַיְהִי)

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next event in his story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses.

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT **Sanballat, and Tobiah**
UST Sanballat, Tobiah
(סַנְבַלַּ֤ט וְטוֹבִיָּה֙)

This are the names of men. See how you translated them in 2:10.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites**
UST the men from {the land of} Arabia, the men from {the nation of} Ammon, and the men from {the city of} Ashdod
(וְהָעַרְבִ֣ים וְהָעַמֹּנִ֔ים וְהָאַשְׁדּוֹדִ֖ים)

These are the names of people groups.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the health of the walls of Jerusalem was going up**
UST we were continuing to repair the wall of Jerusalem
(עָלְתָה אֲרוּכָה לְחֹמֹות יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם)

Here Nehemiah is speaking of the wall around Jerusalem as if it were a living thing that was sick because it was broken down. Nehemiah speaks of the repairs to the wall as if the wall is becoming healthy again. Alternate translation: [we were continuing to repair the walls of Jerusalem]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **was going up**
UST we were continuing to repair
(עָלְתָה)

Alternate translation: [was increasing]

ULT **and the breaks were beginning to be closed**
UST and to fill in the gaps
(כִּי־הֵחֵלּוּ הַפְּרָצִים לְהִסָּתֵם)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: [we were continuing to … fill in the gaps]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **that … it burned them extremely**
UST they became furious
(וַיִּחַר לָהֶם מְאֹד)

Here Nehemiah says that the anger of these enemies was a fire that burned inside of them. Alternate translation: [they became very angry] or [they became enraged]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and the Arabians	the men from {the land of} Arabia
and the Ammonites	the men from {the nation of} Ammon
and the Ashdodites	and the men from {the city of} Ashdod
Jerusalem	Jerusalem

Nehemiah 4:8

ULT	UST
And all of them together conspired to come to fight against Jerusalem and to make confusion for it.	*All of them together made a plan to come and fight against the people of Jerusalem. They wanted to make the people inside the city confused {and divided}.*

ULT **to fight against Jerusalem**
UST and fight against the people of Jerusalem
(לְהִלָּחֵם בִּירוּשָׁלִָם)

Here, **Jerusalem** refers to the people who live there. These enemies were not coming to fight against the walls and buildings. Nehemiah is describing the people of Jerusalem by reference to something associated with them, the city where they live. Alternate translation: [to fight against the people of Jerusalem]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **and to make confusion for it**
UST They wanted to make the people inside the city confused {and divided}
(וְלַעֲשׂוֹת לוֹ תּוֹעָה)

The abstract noun **confusion** refers to the way these enemies hoped that their attack would make the people of Jerusalem not know what to do. The people might disagree among themselves about whether they should keep working on the wall or whether they should discontinue the work to appease the attackers. They might also disagree about how to defend themselves. you could translate the idea behind the term “confusion” with adjectives such as “confused” and “divided.” Alternate translation: [They wanted to make the people inside the city confused and divided.]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
against Jerusalem	against the people of Jerusalem

Nehemiah 4:9

ULT	UST
And we prayed to our God. And we set up a guard on account of them, by day and by night against their faces.	*But we prayed to our God {to protect us}, and we stationed lookouts {on the walls} at all times to watch out for them.*

ULT And we set up a guard on account of them
UST and we stationed lookouts {on the walls}
(וַנַּעֲמֵ֥יד מִשְׁמָ֖ר עֲלֵיהֶֽם)

Alternate translation: [and we put men around the wall to guard the city]

ULT by day and by night
UST at all times
(יוֹמָ֣ם וָלָ֑יְלָה)

This does not mean that some people went up on the walls to look around at various parts of the day, and others went up at certain times of night. Nehemiah is describing how he maintained a constant guard by speaking of two times when people were on duty, the day and the night, in order to include all the time in between. Alternate translation: [at all times,] otherwise “throughout the day and night”

Support Reference: Merism

ULT against their faces
UST to watch out for them
(מִפְּנֵיהֶֽם)

This term could mean two different things: (1) Here, probably **Their faces** means the front of a group. This likely means that the lookouts would see the front ranks of the army as they approached. Alternate translation: [to spot them as they approached]. (2) Here, “their faces” could also be a figurative way of referring to the enemies and their hostile intentions toward the people doing the work. Alternate translation: [against them]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And we prayed	But we prayed
our God	our God {to protect us}
a guard	lookouts {on the walls}

ULT	UST
by day	at all times

Nehemiah 4:10

ULT	UST
And Judah said, "The strength of the burden-bearers is failing, and there is much rubble. And as for us, we are not able to build the wall."	*Then the people of Judah started saying, "The people who are carrying {the stones} are getting worn out. There is too much rubbish. We are not going to be able to {finish} rebuilding the wall."*

ULT And Judah said
UST Then the people of Judah started saying
(וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה)

Nehemiah is describing the people of Judah by reference to something associated with them, the name of their province. Alternate translation: [Then the people of Judah started saying]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT The strength of the burden-bearers is failing
UST The people who are carrying {the stones} are getting worn out
(כָּשַׁל כֹּחַ הַסַּבָּל)

Alternate translation: [The people who are carrying the stones are getting worn out]

ULT and … rubble
UST rubbish
(וְהֶעָפָר)

Alternate translation: [and … burned stone] or [and … broken rock] or [and … unusable stone]

ULT And as for us, we are not able to build the wall
UST We are not going to be able to {finish} rebuilding the wall
(וַאֲנַחְנוּ לֹא נוּכַל לִבְנוֹת בַּחוֹמָה)

Alternate translation: [We are not going to be able to finish rebuilding the wall]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Judah	the people of Judah
the burden-bearers	The people who are carrying {the stones}

Nehemiah 4:11

ULT	UST
And our adversaries said, "They will not know, and they will not see until when we come into their midst and kill them. And we will cause the work to stop."	*Then our enemies {started} saying, "Before {the Jews} know we are coming, we will rush {down} on them and kill them and stop their work {on the wall}!"*

ULT They will not know, and they will not see until when we come into their midst
UST Before {the Jews} know we are coming, we will rush {down} on them
(לֹא יֵדְעוּ֙ וְלֹ֣א יִרְא֔וּ עַד אֲשֶׁר־נָבֹ֥וא אֲלֵיהֶ֖ם)

These two phrases mean similar things. The enemies use the repetition to emphasize how confident they are of launching a surprise attack. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [They will not be expecting an attack until we are right there,] otherwise "before they see us and know we are coming, we will rush down on them"

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT and they will not see
UST Before {the Jews} know we are coming
(וְלֹ֣א יִרְא֔וּ)

While the enemies could be referring to the Jews literally not seeing them approach, "seeing" could also be a way of describing knowledge, notice, or attention. In that case this expression would mean the same thing as "they will not know." Alternate translation: [they will not be expecting]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
our adversaries	our enemies
They will … know	Before {the Jews} know we are coming
and kill them	and kill them
the work	work {on the wall}

Nehemiah 4:12

ULT	UST
And it happened that, when the Jews dwelling beside them came, they said to us ten times, "From all the places where you turn, they are on us!"	*And when some of the Jews who lived near {our enemies} came {to Jerusalem}, they pleaded with us repeatedly, "Let {our men} return {home so} they {can defend} us!"*

ULT **came**
UST came {to Jerusalem}
(בָּאוּ)

The implication is that they came to Jerusalem to speak with the Jewish leaders there. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [came to Jerusalem to speak with us]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the Jews dwelling beside them**
UST some of the Jews who lived near {our enemies} … they
(הַיְהוּדִים הַיֹּשְׁבִים אֶצְלָם)

Them means the enemies Nehemiah has been talking about, so this expression likely refers to the Jews who lived near Nehemiah and those helping him. But it does not mean all of these Jews, just some who came to Jerusalem. Nehemiah is describing part of this group as if it were the whole group. Alternate translation: [some of the Jews who lived near our enemies]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **that … they said to us ten times**
UST pleaded with us repeatedly
(וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָּנוּ עֲשֶׂר פְּעָמִים)

Here the number 10 is used to represent "many." Alternate translation: [spoke to us many times]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT From all the places where you turn, they are on us
UST Let {our men} return {home so} they {can defend} us
(מִכָּל־הַמְּקֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר־תָּשׁוּבוּ עָלֵינוּ)

The meaning of this Hebrew phrase is uncertain. However, one explanation that would fit the context is that these exposed Jewish communities sent representatives to Jerusalem to tell Nehemiah that they were afraid of being attacked in their villages. The "places where you return" could mean "anywhere we live," referring to the villages, and "they are on us" could mean that the enemies could attack these undefended towns at any time. Perhaps these representatives were asking Nehemiah to release their able-bodied men from work duty and send them home so they could help defend their families and neighbors. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say something like this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Our enemies could attack us anywhere we live, so let our men return home so they can defend us!]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT From all the places
UST Let {our men} return {home so} they {can defend} us
(מִכָּל־הַמְּקֹמוֹת)

This phrase likely indicates "in every direction." The word "all" is an exaggeration for emphasis. Alternate translation: [anywhere we live]

Support Reference: Hyperbole

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the Jews	some of the Jews … they

Nehemiah 4:13

ULT	UST
And I stationed from the lowest of places behind the wall, in the bare places; and I stationed the people by families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.	*But I put {guards} behind the wall at the places where it was low or where there were gaps. I also had people from each family group stand {guard} with their swords, spears, and bows and arrows.*

ULT And I stationed
UST But I put {guards}
(וָאַעֲמִֽיד)

If you follow the suggestion in the previous note for translating the last phrase in 4:12, then you could show here that Nehemiah is indicating a contrast between what the representatives wanted him to do and what he actually did. Instead of scattering his forces by sending the men from other towns home, he concentrated them visibly in Jerusalem, expecting that the main attack would come there. Alternate translation: [But] or [Instead]

ULT And I stationed from the lowest of places behind the wall, in the bare places
UST But I put {guards} behind the wall at the places where it was low or where there were gaps
(וָאַעֲמִיד מִתַּחְתִּיּוֹת לַמָּקוֹם מֵאַחֲרֵי לַחוֹמָה בצחחיים)

Alternate translation: [I put guards behind the wall at the places where it was low or where there were gaps in it.]

ULT and I stationed the people by families
UST I also had people from each family group stand {guard}
(וָאַעֲמִיד אֶת־הָעָם לְמִשְׁפָּחוֹת)

This does not mean all the people, and it does not mean every member of every family. Nehemiah is describing part of the people as if they were all of them, and part of each family as if it were the whole family. Chapter 3 describes how Nehemiah organized the work on the wall by family and community groups. He seems to have organized the defense of the city the same way. Alternate translation: [I positioned people from each family]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

> ULT **and their bows**
> UST and bows and arrows
> (וְקַשְׁתֹתֵיהֶם)

This means not just bows, but bows and arrows.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
by families	from each family group
their swords	their swords
their spears	spears
and their bows	and bows and arrows

Nehemiah 4:14

ULT	UST
And I looked, and I rose up, and I said to the nobles, and to the prefects, and to the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of their faces. Remember my great and fearsome Lord! And fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses."	*After I had inspected {everything}, I summoned the leading citizens and the city officials and many of the other people, and I said to them, "Do not be afraid of our enemies! The Lord is great and awesome, {so} think about {what he can do}. And fight to {protect} your families, your sons and daughters, your wives, and your homes!"*

ULT **And I looked**
UST After I had inspected {everything}
(וָאֵרֶא)

This likely means that Nehemiah literally looked over all the defenses he had put in place. Alternate translation: [After I had inspected everything]

ULT **and I rose up, and I said**
UST I summoned … and I said to them
(וָאָקוּם וָאֹמַר)

Since Nehemiah immediately addresses a group of people, the implication is that he gathered them together to speak to them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [I summoned … and I told them]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and I rose up**
UST I summoned
(וָאָקוּם)

In this context, the expression "rose up" likely is a way of saying that Nehemiah took public action, not that he had been sitting or lying down and got up.

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT to the nobles, and to the prefects
UST the leading citizens and the city officials
(אֶל־הַחֹרִים וְאֶל־הַסְּגָנִים)

See how you translated these terms in 2:16. Alternate translation: [to the leading citizens and the city officials]

ULT the rest of the people
UST and many of the other people
(יֶתֶר הָעָם)

This does not mean all of the other people who lived in Jerusalem, but rather many of them who came to hear Nehemiah speak on this occasion. He is describing part of the people as if they were all of them. Alternate translation: [many of the other people]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT Do not be afraid of their faces
UST Do not be afraid of our enemies
(אַל־תִּירְאוּ מִפְּנֵיהֶם)

Here, **face** describes an entire person by reference to one part, the "face," likely because the face shows what the person is thinking and feeling. Alternate translation: [Do not be afraid of our enemies]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT Remember
UST so} think about {what he can do}
(זִכְרוּ)

In this context, **remember** does not refer to a person recalling something they have forgotten. Rather, it means, "keep in mind." Alternate translation: [keep in mind]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **my great and fearsome Lord**
UST The Lord is great and awesome
(אֶת־אֲדֹנָי הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא)

Nehemiah is referring here to Yahweh, the God who promised to bless and protect the Jews as his chosen people. When he says **my**, he is using himself to represent the entire community. Alternate translation: [our great and awesome God]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **great and fearsome**
UST great and awesome
(הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא)

Nehemiah uses this same expression in 1:5. See how you translated it there. Review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: [great and glorious]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **your brothers**
UST your families
(אֲחֵיכֶם)

Here, **brother** could mean biological brothers, but it is more likely that it refers to a person's relatives, that is, their whole family. Alternate translation: [your families]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the nobles	the leading citizens
the prefects	and the city officials
Do … be afraid	Do … be afraid
and fearsome	and awesome
my … Lord	The Lord is
and your houses	and your homes

Nehemiah 4:15

ULT	UST
And it happened that, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and God had frustrated their counsels, all of us returned to the wall, a man to his work.	*When our enemies learned that we had found out about {their plan}, they realized that God had kept them {from launching a surprise attack}. {They decided not to attack us.} So we all went back to {working on} the wall. Each person continued doing {the same} work {as before}.*

ULT **And it happened … when**
UST When
(וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר)

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next event in his story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses.

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT **it was known to us**
UST we had found out about {their plan}
(נֽוֹדַע לָ֔נוּ)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: [we found out about their plans]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **it was known to us**
UST we had found out about {their plan}
(נֽוֹדַע לָ֔נוּ)

It means the plan of these enemies to launch a surprise attack, as described in 4:11. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [we found out about their plans to launch a surprise attack]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and God had frustrated their counsels**
UST they realized that God had kept … from launching a surprise attack}. {They decided not to attack us … }
(וַיָּפֶר הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־עֲצָתָם)

Alternate translation: [and God had kept them from doing what they planned.]

ULT **that … all of us returned to the wall, a man to his work**
UST So we all went back to {working on} the wall. Each person continued doing {the same} work {as before}
(ונשוב כֻּלָּנוּ אֶל־הַחוֹמָה אִישׁ אֶל־מְלַאכְתּוֹ)

Here, **the wall** means the work on the wall. Nehemiah is describing this work by referring to something associated with it, the wall that was the object of the work. Alternate translation: [we all went back to working on the wall]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **that … all of us returned to the wall, a man to his work**
UST So we all went back to {working on} the wall. Each person continued doing {the same} work {as before}
(ונשוב כֻּלָּנוּ אֶל־הַחוֹמָה אִישׁ אֶל־מְלַאכְתּוֹ)

The implication is that when the enemies realized the Jews knew about their plans, they decided not to attack. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [They decided not to attack us, and we all went back to working on the wall]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **a man to his work**
UST Each person continued doing {the same} work {as before}
(אִישׁ אֶל־מְלַאכְתּוֹ)

In this context, **a man** means "each person." It does not refer only to an adult male. Alternate translation: [Each person continued doing the same work as before]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
our enemies	our enemies … them
it was known	we had found out about {their plan}
God	God

ULT	UST
their counsels	had kept … from launching a surprise attack
his work	Each person continued doing {the same} work {as before}

Nehemiah 4:16

ULT	UST
And it happened that, from that day, half of my young men were doing the work, and half of them were grasping, even the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the breastplates. And the officials were behind all the house of Judah.	*But after that, {only} half of my servants worked {on the wall}. The other half of them {stood guard} armed with spears, shields, bows and arrows, and metal armor. Officers {stood} behind the workers and guards {to encourage everyone and to give orders in case there was an attack}.*

ULT **from that day**
UST after that
(מִן־הַיּוֹם הַהוּא)

In this context, **day** may not refer to one specific day, but rather to a more general time. Alternate translation: [from that time on] or [after that]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **my young men were doing the work**
UST my servants worked {on the wall}
(נְעָרַי עֹשִׂים בַּמְּלָאכָה)

This expression refers to the servants who worked for Nehemiah. While they probably were young adult males, the expression is specifically envisioning their role and status. Alternate translation: [my servants]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **were doing the work**
UST worked {on the wall}
(עֹשִׂים בַּמְּלָאכָה)

This refers to the work on the wall. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [worked on the wall]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **half of my young men**
UST {only} half of my servants
(חֲצִי נְעָרַי)

Half means one part out of two equal parts.

Support Reference: Fractions

ULT **and the bows**
UST bows and arrows
(וְהַקְּשָׁתוֹת)

As in 4:13, this means not just bows, but bows and arrows.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **And the officials were behind all the house of Judah**
UST Officers {stood} behind the workers and guards {to encourage everyone and to give orders in case there was an attack}
(וְהַשָּׂרִים אַחֲרֵי כָּל־בֵּית יְהוּדָה)

This likely means that certain officials literally stood behind the workers and the guards. That is, they were inside the wall and close to it, while the guards stood right at the wall and the workers worked on it. Alternate translation: [Officers stood behind all the workers and guards]

ULT **And the officials were behind all the house of Judah**
UST Officers {stood} behind the workers and guards {to encourage everyone and to give orders in case there was an attack}
(וְהַשָּׂרִים אַחֲרֵי כָּל־בֵּית יְהוּדָה)

The implication is that the leaders were there to give orders in case there was an attack. But it is likely that Nehemiah also wanted them to offer encouragement and maintain good morale. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Officers stood behind all the workers and guards to encourage everyone and to give orders in case there was an attack]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And the officials**
UST Officers
(וְהַשָּׂרִים)

From the context here and the use of this term in 7:2, it appears that these “officials” were responsible for giving commands in military situations. Alternate translation: [and officers]

> ULT **all the house of Judah**
> UST the workers and guards
> (כָּל־בֵּ֖ית יְהוּדָֽה)

Here, the word **house** describes all the people descended from a particular person. All of the descendants of Judah are being described as if they were one household living together. So this would ordinarily mean “the people of Judah”

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **all the house of Judah**
> UST the workers and guards
> (כָּל־בֵּ֖ית יְהוּדָֽה)

However, in this context, the expression is not referring to all the people of Judah. Nehemiah is describing part of the people as if they were all of them. He means all of the workers and guards. The expression helps clarify that Nehemiah is no longer speaking just of his own servants, whom had divided into two groups to serve as workers and guards. Alternate translation: [all the workers and guards]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
day	after
my young men	my servants
the work	on the wall
even the spears	with spears
the shields	shields
and the bows	bows and arrows
and the breastplates	and metal armor
And the officials	Officers
the house of	the workers and guards
Judah	the workers and guards

Nehemiah 4:17

ULT	UST
Those who were building the wall, and those who were carrying burdens, the loaders, they were doing the work with one of his hands and one grasping weaponry.	*Those who were building the wall and those who carried the heavy loads {always} had their weapons with them {so that they would be prepared to fight off an attack}.*

ULT **and those who were carrying burdens, the loaders**
UST and those who carried the heavy loads {always} had their weapons with them {so that they would be prepared to fight off an attack}
(וְהַנֹּשְׂאִים בַּסֶּבֶל עֹמְשִׂים)

These two short phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses them together for clarity and emphasis. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [and those who carried the heavy loads]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **the loaders, they were doing the work with one of his hands and one grasping weaponry**
UST always} had their weapons with them {so that they would be prepared to fight off an attack}
(עֹמְשִׂים בְּאַחַת יָדוֹ עֹשֶׂה בַּמְּלָאכָה וְאַחַת מַחֲזֶקֶת הַשָּׁלַח)

Here **his hands** means “their hands.” This is an exaggeration. The builders and porters did not always work with only one hand. Rather, this means that they always had their weapons with them so that they would be prepared to fight off an attack. Alternate translation: [they always had their weapons with them while they were working on the wall]

Support Reference: Hyperbole

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and those who were carrying	and those who carried
the work	always} had their weapons with them {so that they would be prepared to fight off an attack}

Nehemiah 4:18

ULT	UST
And the builders: a man girded his sword to his loins and built. And the one who blew the ram's horn was beside me.	*Each builder worked with his sword strapped to his side. {I stationed} someone next to me who would blow a ram's horn {if we needed a signal}.*

ULT And the builders: a man girded his sword to his loins and built
UST Each builder worked with his sword strapped to his side
(וְהַבּוֹנִים אִישׁ חַרְבּוֹ אָסוּר עַל־מָתְנָיו וּבוֹנִים)

In this context, **a man** means "each person." Alternate translation: [each builder worked with his sword strapped to his side]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT And the one who blew the ram's horn was beside me
UST I stationed} someone next to me who would blow a ram's horn {if we needed a signal}
(וְהַתּוֹקֵעַ בַּשּׁוֹפָר אֶצְלִי)

The implication is that Nehemiah stationed this person next to him so that he could sound a signal if needed. (This becomes clear in 4:20.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly here. Alternate translation: [And I stationed someone next to me who would blow a ram's horn if we needed a signal]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
girded	strapped
his sword	with his sword
his loins	his side
the ram's horn	a ram's horn {if we needed a signal}

Nehemiah 4:19

ULT	UST
And I said to the nobles and to the prefects and to the rest of the people, "The work is great and vast, and we are separated on the wall, a man far from his brother.	*Then I said to the leading citizens, the city officials, and many of the other people, "We are working over a very wide area, and we are far apart from each other along the wall.*

ULT And I said
UST Then I said
(וָאֹמַר)

See how you translated these terms in 2:16. Alternate translation: [the leading citizens … the city officials]

ULT the nobles … the prefects
UST the leading citizens, the city officials
(הַחֹרִים & הַסְּגָנִים)

As in 4:14, this does not mean all of the other people who lived in Jerusalem, but rather many of them who came to hear Nehemiah speak on this occasion. He is describing part of the people as if they were all of them. Alternate translation: [many of the other people]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT The work is great and vast
UST are working over a very wide area
(הַמְּלָאכָה הַרְבֵּה וּרְחָבָה)

Great and **vast** mean similar things. Nehemiah uses them together to emphasize the scope of the rebuilding project. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [large-scale] or [huge]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT and we are separated on the wall, a man far from his brother
UST We … and we are far apart from each other along the wall
(וַאֲנַחְנוּ נִפְרָדִים עַל־הַחוֹמָה רְחוֹקִים אִישׁ מֵאָחִיו)

In this context, **a man** means "each person," and **brother** means "fellow Jew." Alternate translation: [each of us is far apart from our fellow Jews along the wall]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the nobles	the leading citizens
the prefects	the city officials
The work is	are working over

Nehemiah 4:20

ULT	UST
At the place where you hear the sound of the ram's horn, you shall gather to us there. Our God will fight for us."	*But wherever you hear {the man} sounding the ram's horn, gather around us at that place. Our God will fight for us!"*

ULT the sound of the ram's horn
UST {the man} sounding the ram's horn
(אֶת־קוֹל הַשּׁוֹפָר)

The implication is that the workers and guards would need to gather together to fight off an attack. The implication is also that while the people were widely scattered, they would all be able to hear the ram's horn even from a distance, and so it would be an effective signal. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say these things explicitly. Alternate translation: [So if we all need to gather in one place to fight off an attack, I will have someone blow a ram's horn there. You will be able to hear this signal from anywhere along the wall.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT the ram's horn
UST the ram's horn
(הַשּׁוֹפָר)

See how you translated this in 4:18. Review the explanation there if that would be helpful.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT Our God will fight for us
UST Our God will fight for us
(אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִלָּחֶם לָנוּ)

This does not mean that God will fight instead of the Jews, but that God will take their side and help them win. Alternate translation: [God will help us defeat our enemies]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the ram's horn	the ram's horn
you shall gather	gather
Our God	Our God

Nehemiah 4:21

ULT	UST
So we were doing the work. And half of them were grasping spears from the rising of the dawn until the coming out of the stars.	*So we continued to work {on rebuilding the wall}. Half of the men {served as guards} and kept their weapons ready at {all} times.*

ULT So we were doing the work
UST So we continued to work {on rebuilding the wall}
(וַאֲנַחְנוּ עֹשִׂים בַּמְּלָאכָה)

This means the **work** of rebuilding the wall. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [So we continued to work on rebuilding the wall]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT And half of them were grasping spears
UST Half of the men {served as guards} and kept their weapons ready
(וְחֶצְיָם מַחֲזִיקִים בָּרֳמָחִים)

"Them" means the men who would otherwise have been working as builders or carrying loads, but who were serving as guards instead. As verses 4:13 and 4:16 make clear, the weaponry included not just spears, but also shields and bows and arrows. So Nehemiah is using "spears" here to refer to all of the weaponry. Alternate translation: [half of the men served as guards and kept their weapons ready]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT And half of them
UST Half of the men
(וְחֶצְיָם)

Here **half** means one part out of two equal parts.

Support Reference: Fractions

ULT from the rising of the dawn until the coming out of the stars
UST at {all} times
(מֵעֲלוֹת הַשַּׁחַר עַד צֵאת הַכּוֹכָבִים)

Nehemiah is referring to the entire day by speaking of two extreme parts of it, the time when first light of morning appears and the time when it becomes dark enough to see the stars, in order to include everything in between. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this meaning with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [at all times,] otherwise “from the time when the light of dawn appeared in the morning until the time when the stars appeared at night”

Support Reference: Merism

ULT from the rising of the dawn
UST at {all} times
(מֵעֲלוֹת הַשַּׁחַר)

This phrase refers to the daily appearance of light rising in the east in the early morning hours prior to the sun rising above the horizon. Alternate translation: [the first light of day]

ULT the coming out of the stars
UST at {all} times
(צֵאת הַכּוֹכָבִים)

Here Nehemiah describes the appearing of the stars as if they **came out** of an enclosed container. Alternate translation: [the very beginning of the night]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the work	to work {on rebuilding the wall}
spears	their weapons

Nehemiah 4:22

ULT	UST
Also, at that time I said to the people, "Let a man and his young man lodge the night in the midst of Jerusalem, and they will be for us by night a guard and by day a worker."	*At that time, I also said to the people, "Each {worker} and his servant must spend the night inside Jerusalem {and not go home if they live outside the city}. {That way} the city will have plenty of defenders {even} at night, and they can {still} work {on the wall} during the daytime."*

ULT **a man**
UST Each {worker}
(אִישׁ)

In this context, **a man** means "each person" and more specifically "each worker." As in 4:16, "young man" means servant. Alternate translation: [each worker and his servant]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **in the midst of Jerusalem**
UST inside Jerusalem {and not go home if they live outside the city}
(בְּתוֹךְ יְרוּשָׁלִָם)

This could be referring to workers who had come from nearby cities and towns to help rebuild the wall. It could also include people who lived in the Jerusalem area but whose homes were outside the city, such as local farmers. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [spend the night inside Jerusalem and not go home if they live outside the city]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and they will be for us by night a guard and by day a worker**
UST {That way} the city will have plenty of defenders {even} at night, and they can {still} work {on the wall} during the daytime
(וְהָיוּ־לָנוּ הַלַּיְלָה מִשְׁמָר וְהַיּוֹם מְלָאכָה)

The idea is not that these men would be on guard duty all night and then work all day on the wall. Rather, their presence in the city would mean that a large number of defenders would be ready on short notice if needed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [That way the city will have plenty of defenders even at night, and they can still work on the wall during the daytime]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and his young man	and his servant
Jerusalem	Jerusalem
a guard	plenty of defenders
and by day	and … during the daytime

Nehemiah 4:23

ULT	UST
And neither I nor my brothers nor my young men nor the men of the guard who were behind me, none of us stripped off our clothes, or a man his weapon at the water.	*{During that time} none of us took off our clothes. I did not, and my brothers, my servants, and my personal bodyguard did not. Each of us {always had} our weapons {with us}, {even when we were washing ourselves}.*

ULT **And neither**
UST During that time
(וְאֵין)

In this verse Nehemiah is describing something else that was also true of the conditions in Jerusalem during the time period he is describing. You can make this clear in your translation with an appropriate connecting word or phrase. Alternate translation: [At that time, neither]

Support Reference: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

ULT **nor my brothers**
UST and my brothers
(וְאַחַי)

Here **brother** likely refers to Nehemiah's close relatives. Elsewhere in the book he indicates that his brother Hanani lived in the city and that his relatives ate with him at the governor's table (1:2, 5:14, 7:2). Alternate translation: [nor my relatives]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **nor my young men**
UST my servants
(וּנְעָרַי)

As in 4:16, this means "my servants."

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **nor the men of the guard who were behind me**
UST and my personal bodyguard
(וַאֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּשְׁמָר אֲשֶׁר אַחֲרָי)

This likely refers to the personal bodyguard that the king would have assigned to Nehemiah when he appointed him to be the governor of Judah. (Nehemiah describes this appointment in 5:14.) Alternate translation: [my personal bodyguard]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **or a man his weapon at the water**
UST Each of us {always had} our weapons {with us}, {even when we were washing ourselves}
(אִישׁ שִׁלְחוֹ הַמָּיִם)

Here the specific meaning of the Hebrew text is unknown, but Nehemiah is almost certainly leaving out some of the words that a sentence would normally have to have in order to be complete. He says that he and his relatives, servants, and bodyguards did not take off their clothes, **or anyone his weapon at the water**. This could mean that "no one took his weapon off even when he was washing himself" or that "no one took his weapon off even when going to get water." If it would be helpful in your language, you could explain what "at the water" might mean, you could choose one of these possibilities. Alternate translation: [Each of us always had our weapons with us, even when we were washing ourselves.]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **stripped off our clothes, or a man his weapon**
UST took off our clothes … Each of us {always had} our weapons {with us}
(פֹּשְׁטִים בְּגָדֵינוּ אִישׁ שִׁלְחוֹ)

In this context, **a man** means **anyone**.

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
nor my young men	my servants
the guard	and my personal bodyguard

Nehemiah 5

Nehemiah 5 Chapter Introduction

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Equality

The rich made money from the poor. The rich oppressed the poor by charging interest on loans. Because Nehemiah wanted to treat everyone fairly, he did not collect any taxes from them. This chapter also emphasizes that it was wrong to enslave a fellow Jew.

Governor

Nehemiah was a governmental leader in Jerusalem, but he was not a king. Jerusalem had a great deal of independence, but it was under the authority of the Persian king. The term “governor” reflects this idea, but a different term may be used in translation.

Nehemiah 5:1

ULT	UST
And there was a great outcry of the people and their wives against their brothers, the Jews.	*{Around this same time,} many of the men and their wives complained bitterly about what their fellow Jews were doing to them.*

ULT **And there was**
UST Around this same time
(וַתְּהִי)

Nehemiah now relates something else that was happening even while the Jews were trying to rebuild the wall and defend themselves against their enemies. You can make this clear in your translation with an appropriate connecting word or phrase. Alternate translation: [Around this same time]

Support Reference: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

ULT **a great outcry of the people and their wives**
UST many of the men and their wives complained bitterly
(צְעָקַת הָעָם וּנְשֵׁיהֶם גְּדוֹלָה)

Outcry is an abstract noun that refers to the complaints that the poorer Jews made to Nehemiah about how the wealthier and more powerful Jews were treating them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a verb such as "complain." Since Nehemiah says this was a "great" outcry, involving many serious grievances, you could intensify the verb with an adverb such as "bitterly." Alternate translation: [many of the men and their wives complained bitterly]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the people and their wives**
UST many of the men and their wives
(הָעָם וּנְשֵׁיהֶם)

Here, **the people** seems to indicate certain men who lived in Jerusalem, since Nehemiah also mentions their wives. Alternate translation: [many of the men and their wives]

> ULT **their brothers**
> UST their fellow
> (אֲחֵיהֶם)

Here, **brother** does not seem to mean biological brothers, but to refer to other members of the same people group. Alternate translation: [their fellow Jews]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **their brothers, the Jews**
> UST their fellow Jews
> (אֲחֵיהֶם הַיְּהוּדִים)

These two short phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses them together to emphasize how inappropriate it was for people to treat members of their own group in the ways described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [their fellow Jews]

Support Reference: Doublet

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
a … outcry of	complained
the Jews	Jews

Nehemiah 5:2

ULT	UST
And there were those who said, "Our sons and our daughters, we are many. And let us take grain, so we can eat, and we can live."	*Some of them began, "We have many children. We need to get {a lot of} food to feed them {all}."*

ULT And there were those who said
UST Some of them began
(וְיֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר אֹמְרִים)

Verses 2, 3, 4, and 5 do not seem to be different complaints that people brought to Nehemiah separately. Rather, the whole group seems to be complaining that because they need to get food for their families, wealthier and more powerful Jews are exploiting them. They are forcing them to take mortgages and loans and even sell their children into slavery. Nehemiah is probably depicting one speaker after another in the crowd adding details to this picture. You could suggest this to the readers of your translation by introducing these comments with a translation such as, "some of them began to say"

ULT Our sons and our daughters, we are many
UST We have many children. We
(בָּנֵינוּ וּבְנֹתֵינוּ אֲנַחְנוּ רַבִּים)

Alternate translation: [We have many children]

ULT And let us take grain
UST need to get {a lot of} food
(וְנִקְחָה דָגָן)

This does not mean only grain. The people complaining to Nehemiah are using one kind of food, grain, the staple of their diet, to refer to all the foods they would need to eat. Alternate translation: [we need food]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **And let us take grain**
UST need to get {a lot of} food
(וְנִקְחָה דָגָן)

The implication is that because the families are large, a lot of food is needed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [we need to get a lot of food]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **so we can eat, and we can live**
UST to feed them {all}
(וְנֹאכְלָה וְנִחְיֶה)

These two short phrases mean similar things. The people use them together to emphasize the urgency and importance of having food. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [to get enough food to stay alive]

Support Reference: Doublet

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
grain	{a lot of} food

Nehemiah 5:3

ULT	UST
And there were those who said, "We are mortgaging our fields and our vineyards and our houses so we can get grain during the famine."	*Others added, "We have had to promise to give someone our fields, vineyards, and houses if we do not pay back the money {he} has loaned us. We had {to borrow the money} to buy food during this time when food is scarce."*

ULT **And there were those who said**
UST Others added
(וְיֵשׁ֙ אֲשֶׁ֣ר אֹמְרִ֔ים)

See the applicable note to 2:2. Alternate translation: [Others added]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **We are mortgaging our fields and our vineyards and our houses so we can get grain during the famine**
UST We have had to promise to give someone our fields, vineyards, and houses if we do not pay back the money {he} has loaned us. We had {to borrow the money} to buy food during this time when food is scarce
(שְׂדֹתֵ֛ינוּ וּכְרָמֵ֥ינוּ וּבָתֵּ֖ינוּ אֲנַ֣חְנוּ עֹרְבִ֑ים וְנִקְחָ֥ה דָגָ֖ן בָּרָעָ֑ב)

It might be helpful to explain to your readers what a **mortgage** is, if you think they might not know. Alternate translation: [We have had to promise to give someone our fields, vineyards, and houses if we do not pay back the money we borrowed. We had to borrow the money to buy food during this time when food is scarce.]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and our vineyards	vineyards
and our houses	and houses
grain	food
during the famine	during this time when food is scarce

Nehemiah 5:4

ULT	UST
And there were those who said, "We have borrowed silver for the tribute of the king on our fields and our vineyards.	*Still others said, "We have had to borrow money to {pay} the taxes that the king {commanded us to pay} on our fields and our vineyards.*

ULT And there were those who said
UST Still others said
(וַיֵּשׁ אֲשֶׁר אֹמְרִים)

Different people in the crowd apparently continue to add details to the complaint. Alternate translation: [Still others said]

ULT We have borrowed silver
UST We have had to borrow money
(לָוִינוּ כֶסֶף)

Silver here means "money." Nehemiah is describing money by reference to the commodity that is being used as a means of exchange, silver. Alternate translation: [We have had to borrow money]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT for the tribute of the king on our fields and our vineyards
UST to {pay} the taxes that the king {commanded us to pay} on our fields and our vineyards
(לְמַדַּת הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׂדֹתֵינוּ וּכְרָמֵינוּ)

Tribute means "taxes" here. Alternate translation: [the taxes that the king commanded us to pay on our fields and our vineyards]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
silver	money
for the tribute of … on	to {pay} the taxes that … commanded us to pay
the king	the king
and our vineyards	and our vineyards

Nehemiah 5:5

ULT	UST
And now, our flesh is as the flesh of our brothers, our sons are as their sons. And behold, we are putting our sons and our daughters into bondage as slaves. There are those even of our daughters who have been put into bondage, and there is nothing to God in our hand, for our fields and our vineyards belong to others."	*{This is how bad things have gotten.} We are selling our children into slavery. In fact, we have even sold some of our daughters. Our creditors took the fields and vineyards {we pledged as security for loans}, so there was nothing {else} we could do. But we are Jews, just like the people who are doing these things to us!"*

ULT **And now**
UST This is how bad things have gotten
(וְעַתָּה)

This term indicates that the sentence that follows is a further development of the thought from the previous sentence.

Support Reference: Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **our flesh is as the flesh of our brothers, our sons are as their sons**
UST But we are Jews, just like the people who are doing these things to us
(כִּבְשַׂר אַחֵינוּ בְּשָׂרֵנוּ כִּבְנֵיהֶם בָּנֵינוּ)

Here the Jews are insisting that they are of the same Jewish descent as the other Jews and that they of the same importance as the others. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Yet our families are Jews just like the other Jews' families, and our children are just as important to us as their children are to them]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **our flesh is as the flesh of our brothers, our sons are as their sons**
UST But we are Jews, just like the people who are doing these things to us
(כִּבְשַׂר אַחֵינוּ בְּשָׂרֵנוּ כִּבְנֵיהֶם בָּנֵינוּ)

These two phrases mean similar things. The people complaining to Nehemiah are using the repetition to emphasize how shameful it is for the wealthy and powerful to sell their own fellow Jews into slavery. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [And we are Jews, just like the people who are doing these things to us!]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **our flesh is as the flesh of our brothers, our sons are as their sons**
UST But we are Jews, just like the people who are doing these things to us
(כִּבְשַׂר אַחֵינוּ בְּשָׂרֵנוּ כִּבְנֵיהֶם בָּנֵינוּ)

You could move this sentence to the end of the verse, since it is the culmination of the argument.

ULT **our brothers**
UST But we are Jews, just like the people who are doing these things to us
(אַחֵינוּ)

Here, **brother** describes the Jews who are exploiting their poor and vulnerable fellow Jews. Alternate translation: [And we are Jews, just like the people who are doing these things to us!]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **And behold**
UST In fact
(וְהִנֵּה)

Behold is a term meant to focus the attention of the listener on what the speaker is about to say. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use some emphatic term or expression in your language that would have this same effect.

ULT **we are putting our sons and our daughters into bondage as slaves. There are those even of our daughters who have been put into bondage**
UST We are selling our children into slavery … we have even sold some of our daughters
(אֲנַחְנוּ כֹּבְשִׁים אֶת־בָּנֵינוּ וְאֶת־בְּנֹתֵינוּ לַעֲבָדִים וְיֵשׁ מִבְּנֹתֵינוּ נִכְבָּשׁוֹת)

In this context, the construction **are putting** likely indicates that the poor are on the verge of selling their children into slavery. The next sentence shows that they have already done this in some instances. It appears that in this culture, in dire situations, girls were sold before boys, perhaps because they could become either domestic servants or concubines. A concubine was a woman who was both a slave and a secondary wife to her master. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this statement that way. Alternate translation: [We are on the verge of selling our children into slavery. In fact, we have already sold some of our daughters as servants and concubines.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and there is nothing to God in our hand, for our fields and our vineyards belong to others**
UST Our creditors took the fields and vineyards {we pledged as security for loans}, so there was nothing {else} we could do
(וְאֵין לְאֵל יָדֵנוּ וּשְׂדֹתֵינוּ וּכְרָמֵינוּ לַאֲחֵרִים)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases because the second phrase gives the reason why the first phrase is true. Alternate translation: [because our creditors took the fields and vineyards we pledged as security for loans, there is nothing else we can do in this situation.]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **and there is nothing to God in our hand**
UST so there was nothing {else} we could do
(וְאֵין לְאֵל יָדֵנוּ)

There is nothing to God in our hand is an idiom that means that the speaker does not have the power to do what they are describing. Alternate translation: [there is nothing else we can do in this situation]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **for our fields and our vineyards belong to others**
UST Our creditors took the fields and vineyards {we pledged as security for loans}
(וּשְׂדֹתֵינוּ וּכְרָמֵינוּ לַאֲחֵרִים)

The implication is that when the poor could not pay back their loans, their creditors took the fields and vineyards they had pledged as collateral. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [because our creditors took the fields and vineyards we pledged as security for loans.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
are putting … into bondage	are selling
as slaves	into slavery
those … who have been put into bondage	we have … sold
to God	so there was nothing {else} we could do
and our vineyards	and vineyards

Nehemiah 5:6

ULT	UST
And it burned me extremely when I heard their outcry and these words.	*I got very angry when I heard these things that they were complaining about.*

ULT And it burned me extremely
UST I got very angry
(וַיִּחַר לִי מְאֹד)

Here Nehemiah says that his anger was a fire that burned inside of him. Alternate translation: [I got very angry]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT when I heard their outcry and these words
UST when I heard these things that they were complaining about
(כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתִּי אֶת־זַעֲקָתָם וְאֵת הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה)

Outcry is an abstract noun that refers to complaints that the poorer Jews made to Nehemiah about how the wealthier and more powerful Jews were treating them. You can translate the idea behind this word with a verb such as “complain.” Alternate translation: [when I heard how they were complaining]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT their outcry and these words
UST these things that they were complaining about
(אֶת־זַעֲקָתָם וְאֵת הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה)

These two short phrases mean similar things. They are used together to emphasize the urgency and severity of these complaints. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [everything that they were complaining about]

Support Reference: Doublet

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
their outcry	that they were complaining about

Nehemiah 5:7

ULT	UST
And my heart reigned over me, and I contended with the nobles and with the prefects. And I said to them, "You are lending interest, a man against his brother!" And I put forth a great assembly against them.	*I thought hard about what to do. Then I brought charges against the leading citizens and the city officials. I called together a large group of people {to hear} the charges against them. I told these leaders, "You are charging interest {on loans} to your fellow Jews. {You know that is forbidden in the Law of Moses}."*

ULT **And my heart reigned over me**
UST I thought hard about what to do
(וַיִּמְלַךְ לִבִּי עָלָי)

Here Nehemiah is speaking about his heart as if it were a living thing that could act like a king and rule over him. However, he is not saying that his feelings commanded his actions. (He says in the previous verse that he became very angry, but in the next verse he describes acting in a careful and deliberate manner.) Instead, this means that his heart "took counsel" with him, the way a king would take counsel with advisors. In effect, Nehemiah is saying that he talked the matter over with himself. Alternate translation: [I thought hard about what to do]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **And my heart reigned over me**
UST I thought hard about what to do
(וַיִּמְלַךְ לִבִּי עָלָי)

Here, the **heart** represents the thoughts and the will. Alternate translation: [I thought hard about what to do]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and I contended**
UST Then I brought charges against
(וָאָרִיבָה)

Contended is a technical term that means "to bring charges." It means to initiate a lawsuit that would require the defendants to answer for themselves publicly, in the presence of their fellow citizens. Alternate translation: [Then I brought charges]

ULT **the nobles … the prefects**
UST the leading citizens and the city officials
(הַחֹרִים & הַסְּגָנִים)

See how you translated these terms in 2:16. Alternate translation: [the leading citizens and the city officials]

ULT **You … interest**
UST You … interest {on loans}
(מַשָּׂא & אַתֶּם)

This expression means to charge interest when loaning money to another person. Alternate translation: [You are charging interest]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **interest, a man against his brother**
UST interest {on loans} to your fellow Jews
(מַשָּׂא אִישׁ־בְּאָחִיו)

The Law of Moses specifically forbade charging interest on a loan to a fellow Jew. So this was not just an exploitive business practice, it was a violation of God's Law. The rich and powerful Jews would certainly have been expected to know this. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [You are charging interest on loans to your fellow Jews. You know that is forbidden in the Law of Moses.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **a man against his brother**
UST to your fellow Jews
(אִישׁ־בְּאָחִיו)

In this context, "a man" means "each person." It does not mean only an adult male.

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **a man against his brother**
UST to your fellow Jews
(אִישׁ־בְּאָחִיו)

Here, **brother** could conceivably include even biological brothers, but in context it likely refers to fellow Jews. Alternate translation: [to your fellow Jews]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **And I put forth a great assembly against them**
> UST I called together a large group of people {to hear} the charges against them
> (וָאֶתֵּן עֲלֵיהֶם קְהָלָה גְּדוֹלָה)

This means that, as part of conducting the lawsuit against these wealthy and powerful Jews, Nehemiah brought together a large group of their fellow citizens to hear the charges against them. This group was the "assembly." Alternate translation: [I put them on trial in front of their fellow citizens]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

> ULT **And I put forth a great assembly against them**
> UST I called together a large group of people {to hear} the charges against them
> (וָאֶתֵּן עֲלֵיהֶם קְהָלָה גְּדוֹלָה)

To present the events in chronological order, if that would be helpful to your readers, you could put this before the previous sentence, which describes the first charge that Nehemiah brought at this trial.

Support Reference: Order of Events

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the nobles	the leading citizens
the prefects	and the city officials
a … assembly	a … group of people

Nehemiah 5:8

ULT	UST
And I said to them, "We ourselves, according to our ability, have bought back our brothers, the Jews, the ones who were sold to the nations. But even you yourselves are selling your brothers, and they are being bought back by us!" Then they were silent, and they did not find a word.	*I said to them, "Whenever our fellow Jews have had to sell themselves into slavery to people from {other} nations, to {the best of} our ability we have been buying them back. But you are actually selling your fellow Jews into slavery to get back the money they owe you. These are some of the very people we have been buying back!" They knew that these charges were true, so there was absolutely nothing they could say in response.*

ULT **We ourselves … have bought back**
UST we have been buying … back
(אֲנַחְנוּ קָנִינוּ)

We likely means Nehemiah and his relatives, as in 4:23. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [My relatives and I have bought back]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **We … have bought back our brothers, the Jews, the ones who were sold to the nations**
UST Whenever our fellow Jews have had to sell themselves into slavery to people from {other} nations … have been buying them back
(קָנִינוּ אֶת־אַחֵינוּ הַיְהוּדִים הַנִּמְכָּרִים לַגּוֹיִם)

To present the events in chronological order, if that would be helpful to your readers, you could put the information that some Jews had to sell themselves into slavery before the information that Nehemiah and his relatives bought their freedom. Alternate translation: [Whenever our Jewish relatives have had to sell themselves into slavery to people from other nations … we have been buying them back]

Support Reference: Order of Events

ULT **according to our ability**
UST to {the best of} our ability
(כְּדֵי בָּנוּ)

Alternate translation: [to the best of our ability]

> ULT **our brothers, the Jews**
> UST our fellow Jews … them
> (אֶת־אַחֵינוּ הַיְּהוּדִים)

These two short phrases mean similar things. They are used together to emphasize that buying them back was an honorable and expected action. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [our Jewish relatives]

Support Reference: Doublet

> ULT **our brothers**
> UST our fellow Jews … them
> (אֶת־אַחֵינוּ)

Here, **brother** likely refers to fellow Jews. Alternate translation: [our fellow Jews]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **the Jews, the ones who were sold**
> UST Whenever our fellow Jews have had to sell themselves into slavery … them
> (הַיְּהוּדִים הַנִּמְכָּרִים)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: [our fellow Jews have had to sell themselves]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

> ULT **But even you yourselves are selling your brothers, and they are being bought back by us**
> UST But you are actually selling your fellow Jews into slavery to get back the money they owe you. These are some of the very people we have been buying back
> (וְגַם־אַתֶּם תִּמְכְּרוּ אֶת־אֲחֵיכֶם וְנִמְכְּרוּ־לָנוּ)

This means that they are selling their family members, both men and women, as slaves to their fellow Jews. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: [Now you are selling your own people to be slaves of your fellow Jews, so that they might later sell them back to us]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the ones who were sold to the nations**
UST Whenever … have had to sell themselves into slavery to people from {other} nations
(הַנִּמְכָּרִים לַגּוֹיִם)

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [who people had sold as slaves to the nations]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **But even … yourselves**
UST But you … actually
(וְגַם־אַתֶּם)

This is an emphatic expression. Nehemiah uses it to show how serious the offense is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate this emphasis in some way in your translation. Alternate translation: [you are actually]

ULT **you … are selling your brothers**
UST are … selling your fellow Jews into slavery to get back the money they owe you
(תִּמְכְּרוּ אֶת־אֲחֵיכֶם)

This means that the creditors were selling the debtors into slavery to recover the money they owed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [you are actually selling your fellow Jews into slavery to get back the money they owe you]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **your brothers**
UST your fellow Jews
(אֶת־אֲחֵיכֶם)

Here, **brother** likely refers to fellow Jews. Alternate translation: [your fellow Jews]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and they are being bought back by us**
UST These are some of the very people we have been buying back
(וְנִמְכְּרוּ־לָ֔נוּ)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: [They are some of the very people we have been buying back!]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **Then they were silent, and they did not find a word**
UST They knew that these charges were true, so there was absolutely nothing they could say in response
(וַיֶּחֱרְשׁ֖וּ וְלֹ֣א מָצְא֑וּ דָּבָֽר)

The implication is that the accused said nothing because they knew that Nehemiah's charges were true. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [They knew that these charges were true, so they were silent. They could not answer a single word.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Then they were silent, and they did not find a word**
UST They knew that these charges were true, so there was absolutely nothing they could say in response
(וַיֶּחֱרְשׁ֖וּ וְלֹ֣א מָצְא֑וּ דָּבָֽר)

These two phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses the repetition to emphasize how completely guilty the accused people were. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [there was absolutely nothing they could say in response.]

Support Reference: Parallelism

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the Jews	our fellow Jews … them
to the nations	to people from {other} nations

Nehemiah 5:9

ULT	UST
And I said, "This thing that you are doing is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies?	*Then I said to them, "What you are doing is wrong! You certainly ought to obey God and do what is right! Otherwise, our enemies will mock us even more.*

ULT This thing that you are doing is not good
UST What you are doing is wrong
(לֹא־טוֹב הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר־אַתֶּם עֹשִׂים)

In this context, **good** does have a moral connotation. Nehemiah is saying more than that this is not a good idea. Alternate translation: [What you are doing is wrong!]

ULT Should you not walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies
UST You certainly ought to obey God and do what is right! Otherwise, our enemies will mock us even more
(הֲלוֹא בְיִרְאַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ תֵּלֵכוּ מֵחֶרְפַּת הַגּוֹיִם אוֹיְבֵינוּ)

Nehemiah is making a statement, not asking a question. He does not expect the accused to give him reasons why they should not obey God. Instead, he is using the question form to emphasize how important it is for these wealthy and powerful Jews to stop doing these wrong things. Alternate translation: [You really ought to live your life in a way that honors God!]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT Should you not walk in the fear of our God
UST You certainly ought to obey God and do what is right
(הֲלוֹא בְיִרְאַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ תֵּלֵכוּ)

In this context, **fear** does not mean to be afraid. It means to show respect and reverence, specifically by obeying instead of disobeying. Alternate translation: [live your life in a way that honors God]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **you … walk**
UST You certainly ought to obey God and do what is right
(תֵּלֵכוּ)

Here, **walk** is an idiom that describes a person's conduct in life. Alternate translation: [live your life]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies**
UST Otherwise, our enemies will mock us even more
(מֵחֶרְפַּת הַגּוֹיִם אוֹיְבֵינוּ)

This may be a reference to the way the enemies of the Jews were already mocking them, or to the way they would mock them if they learned of what was happening. It could mean both things. Alternate translation: [Otherwise, our enemies will mock us even more]

ULT **because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies**
UST Otherwise, our enemies will mock us even more
(מֵחֶרְפַּת הַגּוֹיִם אוֹיְבֵינוּ)

Reproach is an abstract noun that refers to the way the enemies of the Jews were mocking them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the same idea with a verb such as "mock." Alternate translation: [to keep the nations who are our enemies from mocking us]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the nations, our enemies**
UST Otherwise, our enemies will mock us even more
(הַגּוֹיִם אוֹיְבֵינוּ)

These two short phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses them together to emphasize the identity and hostility of the people who are opposing the Jews. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them. Alternate translation: [our enemies]

Support Reference: Doublet

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
is … good	is wrong
in the fear of	You certainly ought to obey God and do what is right
our God	

ULT	UST
	You certainly ought to obey God and do what is right
because of the reproach of	Otherwise, our enemies will mock us even more
the nations	Otherwise, our enemies will mock us even more
our enemies	Otherwise, our enemies will mock us even more

Nehemiah 5:10

ULT	UST
Also, even I, my brothers, and my young men are lending against them silver and grain. Please, let us forsake this interest!	*I myself, my relatives, and my servants have been lending money and grain {to anyone in need without charging interest}. All of us should stop charging interest on loans.*

ULT **Also, even I, my brothers, and my young men**
UST I myself, my relatives, and my servants
(וְגַם־אֲנִי֙ אַחַ֣י וּנְעָרַ֔י)

As in 4:23, this means, "I myself, my relatives, and my servants." The term "brother" here likely includes one or more of Nehemiah's biological brothers, but more generally it refers to his close relatives. Alternate translation: [I myself, my relatives, and my servants]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **are lending against them silver and grain**
UST have been lending money and grain {to anyone in need without charging interest}
(נֹשִׁ֥ים בָּהֶ֖ם כֶּ֣סֶף וְדָגָ֑ן)

The implication is that Nehemiah and his companions are lending without charging any interest. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [have been lending money and grain to those in need without charging interest]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **silver**
UST money
(כֶּ֣סֶף)

Silver here means "money." Nehemiah is describing money by reference to the commodity that is being used as a means of exchange, silver. Alternate translation: [money]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **Please, let us forsake this interest**
UST All of us should stop charging interest on loans
(נַעַזְבָה־נָּא אֶת־הַמַּשָּׁא הַזֶּה)

It is clear from the context that **us** in this sentence does not mean Nehemiah and his companions, but rather the entire Jewish community, of which they are a part. Nehemiah could say to the defendants, accusingly, “You must stop charging interest!” But he includes himself and the entire community as a way of being encouraging rather than condemning. (This would be a use of “we/us” that includes the addressees. You should make this clear in your translation if your language makes that distinction.) Alternate translation: [All of us should stop charging interest on loans.]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and my young men	and my servants
silver	money
and grain	and grain
Please	should
let us forsake	All of us … stop

Nehemiah 5:11

ULT	UST
Please, even today, return to them their fields, their vineyards, their olive orchards, and their houses, and a hundred of the silver and the grain, the new wine, and the oil that you are lending against them."	*Give them back their fields, vineyards, olive orchards, and houses. Do it right away! And pay back the 12% annual {interest you have been collecting} on the money, grain, wine, and olive oil that you have lent them."*

ULT **Please … return to them**
UST Give them back … pay back
(הָשִׁיבוּ נָא לָהֶם)

This is worded as a polite request, but it is really a demand. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express it with an imperative. "Give them back"

ULT **even today**
UST Do it right away
(כְּהַיּוֹם)

This does not necessarily mean on this same day, but without waiting. Alternate translation: [Do it right away!]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **and a hundred of**
UST And … the 12% annual {interest you have been collecting} on
(וּמְאַת)

In this context, this expression means "the hundredth part," or one per cent. In this culture, this was likely charged monthly, so it would have amounted to 12% annual interest. In an economy that was based more on commodities than on cash, this would have been an exorbitant amount. If your culture typically calculates interest at an annual rate, you could express it that way here to help your readers understand the likely meaning. Alternate translation: [the 12% annual interest]

Support Reference: Fractions

> ULT **the silver**
> UST the money
> (הַכֶּסֶף)

Silver means “money” here, as in verse 10. Alternate translation: [money]

Support Reference: Metonymy

> ULT **are lending against them**
> UST have lent them
> (נֹשִׁים בָּהֶם)

Alternate translation: [charging them] or [making them pay]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Please	Give … back … pay back
their vineyards	vineyards
their olive orchards	olive orchards
and their houses	and houses
the silver	the money
and the grain	grain
the new wine	wine
and the oil	and olive oil

Nehemiah 5:12

ULT	UST
And they said, “We will return, and we will seek nothing from them. Thus we will do according to what you say.” And I called the priests, and I caused them to swear to do according to this word.	*These leaders replied, “Yes, we will do what you say. We will give back {their fields, vineyards, olive orchards, and houses}. And we will stop {charging} them {interest}.” Then I called the priests, and I made the leaders swear {to God in front of them} that they would do what they had promised.*

ULT **And they said**
UST These leaders replied
(וַיֹּאמְרוּ)

They means the leading citizens and the city officials. Alternate translation: [These leaders replied]

ULT **We will return**
UST We will give back {their fields, vineyards, olive orchards, and houses}
(נָשִׁיב)

The implication is that they will return the fields, vineyards, olive orchards, and houses that they took from the poor, as Nehemiah demanded in 5:11. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [We will give back their fields, vineyards, olive orchards, and houses]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and we will seek nothing from them**
UST And we will stop {charging} them {interest}
(וּמֵהֶם֙ לְאׇ נְבַקֵּ֔שׁ)

Alternate translation: [And we will stop charging them interest]

ULT **we will do according to what you say**
UST we will do what you say
(נַעֲשֶׂה כַּאֲשֶׁר אַתָּה אוֹמֵר)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could put this statement first, since it is the reason for the results that follow, the return of property and the cancelling of interest. Alternate translation: [Yes, we will do what you say]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **And I called the priests, and I caused them to swear to do according to this word**
UST Then I called the priests, and I made the leaders swear {to God in front of them} that they would do what they had promised
(וָאֶקְרָא אֶת־הַכֹּהֲנִים וָאַשְׁבִּיעֵם לַעֲשׂוֹת כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה)

The implication is that the priests would have these leaders swear an oath before God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Then I called the priests, and I made the leaders swear to God in front of them that they would do what they had promised.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
we will seek	we will stop {charging} … interest
And I called	Then I called
the priests	the priests
and I caused them to swear	and I made the leaders swear {to God in front of them}

Nehemiah 5:13

ULT	UST
Also, I shook out my bosom, and I said, "Thus may God shake out from his house and from his labor every man who does not cause this word to stand. And thus may he be shaken out and emptied." And all the assembly said, "Amen!" And they praised Yahweh, and the people did according to this word.	*I also shook out the folds of my robe and said to them, "In this same way, may God fling anyone who does not keep this oath away from everything he owns. Yes, may that person lose everything!" Then everyone who was there said, "We agree!" And they praised Yahweh. After that none of the Jews took houses or fields to guarantee loans, and none of them charged interest any more.*

ULT **I shook out my bosom**
UST I … shook out the folds of my robe
(חָצְנִי נָעַרְתִּי)

Bosom here refers to Nehemiah's robe. It refers specifically by association to the part that he could gather together in front of him to form a pouch. Alternate translation: [I shook out the folds of my robe]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **I shook out my bosom**
UST I … shook out the folds of my robe
(חָצְנִי נָעַרְתִּי)

Nehemiah gathered his robe together in front of him, the way someone would if they wanted to carry something in its folds. Then he flung the robe open and shook it, so that anything that was in it would have scattered. By doing this, he demonstrated symbolically to the Jewish leaders what would happen to them if they broke the promise they made. Alternate translation: [I shook out the folds of my robe]

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT **Thus may God shake out from his house and from his labor every man who does not cause this word to stand. And thus may he be shaken out and emptied**
UST In this same way, may God fling anyone who does not keep this oath away from everything he owns. Yes, may that person lose everything
(כָּכָה יְנַעֵר הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־כָּל־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָקִים אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה מִבֵּיתוֹ וּמִיגִיעוֹ וְכָכָה יִהְיֶה נָעָוּר וָרֵק)

Alternate translation: [In the same way, may God take away the home and all the possessions of anyone who does not keep this promise]

ULT **every man**
UST anyone
(אֶת־כָּל־הָאִישׁ)

In this context, this expression means “anyone.” It could include women as well as men. Alternate translation: [anyone]

Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **cause this word to stand**
UST does … keep this oath
(יָקִים אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה)

The **word** means the promise that the leaders have made and the oath they have taken to confirm it. Nehemiah is speaking of this promise as if it were a living thing that could stand, that is, stay in place rather than go away. Alternate translation: [keep this oath]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **from his house and from his labor**
UST away from everything he owns
(מִבֵּיתוֹ וּמִיגִיעוֹ)

These two short phrases mean similar things. They are used together to express the totality of what a person owns. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them. Alternate translation: [everything he owns]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **and from his labor**
UST away from everything he owns
(וּמִיגִיעוֹ)

Labor here refers to the “fruits of labor,” that is, the possessions that a person acquires through labor. Alternate translation: [all his possessions]

> **ULT And thus may he be shaken out and emptied**
> **UST** Yes, may that person lose everything
> (וְכָכָה יִהְיֶה נָעֽוּר וְרֵק)

This sentence repeats the meaning of the previous one. Nehemiah uses the repetition for emphasis. You would not need to use the same repetition in your translation if it were already clear that Nehemiah is speaking emphatically in the first sentence. However, you could also rephrase the meaning. Alternate translation: [Yes, may that person be separated from everything he owns]

Support Reference: Parallelism

> **ULT shaken out and emptied**
> **UST** Yes, may that person lose everything
> (נָעֽוּר וְרֵק)

These two short phrases mean similar things. They are used together to emphasize how completely Nehemiah wants God to punish anyone who breaks the oath. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [be separated from everything he owns]

Support Reference: Doublet

> **ULT all the assembly**
> **UST** everyone who was there
> (כָּל־הַקָּהָל)

This means everyone who was there, both the leaders who were the defendants and the citizens Nehemiah had gathered to hear the charges against them. Alternate translation: [everyone who was there]

> **ULT Amen**
> **UST** We agree
> (אָמֵן)

This is an expression that means, “Truly, it is so.” It expresses agreement with what someone has just said. You could express the meaning with a phrase such as, “We agree!” Or you could use the Hebrew term and explain its meaning: “Amen! It is true.”

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **And they praised Yahweh**
UST And they praised Yahweh
(וַיְהַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה)

Alternate translation: [they worshipped God]

ULT **and the people did according to this word**
UST After that none of the Jews took houses or fields to guarantee loans, and none of them charged interest any more
(וַיַּעַשׂ הָעָם כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה)

The people means "the Jews." "This word" means the promises they made. Alternate translation: [After that, none of the Jews took houses or fields to guarantee loans, and none of them charged interest]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
God	God
from his house	away from everything he owns
and from his labor	away from everything he owns
the assembly	who was there
Amen	We agree
And they praised	And they praised
Yahweh	Yahweh

Nehemiah 5:14

ULT	UST
Also, from the day that he appointed me to be their governor in the land of Judah, from year 20 even until year 32 of Artaxerxes the king, twelve years, I myself did not eat the bread of the governor, nor did my brothers.	*Here is something else I did to help the people. Artaxerxes, the king {of Persia}, had appointed me to be the governor of {the province of} Judah during the twentieth year {of his reign}. During the twelve years from the time that he appointed me until the thirty-second year of his reign, I did not accept the governor's food allowance, and {I did not use it to feed} my relatives. {I knew that the people were poor and could not afford to pay for it.}*

ULT **Also**
UST Here is something else I did to help the people
(גַּם)

As explained in the note to 3:1, in this book, Nehemiah is recording everything that he did to help the people of Judah. He hopes and prays that God will bless him for what he did. He has just described how he rescued the poor from foreclosures and interest. Now he is going to describe something further that he did to help them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Here is something else I did to help the people]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **from the day that he appointed me to be their governor in the land of Judah, from year 20 … of Artaxerxes the king**
UST Artaxerxes, the king {of Persia}, had appointed me to be the governor of {the province of} Judah during the twentieth year {of his reign} … from the time that he appointed me
(מִיּוֹם ׀ אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה אֹתִי לִהְיוֹת פָּחָם֙ בְּאֶ֣רֶץ יְהוּדָ֔ה מִשְּׁנַ֥ת עֶשְׂרִ֖ים & לְאַרְתַּחְשַׁסְתְּא הַמֶּ֑לֶךְ)

This is background information that helps explain what Nehemiah will say next. Alternate translation: [Artaxerxes, the king of Persia, had appointed me to be the governor of the province of Judah during the twentieth year of his reign]

ULT **from the day … even until year 32 of Artaxerxes the king**
UST Artaxerxes, the king {of Persia} … from the time … he … until the thirty-second year of his reign
(מִיּוֹם & וְעַד שְׁנַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁתַּיִם לְאַרְתַּחְשַׁסְתְּא הַמֶּלֶךְ)

Alternate translation: [During the twelve years from that time until the thirty-second year of his reign]

ULT **from the day**
UST from the time
(מִיּוֹם)

This is an idiom that means “from the time.” Alternate translation: [from that time]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **from year 20 even until year 32**
UST during the twentieth year {of his reign} … until the thirty-second year of his reign
(מִשְּׁנַת עֶשְׂרִים וְעַד שְׁנַת שְׁלֹשִׁים וּשְׁתַּיִם)

Alternate translation: [from the 20th year until the 32nd year of the reign of Artaxerxes as king] or [from year 20 until year 32 in the reign of Artaxerxes as king]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT **twelve years**
UST During the twelve years
(שְׁנֵים שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה)

Alternate translation: [12 years] or [during those 12 years]

Support Reference: Numbers

ULT **I myself did not eat the bread of the governor, nor did my brothers**
UST I did not accept the governor’s food allowance, and {I did not use it to feed} my relatives. {I knew that the people were poor and could not afford to pay for it … }
(אֲנִי וְאַחַי לֶחֶם הַפֶּחָה לֹא אָכָלְתִּי)

As Nehemiah explains in the next verse, he recognized that the people were poor and could not afford to provide very much for the expenses of the governor. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly here. Alternate translation: [Because I knew that the people were poor and could not afford to pay for it, I did not accept the governor’s food allowance, and I did not use it to feed my relatives]

ULT I myself did not eat … did
UST I did not accept … I knew that the people were poor and could not afford to pay for it
(אֲנִי & לֹא אָכַלְתִּי)

Alternate translation: [I did not accept]

ULT the bread of the governor
UST the governor's food allowance
(לֶחֶם הַפֶּחָה)

Nehemiah is using bread to refer to the entire food allowance that he was entitled to as the governor of Judah. He is describing all the food by the name of one part of it, the bread. Alternate translation: [the food that the people provided for the governor] or [the governor's food allowance]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT nor … my brothers
UST and {I did not use it to feed} my relatives
(וְאַחַי)

As in 4:23, **brother** here likely refers to Nehemiah's actual brother Hanani and the other close relatives who were with him. Alternate translation: [and I did not use it to feed my relatives]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
from the day	from the time
he appointed	had appointed … appointed
their governor	the governor
in the land of	of
Judah	{the province of} Judah
from year	during the … year {of his reign}
year	the … year of his reign
of Artaxerxes	Artaxerxes … he
the king	the king {of Persia}
years	During the … years
the bread of	s food allowance
the governor	the governor

Nehemiah 5:15

ULT	UST
But the former governors who were before my face had been heavy on the people, and they took from them bread and wine, after forty silver shekels. Also, their young men had acted dominantly over the people. But I myself did not do thus, from the face of the fear of God.	*The governors before me had made life very difficult for the people. They had demanded that the people supply them with bread and wine and forty silver shekels every day. Even their servants oppressed the people. But I respected and honored God, and so I did not oppress them.*

ULT But the former governors who were before my face
UST The governors before me … They
(וְהַפַּחוֹת הָרִאשֹׁנִים אֲשֶׁר־לְפָנַי)

Former and **before my face** mean similar things. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them. Alternate translation: [The men who were governors before me]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT were before my face
UST before me
(לְפָנַי)

Here **face** describes an entire person by reference to one part of them, the "face." Alternate translation: [before me]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT had been heavy on the people
UST had made life very difficult for the people
(הִכְבִּידוּ עַל־הָעָם)

Here Nehemiah speaks as if these governors had been a great burden that the people were carrying, making their lives very difficult. Alternate translation: [made life very difficult for the people]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and they took from them bread and wine, after forty silver shekels**
UST had demanded that the people supply them with bread and wine and forty silver shekels every day
(וַיִּקְחוּ מֵהֶם בְּלֶחֶם וְיַיִן אַחַר כֶּסֶף־שְׁקָלִים אַרְבָּעִים)

After indicates that the supplies of bread and wine were in addition to the money. Nehemiah is likely describing what the former governors required of the people each day. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [They demanded that they supply them with bread and wine and forty silver shekels every day.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **forty silver shekels**
UST forty silver shekels
(כֶּסֶף־שְׁקָלִים אַרְבָּעִים)

In ancient times, a silver shekel weighed about 11 grams or about a third of an ounce. You could try to express this in terms of modern money values, but if you did, that could cause your Bible translation to become outdated and inaccurate over time, since those values can change from year to year. Instead, you could say something general like “40 silver coins,” or give the equivalent weight, or use the biblical term in the text and give the weight in a note.

Support Reference: Biblical Money

ULT **forty silver shekels**
UST forty silver shekels
(כֶּסֶף־שְׁקָלִים אַרְבָּעִים)

Alternate translation: [forty silver shekels] or [40 pieces of silver]

Support Reference: Numbers

ULT **Also, their young men had acted dominantly over the people**
UST Even their servants oppressed the people
(גַּם נַעֲרֵיהֶם שָׁלְטוּ עַל־הָעָם)

Alternate translation: [Even their servants oppressed the people.]

ULT **But I myself did not do thus, from the face of the fear of God**
UST But I respected and honored God, and so I did not oppress them
(וַאֲנִי֙ לֹא־עָשִׂ֣יתִי כֵּ֔ן מִפְּנֵ֖י יִרְאַ֥ת אֱלֹהִֽים)

In this sentence, If it would be helpful in your language, you could put the reason before the result. Alternate translation: [But because of my fear of God, I did not take the food]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **from the face of the fear of God**
UST I respected and honored God, and so
(מִפְּנֵ֖י יִרְאַ֥ת אֱלֹהִֽים)

Here, **face** represents Nehemiah's personal perception. "Fearing" God does not mean being afraid of God, but recognizing that God deserves respect and honor. Nehemiah is speaking of this perception figuratively, as if this recognition was always directly in front of him in a place where he could see it. He means that he was always aware of it. Alternate translation: [because I knew I needed to respect God]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
But the … governors	The governors … They
bread	with bread
and wine	and wine
silver	silver
their young men	their servants
the fear of	I respected and honored
God	God

Nehemiah 5:16

ULT	UST
Yes, also I held fast to the work of this wall, and we did not buy a field. And all my young men were gathered there for the work.	*I devoted myself to the work of {rebuilding} the wall. {My relatives and I} did not buy any property, {even though we could have gotten it cheaply because the poor were so desperate}. I also assigned all of my servants to work {on the wall}.*

ULT **I held fast to the work of this wall**
UST I devoted myself to the work of {rebuilding} the wall
(בִּמְלֶאכֶת הַחוֹמָה הַזֹּאת הֶחֱזַקְתִּי)

Nehemiah describes himself as **holding fast to**, meaning "holding onto," the work of rebuilding the wall. This means that he was devoted to it, and he did not pursue other interests, including ones that could have made money for him. Alternate translation: [I devoted myself to the work of rebuilding of the wall]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and we did not buy a field**
UST My relatives and I} did not buy any property, {even though we could have gotten it cheaply because the poor were so desperate}
(וְשָׂדֶה לֹא קָנִינוּ)

We likely refers to Nehemiah and his relatives, since he mentions his servants next.

ULT **and we did not buy a field**
UST My relatives and I} did not buy any property, {even though we could have gotten it cheaply because the poor were so desperate}
(וְשָׂדֶה לֹא קָנִינוּ)

Nehemiah is using the term **field** to describe any kind of real property that he and his relatives might have bought. Verse 11 shows that this could have included not just fields but also things like vineyards, olive orchards, and houses. He is describing all real property by reference to one kind, a field. Alternate translation: [My relatives and I did not buy any property]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **and we did not buy a field**
UST My relatives and I} did not buy any property, {even though we could have gotten it cheaply because the poor were so desperate}
(וְשָׂדֶה לֹא קָנִינוּ)

The implication is that they could have bought property cheaply because the poor were so desperate. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [My relatives and I did not buy any property, even though we could have gotten it cheaply because the poor were so desperate]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And all my young men were gathered there for the work**
UST I … assigned all of my servants to work {on the wall}
(וְכָל־נְעָרַי קְבוּצִים שָׁם עַל־הַמְּלָאכָה)

There means at the wall, and **for the work** means the work of rebuilding the wall. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: [I gathered all of my servants there to work on the wall]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
to the work of	to the work of {rebuilding}
my young men	my servants
were gathered	I … assigned
the work	work {on the wall}

Nehemiah 5:17

ULT	UST
Now the Jews and the prefects were 150 men at my table, with the ones coming to us from the nations that were around us.	*{As governor,} I {was responsible for} feeding 150 Jewish leaders and city officials. I also entertained {Jewish} visitors who came from nearby countries.*

ULT **Now the Jews**
UST Jewish leaders
(וְהַיְּהוּדִים)

While this expression means "the Jewish people" in most of the book, in the context here and in 2:16 it seems to mean "Jewish leaders." Nehemiah is describing some members of this people group, its leaders, as if they were the whole group. Alternate translation: [the Jewish leaders]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **and the prefects**
UST and city officials
(וְהַסְּגָנִים)

See how you translated this term in 2:16. Alternate translation: [city officials]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **were 150 men at my table**
UST {As governor,} I {was responsible for} feeding 150 … I also entertained
(מֵאָה וַחֲמִשִּׁים אִישׁ עַל־שֻׁלְחָנִי &)

Nehemiah is using the word **table** to refer to the act of feeding people. He is describing that act by reference to something associated with it, the table that the food was served on. Alternate translation: [every day I was responsible to feed 150 Jewish leaders and officials]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT with the ones coming to us from the nations that were around us
UST {Jewish} visitors who came from nearby countries
(וְהַבָּאִים אֵלֵינוּ מִן־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר־סְבִיבֹתֵינוּ)

This likely refers to Jews who lived in other countries but who came to Jerusalem. Their own communities may have sent them as representatives, or they may have come on their own for business or personal reasons. Alternate translation: [and we also fed the Jewish visitors who came from other countries around us]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Now the Jews	Jewish leaders
and the prefects	and city officials
the nations	countries

Nehemiah 5:18

ULT	UST
And what was made for one day was one bull, six choice sheep, and birds were made for me, and between ten days all kinds of wine in abundance. So with this I did not seek the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy on this people.	*Each day {I told my servants} to prepare {for us} one ox, six good sheep, and various kinds of poultry. I paid for these myself. Every ten days I also brought in an abundant supply of various kinds of wine. But {I knew that} the people were struggling to survive, and so {I paid for all of these things at my own expense}. I did not accept the governor's food allowance.*

ULT **And what was made for one day was one bull, six choice sheep, and birds were made for me**

UST Each day {I told my servants} to prepare {for us} one ox, six good sheep, and various kinds of poultry. I paid for these myself … I also brought in
(וַאֲשֶׁר֙ הָיָ֣ה נַעֲשָׂ֔ה לְי֥וֹם אֶחָ֖ד שׁ֣וֹר אֶחָ֑ד צֹ֚אן שֵׁ֣שׁ־בְּרֻר֔וֹת וְצִפֳּרִ֖ים נַעֲשׂ֣וּ־לִ֑י)

Nehemiah seems once again to be leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. He probably means something like, "What was prepared for one day is as follows: One bull, six choice sheep, and birds; that is what was prepared for me." You could simplify the sentence for your readers by not including "were prepared for me" again at the end. Alternate translation: [Each day I told my servants to prepare one ox, six good sheep, and various kinds of poultry]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **And what was made for … day was one**

UST Each day {I told my servants} to prepare {for us} … I also brought in
(וַאֲשֶׁר֙ הָיָ֣ה נַעֲשָׂ֔ה לְי֥וֹם אֶחָ֖ד)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: [Each day I told my servants to prepare] or [Each day I told my servants to serve us the meat from]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

> ULT **and birds**
> UST and various kinds of poultry
> (וְצִפֳּרִים)

It is likely that the birds were domesticated rather than wild, and if it would be helpful to your readers, you could use a term that indicates this. Alternate translation: [and various kinds of poultry]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

> ULT **and between ten days all kinds of wine in abundance**
> UST Every ten days … an abundant supply of various kinds of wine
> (וּבֵין עֲשֶׂרֶת יָמִים בְּכָל־יַיִן לְהַרְבֵּה)

Nehemiah is once again leaving out some words that a sentence would ordinarily need to be complete. If it would be helpful in your language, you express the meaning more fully. Alternate translation: [Every ten days I also had my servants bring in an abundant supply of various kinds of wine]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

> ULT **and between ten days**
> UST Every ten days
> (וּבֵין עֲשֶׂרֶת יָמִים)

This expression means “every ten days.”

Support Reference: Idiom

> ULT **wine in abundance**
> UST an abundant … various kinds of wine
> (יַיִן לְהַרְבֵּה)

Alternate translation: [enough wine for everyone]

ULT **So with this I did not seek the bread of the governor**
UST But … {I paid for all of these things at my own expense}. I did not accept the governor's food allowance
(וְעִם־זֹ֖את לֶ֣חֶם הַפֶּ֔חָה לֹ֥א בִקַּ֖שְׁתִּי)

As in 5:14, "the bread of the governor" means "the governor's food allowance." The implication is that, at his own expense, Nehemiah paid for all of the things he has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [I paid for all of these things at my own expense. I did not accept the governor's food allowance]

ULT **the bondage was heavy on this people**
UST {I knew that} the people were struggling to survive
(כָּבְדָ֥ה הָעֲבֹדָ֖ה עַל־הָעָ֥ם הַזֶּֽה)

The abstract noun **bondage** refers to the way the people were struggling to survive in difficult times. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a verb such as "struggle." Alternate translation: [I knew that the people were struggling to survive]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the bondage was heavy on this people**
UST {I knew that} the people were struggling to survive
(כָּבְדָ֥ה הָעֲבֹדָ֖ה עַל־הָעָ֥ם הַזֶּֽה)

Here Nehemiah is speaking of bondage or struggle as if it were a great burden that the people were carrying, making their lives very difficult. Alternate translation: [I knew that the people were struggling to survive]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the bondage was heavy on this people**
UST {I knew that} the people were struggling to survive
(כָּבְדָ֥ה הָעֲבֹדָ֖ה עַל־הָעָ֥ם הַזֶּֽה)

You can put this before Nehemiah's statement that he did not accept the governor's food allowance, because it gives the reason why he refused it. Alternate translation: [I knew that the people were struggling to survive, so I did not accept the governor's food allowance.]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
for … day	day
bull	ox
sheep	sheep
days	days
wine	various kinds of wine
I did … seek	{I paid for all of these things at my own expense}. I did … accept
the bread of	the … s food allowance
the governor	governor
the bondage	I knew that … were struggling to survive

Nehemiah 5:19

ULT	UST
Remember me, my God, for good, all that I have done for this people.	*My God, think of me, and reward me for all the good that I have done for the people of Judah.*

ULT **Remember me, my God, for good**
UST My God, think of me, and reward me for … the good
(זָכְרָה־לִּי אֱלֹהַי לְטוֹבָה)

As in 4:4, here Nehemiah speaks directly to God. You could indicate this by putting this verse in quotation marks. Review the note at 4:4 about asides like this if that would be helpful.

Support Reference: Aside

ULT **Remember me … for good**
UST think of me, and reward me for … the good
(זָכְרָה־לִּי & לְטוֹבָה)

To remember someone **for good** is an idiom that means to reward someone with good things for the good that they have done.

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Remember me, my God, for good**
UST My God, think of me, and reward me for … the good
(זָכְרָה־לִּי אֱלֹהַי לְטוֹבָה)

In this context, **remember** means to think about someone and consider what action you can take on their behalf. Nehemiah is not suggesting that God has forgotten him. Alternate translation: [think of me]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **all that I have done for this people**
UST all … that I have done for the people of Judah
(כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־עָשִׂיתִי עַל־הָעָם הַזֶּה)

Nehemiah is once again leaving out some words that a sentence would ordinarily need. He is asking God to do good things for him because of all the good things he has done for the people of Judah as their governor. Alternate translation: [reward me because of all the good that I have done for the people of Judah]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
my God	My God
for good	and reward … for … the good

Nehemiah 6

Nehemiah 6 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

The building of the wall is completed in this chapter.

The ULT sets the lines in 6:6–7 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are part of a long quotation.

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Miracle

Completing this city wall in only 52 days was considered proof that God had helped the Jews, especially given the opposition that they had experienced from the people in surrounding areas.

Nehemiah 6:1

ULT	UST
And it happened, when it was heard by Sanballat and Tobiah, and by Geshem the Arabian, and by the rest of our enemies, that I had built the wall and a break was not remaining in it (although until that time I had not set up the doors in the gates),	*Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arabian, and our other enemies learned that we had finished rebuilding the wall, and that there were now no more gaps in it. (However, we had not yet put the doors in the gates.)*

ULT **And it happened**
UST learned
(וַיְהִי)

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next event in his story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses.

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT **it was heard**
UST learned
(נִשְׁמַע)

This means that these enemies learned somehow that the wall was finished. Perhaps someone came and told them, or perhaps they received a written report. Nehemiah uses hearing, one means of discovering things, to describe these men learning this. Alternate translation: [when our enemies learned]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **when it was heard … and by the rest of our enemies**
UST and our other enemies learned
(כַּאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁמַע & וּלְיֶתֶר אֹיְבֵינוּ)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: [when our enemies learned]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT by Sanballat and Tobiah
UST Sanballat, Tobiah
(לְסַנְבַלַּט וְטוֹבִיָּה)

These are the names of men. See how you translated them in 2:10.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT and by Geshem
UST Geshem
(וּלְגָשֶׁם)

This is the name of a man and his people group. See how you translated these names in 2:19.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT I had built the wall
UST we had finished rebuilding the wall
(בָּנִיתִי אֶת־הַחוֹמָה)

As in 4:14, Nehemiah is using himself to represent the entire community that he is a part of. Alternate translation: [that we had finished rebuilding the wall]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT although
UST However
(גַּם)

This term expresses a weak contrast between the sentence that comes before and the sentence that comes after. There was no break in the wall except for the spaces where the doors had not yet been hung in the gates. Alternate translation: [however]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT until that time I had not set up the doors in the gates
UST we had not yet put the doors in the gates
(עַד־הָעֵת הַהִיא דְּלָתוֹת לֹא־הֶעֱמַדְתִּי בַּשְּׁעָרִים)

Once again Nehemiah is using himself to represent the entire community that he is a part of. Alternate translation: [we had not yet put the doors in the gates]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the Arabian	the Arabian

ULT	UST
our enemies	our … enemies
in the gates	in the gates

Nehemiah 6:2

ULT	UST
that Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come, and let us appoint a time to meet together among the villages in the valley of Ono." And they were thinking to do evil to me.	*So Sanballat and Geshem sent me {a message that} said, "We want to arrange to meet with you in one of the villages in the plain of Ono." But {I knew that they were saying this because} they wanted to harm me.*

ULT **that … sent to me**
UST So … sent me {a message … }
(וַיִּשְׁלַח & אֵלַי)

Alternate translation: [sent me a messenger to me]

ULT **Come, and let us appoint a time to meet together**
UST We want to arrange to meet with you
(לְכָה וְנִוָּעֲדָה יַחְדָּו)

These enemies use the word **come** to encourage Nehemiah to accept their invitation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the word as something other than an imperative to make the message sound inviting. Alternate translation: [We would like to arrange to meet with you]

ULT **among the villages in the valley of Ono**
UST in one of the villages in the plain of Ono
(בַּכְּפִירִים בְּבִקְעַת אוֹנוֹ)

Ono is the name of a place about twenty miles from Jerusalem. It is down from the mountains towards the Mediterranean coast, so it can be described as a "valley" or "plain." Alternate translation: [in one of the villages in the plain of Ono]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **And they were thinking to do evil to me**
UST But {I knew that they were saying this because} they wanted to harm me
(וְהֵמָּה חֹשְׁבִים לַעֲשׂוֹת לִי רָעָה)

In this context, **evil** means "harm." Alternate translation: [they wanted to harm me]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **And they were thinking to do evil to me**
UST But {I knew that they were saying this because} they wanted to harm me
(וַהֵמָּה חֹשְׁבִים לַעֲשׂוֹת לִי רָעָה)

The implication is that Nehemiah figured this out even though in their invitation these enemies pretended to be sincere. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [But I recognized that they were saying this because they wanted to harm me.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
were thinking	wanted
evil	harm

Nehemiah 6:3

ULT	UST
And I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work, and I am not able to go down. Why should the work stop while I abandon it and go down to you?"	*So I sent messengers to tell them, "The work I am doing {here} is very important. I am not able to travel {while it is going on}. There is no reason for me to stop the work and leave it so that I can meet with you."*

ULT I am doing a great work

UST The work I am doing {here} is very important

(מְלָאכָה גְּדוֹלָה אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה)

Nehemiah is once again using himself to represent the whole community and its work of rebuilding of the wall. Alternate translation: [We are doing a great work]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT and I am not able to go down

UST I am not able to travel {while it is going on}

(וְלֹא אוּכַל לָרֶדֶת)

Nehemiah does not mean that he is physically unable to travel to Ono. He means that he cannot leave his supervision of the work for the several days it would take to travel there and back. Alternate translation: [I am not able to travel while it is going on]

ULT to go down

UST to travel {while it is going on}

(לָרֶדֶת)

Nehemiah uses the word **down** because the plain of Ono is at a lower elevation than Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [meet with you]

ULT **Why should the work stop while I abandon it and go down to you**
UST There is no reason for me to stop the work and leave it so that I can meet with you
(לָמָּה תִשָּׁבֵת הַמְּלָאכָה כַּאֲשֶׁר אַרְפֶּה וְיָרַדְתִּי אֲלֵיכֶם)

Nehemiah is making a statement, not asking a question. He does not expect Sanballat and Geshem to give him reasons why the work should stop as he travels to meet with them. Instead, Nehemiah is using the question form to emphasize how important it is for the work of rebuilding the walls to continue. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate his question as a statement. Alternate translation: [I cannot let the work stop and come down to you]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **and go down to you**
UST so that I can meet with you
(וְיָרַדְתִּי אֲלֵיכֶם)

The word **down** is used here because the plain of Ono where they were requesting Nehemiah to come is at a lower elevation than Jerusalem.

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
messengers	messengers
a … work	The work
the work	the work

Nehemiah 6:4

ULT	UST
And they sent to me according to this word four times, and I turned them back according to this word.	*They sent me the same message four times, and {each time} I refused them for this same reason.*

ULT And they sent to me according to this word four times
UST They sent me the same message four times
(וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ אֵלַי כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה אַרְבַּע פְּעָמִים)

Alternate translation: [They sent me the same message four times]

ULT and I turned them back
UST and {each time} I refused them
(וָאָשִׁיב אוֹתָם)

Turned them back means **refused them** The implication is that Nehemiah did this each time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [and each time I refused them]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT according to this word
UST the same message
(כַּדָּבָר הַזֶּה)

Alternate translation: [for this same reason]

Nehemiah 6:5

ULT	UST
Then Sanballat sent his young man to me a fifth time according to this word, and an opened letter was in his hand.	*Then Sanballat sent one of his servants to me bringing the same request for a fifth time. This time the message was written, but it was not sealed. Sanballat {left the letter unsealed so that others would find out what it said, because he wanted to pressure me to meet with him}.*

ULT **Then Sanballat sent his young man to me a fifth time according to this word**
UST Then Sanballat sent one of his servants to me … the same request for a fifth time
(וַיִּשְׁלַח֩ אֵלַ֨י סַנְבַלַּ֜ט כַּדָּבָ֤ר הַזֶּה֙ פַּ֣עַם חֲמִישִׁ֔ית אֶת־נַעֲרֹ֖ו)

Alternate translation: [Sanballat sent his servant to me with this same message for a fifth time] or [this was time number five that Sanballat sent his servant to me with this same message]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT **and an opened letter was in his hand**
UST bringing … This time the message was written, but it was not sealed. Sanballat {left the letter unsealed so that others would find out what it said, because he wanted to pressure me to meet with him}
(וְאִגֶּ֥רֶת פְּתוּחָ֖ה בְּיָדֹֽו)

This means that this fifth message was written in a letter, but the letter was unsealed. Alternate translation: [This time the message was written, but it was not sealed]

ULT **and an opened letter was in his hand**
UST bringing … This time the message was written, but it was not sealed. Sanballat {left the letter unsealed so that others would find out what it said, because he wanted to pressure me to meet with him}
(וְאִגֶּ֥רֶת פְּתוּחָ֖ה בְּיָדֹֽו)

As a diplomatic communication, the letter should have been sealed. Because it was not, others could read it and spread its contents among the people of the region. It appears that Sanballat deliberately left the letter unsealed to pressure Nehemiah to meet with him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [Sanballat left the letter unsealed so that others would find out what it said, because he wanted to pressure me to meet with him]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
his young man	one of his servants

Nehemiah 6:6

ULT	UST
In it was written, "It is heard among the nations, and Gashmu is saying, that you and the Jews are thinking to rebel, therefore you are building the wall. And you are becoming a king over them, according to these words.	*The letter said, "{The people in} the countries {around us} are saying, and Geshem confirms {that it is true}, that you and the Jewish people are planning to rebel {against King Artaxerxes}. That is why you are rebuilding the wall. {They are also} saying that you intend to become the king of the Jews yourself.*

ULT In it was written
UST The letter said
(כָּתוּב בָּהּ)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [The letter said]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT It is heard among the nations … that
UST {The people in} the countries {around us} are saying
(בַּגּוֹיִם נִשְׁמָע)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [The rumor in the region is]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT and Gashmu is saying
UST and Geshem confirms {that it is true}
(וְגַשְׁמוּ אֹמֵר)

The claim appears to be that Geshem has investigated these rumors and told Sanballat that they are true. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [and Geshem confirms that it is true]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and Gashmu**
UST and Geshem
(וְגַשְׁמוּ)

Gashmu here is an alternate form of the name **Geshem** found in 6:1. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the name as **Geshem** here as well.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **you and the Jews are thinking to rebel, therefore you are building the wall**
UST that you and the Jewish people are planning to rebel {against King Artaxerxes}. That is why you are rebuilding the wall
(אַתָּה וְהַיְהוּדִים ח�ֹשְׁבִים לִמְרֹד עַל־כֵּן אַתָּה בוֹנֶה הַחוֹמָה)

This means specifically that the Jews would rebel against Artaxerxes, the Persian king, who was currently ruling them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [you and the Jewish people are rebuilding the wall because you are planning to rebel against King Artaxerxes]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and the Jews**
UST and the Jewish people
(וְהַיְהוּדִים)

Here this expression means **the Jewish people** specifically the ones living in Judah and Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Jewish people]

ULT **And you are becoming a king over them**
UST you intend to become the king of the Jews yourself
(וְאַתָּה הֹוֶה לָהֶם לְמֶלֶךְ)

Alternate translation: [They are also saying that you intend to make yourself the king of the Jews]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
among the nations	The people in} the countries {around us}
and the Jews	and the Jewish people
are thinking	planning … are
to rebel	to rebel {against King Artaxerxes}

ULT	UST
a king	the king

Nehemiah 6:7

ULT	UST
And also, you have set up prophets to call out concerning you in Jerusalem, saying, 'A king is in Judah!' And now, it will be heard by the king according to these words. So now, come, and let us consult together."	*{These people are} also {saying that} you have appointed prophets to make a proclamation about you in Jerusalem. They are saying, 'The Jews {now} have a king {of their own}!' King Artaxerxes will certainly hear these reports, {and when he does, he will be very angry with you}. So we really should meet together and talk {about this}."*

ULT And also
UST These people are} also {saying that}
(וְגַם)

This phrase indicates that what follows is more of the report that Sanballat claims he is hearing from the people in the surrounding countries. If it would be helpful in your language, you could put something in your translation to indicate this. Alternate translation: [These people are also saying that]

Support Reference: Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT you have set up prophets to call out concerning you in Jerusalem
UST you have appointed prophets to make a proclamation about you in Jerusalem
(נְבִיאִים הֶעֱמַדְתָּ לִקְרֹא עָלֶיךָ בִּירוּשָׁלַ͏ִם)

Alternate translation: [you have appointed prophets to make this proclamation about you in Jerusalem]

ULT saying, 'A king is in Judah
UST They are saying, 'The Jews {now} have a king {of their own}
(לֵאמֹר מֶלֶךְ בִּיהוּדָה)

The proclamation can be presented as a direct quotation. "Saying" can be represented by the quotation marks and whatever punctuation your language uses to introduce a quotation. Alternate translation: [The Jews now have a king of their own]

> ULT **And now**
> UST certainly
> (וְעַתָּה)

This is not a reference to time. Sanballat is using this expression to introduce a further inference. Alternate translation: [certainly]

> ULT **it will be heard by the king according to these words**
> UST King Artaxerxes will … hear these reports, {and when he does, he will be very angry with you}
> (יִשָּׁמַע לַמֶּלֶךְ כַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [King Artaxerxes will certainly hear these reports]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

> ULT **it will be heard by the king according to these words**
> UST King Artaxerxes will … hear these reports, {and when he does, he will be very angry with you}
> (יִשָּׁמַע לַמֶּלֶךְ כַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה)

The implication is that when Artaxerxes hears these reports, he will be very angry with Nehemiah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [King Artaxerxes will certainly hear these reports, and when he does, he will be very angry with you]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **And now**
> UST certainly
> (וְעַתָּה)

This is not a reference to time. Sanballat is using this expression to introduce his conclusion. This term expresses that the sentences that came before provide the reason for the sentence that comes after. Alternate translation: [Therefore]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **come, and let us consult together**
UST we really should meet together and talk {about this}
(לְכָה וְנִוָּעֲצָה יַחְדָּו)

As in 6:2, “come” is a word of encouragement rather than a command. Alternate translation: [So we really should meet together and talk about this]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
you have set up	you have appointed
prophets	prophets
to call out	to make a proclamation
in Jerusalem	in Jerusalem
A king	a king {of their own}
is in Judah	The Jews {now} have
by the king	King Artaxerxes

Nehemiah 6:8

ULT	UST
And I sent to him, saying, "No such thing has been done according to these words that you are saying, but you are inventing them out of your own heart."	*I sent {a message} back to him saying, "None of these things that you are saying are true. You are just making them up yourself."*

ULT And I sent to him
UST I sent … back to him
(וָאֶשְׁלְחָה אֵלָיו)

Alternate translation: [I sent a message back to him]

ULT No such thing has been done according to these words that you are saying
UST None of these things that you are saying are true
(לֹא נִהְיָה כַּדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה אוֹמֵר)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [I have not done any of the things you have written]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT but you are inventing them out of your own heart
UST You are just making them up yourself
(כִּי מִלִּבְּךָ אַתָּה בוֹדֶאם)

Here, the **heart** represents someone's thoughts and feelings. Sanballat's thoughts and feelings, in turn, represent him as a person. Alternate translation: [you have made all this up in your own imagination]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT but
UST just
(כִּי)

This term expresses a contrast between the clause that comes before and the clause that comes after.

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

Nehemiah 6:9

ULT	UST
For all of them were frightening us, saying, “Their hands will drop from the work, and it will not be done.” So now, strengthen my hands.	*I knew that they were all {just trying to} frighten us. They thought, “{The Jews will become so afraid that} they will stop working {on the wall}, and they will never finish {rebuilding it}.” So {I prayed, “O God,} give me courage.{”}*

ULT **For all of them were frightening us**
UST I knew that they were all {just trying to} frighten us
(כִּ֤י כֻלָּם֙ מְיָרְאִ֣ים אוֹתָ֔נוּ)

This likely means, “they were all trying to frighten us.” The implication is that Nehemiah recognized that this was the motive behind the letters. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [I knew that they were all just trying to frighten us]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **saying**
UST They thought
(לֵאמֹ֑ר)

Alternate translation: [They were thinking]

ULT **Their hands will drop from the work**
UST The Jews will become so afraid that} they will stop working {on the wall}
(יִרְפ֤וּ יְדֵיהֶם֙ מִן־הַמְּלָאכָ֔ה)

Here, **hand** represents strength, power, control, or action. Alternate translation: [The workers will stop doing the work on the wall]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **Their hands will drop from the work**
> UST The Jews will become so afraid that} they will stop working {on the wall}
> (יִרְפּוּ יְדֵיהֶם מִן־הַמְּלָאכָה)

The implication is that the enemies expected the Jews to become so afraid of being accused of rebelling for rebuilding the wall that they would stop doing that. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [The Jews will become so afraid that they will stop working on the wall]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **from the work**
> UST The Jews will become so afraid that} they will stop working {on the wall}
> (מִן־הַמְּלָאכָה)

This means specifically the work on the wall. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [working on the wall]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **and it will not be done**
> UST and they will never finish {rebuilding it}
> (וְלֹא תֵעָשֶׂה)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who will do the action. Alternate translation: [they will never finish rebuilding it]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

> ULT **So now, strengthen my hands**
> UST So {I prayed, "O God,} give me courage
> (וְעַתָּה חַזֵּק אֶת־יָדָי)

Nehemiah speaks directly to God once again here. This instance is like the one in 4:4, where Nehemiah records what he prayed at the time of the events he is describing. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this by introducing the prayer with a phrase such as "so I prayed," by presenting the prayer as a direct quotation, and by having Nehemiah address God directly at the beginning. Alternate translation: [So I prayed, 'O God, give me courage']

Support Reference: Aside

> **ULT strengthen my hands**
> **UST** give me courage
> (חַזֵּק אֶת־יָדָי)

Here the strength of a person's hands stands for the courage they are feeling inside. Alternate translation: [strengthen me]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
were frightening	were … {just trying to} frighten
the work	The Jews will become so afraid that} they will stop working {on the wall}

Nehemiah 6:10

ULT	UST
Now as for me, I entered the house of Shemaiah, the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel, and he was confined. And he said, "Let us appoint a time to meet in the house of God, in the midst of the temple. And let us shut the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you. Yes, at night they are coming to kill you."	*{Around this time} I went to visit Shemaiah, the son of Delaiah and grandson of Mehetabel. {I went to see him in his home, because} he was not leaving {his house}. He was a priest, and he was trying to show that it was not safe for Jewish leaders to go out in public. He told me, "{We are not safe even here.} We need to go into the temple and lock the doors, because people are trying to kill you. One night they are going to come and kill you."*

ULT **Now as for me**
UST {Around this time} I
(וְאָנִי)

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce something else that happened around this same time. Alternate translation: [Around this time]

Support Reference: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

ULT **I entered the house of**
UST went to visit
(בָּאתִי בֵּית)

Alternate translation: [I went to visit]

ULT **Shemaiah, the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabel**
UST Shemaiah, the son of Delaiah and grandson of Mehetabel
(שְׁמַעְיָה בֶן־דְּלָיָה בֶּן־מְהֵיטַבְאֵל)

Shemaiah is the name of a man, Delaiah is the name of his father, and Mehetabel is the name of his grandfather. Alternate translation: [Shemaiah, the son of Delaiah and grandson of Mehetabel]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and he was confined**
UST {I went to see him in his home, because} he was not leaving {his house}. He was a priest, and he was trying to show that it was not safe for Jewish leaders to go out in public
(וְהֻוּא עָצֻור)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: [he was not leaving his house.]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **and he was confined**
UST {I went to see him in his home, because} he was not leaving {his house}. He was a priest, and he was trying to show that it was not safe for Jewish leaders to go out in public
(וְהֻוּא עָצֻור)

Nehemiah does not say why Shemaiah was not leaving his house. He could have been sick or he could have been ceremonially unclean, so you might choose not to specify any reason. However, the context suggests that Shemaiah may have been trying to symbolize that it was not safe for Jewish leaders to go around in public. A man by the name of Shemaiah is listed in 10:8 as one of the priests who signed the community agreement. This could be the same person since he has access to the temple and is therefore likely a priest. If it would be helpful in your language, you could suggest this reason explicitly. Alternate translation: [He was a priest, and he was trying to show that it was not safe for Jewish leaders to go out in public, so he was not leaving his house]

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT **Let us appoint a time to meet in the house of God, in the midst of the temple**
UST {We are not safe even here.} We need to go into the temple
(נִוָּעֵד֙ אֶל־בֵּ֣ית הָאֱלֹהִ֔ים אֶל־תֹּ֖וךְ הַהֵיכָ֑ל)

Shemaiah seems to be proposing that he and Nehemiah move their meeting to the temple, suggesting that they are not even safe in his house. Alternate translation: [We are not safe even here. We need to go into the temple, to the sacred place inside the temple]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT in the house of God, in the midst of the temple
UST {We are not safe even here.} We need to go into the temple
(אֶל־בֵּ֣ית הָאֱלֹהִ֔ים אֶל־תּ֖וֹךְ הַהֵיכָ֑ל)

These two phrases mean similar things. Shemaiah uses the repetition to emphasize the danger he is suggesting they are in. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [into the temple]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT the house of God
UST {We are not safe even here.} We need to go into the temple
(בֵּ֣ית הָאֱלֹהִ֔ים)

Shemaiah is referring to the temple as the "house of God," as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: [the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT And let us shut the doors of the temple
UST and lock the doors
(וְנִסְגְּרָ֖ה דַּלְתוֹת֣ הַהֵיכָ֑ל)

This means to not just close the doors but lock them. Alternate translation: [and lock the doors]

ULT for they are coming to kill you
UST because people are trying to kill you
(כִּ֥י בָאִ֛ים לַהֲרָגֶ֖ךָּ)

Shemaiah does not say who these people are. It would be possible to say something based on what can reasonably be inferred. For example, "Your enemies have hired people to kill you." However, the vagueness seems to be part of Shemaiah's strategy to frighten Nehemiah. So it might be more effective to leave this indefinite. Alternate translation: [because people are trying to kill you]

ULT **Yes, at night they are coming to kill you**
UST One night they are going to come and kill you
(וְלַיְלָה בָּאִים לְהָרָגְךָ)

Shemaiah's confidence in the detail of "at night" seems designed to make Nehemiah even more afraid, because this means that the killers will come in the dark when he is asleep, so he will not be able to protect himself. It could be helpful to your readers for your translation to reflect this confidence. Alternate translation: [I know that one night they are going to come and kill you]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the house of	went to visit
the house of God	{We are not safe even here.} We need to go into the temple
the temple	{We are not safe even here.} We need to go into the temple
the temple	the doors
to kill you	to kill you
to kill you	and kill you

Nehemiah 6:11

ULT	UST
And I said, "Should a man such as I run away? And who, such as I, is it that could go in to the temple and live? I will not go in!"	*I responded, "I am not the kind of man who would run away! Besides, I am the governor, {and everyone knows me,} so I could not save my life by {trying to} hide in the temple. I refuse to do it!"*

ULT **And I said**
UST I responded
(וָאֹמְרָה)

Alternate translation: [I responded]

ULT **Should a man such as I run away**
UST I am not the kind of man who would run away
(הָאִישׁ כָּמוֹנִי יִבְרָח)

Nehemiah is making a statement, not asking a question. He does not expect Shemiah to tell him whether or not he should run away. Instead, Nehemiah is using the question form to emphasize that he is not going to do what Shemaiah has suggested. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this question as a statement. Alternate translation: [A man like me would not run away.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **And who, such as I, is it that could go in to the temple and live**
UST Besides, I am the governor, {and everyone knows me,} so I could not save my life by {trying to} hide in the temple
(וּמִי כָמֹונִי אֲשֶׁר־יָבֹוא אֶל־הַהֵיכָל וְחָיָי)

Once again Nehemiah is making a statement, not asking a question. He does not expect Shemiah to tell him whether going into the temple would save his life. Alternate translation: [A man like me would not go into the temple just to hide to stay alive.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **And who, such as I, is it that could go in to the temple and live**
UST Besides, I am the governor, {and everyone knows me,} so I could not save my life by {trying to} hide in the temple
(וּמִי כָמֹונִי אֲשֶׁר־יָבֹוא אֶל־הַהֵיכָל וְחָיָי)

It is not entirely clear what Nehemiah means by this. He could be saying that he should not go into the temple because he is not a priest. However, the Bible records instances of other people who were not priests going into the temple to seek sanctuary. So Nehemiah may be saying instead that because he is the governor he is too well known to escape from assassins by hiding in the temple. You could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [Besides, I am the governor, and everyone knows me, so I could not save my life by trying to hide in the temple]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **I will not go in**
UST I refuse to do it
(לֹא אָבֹוא)

Alternate translation: [I refuse to do it!]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the temple	the temple

Nehemiah 6:12

ULT	UST
And I recognized, and behold, God had not sent him. But he spoke the prophecy against me, for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.	*All of a sudden I realized that God had not given Shemaiah a prophetic message for me. Instead, he was saying these things because Tobiah and Sanballat had paid him {to say them}.*

ULT **And I recognized, and behold**
UST All of a sudden I realized that
(וָאַכִּ֕ירָה וְהִנֵּ֥ה)

The term "behold" is used to focus attention on the words that follow. Within this episode as a whole, it creates the impression of Nehemiah suddenly realizing something that had not been clear to him before. Alternate translation: [All of a sudden I realized]

ULT **God had not sent him**
UST God had not given Shemaiah
(לֹ֣א־אֱלֹהִ֖ים שְׁלָח֑וֹ)

Shemaiah seems to have been pretending that God had revealed to him prophetically that people would be coming secretly at night to kill Nehemiah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [God had not given Shemaiah a prophetic message for me]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **But he spoke the prophecy against me, for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him**
UST a prophetic message for me. Instead, he was saying these things because Tobiah and Sanballat had paid him {to say them}
(כִּ֤י הַנְּבוּאָה֙ דִּבֶּ֣ר עָלַ֔י וְטוֹבִיָּ֥ה וְסַנְבַלַּ֖ט שְׂכָרֽוֹ)

Alternate translation: [Instead, he was saying these things to hinder my work because Tobiah and Sanballat had paid him to say them]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
God	God
the prophecy	a prophetic message … these things

Nehemiah 6:13

ULT	UST
For this purpose he was hired, so that I would be afraid, and I would do thus and sin. And it might become an evil name to them, so that they could reproach me.	*{They} had paid him the money specifically to {say things that} would scare me. They were hoping they could make me sin {by abandoning my responsibilities and hiding in the temple}. {If I had done that,} they would have ruined my reputation and discredited me.*

ULT **For this purpose he was hired, so that I would be afraid**
UST {They} had paid him the money specifically to {say things that} would scare me
(לְמַעַן שָׂכוּר הוּא לְמַעַן־אִירָא)

This is the reason why Nehemiah's enemies had hired Shemaiah; because they wanted to cause Nehemiah to be afraid. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [The reason they had hired him was to scare me. They hoped that as a result]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **For this purpose**
UST specifically
(לְמַעַן)

This term introduces the purpose for the sentence contained in the verse.

Support Reference: Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **and I would do thus and sin**
UST They were hoping they could make me sin {by abandoning my responsibilities and hiding in the temple}
(וְאֶעֱשֶׂה־כֵּן וְחָטָאתִי)

This phrase expresses the goal for the sentence contained in the verse.

Support Reference: Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **and I would do thus and sin**
UST They were hoping they could make me sin {by abandoning my responsibilities and hiding in the temple}
(וְאֶעֱשֶׂה־כֵּן וְחָטָאתִי)

It is not entirely clear why Nehemiah says it would have been a sin for him to hide in the temple since it was a time-honored tradition in Israel to allow people to seek sanctuary there. Perhaps the explanation is that Nehemiah knew God had sent him to Judah on a special mission to help and protect the Jewish community there. And so, if he had abandoned that mission to save his life, he would have been disobeying God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say something like that explicitly. Alternate translation: [They were hoping they could make me sin by abandoning my responsibilities and hiding in the temple.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And it might become an evil name to them, so that they could reproach me**
UST {If I had done that,} they would have ruined my reputation and discredited me
(וְהָיָה לָהֶם לְשֵׁם רָע לְמַעַן יְחָרְפוּנִי)

Here, **name** is a figurative way of referring to the fame or reputation of a person. If he hid in the temple to save his own life, Nehemiah would get a bad reputation as a coward who was concerned only for himself. Alternate translation: [this would give me a bad reputation, and they could say bad things about me to everyone]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **so that**
UST to {say things that} would scare me
(לְמַעַן)

This term expresses that the clause that comes after is the goal for the clause that comes before.

Support Reference: Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
I would be afraid	to {say things that} would scare me
and sin	sin {by abandoning my responsibilities and hiding in the temple}
evil	they would have ruined my reputation
they could reproach me	and discredited me

Nehemiah 6:14

ULT	UST
My God, remember Tobiah, and Sanballat according to these deeds of his, and also Noadiah the prophetess, and the rest of the prophets who are frightening me.	*{So I prayed,} "My God, treat Tobiah and Sanballat the way they deserve for what they have done. Do the same for the female prophet Noadiah and all the other prophets who are {trying to} make me afraid."*

ULT **My God**
UST My God
(אֱלֹהַ֣י)

As in 4:4 and 6:9, Nehemiah records here what he prayed at the time of the events he is describing. You can indicate this by introducing these words as a prayer and presenting the prayer as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: [So I prayed, 'My God…']

ULT **remember Tobiah, and Sanballat according to these deeds of his**
UST So I prayed … treat Tobiah and Sanballat the way they deserve for what they have done
(זְכָרָה & לְטוֹבִיָּה וּלְסַנְבַלַּט כְּמַעֲשָׂיו אֵלֶּה)

His refers to both Sanballat and Tobiah. In this context, "remember" means to think about someone and consider what action you should take in their regard. Nehemiah is not suggesting that God has forgotten about Tobiah and Sanballat. Alternate translation: [treat Tobiah and Sanballat the way they deserve for what they have done]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **and also Noadiah the prophetess, and the rest of the prophets who are frightening me**
UST Do the same for the female prophet Noadiah and all the other prophets who are {trying to} make me afraid
(וְגַם לְנוֹעַדְיָה הַנְּבִיאָה וּלְיֶתֶר הַנְּבִיאִים אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ מְיָרְאִים אוֹתִי)

Alternate translation: [Do the same for the female prophet Noadiah and all the other prophets who are trying to make me afraid]

ULT Noadiah
UST for … Noadiah
(לְנוֹעַדְיָה)

This is the name of a woman.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
My God	My God
the prophetess	the female prophet
the prophets	prophets
frightening	are {trying to} make … afraid

Nehemiah 6:15

ULT	UST
And the wall was finished on 25 of Elul, on day 52.	*We finished {rebuilding} the wall on the twenty-fifth {day} of the month of Elul, after {working on it} for 52 days.*

ULT And the wall was finished
UST We finished {rebuilding} the wall
(וַתִּשְׁלַם הַחוֹמָה)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: [We finished rebuilding the wall]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT on 25 of Elul
UST on the twenty-fifth {day} of the month of Elul
(בְּעֶשְׂרִים וַחֲמִשָּׁה לֶאֱלוּל)

Elul is the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar. Alternate translation: [on the twenty-fifth day of the month of Elul]

Support Reference: Hebrew Months

ULT on 25 of Elul
UST on the twenty-fifth {day} of the month of Elul
(בְּעֶשְׂרִים וַחֲמִשָּׁה לֶאֱלוּל)

Alternate translation: [on day 25 of the month of Elul]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT on day 52
UST after {working on it} for 52 days
(לַחֲמִשִּׁים וּשְׁנַיִם יוֹם)

Alternate translation: [after working on it for 52 days]

Support Reference: Numbers

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
day	after {working on it} for … days

Nehemiah 6:16

ULT	UST
And it happened that, when all our enemies heard, all the nations that were around us were afraid, and they fell extremely in their eyes. And they knew that this work was done by our God.	*When all of our enemies learned that we had completed the rebuilding in such a short time, they realized that our God must have helped {us}. This made the people in the countries around us lose all of their confidence.*

ULT **And it happened**
UST When
(וַיְהִי)

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next event in his story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses.

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT **when all our enemies heard**
UST When all of our enemies learned that we had completed the rebuilding in such a short time
(כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמְעוּ כָּל־אוֹיְבֵינוּ)

This means that these enemies learned by some means that work had been completed. Nehemiah uses hearing, one means of discovering things, to describe the enemies learning this. Alternate translation: [when all of our enemies learned]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **when all our enemies heard**
UST When all of our enemies learned that we had completed the rebuilding in such a short time
(כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמְעוּ כָּל־אוֹיְבֵינוּ)

This means specifically, “When all our enemies learned that we had completed the rebuilding in such a short time.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly.

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **that … all the nations that were around us were afraid, and they fell extremely in their eyes**
UST This made the people in the countries around us lose all of their confidence
(וַיִּרְאוּ כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבֹתֵינוּ וַיִּפְּלוּ מְאֹד בְּעֵינֵיהֶם)

These two phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses the repetition to emphasize how intimidated the people in the surrounding countries felt. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [they thought much less of themselves] or [they lost confidence in themselves,] otherwise "they became afraid and felt humiliated"

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **and they fell extremely in their eyes**
UST lose all of their confidence
(וַיִּפְּלוּ מְאֹד בְּעֵינֵיהֶם)

Here, **fell** is a figurative way of saying "become less."

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and they fell extremely in their eyes**
UST lose all of their confidence
(וַיִּפְּלוּ מְאֹד בְּעֵינֵיהֶם)

Here, **eyes** stand for "seeing," and "seeing" means judgment. This means that these people were no longer so great or powerful in their own estimation. Alternate translation: [they lost confidence in themselves]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **And they knew that this work was done by our God**
UST they realized that our God must have helped {us}
(וַיֵּדְעוּ כִּי מֵאֵת אֱלֹהֵינוּ נֶעֱשְׂתָה הַמְּלָאכָה הַזֹּאת)

You can put this right before the statement that the enemies were afraid and thought less of themselves, because it is the reason that explains that result. Alternate translation: [They realized that our God had helped us complete this work]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

> ULT **this work was done by our God**
> UST our God must have helped {us}
> (מֵאֵת אֱלֹהֵינוּ נֶעֶשְׂתָה הַמְּלָאכָה הַזֹּאת)

You can say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [our God had helped us complete this work]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
our enemies	our enemies
the nations	the people in the countries
that … were afraid	This made
And they knew	they realized
work	must have helped {us}
our God	our God

Nehemiah 6:17

ULT	UST
Also, in those days, the nobles of Judah were multiplying their letters going to Tobiah, and those belonging to Tobiah were coming to them.	*During this time, the leading citizens of Judah were writing many letters to Tobiah {to give him information about me}, and he was sending letters back to them {with instructions}.*

ULT **Also, in those days**
UST During this time
(גַּם ׀ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם)

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce something else that was happening at the same time as the other events he has just described. Alternate translation: [During this time]

Support Reference: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

ULT **in those days**
UST this time
(בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם)

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: [at this time]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the nobles of Judah**
UST the leading citizens of Judah
(חֹרֵי יְהוּדָה)

See how you translated this term in 2:16. Alternate translation: [the leading citizens of Judah]

ULT **were multiplying their letters**
UST were writing many letters … to give him information about me
(מַרְבִּים & אִגְּרוֹתֵיהֶם)

The implication is these citizens were sending information to Tobiah about Nehemiah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [sent many messengers with letters to Tobiah to give him information about me]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and those belonging to Tobiah were coming to them**
UST and he was sending letters back to them {with instructions}
(וְאַשֶּׁר לְטוֹבִיָּה בָּאוֹת אֲלֵיהֶם)

Here Nehemiah speaks of Tobiah's letters as if they could come on their own to the people he was answering. Alternate translation: [Tobiah sent letters] or [Tobiah sent many messengers with letters]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **and those belonging to Tobiah were coming to them**
UST and he was sending letters back to them {with instructions}
(וְאַשֶּׁר לְטוֹבִיָּה בָּאוֹת אֲלֵיהֶם)

The implication is that Tobiah was sending back instructions to his allies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Tobiah sent many messengers with letters back to them with instructions]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Tobiah**
UST Tobiah
(טוֹבִיָּה)

This is the name of a man. See how you translated it in 2:10.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in … days	time
the nobles of	the leading citizens of
Judah	Judah
were multiplying	many

Nehemiah 6:18

ULT	UST
For many in Judah were masters of oath to him, because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah. And Jehohanan his son had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah.	*Tobiah was married to the daughter of {a powerful and influential member of the community,} Shecaniah the son of Arah. His son Jehohanan was married to the daughter of {another powerful and influential man,} Meshullam the son of Berechiah. And so, for those reasons, many people in Judah had sworn oaths to {be loyal to} Tobiah.*

ULT For many in Judah were masters of oath to him
UST And so … many people in Judah had sworn oaths to {be loyal to} Tobiah
(כִּי־רַבִּים בִּיהוּדָה בַּעֲלֵי שְׁבוּעָה לֹו׃)

This means that many Judeans were "owners of oaths" to Tobiah. That is, they had sworn oaths to be loyal to him. Alternate translation: [Many people in Judah had sworn an oath to be loyal to him]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT For many in Judah were masters of oath to him
UST And so … many people in Judah had sworn oaths to {be loyal to} Tobiah
(כִּי־רַבִּים בִּיהוּדָה בַּעֲלֵי שְׁבוּעָה לֹו׃)

You can put this information last in the verse because it is a result, and the rest of the verse gives the reason why the people swore these oaths.

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah
UST Tobiah was married to the daughter of {a powerful and influential member of the community,} Shecaniah the son of Arah … for those reasons
(כִּי־חָתָן הוּא לִשְׁכַנְיָה בֶן־אָרַח)

This statement means that Tobiah was married to the daughter of Shecaniah. The implication is that Shecaniah was a powerful and influential member of the community. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Tobiah was married to the daughter of a powerful and influential member of the community, Shecaniah the son of Arah]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **of Shecaniah the son of Arah**
UST {a powerful and influential member of the community,} Shecaniah the son of Arah
(לִשְׁכַנְיָה בֶן־אָרַח)

Shecaniah is the name of a man, and Arah is the name of his father. This is probably the same Shecaniah who is mentioned in 3:29. See how you translated his name there.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **And Jehohanan his son had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah**
UST His son Jehohanan was married to the daughter of {another powerful and influential man,} Meshullam the son of Berechiah
(וִיהוֹחָנָן בְּנוֹ לָקַח אֶת־בַּת־מְשֻׁלָּם בֶּן בֶּרֶכְיָה)

The implication is that Meshullam was another powerful and influential member of the community. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Tobiah's son Jehohanan was married to the daughter of another powerful and influential man, Meshullam the son of Berechiah]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And Jehohanan**
UST Jehohanan
(וִיהוֹחָנָן)

This is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **his son**
UST His son
(בְּנוֹ)

His means that Jehohanan was the son of Tobiah.

ULT **had taken the daughter of**
UST was married to the daughter of
(לָקַח אֶת־בַּת)

Alternate translation: [was married to the daughter of]

ULT Meshullam the son of Berechiah
UST {another powerful and influential man,} Meshullam the son of Berechiah
(מְשֻׁלָּם בֶּן בֶּרֶכְיָה)

Meshullam is the name of a man, and Berechiah is the name of his father. He is mentioned in 3:4 and 3:30. See how you translated his name there.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in Judah	in Judah
oath	oaths

Nehemiah 6:19

ULT	UST
Also, they were saying his good deeds before my face, and they were taking out my words to him. Tobiah sent letters to frighten me.	*{The people who were loyal to Tobiah} would also {come and} tell me what good things he was doing, and then they would report to him everything I said {in response}. Tobiah also sent me many letters to try to make me afraid.*

ULT **they were saying his good deeds before my face**
UST would … {come and} tell me what good things he was doing
(טוֹבֹתָיו הָיוּ אֹמְרִים לְפָנַי)

Here, **face** represents the presence of a person. Alternate translation: [told me personally about Tobiah's good deeds]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **they were**
UST would … {come and} tell me
(הָיוּ)

They means the people who were loyal to Tobiah.

ULT **and they were taking out my words to him**
UST and then they would report to him everything I said {in response}
(וּדְבָרַי הָיוּ מוֹצִיאִים לוֹ)

Taking out here is an idiom that means these people were "reporting" Nehemiah's responses to Tobiah. Alternate translation: [and then told him about my responses]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
his good deeds	what good things he was doing
to frighten me	to try to make me afraid

Nehemiah 7

Nehemiah 7 Chapter Introduction

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Genealogy

The people who returned from Persia were counted according to their families. Nehemiah ensured that those who lived in Jerusalem had a completely Jewish ancestry.

Different lists

This list is paralleled in Ezra 2. The lists do contain some differences in numbers. This is probably due to the timing of their counting. They were likely counted at different times.

Nehemiah 7:1

ULT	UST
And it happened that, when the wall was built and I had set up the doors, the gatekeepers and the ones who sang and the Levites were appointed.	*Once we had finished rebuilding the wall and we had put the doors in the gates, we assigned the gatekeepers and singers and Levites to their tasks.*

ULT **And it happened**
UST Once
(וַיְהִי)

This expression introduces a new event in the story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses.

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT **when the wall was built**
UST Once we had finished rebuilding the wall
(כַּאֲשֶׁר נִבְנְתָה הַחוֹמָה)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: [when we had finished the wall]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **and I had set up the doors**
UST and we had put the doors in the gates
(וַאֲעַמֵּיד הַדְּלָתוֹת)

As in 4:14 and 6:1, Nehemiah is using himself to represent the entire community that he is a part of. Alternate translation: [and we had put the doors in the gates]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **that … the gatekeepers and the ones who sang and the Levites were appointed**
UST we assigned the gatekeepers and singers and Levites to their tasks
(וַיִּפָּקְדוּ הַשּׁוֹעֲרִים וְהַמְשֹׁרְרִים וְהַלְוִיִּם)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Nehemiah may have done this personally, or the people in charge of each of these groups may have done it. Because of the uncertainly, a good approach might be to say “we” to indicate the community. Alternate translation: [we assigned the gatekeepers and singers and Levites to their tasks]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

> **ULT** **the gatekeepers**
> **UST** the gatekeepers
> (הַשּׁוֹעֲרִים)

These were people who were assigned to each gate of Jerusalem. They were responsible for controlling access to the city. They would open and close the gates at times and for reasons set by the city administrators. For example, Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah is named in 3:29 as the keeper of the East Gate.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

> **ULT** **and the ones who sang**
> **UST** and singers
> (וְהַמְשֹׁרְרִים)

This means vocal musicians who led in worship, in processions, and ceremonies, producing music and chants that emphasized and enhanced the occasion. Alternate translation: [singers]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the gatekeepers	the gatekeepers
that … were appointed	we assigned … to their tasks
and the Levites	and Levites

Nehemiah 7:2

ULT	UST
And I gave Hanani, my brother, and Hananiah, the official for the citadel, charge over Jerusalem. For he was according to a faithful man, and he feared God more than many.	*I appointed two men to {help me} govern Jerusalem, my brother Hanani and Hananiah, the commander of the fortress {in Jerusalem}. I appointed Hananiah because he was trustworthy, and because he showed God more reverence and respect than most people do.*

ULT **And I gave Hanani, my brother, and Hananiah … charge over Jerusalem**
UST I appointed two men to {help me} govern Jerusalem, my brother Hanani and Hananiah … I appointed Hananiah
(וָאֶצַוֶּה אֶת־חֲנָנִי אָחִי וְאֶת־חֲנַנְיָה & עַל־יְרוּשָׁלִָם)

Alternate translation: [I appointed two men to help me govern Jerusalem, my brother Hanani and Hananiah]

ULT **Hanani, my brother**
UST my brother Hanani
(אֶת־חֲנָנִי אָחִי)

As in 1:2, **brother** here most likely indicates that Hanani was Nehemiah's biological brother.
Alternate translation: [my brother Hanani]

ULT **Hanani**
UST Hanani
(אֶת־חֲנָנִי)

This is the name of a man. See how you translated it in 1:2

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Hananiah**
UST and Hananiah … Hananiah
(חֲנַנְיָה)

This is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the official for the citadel**
UST the commander of the fortress {in Jerusalem}
(שַׂר הַבִּירָה)

Alternate translation: [who was in charge of the fortress]

ULT **For he was according to a faithful man**
UST because he was trustworthy, and because he
(כִּי־הוּא כְּאִישׁ אֱמֶת)

He means Hananiah. “He was as a faithful man” is a way of saying “he was such as only a faithful man would be.” Alternate translation: [I appointed Hananiah because he was trustworthy]

ULT **and he feared God more than many**
UST showed God more reverence and respect than most people do
(וְיָרֵא אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים מֵרַבִּים)

Here, **fear** does not mean to be afraid of God, but to show God reverence and respect. Alternate translation: [because he showed God more reverence and respect than most people do]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Hananiah	and Hananiah … Hananiah
the official for	the commander of
the citadel	the fortress {in Jerusalem}
Jerusalem	Jerusalem
faithful	was trustworthy
and he feared	showed … reverence and respect
God	God

Nehemiah 7:3

ULT	UST
And I said to them, "Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun becomes hot. And while they are still standing, let them shut the doors, and they must bar them. And set up watches for those who dwell in Jerusalem, a man in his watch, and a man in front of his house."	*I told them, "Do not open the gates of Jerusalem until broad daylight. {That way we will be able to see anything our enemies are doing.} Have the gatekeepers close {the gates} and put the bars across the doors while they are still guarding {the gates before they go home for the night}." I also told them, "Have the men who live in Jerusalem take turns keeping watch in their own neighborhoods."*

ULT **Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened**
UST Do not open the gates of Jerusalem
(לֹא יִפָּתְחוּ שַׁעֲרֵי יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [Do not order the gates of Jerusalem to be opened]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened**
UST Do not open the gates of Jerusalem
(לֹא יִפָּתְחוּ שַׁעֲרֵי יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם)

Hanani and Hananiah would not have opened the gates physically themselves. Rather, they would have ordered this to be done. Alternate translation: [Do not order the gates of Jerusalem to be opened]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **until the sun becomes hot**
UST until broad daylight. {That way we will be able to see anything our enemies are doing … }
(עַד־חֹם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ)

Here Nehemiah probably uses the heat of the sun to represent the light of the sun. His intent is to open the gates some time after the sun rises regardless of how hot the sun shines on any particular day. Alternate translation: [until broad daylight]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **until the sun becomes hot**
UST until broad daylight. {That way we will be able to see anything our enemies are doing … }
(עַד־חֹם הַשָּׁמֶשׁ)

The implication is that the gatekeepers should not open the gates at sunrise, as would have been customary, because the enemies of the Jews could launch a surprise attack in the dim light before most of the city was up and ready for the day. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [until broad daylight. That way we will be able to see anything our enemies are doing]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And while they are still standing, let them shut the doors, and they must bar them**
UST Have the gatekeepers close {the gates} and put the bars across the doors while they are still guarding {the gates before they go home for the night}
(וְעַד הֵם עֹמְדִים יָגִיפוּ הַדְּלָתוֹת וְאָחֹזוּ)

They means the gatekeepers, and "standing" means keeping guard. Alternate translation: [Order the doors to be shut and locked while the gatekeepers are still on guard]

ULT **And set up watches for those who dwell in Jerusalem, a man in his watch, and a man in front of his house**
UST I also told them, "Have the men who live in Jerusalem take turns keeping watch in their own neighborhoods
(וְהַעֲמֵיד מִשְׁמָרוֹת יֹשְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם אִישׁ בְּמִשְׁמָרוֹ וְאִישׁ נֶגֶד בֵּיתוֹ)

In this context, **a man** means **each man**. It is likely that adult males were intended for this dangerous night duty. "A man in his watch" means that each man should take a turn, and "a man in front of his house" means that each man should keep watch in his own neighborhood. Alternate translation: [Have the men who live in Jerusalem take turns keeping watch in their own neighborhoods]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the gates of	the gates of
Jerusalem	Jerusalem
watches for	I also told them, "Have
Jerusalem	Jerusalem
in his watch	take turns keeping watch

ULT	UST
his house	in their own neighborhoods

Nehemiah 7:4

ULT	UST
Now the city was wide on two hands and great, and the people were few in the midst of it. And there were no built houses.	*The city of Jerusalem covered a large area, but {at that time} not many people lived in the city, and they had not yet built houses {for themselves}.*

ULT Now the city was wide on two hands and great
UST The city of Jerusalem covered a large area
(וְהָעִ֥יר רַחֲבַת יָדַ֖יִם וּגְדוֹלָ֑ה)

These two short phrases mean similar things. Nehemiah uses them together to emphasize how large Jerusalem was. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them. Alternate translation: [The city of Jerusalem covered a large area]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT was wide on two hands
UST covered a large area
(רַחֲבַת יָדַ֖יִם)

Here, **hand** means "side." The image is that if you stood in the city, there would be a lot of it on both sides of you. Alternate translation: [covered a large area]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT and the people were few in the midst of it
UST but {at that time} not many people lived in the city
(וְהָעָ֥ם מְעַ֛ט בְּתוֹכָ֖הּ)

Alternate translation: [but not many people lived there]

ULT And there were no built houses
UST and they had not yet built houses {for themselves}
(וְאֵ֥ין בָּתִּ֖ים בְּנוּיִֽם)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: [the people had not yet rebuilt the houses]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
houses	houses

Nehemiah 7:5

ULT	UST
And my God gave to my heart, and I gathered together the nobles and the prefects and the people to be enrolled by genealogy. And I found the book of the genealogy for the ones who came up at the first. And I found written in it:	*So {as a first step towards filling Jerusalem with people again}, God led me to gather together the leading citizens and the city officials and the other people {living in the city} to register them according to their family histories. I also found a book containing the records of the first group of people who had returned {to Jerusalem} from the exile. This is what those records said.*

ULT **And my God gave to my heart**
UST So {as a first step towards filling Jerusalem with people again}, God led me
(וַיִּתֵּן אֱלֹהַי אֶל־לִבִּי)

The implication is that registering the people was a first step toward filling Jerusalem with people again, a process that Nehemiah will describe in chapter 11. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [as a first step towards filling Jerusalem with people again, God led me]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And my God gave to my heart**
UST So {as a first step towards filling Jerusalem with people again}, God led me
(וַיִּתֵּן אֱלֹהַי אֶל־לִבִּי)

As in 2:12, Nehemiah's **heart** represents his thoughts and will. Alternate translation: [God inspired me] or [led me]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and I gathered together**
UST to gather together
(וָאֶקְבְּצָה)

This word indicates that what Nehemiah did was in response to the situation just described. Alternate translation: [so I gathered together]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **the nobles and the prefects**
UST the leading citizens and the city officials
(אֶת־הַחֹרִים וְאֶת־הַסְּגָנִים)

See how you translated these terms in 2:16. Alternate translation: [the leading citizens and the city officials]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **and the people**
UST and the other people {living in the city}
(וְאֶת־הָעָם)

In context, this likely means "the other people living in the city."

ULT **to be enrolled by genealogy**
UST to register them according to their family histories
(לְהִתְיַחֵשׂ)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [and to register them by genealogies]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **to be enrolled by genealogy**
UST to register them according to their family histories
(לְהִתְיַחֵשׂ)

Alternate translation: [to be enrolled according to their family histories]

ULT **And I found the book of the genealogy for the ones who came up at the first**
UST I also found a book containing the records of the first group of people who had returned {to Jerusalem} from the exile
(וָאֶמְצָא סֵפֶר הַיִּחַשׂ הָעוֹלִים בָּרִאשׁוֹנָה)

This means a list of the first group of Jews who had returned from exile, about a hundred years earlier. Alternate translation: [I also found a book containing the records of the first group of people who had returned to Jerusalem from the exile.]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT And I found written in it
UST This is what those records said
(וְאֶמְצָא כָּתוּב בּוֹ)

You can say this with an active form, and you can say who did the action. Alternate translation: [I found that those people had written the following in it]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
my God	God
and I gathered together	to gather together
the nobles	the leading citizens
the prefects	and the city officials

Nehemiah 7:6

ULT	UST
“These are the sons of the province, the ones who went up from the captivity of the exiles, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon exiled. And they returned to Jerusalem and to Judah, a man to his city,	*“These are {the names of} the people from Judah who returned home from exile. Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had taken {their ancestors} away {to Babylon}. But they returned to Jerusalem and to {other places in} Judah. They returned to the {same} towns where their {ancestors had lived}.*

ULT **the sons of the province**
UST the people from Judah
(בְּנֵי הַמְּדִינָה)

The document speaks here of the province of Judah as if it were the ancestor of all the Jews who lived there. Alternate translation: [the people from the province of Judah]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **the province**
UST Judah
(הַמְּדִינָה)

The province means the province of Judah. The document is referring to Judah by something associated with it, its status as a province.

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the ones who went up**
UST who returned home
(הָעֹלִים)

Went up means “traveled from Babylon back to Judah,” since that involves going from a river valley up into the mountains. Alternate translation: [returned to Judah from Babylon]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **from the captivity of the exiles, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon exiled**
UST from exile. Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had taken {their ancestors} away {to Babylon}
(מִשְּׁבִי הַגּוֹלָה אֲשֶׁר הֶגְלָה נְבוּכַדְנֶאצַּר מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל)

Captivity and **exile** are abstract nouns. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind them with verbs. Alternate translation: [Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, captured their ancestors and took them away]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **from the captivity of the exiles**
UST from exile
(מִשְּׁבִי הַגּוֹלָה)

Captivity and **exile** mean basically the same thing. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [after being taken away]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **a man to his city**
UST They returned to the {same} towns where their {ancestors had lived}
(אִישׁ לְעִירוֹ)

Here, **a man** means “each one” or “each person” Alternate translation: [They went to live in the same towns where their families had lived before.]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the province	Judah
from the captivity of	from exile
the exiles	from exile
Nebuchadnezzar	Nebuchadnezzar
the king of	the king of
Babylon	Babylon
exiled	had taken … away {to Babylon}
to Jerusalem	to Jerusalem
and to Judah	and to {other places in} Judah

Nehemiah 7:7

ULT	UST
the ones who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel:	*The people who came back were following Zerubbabel, Joshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, and Baanah. {This is a list of} the number of men from {each} Israelite {clan who returned}:*

ULT **the ones who came with**
UST The people who came back were following … who returned
(הַבָּאִים עִם)

This phrase introduces a list of the men who led this group back to Judah. Alternate translation: [The leaders of this group were]

ULT **Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah**
UST Zerubbabel, Joshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, and Baanah
(זְרֻבָּבֶל יֵשׁוּעַ נְחֶמְיָה עֲזַרְיָה רַעַמְיָה נַחֲמָנִי מָרְדֳּכַי בִּלְשָׁן מִסְפֶּרֶת בִּגְוַי נְחוּם בַּעֲנָה)

These are the names of twelve men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **The number of the men of the people of Israel**
UST This is a list of} the number of men from {each} Israelite {clan … }
(מִסְפַּר אַנְשֵׁי עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל)

In keeping with the practices of the time, the totals in the list that follows likely include just the men and not also the women and children. While all of these people were from Judah, they were from the Israelite people group. Alternate translation: [This is how many men came back from each Israelite clan and town]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Zerubbabel	Zerubbabel
Nehemiah	Nehemiah
Azariah	Azariah
Mordecai	Mordecai

ULT	UST
Israel	Israelite {clan … }

Nehemiah 7:8

ULT	UST
The sons of Parosh were 2, 172.	*2172 men from {the clan of} Parosh;*

ULT **The sons of Parosh were 2, 172**
UST 2172 men from {the clan of} Parosh
(בְּנֵי פַרְעֹשׁ אַלְפַּיִם מֵאָה וְשִׁבְעִים וּשְׁנָיִם)

This means, “From the descendants of Parosh, 2,172 returned.” To help make this clear for your readers, you could say something like “returned” throughout verses 8–45, after the name of each group and the number that is given.

ULT **The sons of Parosh**
UST men from {the clan of} Parosh
(בְּנֵי פַרְעֹשׁ)

Sons means “descendants” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Parosh]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Parosh**
UST Parosh
(פַּרְעֹשׁ)

Parosh is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:9

ULT	UST
The sons of Shephatiah were 372.	*372 men from {the clan of} Shephatiah;*

ULT **The sons of Shephatiah**
UST men from {the clan of} Shephatiah
(בְּנֵי שְׁפַטְיָה)

Sons means “descendants” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Shephatiah]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Shephatiah**
UST Shephatiah
(שְׁפַטְיָה)

Shephatiah is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:10

ULT	UST
The sons of Arah were 652.	*652 men from {the clan of} Arah;*

ULT **The sons of Arah**
UST men from {the clan of} Arah
(בְּנֵי אָרַח)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Arah]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Arah**
UST Arah
(אָרַח)

Arah is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:11

ULT	UST
The sons of Pahath-Moab, of the sons of Jeshua and Joab, were 2, 818.	*2818 men from {the clan of} Pahath-Moab, who are descendants of Jeshua and Joab;*

ULT The sons of Pahath-Moab, of the sons of Jeshua and Joab
UST men from {the clan of} Pahath-Moab, who are descendants of Jeshua and Joab
(בְּנֵי־פַחַת מוֹאָב לִבְנֵי יֵשׁוּעַ וְיוֹאָב)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Pahath-Moab who were descendants of Jeshua and Joab]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT Pahath-Moab … Jeshua and Joab
UST Pahath-Moab … Jeshua and Joab
(פַּחַת מוֹאָב & יֵשׁוּעַ וְיוֹאָב)

Pahath-Moab is the name of a man, and Jeshua and Joab are the names of two of his descendants.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and Joab	and Joab

Nehemiah 7:12

ULT	UST
The sons of Elam were 1, 254.	*1254 men from {the clan of} Elam;*

ULT The sons of Elam
UST men from {the clan of} Elam
(בְּנֵי עֵילָֹם)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Elam]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT Elam
UST Elam
(עֵילָֹם)

Elam is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Elam	Elam

Nehemiah 7:13

ULT	UST
The sons of Zattu were 845.	*845 men from {the clan of} Zattu;*

ULT **The sons of Zattu**
UST men from {the clan of} Zattu
(בְּנֵי זַתּוּא)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Zattu]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Zattu**
UST Zattu
(זַתּוּא)

Zattu is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:14

ULT	UST
The sons of Zakkai were 760.	*760 men from {the clan of} Zakkai;*

ULT **The sons of Zakkai**
UST men from {the clan of} Zakkai
(בְּנֵי זַכָּי)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Zakkai]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Zakkai**
UST Zakkai
(זַכָּי)

Zakkai is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:15

ULT	UST
The sons of Binnui were 648.	*648 men from {the clan of} Binnui;*

ULT **The sons of Binnui**
UST men from {the clan of} Binnui
(בְּנֵי בִנּוּי)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Binnui]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Binnui**
UST Binnui
(בִּנּוּי)

Binnui is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:16

ULT	UST
The sons of Bebai were 628.	*628 men from {the clan of} Bebai;*

ULT **The sons of Bebai**
UST men from {the clan of} Bebai
(בְּנֵי בֵבָי)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Bebai]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Bebai**
UST Bebai
(בֵבָי)

Bebai is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:17

ULT	UST
The sons of Azgad were 2, 322.	*2322 men from {the clan of} Azgad;*

ULT **The sons of Azgad**
UST men from {the clan of} Azgad
(בְּנֵי עַזְגָּד)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Azgad]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Azgad**
UST Azgad
(עַזְגָּד)

Azgad is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:18

ULT	UST
The sons of Adonikam were 667.	*667 men from {the clan of} Adonikam;*

ULT **The sons of Adonikam**
UST men from {the clan of} Adonikam
(בְּנֵי֙ אֲדֹנִיקָ֔ם)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Adonikam]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Adonikam**
UST Adonikam
(אֲדֹנִיקָ֔ם)

Adonikam is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:19

ULT	UST
The sons of Bigvai were 2,067.	*2067 men from {the clan of} Bigvai;*

ULT **The sons of Bigvai**
UST men from {the clan of} Bigvai
(בְּנֵי בִגְוָי)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Bigvai]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Bigvai**
UST Bigvai
(בִּגְוָי)

Bigvai is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:20

ULT	UST
The sons of Adin were 655.	*655 men from {the clan of} Adin;*

ULT **The sons of Adin**
UST men from {the clan of} Adin
(בְּנֵי עָדִין)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Adin]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Adin**
UST Adin
(עָדִין)

Adin is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:21

ULT	UST
The sons of Ater, of Hezekiah, were 98.	*98 men from {the clan of} Ater who were descendants of Hezekiah;*

ULT **The sons of Ater, of Hezekiah**
UST men from {the clan of} Ater who were descendants of Hezekiah
(בְּנֵי־אָטֵר לְחִזְקִיָּה)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Ater who were descendants of Hezekiah]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Ater**
UST Ater
(אָטֵר)

Ater is the name of a man, and Hezekiah is the name of one of his descendants.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
of Hezekiah	who were descendants of Hezekiah

Nehemiah 7:22

ULT	UST
The sons of Hashum were 328.	*328 men from {the clan of} Hashum;*

ULT **The sons of Hashum**
UST men from {the clan of} Hashum
(בְּנֵי חָשֻׁם)

Sons means **descendants**. Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Hashum]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Hashum**
UST Hashum
(חָשֻׁם)

Hashum is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:23

ULT	UST
The sons of Bezai were 324.	*324 men from {the clan of} Bezai;*

ULT **The sons of Bezai**
UST men from {the clan of} Bezai
(בְּנֵי בֵצָי)

Sons means **descendants**. Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Bezai]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Bezai**
UST Bezai
(בֵצָי)

Bezai is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:24

ULT	UST
The sons of Hariph were 112.	*112 men from {the clan of} Hariph;*

ULT **The sons of Hariph**
UST men from {the clan of} Hariph
(בְּנֵי חָרִיף)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Hariph]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Hariph**
UST Hariph
(חָרִיף)

Hariph is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:25

ULT	UST
The sons of Gibeon were 95.	*95 men from {the clan of} Gibeon.*

ULT The sons of Gibeon
UST men from {the clan of} Gibeon
(בְּנֵי גִבְעוֹן)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Gibeon]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT Gibeon
UST Gibeon
(גִּבְעוֹן)

Gibeon is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Gibeon	Gibeon

Nehemiah 7:26

ULT	UST
The men of Bethlehem and Netophah were 188.	*{Some other} men {also returned, whose ancestors had lived in these towns}: 188 men from Bethlehem and Netophah;*

ULT Bethlehem and Netophah
UST Bethlehem and Netophah
(בֵּית־לֶחֶם וּנְטֹפָה)

Bethlehem and Netophah are the names of towns. Alternate translation: [from the towns of Bethlehem and Netophah]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Bethlehem	Bethlehem

Nehemiah 7:27

ULT	UST
The men of Anathoth were 128.	*128 men from Anathoth;*

ULT Anathoth
UST Anathoth
(עֲנָתוֹת)

Anathoth is the name of a town. Alternate translation: [from the town of Anathoth]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:28

ULT	UST
The men of Beth Azmaveth were 42.	*42 men from Beth-Azmaveth;*

ULT Beth Azmaveth
UST Beth-Azmaveth
(בֵּית־עַזְמָוֶת)

Beth Azmaveth is the name of a town. Alternate translation: [from the town of Beth Azmaveth]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:29

ULT	UST
The men of Kiriath Jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth were 743.	*743 men from Kiriath-Jearim, Kephirah and Beeroth;*

ULT Kiriath Jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth
UST Kiriath-Jearim, Kephirah and Beeroth
(קִרְיַת יְעָרִים כְּפִירָה וּבְאֵרוֹת)

Kiriath Jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth are the names of towns. Alternate translation: [from the towns of Kiriath Jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:30

ULT	UST
The men of Ramah and Geba were 621.	*621 men from Ramah and Geba;*

ULT **Ramah and Geba**
UST Ramah and Geba
(הָרָמָה וְגָבַע)

Ramah and Geba are the names of towns. Alternate translation: [from the towns of Ramah and Geba]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Ramah	Ramah

Nehemiah 7:31

ULT	UST
The men of Michmas were 122.	*122 men from Michmas;*

ULT Michmas
UST Michmas
(מִכְמָס)

Michmas is the name of a town. Alternate translation: [from the town of Michmas]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:32

ULT	UST
The men of Bethel and Ai were 123.	*123 men from Bethel and Ai;*

ULT **Bethel and Ai**
UST Bethel and Ai
(בֵּית־אֵל וְהָעָי)

Bethel and Ai are the names of towns. Alternate translation: [from the towns of Bethel and Ai]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Bethel	Bethel
and Ai	and Ai

Nehemiah 7:33

ULT	UST
The men of the other Nebo were 52.	*52 men from a {small town} called Nebo;*

ULT the … Nebo
UST Nebo
(נְבֹו)

Nebo is the name of a town. Alternate translation: [from another town called Nebo]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:34

ULT	UST
The sons of the other Elam were 1, 254.	*1254 men from a {small town} called Elam;*

ULT **the other Elam**
UST a {small town} called Elam
(עֵילָם אַחֵר)

Elam is the name of a town. Alternate translation: [from another town called Elam]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the … Elam**
UST Elam
(עֵילָם)

The document speaks here of the town of Elam as if it were the ancestor of all the people who lived there. It is saying that these men were from families that had originally lived in that town. Alternate translation: [from another town called Elam]

Support Reference: Personification

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the … Elam	Elam

Nehemiah 7:35

ULT	UST
The sons of Harim were 320.	*320 men from Harim;*

ULT The sons of Harim
UST men from Harim
(בְּנֵי חָרִם)

The document speaks here of the town of Harim as if it were the ancestor of all the people who lived there. It is saying that these men were from families that had originally lived in that town. Alternate translation: [from the town of Harim]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT Harim
UST Harim
(חָרִם)

Harim is the name of a town.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:36

ULT	UST
The sons of Jericho were 345.	*345 men from Jericho;*

ULT **The sons of Jericho**
UST men from Jericho
(בְּנֵי יְרֵחֹו)

The document speaks here of the city of Jericho as if it were the ancestor of all the people who lived there. It is saying that these men were from families that had originally lived in that city. Alternate translation: [from the city of Jericho]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **Jericho**
UST Jericho
(יְרֵחֹו)

Jericho is the name of a city.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Jericho	Jericho

Nehemiah 7:37

ULT	UST
The sons of Lod, Hadid, and Ono were 721.	*721 men from Lod, Hadid, and Ono;*

ULT The sons of Lod, Hadid, and Ono
UST men from Lod, Hadid, and Ono
(בְּנֵי־לֹד חָדִיד וְאוֹנֹו)

The document speaks here of the towns of Lod, Hadid, and Ono as if they were the ancestors of all the people who lived in them. It is saying that these men were from families that had originally lived in those towns. Alternate translation: [from towns of Lod, Hadid, and Ono]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT Lod, Hadid, and Ono
UST Lod, Hadid, and Ono
(לֹד חָדִיד וְאוֹנֹו)

Lod, Hadid, and Ono are the names of towns.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:38

ULT	UST
The sons of Senaah were 3, 930.	*3930 men from Senaah.*

ULT **The sons of Senaah**
UST men from Senaah
(בְּנֵי סְנָאָה)

The document speaks here of the town of Senaah as if it were the ancestor of all the people who lived there. It is saying that these men were from families that had originally lived in that town. Alternate translation: [from the town of Senaah]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **Senaah**
UST Senaah
(סְנָאָה)

Senaah is the name of a town.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:39

ULT	UST
The priests: the sons of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, were 973;	*These priests also returned: 973 men from {the clan of} Jedaiah who are descendants of Jeshua;*

ULT The priests
UST These priests also returned
(הַכֹּהֲנִים)

Alternate translation: [This is how many men returned from each family of priests]

ULT the sons of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua
UST men from {the clan of} Jedaiah who are descendants of Jeshua
(בְּנֵי יְדַעְיָה לְבֵית יֵשׁוּעַ)

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Jedaiah who were descendants of Jeshua]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT Jedaiah … Jeshua
UST {the clan of} Jedaiah … Jeshua
(יְדַעְיָה & יֵשׁוּעַ)

Jedaiah is the name of a man, and Jeshua is the name of one of his descendants.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT of the house of Jeshua
UST who are descendants of Jeshua
(לְבֵית יֵשׁוּעַ)

Here, the word **house** describes all the people descended from a particular person. The document is describing all of the descendants of Jeshua as if they were one household living together. Alternate translation: [who were descendants of Jeshua]

Support Reference: Metonymy

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
The priests	These priests also returned

ULT	UST
of the house of	who are descendants of

Nehemiah 7:40

ULT	UST
the sons of Immer were 1,052;	*1052 men from {the clan of} Immer;*

ULT **the sons of Immer**
UST men from {the clan of} Immer
(בְּנֵי אִמֵּר)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Immer]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Immer**
UST {the clan of} Immer
(אִמֵּר)

Immer is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:41

ULT	UST
the sons of Pashhur were 1, 247;	*1247 men from {the clan of} Pashhur;*

ULT **the sons of Pashhur**
UST men from {the clan of} Pashhur
(בְּנֵי פַשְׁחוּר)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Pashhur]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Pashhur**
UST {the clan of} Pashhur
(פַּשְׁחוּר)

Pashhur is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:42

ULT	UST
the sons of Harim were 1,017.	*1017 men from {the clan of} Harim.*

ULT **the sons of Harim**
UST men from {the clan of} Harim
(בְּנֵי חָרִם)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Harim]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Harim**
UST {the clan of} Harim
(חָרִם)

Harim is the name of a man. Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Harim]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:43

ULT	UST
The Levites: the sons of Jeshua, of Kadmiel, of the sons to Hodevah, were 74.	*These Levites also returned: 74 men from the clan of Jeshua and {the clan of} Kadmiel, all of them descendants of Hodevah.*

ULT The Levites
UST These Levites also returned
(הַלְוִיִּם)

Alternate translation: [Some of the descendants of Levi also returned.]

ULT the sons of Jeshua, of Kadmiel, of the sons to Hodevah
UST men from the clan of Jeshua and {the clan of} Kadmiel, all of them descendants of Hodevah
(בְּנֵי־יֵשׁוּעַ לְקַדְמִיאֵל לִבְנֵי לְהוֹדָוָה)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Jeshua and Kadmiel, who were descended from Hodevah]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT Jeshua, of Kadmiel … to Hodevah
UST Jeshua and {the clan of} Kadmiel … Hodevah
(יֵשׁוּעַ לְקַדְמִיאֵל & לְהוֹדָוָה)

Jeshua and Kadmiel are men’s names, and Hodevah is the name of their ancestor.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
The Levites	These Levites also returned

Nehemiah 7:44

ULT	UST
The ones who sang: the sons of Asaph were 148.	*148 members of the {sacred} choir {also returned}. All of them were from the clan of Asaph.*

ULT The ones who sang
UST members of the {sacred} choir {also returned}
(הַמְשֹׁרְרִים)

As in 7:1, this refers to vocal musicians who led in worship, in processions, and ceremonies, producing music and chants that emphasized and enhanced the occasion. Alternate translation: [singers]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT The ones who sang
UST members of the {sacred} choir {also returned}
(הַמְשֹׁרְרִים)

Alternate translation: [Some of the descendants of the singers also returned.]

ULT the sons of Asaph
UST All of them were from the clan of Asaph
(בְּנֵי אָסָף)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Asaph]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT Asaph
UST Asaph
(אָסָף)

Asaph is a man’s name.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Asaph	Asaph

Nehemiah 7:45

ULT	UST
The gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, the sons of Shobai, were 138.	*138 {temple} gatekeepers {also returned}. They were from the clan of Shallum, the clan of Ater, the clan of Talmon, the clan of Akkub, the clan of Hatita, and the clan of Shobai.*

ULT **The gatekeepers**
UST temple} gatekeepers {also returned}
(הַשֹּׁעֲרִים)

See how you translated this term in 7:1. Alternate translation: [Some of the descendants of the gatekeepers also returned]

ULT **the sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, the sons of Shobai**
UST They were from the clan of Shallum, the clan of Ater, the clan of Talmon, the clan of Akkub, the clan of Hatita, and the clan of Shobai
(בְּנֵי־שַׁלֻּם בְּנֵי־אָטֵר֙ בְּנֵי־טַלְמֹ֔ן בְּנֵי־עַקּ֖וּב בְּנֵי חֲטִיטָ֑א בְּנֵי שֹׁבָֽי)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatita, and Shobai]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Shallum … Ater … Talmon … Akkub … Hatita … Shobai**
UST the … Shallum … Ater … Talmon … Akkub … Hatita … Shobai
(שַׁלֻּם & אָטֵר֙ & טַלְמֹ֔ן & עַקּ֖וּב & חֲטִיטָ֑א & שֹׁבָֽי)

These are the names of six men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
The gatekeepers	temple} gatekeepers {also returned}

Nehemiah 7:46

ULT	UST
The Nethinim were: the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth,	*Some temple workers also returned. They were from the clan of Ziha, the clan of Hasupha, the clan of Tabbaoth,*

ULT **The Nethinim were**
UST Some temple workers also returned … from
(הַנְּתִינִֽים)

As in 3:26, the term “Nethinim” describes servants who worked in the temple. Alternate translation: [the temple servants]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **The Nethinim were**
UST Some temple workers also returned … from
(הַנְּתִינִֽים)

Alternate translation: [Some of the descendants of the temple servants also returned]

ULT **the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth**
UST They were … the clan of Ziha, the clan of Hasupha, the clan of Tabbaoth
(בְּנֵי־צִיחָ֥א בְנֵי־חֲשֻׁפָ֖א בְּנֵ֥י טַבָּעֽוֹת)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [from the descendants of Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatita, and Shobai]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Ziha … Hasupha … Tabbaoth**
UST Ziha … Hasupha … Tabbaoth
(צִיחָ֥א & חֲשֻׁפָ֖א & טַבָּעֽוֹת)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:47

ULT	UST
the sons of Keros, the sons of Sia, the sons of Padon,	*the clan of Keros, the clan of Sia, the clan of Padon,*

> ULT **the sons of Keros, the sons of Sia, the sons of Padon**
> UST the clan of Keros, the clan of Sia, the clan of Padon
> (בְּנֵי־קֵירֹס בְּנֵי־סִיעָא בְּנֵי פָדוֹן)

Sons means “descendants.” If you continue the sentence from 7:46, you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: [Keros, Sia, Padon,]

Support Reference: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:48

ULT	UST
the sons of Lebana, the sons of Hagaba, the sons of Shalmai,	*the clan of Lebanah, the clan of Hagabah, the clan of Shalmai,*

ULT **the sons of Lebana, the sons of Hagaba, the sons of Shalmai**
UST the clan of Lebanah, the clan of Hagabah, the clan of Shalmai
(בְּנֵי־לְבָנָה בְּנֵי־חֲגָבָה בְּנֵי שַׁלְמָי)

Sons means “descendants.” If you continue the sentence from 7:46, you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: [Lebana, Hagaba, Shalmai,]

Support Reference: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:49

ULT	UST
the sons of Hanan, the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar,	*the clan of Hanan, the clan of Giddel, the clan of Gahar,*

ULT **the sons of Hanan, the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar**
UST the clan of Hanan, the clan of Giddel, the clan of Gahar
(בְּנֵי־חָנָן בְּנֵי־גִדֵּל בְּנֵי־גָחַר)

Sons means “descendants.” If you continue the sentence from 7:46, you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: [Hanan, Giddel, Gahar,]

Support Reference: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:50

ULT	UST
the sons of Reaiah, the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda,	*the clan of Reaiah, the clan of Rezin, the clan of Nekoda,*

ULT **the sons of Reaiah, the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda**
UST the clan of Reaiah, the clan of Rezin, the clan of Nekoda
(בְּנֵי־רְאָיָה בְּנֵי־רְצִין בְּנֵי נְקוֹדָא)

Sons means “descendants.” If you continue the sentence from 7:46, you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: [Reaiah, Rezin, Nekoda,]

Support Reference: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:51

ULT	UST
the sons of Gazzam, the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah,	*the clan of Gazzam, the clan of Uzza, the clan of Paseah,*

ULT **the sons of Gazzam, the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah**
UST the clan of Gazzam, the clan of Uzza, the clan of Paseah
(בְּנֵי־גַזָּם בְּנֵי־עֻזָּא בְּנֵי פָסֵחַ)

Sons means “descendants.” If you continue the sentence from 7:46, you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: [Gazzam, Uzza, Paseah,]

Support Reference: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:52

ULT	UST
the sons of Besai, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephushesim,	*the clan of Besai, the clan of Meunim, the clan of Nephushesim,*

ULT **the sons of Besai, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephushesim**
UST the clan of Besai, the clan of Meunim, the clan of Nephushesim
(בְּנֵי־בֵסַי בְּנֵי־מְעוּנִים בְּנֵי נפושסים)

Sons means “descendants.” If you continue the sentence from 7:46, you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: [Besai, Meunim, Nephushesim,]

Support Reference: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:53

ULT	UST
the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur,	*the clan of Bakbuk, the clan of Hakupha, the clan of Harhur,*

ULT **the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur**
UST the clan of Bakbuk, the clan of Hakupha, the clan of Harhur
(בְּנֵי־בַקְבּוּק בְּנֵי־חֲקוּפָא בְּנֵי חַרְחוּר)

Sons means “descendants.” If you continue the sentence from 7:46, you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: [Bakbuk, Hakupha, Harhur,]

Support Reference: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:54

ULT	UST
the sons of Bazluth, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha,	*the clan of Bazlith, the clan of Mehida, the clan of Harsha,*

ULT **the sons of Bazluth, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha**
UST the clan of Bazlith, the clan of Mehida, the clan of Harsha
(בְּנֵי־בַצְלִית בְּנֵי־מְחִידָא בְּנֵי חַרְשָׁא)

Sons means “descendants.” If you continue the sentence from 7:46, you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: [Bazluth, Mehida, Harsha,]

Support Reference: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:55

ULT	UST
the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Temah,	*the clan of Barkos, the clan of Sisera, the clan of Temah,*

ULT **the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Temah**
UST the clan of Barkos, the clan of Sisera, the clan of Temah
(בְּנֵי־בַרְקוֹס בְּנֵי־סִיסְרָא בְּנֵי־תָמַח)

Sons means “descendants.” If you continue the sentence from 7:46, you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: [Barkos, Sisera, Temah,]

Support Reference: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:56

ULT	UST
the sons of Neziah, the sons of Hatipha.	*the clan of Neziah, and the clan of Hatipha.*

ULT **the sons of Neziah, the sons of Hatipha**
UST the clan of Neziah, and the clan of Hatipha
(בְּנֵי נְצִיחַ בְּנֵי חֲטִיפָא)

Sons means “descendants.” If you continue the sentence from 7:46, you can just list the names of these two men, and end the series in this verse. Alternate translation: [Neziah, and Hatipha.]

Support Reference: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:57

ULT	UST
The sons of the servants of Solomon were: the sons of Sotai, the sons of Sophereth, the sons of Perida,	*Some descendants of the laborers that King Solomon {first conscripted also returned}. These were from the clan of Sotai, the clan of Sophereth, the clan of Perida,*

ULT **The sons of the servants of Solomon were**
UST Some descendants of the laborers that King Solomon {first conscripted also returned}. These were from
(בְּנֵי עַבְדֵי שְׁלֹמֹה)

By **servants of Solomon**, this document does not mean officials who served in Solomon's court. Rather, this phrase refers to people whom Solomon first conscripted as laborers. They were descendants of the groups that were living in the land of Canaan before the Israelites occupied it. They and their descendants remained conscripted laborers under later kings. You could call these people "the laborers that King Solomon first conscripted." Alternate translation: [laborers who had worked for the kingdom]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **The sons of the servants of Solomon were**
UST Some descendants of the laborers that King Solomon {first conscripted also returned}. These were from
(בְּנֵי עַבְדֵי שְׁלֹמֹה)

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: [Some of the descendants of the laborers who had worked for the kingdom also returned.]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the sons of Sotai, the sons of Sophereth, the sons of Perida**
UST the clan of Sotai, the clan of Sophereth, the clan of Perida
(בְּנֵי־סוֹטַי בְּנֵי־סוֹפֶרֶת בְּנֵי פְרִידָא)

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: [They were from the descendants of Sotai, Sophereth, Perida]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT Sotai … Sophereth … Perida
UST Sotai … Sophereth … Perida
(סוֹטַי & סוֹפֶרֶת & פְּרִידָא)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the servants of	the laborers that King Solomon {first conscripted … }
Solomon	the laborers that King Solomon {first conscripted … }

Nehemiah 7:58

ULT	UST
the sons of Jaala, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel,	*the clan of Jaalah, the clan of Darkon, the clan of Giddel,*

ULT **the sons of Jaala, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel**
UST the clan of Jaalah, the clan of Darkon, the clan of Giddel
(בְּנֵי־יַעְלָא בְּנֵי־דַרְקוֹן בְּנֵי גִדֵּל)

Sons means “descendants.” If you continue the sentence from 7:57, you can just list the names of these three men. Alternate translation: [Jaala, Darkon, Giddel,]

Support Reference: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:59

ULT	UST
the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth Hazzebaim, the sons of Amon.	*the clan of Shephatiah, the clan of Hattil, the clan of Pochereth-Hazzebaim, and the clan of Amon.*

ULT **the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth Hazzebaim, the sons of Amon**

UST the clan of Shephatiah, the clan of Hattil, the clan of Pochereth-Hazzebaim, and the clan of Amon

(בְּנֵי שְׁפַטְיָה בְּנֵי־חַטִּיל בְּנֵי פֹכֶרֶת הַצְּבָיִים בְּנֵי אָמֹון)

Sons means “descendants.” If you continue the sentence from 7:57, you can just list the names of these four men and end the series in this verse. Alternate translation: [Shephatiah, Hattil, Pochereth Hazzebaim, and Amon]

Support Reference: Metaphor

Nehemiah 7:60

ULT	UST
All the Nethinim and the sons of the servants of Solomon were 392.	*Altogether, there were 392 descendants of the {temple} workers and {conscripted} laborers {who returned}.*

ULT All the Nethinim and the sons of the servants of Solomon were 392

UST Altogether, there were 392 descendants of the {temple} workers and {conscripted} laborers {who returned}

(כָּל־הַנְּתִינִים וּבְנֵי עַבְדֵי שְׁלֹמֹה שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת תִּשְׁעִים וּשְׁנָיִם)

Alternate translation: [Altogether 392 men returned who were descendants of temple servants or of laborers who had worked for the kingdom]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the servants of	and {conscripted} laborers
Solomon	and {conscripted} laborers

Nehemiah 7:61

ULT	UST
And these are the ones who went up from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Kerub, Addon, and Immer, but they were not able to tell the house of their fathers and their seed, whether they were from Israel.	*Another group also returned {that came from the towns of} Tel-Melah, Tel-Harsha, Kerub, Addon, and Immer {in Babylonia}. But they could not prove that they were descendants of Israelites.*

ULT And these are the ones who went up
UST Another group also returned {that came from the towns of} … in Babylonia
(וְאֵלֶּה הָעוֹלִים)

As in 7:6, "went up" means "traveled from Babylon back to Judah," since that involves going from a river valley up into the mountains. Alternate translation: [Some others returned to Judah from Babylon]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT from Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Kerub, Addon, and Immer
UST Tel-Melah, Tel-Harsha, Kerub, Addon, and Immer
(מִתֵּל מֶלַח תֵּל חַרְשָׁא כְּרוּב אַדּוֹן וְאִמֵּר)

These are the names of five towns in Babylonia. Alternate translation: [who had been living in the towns of Tel Melah, Tel Harsha, Kerub, Addon, and Immer.]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT but they were not able to tell
UST But they could not prove
(וְלֹא יָכְלוּ לְהַגִּיד)

Alternate translation: [They had no records to prove]

ULT the house of their fathers and their seed, whether they were from Israel
UST that they were descendants of Israelites
(בֵּית־אֲבוֹתָם וְזַרְעָם אִם מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל הֵם)

These two longer phrases mean similar things. The second phrase explains the meaning of the first for clarity and emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [that their ancestors had been Israelites,] otherwise "what clan they were from or who their ancestors were, whether they were really Israelites"

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **the house of their fathers and their seed**
UST that they were descendants of Israelites
(בֵּית־אֲבוֹתָם וְזַרְעָם)

These two short phrases mean similar things. They are used together to emphasize that accurate records would be required to prove a person's lineage. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [what their lineage was]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **the house of their fathers and their seed**
UST that they were descendants of Israelites
(בֵּית־אֲבוֹתָם וְזַרְעָם)

Among the Israelites, the expression **father's house** or **house of the father** originally described an extended clan. It later came to be used more generally to refer to a larger clan within a tribe. (For example, the two expressions are used interchangeably in Exodus 6:14, "These were the heads of their fathers' houses: The sons of Reuben, the firstborn of Israel, were Hanok, Pallu, Hezron, and Karmi. These were the clan ancestors of Reuben.") In this expression, the word **house** describes all the people descended from a particular person. The term views all of those descendants as if they were one household living together. Alternate translation: [what clan they were from]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and their seed**
UST that they were descendants of Israelites
(וְזַרְעָם)

Here, **seed** means "ancestors." In the Bible, the term often describes a person's descendants. But here, "their seed" means "whose seed they were," so the term is describing the ancestors of these people. Alternate translation: [or who their ancestors were]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
to tell	prove
the house of	that they were descendants of Israelites
and their seed	that they were descendants of Israelites

ULT	UST
were from Israel	that they were descendants of Israelites

Nehemiah 7:62

ULT	UST
The sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda, were 642.	*These 642 men were from the clan of Delaiah, the clan of Tobiah, and the clan of Nekoda.*

ULT **The sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda, were 642**
UST These 642 men were from the clan of Delaiah, the clan of Tobiah, and the clan of Nekoda
(בְּנֵי־דְלָיָה בְּנֵי־טוֹבִיָּה בְּנֵי נְקוֹדָא שֵׁשׁ מֵאוֹת וְאַרְבָּעִים וּשְׁנָיִם)

Alternate translation: [Altogether 642 men returned who were from the descendants of Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda]

ULT **The sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda**
UST the clan of Delaiah, the clan of Tobiah, and the clan of Nekoda
(בְּנֵי־דְלָיָה בְּנֵי־טוֹבִיָּה בְּנֵי נְקוֹדָא)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [They were from the descendants of Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Delaiah … Tobiah … Nekoda**
UST Delaiah … Tobiah … Nekoda
(דְּלָיָה & טוֹבִיָּה & נְקוֹדָא)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 7:63

ULT	UST
And from the priests: the sons of Habaiah; the sons of Hakkoz; the sons of Barzillai, who took a wife from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and he was called by their name.	*Some priests {also returned who were} from the clan of Hobaiah, the clan of Hakkoz, and the clan of Barzillai. Barzillai had married a woman who was a descendant of a man named Barzillai from the region of Gilead. He had taken the family name of his wife.*

ULT **And from the priests**
UST Some priests {also returned who were} from
(וּמִן־הַכֹּהֲנִֽים)

Alternate translation: [Some of the men who returned from those towns were descendants of the priests]

ULT **the sons of Habaiah; the sons of Hakkoz; the sons of Barzillai**
UST the clan of Hobaiah, the clan of Hakkoz, and the clan of Barzillai
(בְּנֵ֣י חֲבַיָּ֔ה בְּנֵ֥י הַקּ֖וֹץ בְּנֵ֣י בַרְזִלָּֽי)

Sons means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [They were from the descendants of Habaiah, Hakkoz, and Barzillai]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Habaiah … Hakkoz … Barzillai**
UST Hobaiah … Hakkoz … Barzillai
(חֲבַיָּ֔ה & הַקּ֖וֹץ & בַרְזִלָּֽי)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Barzillai the Gileadite**
UST a man named Barzillai from the region of Gilead
(בַּרְזִלַּ֣י הַגִּלְעָדִ֑י)

Barzillai is the name of a man, and Gileadite means that he was from the region of Gilead.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT who took a wife from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite
UST Barzillai had married a woman who was a descendant of a man named Barzillai from the region of Gilead. He
(אֲשֶׁר־לָקַח מִבְּנוֹת בַּרְזִלַּי הַגִּלְעָדִי אִשָּׁה)

Alternate translation: [Barzillai married a woman who was one of the descendants of Barzillai the Gileadite]

ULT from the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite
UST who was a descendant of a man named Barzillai from the region of Gilead
(מִבְּנוֹת בַּרְזִלַּי הַגִּלְעָדִי)

Daughters means "descendants." Alternate translation: [the descendants of Barzillai the Gileadite]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT and he was called by their name
UST had taken the family name of his wife
(וַיִּקָּרֵא עַל־שְׁמָם)

Alternate translation: [and he took the name of her clan as his own name]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the priests	priests
the Gileadite	from the region of Gilead
and he was called	had taken

Nehemiah 7:64

ULT	UST
These ones sought their record among the ones who were enrolled by genealogy, but it was not found. And they were desecrated from the priesthood.	*These {priests} searched the records that contained the names of the Israelite ancestors, but they could not find the names of their families. {They did not qualify to be priests because they could not trace their family history,} so they were not allowed to have {the rights and duties of} priests.*

ULT **These ones sought their record among the ones who were enrolled by genealogy, but it was not found**

UST These {priests} searched the records that contained the names of the Israelite ancestors, but they could not find the names of their families

(אֵלֶּה בִּקְשׁוּ כְתָבָם הַמִּתְיַחְשִׂים וְלֹא נִמְצָא)

Alternate translation: [They were not able to find any mention of their names in the lists of people who were descendants of the priests]

ULT **And they were desecrated from the priesthood**

UST {They did not qualify to be priests because they could not trace their family history,} so they were not allowed to have {the rights and duties of} priests

(וַיִּגָּאֲלוּ מִן־הַכְּהֻנָּה)

Alternate translation: [So they were not allowed to serve as priests.]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
sought	searched
And they were desecrated	{They did not qualify to be priests because they could not trace their family history,} so they were not allowed
the priesthood	{the rights and duties of} priests

Nehemiah 7:65

ULT	UST
And the Tirshatha said to them that they must not eat from the holiest holy food until the priest stood with Urim and Thummim.	*The governor told them that they must not eat any of the share of food taken from the sacrifices and kept for the priests. They would have to wait until the priest {in charge of the temple} had begun his duties and could ask {God} what to do {about this situation}.*

ULT **the Tirshatha**
UST The governor
(הַתִּרְשָׁתָא)

This was the formal Persian title of the governor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the title and then explain it. Alternate translation: [The Tirshatha, that is, the governor]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **And the Tirshatha said to them that they must not eat from the holiest holy food**
UST The governor told them that they must not eat any of the share of food taken from the sacrifices and kept for the priests
(וַיֹּאמֶר הַתִּרְשָׁתָא לָהֶם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יֹאכְלוּ מִקֹּדֶשׁ הַקָּדָשִׁים)

In this case, **the holy of holies** does not refer to the inmost part of the Temple. Rather, it refers to the most sacred part of the food offerings, which was reserved for the priests. Alternate translation: [told them that they would not be allowed to eat the most sacred food]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **until the priest stood with Urim and Thummim**
UST They would have to wait until the priest {in charge of the temple} had begun his duties and could ask {God} what to do {about this situation}
(עַד עֲמֹד הַכֹּהֵן לְאוּרִים וְתוּמִּים)

Here, **stand** is a figurative way of saying that a person has assumed the duties of their office. The priest means specifically the high priest, since he had the objects described. Alternate translation: [Until the high priest was once again on duty]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT with Urim and Thummim
UST and could ask {God} what to do {about this situation}
(לְאוּרִים וְתוּמִּים)

This was a pair of objects that the high priest kept in the breastpiece of his robe. It is unknown exactly what type of objects they were, but they were used to answer yes-or-no questions and to decide between two alternatives. If the priest, without looking, pulled out the Urim, that meant one answer, while if he pulled out the Thummim, that meant the other answer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could describe these objects by their function rather than by their names. Alternate translation: [and could use the sacred objects to decide their cases.]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the Tirshatha	The governor
from … holy	any of the share of food taken from the sacrifices and kept for the priests
the priest	the priest {in charge of the temple}

Nehemiah 7:66

ULT	UST
All the assembly, as one, was 42, 360:	*Altogether, 42360 people {returned to Judea}.*

ULT All the assembly, as one, was 42, 360
UST Altogether, 42360 people {returned to Judea}
(כָּל־הַקָּהָל כְּאֶחָד אַרְבַּע רִבֹּוא אַלְפַּיִם שְׁלֹשׁ־מֵאוֹת וְשִׁשִּׁים)

Alternate translation: [The total number of men who returned was 42,360]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the assembly	Altogether … people {returned to Judea}

Nehemiah 7:67

ULT	UST
apart from their male servants and their female servants, these were 7, 337; and for them, the men who sang and the women who sang were 245.	*There were also 7337 male servants and female servants, and 245 male singers and female singers.*

ULT apart from their male servants and their female servants, these were 7, 337
UST There were also 7337 male servants and female servants
(מִלְּבַד עַבְדֵיהֶם וְאַמְהֹתֵיהֶם אֵלֶּה שִׁבְעַת אֲלָפִים שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת שִׁלֹּשִׁים וְשִׁבְעָה׃)

Alternate translation: [not counting their 7,337 male and female servants]

ULT and for them, the men who sang and the women who sang were 245
UST and 245 male singers and female singers
(וְלָהֶם מְשֹׁרְרִים וּמְשֹׁרְרוֹת מָאתַיִם וְאַרְבָּעִים וַחֲמִשָּׁה׃)

This is a different group from “the ones who sang” in 7:44. Those were Levites who sang in connection with Israel’s worship. The group here is a class of servants who were employed to provide music for public and private events. Alternate translation: [and the 245 male and female singers they employed.]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
their male servants	male servants
and their female servants	and female servants

Nehemiah 7:68

ULT	UST
The horses were 736. The mules were 245.	*{The Israelites also brought back from Babylonia} 736 horses, 245 mules,*

ULT The horses were 736. The mules were 245

UST {The Israelites also brought back from Babylonia} 736 horses, 245 mules

(סוּסֵיהֶם שְׁבַע מֵאוֹת שְׁלֹשִׁים וְשִׁשָּׁה פִּרְדֵיהֶם מָאתַיִם אַרְבָּעִים וַחֲמִשָּׁה)

Alternate translation: [The group also brought back with them 736 horses, 245 mules]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
The horses	The Israelites also brought back from Babylonia … horses
The mules	mules

Nehemiah 7:69

ULT	UST
The camels were 435. The donkeys were 6, 720.	*435 camels, and 6720 donkeys.*

ULT The camels were 435. The donkeys were 6, 720

UST 435 camels, and 6720 donkeys

(גְּמַלִּים אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שְׁלֹשִׁים וַחֲמֹרִים שֵׁשֶׁת אֲלָפִים שֵׁבַע מֵאוֹת וְעֶשְׂרִים & חֲמֹרִים שֵׁשֶׁת אֲלָפִים שֵׁבַע מֵאוֹת וְעֶשְׂרִים)

Alternate translation: [435 camels, and 6,720 donkeys.]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
The camels	camels
The donkeys	and … donkeys

Nehemiah 7:70

ULT	UST
And some from the extremity of the heads of the fathers gave to the work. The Tirshatha gave to the treasury 1,000 gold darics, 50 basins, 530 tunics of priests.	*Some of the leaders of the ancestral clans gave {gifts} for the work {of rebuilding the temple}. The governor gave into the treasury more than 8 kilograms of gold, 50 bowls {to be used in the temple}, and 530 robes for the priests.*

ULT **the heads of the fathers**
UST the leaders of the ancestral clans
(רָאשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת)

This seems to be an abbreviated way of saying "the heads of father's houses." The full expression "father's house" or "house of the father" is used in verse 61. See how you translated it there, and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: [some of the clan leaders]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **the heads of**
UST the leaders of
(רָאשֵׁי)

Head here is a figurative way of saying "leader." Alternate translation: [the leaders of]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **gave to the treasury**
UST gave into the treasury
(נָתַן לָאוֹצָר)

Even though in the book of Nehemiah **the work** typically means the work of rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem, in this document it refers to the work of re-establishing the temple. That was the project that Zerubbabel and the group that returned under his leadership worked on. Alternate translation: [gave gifts towards the costs of re-establishing the temple]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT The Tirshatha gave to the treasury 1,000 gold darics, 50 basins, 530 tunics of priests
UST The governor gave into the treasury more than 8 kilograms of gold, 50 bowls {to be used in the temple}, and 530 robes for the priests
(הַתִּרְשָׁתָא נָתַן לְאוֹצָר זָהָב דַּרְכְּמֹנִים אֶלֶף מִזְרָקוֹת חֲמִשִּׁים כָּתְנוֹת כֹּהֲנִים שְׁלֹשִׁים וַחֲמֵשׁ מֵאוֹת)

Alternate translation: [The Tirshatha, that is, the governor, donated to the temple treasury 1,000 gold coins, 50 bowls to be used in the temple, and 530 garments for the priests to wear]

ULT The Tirshatha
UST The governor
(הַתִּרְשָׁתָא)

As in 7:65, this was the formal Persian title of the governor. Alternate translation: [The Tirshatha, that is, the governor]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT 1,000 gold darics
UST more than 8 kilograms of gold
(זָהָב דַּרְכְּמֹנִים אֶלֶף)

In ancient times, a gold daric weighed about 8 or 8.5 grams or about a quarter of an ounce. You could try to express this in terms of modern money values, but if you did, that could cause your Bible translation to become outdated and inaccurate over time, since those values can change from year to year. Instead, you could say something general like “1,000 gold coins,” or give the equivalent weight, or use the biblical term in the text and give the weight in a note.

Support Reference: Biblical Money

ULT 50 basins
UST 50 bowls {to be used in the temple}
(מִזְרָקוֹת חֲמִשִּׁים)

These were large, flat bowls that were used in the temple to collect the blood of sacrifices. When the Law called for some of this blood to be sprinkled on the altar, in the air, or on a person or a garment, that would be done from one of these bowls. Alternate translation: [50 bowls to be used in the temple]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT 530 tunics of priests
UST and 530 robes for the priests
(כָּתְנוֹת כֹּהֲנִים שְׁלֹשִׁים וַחֲמֵשׁ מֵאוֹת)

These were the special garments that priests would wear while performing their duties in the temple. Alternate translation: [530 garments for the priests to wear]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
to the work	for the work {of rebuilding the temple}
tunics of	and … robes for
The Tirshatha	The governor
gold	gold
priests	the priests

Nehemiah 7:71

ULT	UST
And some from the heads of the fathers gave to the treasury of the work 20,000 gold darics and 2, 200 silver minas.	*Some of the leaders of the ancestral clans also gave into the {temple} treasury for the work {of rebuilding the temple a total of} 153 kilograms of gold, and 1460 kilograms of silver.*

ULT **And some from the heads of the fathers gave to the treasury of the work**
UST Some of the leaders of the ancestral clans also gave into the {temple} treasury for the work {of rebuilding the temple a total of}
(וּמֵרָאשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת נָתְנוּ לְאוֹצַר הַמְּלָאכָה)

As in 7:70, **the heads of the fathers** seems to be an abbreviated way of saying "the heads of father's houses." See how you translated that expression in 7:61, and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: [Some of the clan leaders donated to the temple treasury]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **And some from the heads of**
UST Some of the leaders of
(וּמֵרָאשֵׁי)

Head here is a figurative way of saying "leader." Alternate translation: [leaders]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **20,000 gold darics**
UST 153 kilograms of gold
(זָהָב דַּרְכְּמוֹנִים שְׁתֵּי רִבּוֹת)

See the note about **darics** in verse 7:70. Alternate translation: [20,000 gold coins]

Support Reference: Biblical Money

ULT and 2, 200 silver minas
UST and 1460 kilograms of silver
(וְכֶסֶף מָנִים אַלְפַּיִם וּמָאתָיִם)

In ancient times, a silver mina weighed about half a kilogram or about 1.25 pounds. However, as in the case of darics, it would probably be best to say something general like "2,200 silver bars," or give the equivalent weight, or use the biblical term and give the equivalent weight in a note.

Support Reference: Biblical Money

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the work	for the work {of rebuilding the temple … }
gold	of gold
and … silver	and … of silver

Nehemiah 7:72

ULT	UST
And what the remnant of the people gave was 20,000 gold darics, and 2,000 silver minas, and 67 tunics of priests."	*And the remainder of the people gave {a total of} 153 kilograms of gold, 1330 kilograms of silver, and 67 robes for the priests."*

ULT **And what the remnant of the people gave was 20,000 gold darics, and 2,000 silver minas, and 67 tunics of priests**

UST And the remainder of the people gave {a total of} 153 kilograms of gold, 1330 kilograms of silver, and 67 robes for the priests

(וַאֲשֶׁר נָתְנוּ שְׁאֵרִית הָעָם זָהָב דַּרְכְּמוֹנִים שְׁתֵּי רִבּוֹא וְכֶסֶף מָנִים אַלְפַּיִם וְכָתְנֹת כְּהֲנִים שִׁשִּׁים וְשִׁבְעָה)

See the notes in 7:70 and 7:71 about "darics," "minas," and "tunics." Alternate translation: [The rest of the people donated 20,000 gold coins, 2,000 silver bars, and 67 garments for the priests to wear]

Support Reference: Biblical Money

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and … tunics of	and … robes for
the remnant of	the remainder of
gold	of gold
and … silver	of silver
priests	the priests

Nehemiah 7:73

ULT	UST
And the priests, and the Levites, and the gatekeepers, and the ones who sang, and some from the people, and the Nethinim, and all Israel dwelt in their cities. And the seventh month came, and the sons of Israel were in their cities.	*So the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the {temple} workers, and many ordinary people {started to} live in the {towns and} cities {of Judea where} their {ancestors had lived}. All these people were Israelites. By the seventh month {all of} the Israelites had gone to their cities and had started living in them.*

ULT **And … dwelt**
UST So … {started to} live
(וַיֵּשְׁבוּ)

At the end of 7:72, Nehemiah stops quoting from the document about the first group of people who returned to Judah. The story now goes on to tell what happened next. You could introduce this verse with a word or phrase that indicates this. Alternate translation: [And so … dwelt]

Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT **the priests, and the Levites, and the gatekeepers, and the ones who sang, and some from the people, and the Nethinim, and all Israel**
UST the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the {temple} workers, and many ordinary people … All these people were Israelites
(הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וְהַשּׁוֹעֲרִים וְהַמְשֹׁרְרִים וּמִן־הָעָם וְהַנְּתִינִים וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Five of the groups in this list are also named in the document about the people who returned from exile: the priests (verses 39–43), the Levites (verse 43), the gatekeepers (verse 45), the singers (verse 44), and the temple servants (verses 46–56). You can use those same names for these groups here. It is not immediately clear who "some from the people" are, and why they are not included in "all Israel." You could just say "many ordinary people." However, there is very similar list in 10:28 that names these same five groups and also describes people who dedicated themselves to following the law of God. That would unfortunately not have included all of Israel at this point, so that may be the distinction that is in view here. Alternate translation: [the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants, some people who dedicated themselves to follow the law, and the rest of the Israelites]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **And … dwelt in their cities. And the seventh month came, and the sons of Israel were in their cities**
UST So … started to} live in the {towns and} cities {of Judea where} their {ancestors had lived} … By the seventh month {all of} the Israelites had gone to their cities and had started living in them
(וַיֵּשְׁבוּ & בְּעָרֵיהֶם וַיִּגַּע הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעָרֵיהֶם)

The rebuilding of the wall was completed that year near the end of Elul, the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar. The implication is that everyone who had come to Jerusalem to work on the wall was then allowed to return home. Within about a week, by the beginning of the seventh month, they were all back home. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [So … returned to their homes, because the rebuilding of the wall had been completed. By the beginning of the next month, they were all back home.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the seventh month**
UST the seventh month
(הַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי)

Alternate translation: [month seven]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the priests	the priests
and the Levites	the Levites
and the gatekeepers	the gatekeepers
Israel	Israelites
the … month	the … month
Israel	the Israelites

Nehemiah 8

Nehemiah 8 Chapter Introduction

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Reading of the law

During the exile, the Hebrew language was no longer spoken. Only the priests and Levites still understood it. Ezra read the book of the law to the people in Hebrew and the Levites walked among the crowd translating it into Aramaic for the people to understand. (See: priest, priesthood; and law, law of Moses, law of Yahweh, law of God)

Festival of Shelters

After they heard Ezra read the law of Moses, the people obeyed it by making temporary shelters for themselves with tree branches. They did this to remember that their ancestors slept in shelters when they came out of slavery in Egypt.

Nehemiah 8:1

ULT	UST
And all the people gathered as one man to the open area that is before the face of the gate of water. And they said to Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which Yahweh had commanded Israel.	*A huge crowd of people gathered together in the plaza that was near the Water Gate. They asked Ezra the scribe to bring out the scroll of the law that Moses {had written down}, and which Yahweh had given to the people of Israel {for them to obey its rules and commands}.*

ULT **all the people**
UST A huge crowd of people
(כָּל־הָעָם)

The word **all** is a generalization that indicates that everyone who was able and available came to Jerusalem for this occasion. By "the people," Nehemiah means the groups he described in the previous verse who had come back to live in Judah and Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [The people of Judah]

Support Reference: Hyperbole

ULT **And … gathered as one man**
UST gathered together
(וַיֵּאָסְפוּ & כְּאִישׁ אֶחָד)

Verses 8 and 9 explain that the people had gathered for a festival, and 8:2 states that this was the first day of the seventh month, which means that the people had gathered in Jerusalem for the Festival of Trumpets. In the Law of Moses, Yahweh had commanded the people to observe this celebration on this date. If it would be helpful to your readers to know why the people came together on this day, you could say that specifically. Alternate translation: [gathered in Jerusalem in a huge crowd for a special celebration known as the Festival of Trumpets.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **as one man**
UST together
(כְּאִישׁ אֶחָד)

As one man is an idiom that means "as if they were a single person," that is, all in once place at the same time. Alternate translation: [gathered in a huge crowd]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **to the open area**
UST in the plaza
(אֶל־רְחֹוב)

This means a “plaza” or “square” in the city where there were no buildings and so where public events like this could be held. Alternate translation: [in the square]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **is before the face of the gate of water**
UST near the Water Gate
(לִפְנֵי שַׁעַר־הַמָּיִם)

Here, **face** means the front of an object. Alternate translation: [in front of the Water Gate]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the gate of water**
UST the Water Gate
(שַׁעַר־הַמָּיִם)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. See how you translated it in 3:26. Alternate translation: [the Water Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **And they said to Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses**
UST They asked Ezra the scribe to bring out the scroll of the law that Moses {had written down}
(וַיֹּאמְרוּ לְעֶזְרָא הַסֹּפֵר לְהָבִיא אֶת־סֵפֶר תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה)

They means the crowd, though they likely made this request to Ezra through their leaders. The implication is that they wanted him not just to bring the book forward, but to read to them from it out loud (as 8:3 indicates he did). This was because they wanted to learn what was in it. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [The crowd had asked Ezra the scribe to read to them from a scroll that contained the Law of Moses because they wanted to know what it commanded.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And they said to Ezra**
UST They asked Ezra
(וַיֹּאמְרוּ לְעֶזְרָא)

Since the rest of the chapter describes arrangements that the leaders must have made in advance, the crowd, once it gathered, did not start shouting spontaneously for Ezra to come forward and read. Rather, they had made this request in advance. Alternate translation: [And the crowd had asked Ezra]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **to Ezra the scribe**
UST Ezra the scribe
(לְעֶזְרָא הַסֹּפֵר)

This introduces Ezra as a new character in the story. The expression “the scribe” identifies him as a teacher who had carefully studied the Law of Moses. Since he is a new participant, if it would be helpful to your readers, you could call him something like “a man named Ezra, who was a teacher of the Law of Moses”

Support Reference: Introduction of New and Old Participants

ULT **to Ezra the scribe**
UST Ezra the scribe
(לְעֶזְרָא הַסֹּפֵר)

The biblical book of Ezra indicates that this man returned to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon 13 years before Nehemiah did. He led many reforms in the community. But in this book, Nehemiah does not say whether Ezra had remained in the city all that time, or whether he had gone back to Babylon and had recently returned to Jerusalem again. Even if your language, in telling a story, ordinarily accounts for how a person came to be on the scene, it might be best not to try to address that question here in your translation. Even though Nehemiah seems to expect that his readers will know where Ezra had been, Nehemiah does not say specifically where he was, and so the answer is unknown.

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the book of the law of Moses**
UST the scroll of the law that Moses {had written down}
(אֶת־סֵפֶר֙ תּוֹרַ֣ת מֹשֶׁ֔ה)

This **book** was most likely a scroll, and it most likely contained what is now known as the Torah or the "five books of Moses." Alternate translation: [a scroll that contained the law of Moses]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **which Yahweh had commanded Israel**
UST and which Yahweh had given to the people of Israel {for them to obey its rules and commands}
(אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּ֥ה יְהוָ֖ה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵֽל)

Alternate translation: [These were the commandments that Yahweh had told Israel to follow]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And … gathered	gathered
the gate of	the … Gate
to Ezra	Ezra
the scribe	the scribe
the law of Moses	the law that Moses {had written down}
Yahweh	Yahweh
Israel	to the people of Israel {for them to obey its rules and commands}

Nehemiah 8:2

ULT	UST
And Ezra the priest brought the law before the face of the assembly of both men and women and all who were understanding to hear, on day one of the seventh month.	*Ezra the priest, {who served God by offering sacrifices in the temple,} brought out the law {and presented it} before all the people, to both men and women, and {children} who were old enough to understand what he read. He did this on the first day of the seventh month {of that year}.*

ULT Ezra the priest

UST Ezra the priest, {who served God by offering sacrifices in the temple … } … He
(עֶזְרָא֩ הַכֹּהֵ֨ן)

This information serves to introduce Ezra further. In addition to being a teacher and learned student of the Law of Moses, he was also a priest whose duties would have included offering sacrifices in the temple and helping people make sure they were following the law in everyday matters. It might be helpful to your readers to explain that here because it shows why Ezra would have been such an effective teacher for everyone on this occasion. Alternate translation: [Ezra was also a priest who served in the temple and helped people follow the law] (See: Introduction of New and Old Participants)

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT And … brought the law before the face of the assembly

UST brought out the law {and presented it} before all the people … did this
(וַיָּבֵ֨יא & אֶת־הַתּוֹרָ֜ה לִפְנֵ֣י הַקָּהָ֗ל)

Here, **face** means the front of a group. Alternate translation: [He read the law out loud in front of the whole crowd.]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **of both men and women and all who were understanding to hear**
UST to both men and women, and {children} who were old enough to understand what he read
(מֵאִישׁ וְעַד־אִשָּׁה וְכֹל מֵבִין לִשְׁמֹעַ)

All who were understanding to hear is an idiom that means "everyone who could hear with understanding," that is, "who understood what they were hearing." This phrase likely refers to children and it would mean "children who were old enough to understand." Alternate translation: [for the men, the women, and the children who were old enough to understand.]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **on day one of the seventh month**
UST on the first day of the seventh month {of that year}
(בְּיוֹם אֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי)

Since Nehemiah does not say otherwise, the implication is that this happened in the same year that the wall was rebuilt. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [He did this on the first day of the seventh month of that same year.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **on day one of the seventh month**
UST on the first day of the seventh month {of that year}
(בְּיוֹם אֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי)

Alternate translation: [On day 1 of month 7]

Support Reference: Hebrew Months

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Ezra	Ezra … He
the priest	the priest, {who served God by offering sacrifices in the temple … }
the law	the law
the assembly	all the people
who were understanding	{children} who were old enough to understand what he read
on day	on … day
of the … month	of the … month

Nehemiah 8:3

ULT	UST
And he read it aloud before the face of the open area that is before the face of the gate of water, from the light until the middle of the day, in front of the men and the women, and the ones who were understanding. And the ears of all the people listened to the book of the law.	*So he read aloud from the book in the plaza that was near the Water Gate throughout the whole morning. He read it in front of all the people, both men and women and {children} who {were old enough} to understand what he read. And all the people listened carefully to the laws that were written {on the scroll}.*

ULT **And he read it aloud**
UST So he read aloud from the book … He read it
(וַיִּקְרָא־בוֹ)

Here, **it** means the book of the Law of Moses.

ULT **before the face of the open area that is before the face of the gate of water**
UST in the plaza that was near the Water Gate
(לִפְנֵי הָרְחוֹב אֲשֶׁר ׀ לִפְנֵי שַׁעַר־הַמָּיִם)

Here, **face** means the front of both places, the square and the gate. Alternate translation: [from the front of the square that is in front of the Water Gate]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the gate of water**
UST the Water Gate
(שַׁעַר־הַמָּיִם)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. See how you translated it in 3:26 and 8:1. Alternate translation: [the Water Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **from the light until the middle of the day**
UST throughout the whole morning
(מִן־הָאוֹר עַד־מַחֲצִית הַיּוֹם)

The light means sunrise, that is, the time of morning when the sun itself becomes visible above the horizon. “The middle of the day” means noon. Alternate translation: [from sunrise until noon]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **from the light until the middle of the day**
UST throughout the whole morning
(מִן־הָאוֹר עַד־מַחֲצִית הַיּוֹם)

Verse 8:7 explains that other teachers circulated within the crowd to answer questions that people had about what Ezra was reading. It is unlikely that they did this while he was still talking. Instead, he probably paused from time to time to allow this. So this expression is actually referring to a whole time period by describing its beginning and ending, but it does not mean that the activity took place without interruption the whole time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this meaning with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [throughout the morning]

Support Reference: Merism

ULT **in front of the men and the women, and the ones who were understanding**
UST in front of all the people, both men and women and {children} who {were old enough} to understand what he read
(נֶגֶד הָאֲנָשִׁים וְהַנָּשִׁים וְהַמְּבִינִים)

This is the same group that was described in 8:2. Many of the phrases here in verse 3 echo similar phrases in verse 2. The repetition emphasizes the importance and solemnity of this occasion. However, you do not need to repeat this phrase a second time in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers.

ULT **And the ears of all the people listened**
UST And all the people listened carefully
(וְאָזְנֵי כָל־הָעָם)

Here, Nehemiah uses the **ears** of the people to represent the people themselves, in the act of listening. Alternate translation: [all the people listened carefully]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the gate of	the … Gate
the day	throughout the whole morning
and the ones who were understanding	and {children} who {were old enough} to understand what he read
the law	the laws

Nehemiah 8:4

ULT	UST
And Ezra the scribe stood on a platform of wood that they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood: Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Uriah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and from his left, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malkijah, and Hashum, and Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, Meshullam.	*Ezra the scribe stood on top of a {high} wooden platform that the people had built for this purpose. At his right side stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah. At his left side stood Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.*

ULT **on a platform of wood**
UST on top of a {high} wooden platform
(עַל־מִגְדַּל־עֵץ)

As 8:5 explains, this was a raised platform that allowed the large crowd to see and hear Ezra as he read. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly here. Alternate translation: [a raised wooden platform]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **that they had made for the purpose**
UST that the people had built for this purpose
(אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ לַדָּבָר)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say who built this platform, and what the purpose was. Alternate translation: [that the people had built so that they could see and hear Ezra as he read]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **beside him … on his right hand**
UST At his right side … side
(אֶצְלוֹ & עַל־יְמִינוֹ)

Here, **hand** is a metonym that means “side.” Alternate translation: [next to him, on his right side]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Uriah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah**
UST Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah
(מַתִּתְיָ֔ה וְשֶׁ֕מַע וַ֠עֲנָיָה וְאוּרִיָּ֧ה וְחִלְקִיָּ֛ה וּמַעֲשֵׂיָ֖ה)

These are the names of six men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and from his left**
UST At his left
(וּמִשְּׂמֹאלֹ֔וֹ)

Alternate translation: [and next to him, on his left side]

ULT **Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malkijah, and Hashum, and Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, Meshullam**
UST Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam
(פְּדָיָה וּמִישָׁאֵ֧ל וּמַלְכִּיָּ֛ה וְחָשֻׁ֥ם וְחַשְׁבַּדָּ֖נָה זְכַרְיָ֥ה מְשֻׁלָּֽם)

These are the names of seven men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Zechariah	Zechariah
and Uriah	Uriah
and Hilkiah	Hilkiah
and Mishael	Mishael
Ezra	Ezra
the scribe	the scribe

Nehemiah 8:5

ULT	UST
And Ezra opened the book before the eyes of all the people, for he was higher than all the people. And as soon as he opened it, all the people stood.	*Ezra {stood on the platform} above all the people so that everyone could see him. He opened the scroll, and as he did that all the people stood up.*

ULT And Ezra opened the book before the eyes of all the people, for … higher than all the people

UST Ezra … above all the people so that everyone could see him. He opened the scroll
(וַיִּפְתַּח עֶזְרָא הַסֵּפֶר לְעֵינֵי כָל־הָעָם כִּי־מֵעַל כָּל־הָעָם)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the first phrase gives the reason for the result that is described in the second phrase. Alternate translation: [Ezra was up on the platform above the people, so they were able to see him when he opened the book.]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT before the eyes of all the people

UST everyone could see him
(לְעֵינֵי כָל־הָעָם)

Here, Nehemiah uses the **eyes** of the people to represent the people themselves, in the act of observing. Alternate translation: [where all the people could see]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT all the people stood

UST all the people stood up
(עָמְדוּ כָל־הָעָם)

The people stood up as a symbolic way of showing respect for Yahweh and his law. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [the people stood up to show their respect for Yahweh and his law]

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT **all the people**
UST everyone
(כָּל־הָעָם)

In this verse, **all** is not a generalization as it is in verse 1. Rather, it means **all the people who were there**. Alternate translation: [the people]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Ezra	Ezra … He

Nehemiah 8:6

ULT	UST
And Ezra blessed Yahweh the great God. And all the people answered, "Amen! Amen!" with their hands uplifted. And they knelt and prostrated themselves to Yahweh, nostrils to the ground.	*Then Ezra praised Yahweh, the great God, and all the people lifted up their hands {to show that they were praying with him}. {At the end of his prayer} they said, "We agree!" Then they all bowed down with their faces touching the ground, and they worshiped Yahweh.*

ULT **And Ezra blessed Yahweh the great God**
UST Then Ezra praised Yahweh, the great God
(וַיְבָרֵךְ עֶזְרָא אֶת־יְהוָה הָאֱלֹהִים הַגָּדוֹל)

This means that before Ezra read from the law, he prayed out loud. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [Before he read from the law, Ezra prayed to Yahweh, the great God]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And all the people answered, "Amen! Amen**
UST and all the people … {At the end of his prayer} they said, "We agree … all
(וַיַּעֲנוּ כָל־הָעָם אָמֵן ׀ אָמֵן)

Since the people lifted their hands to show that they were joining Nehemiah in prayer, they would have done this before they said "Amen" at the end of his prayer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could describe the events in that order. Alternate translation: [The people lifted their hands to show that they were praying with Ezra, and when he finished praying, they shouted, 'Amen! Amen!']

Support Reference: Order of Events

ULT **Amen! Amen**
UST We agree
(אָמֵן ׀ אָמֵן)

As in 5:13, **Amen** is a Hebrew word that means, "Truly, it is so." The word expresses agreement with what someone has just said. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express that meaning with a phrase such as, "We agree!" Or you could use the Hebrew term and explain what it means in this context: "Amen! Yahweh is truly great!"

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **with their hands uplifted**
UST lifted up their hands {to show that they were praying with him}
(בְּמַעַל יְדֵיהֶם)

In ancient Israel, lifted hands were the posture of prayer. By this gesture, the people showed that they were joining Nehemiah in prayer before he read from the law.

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT **And they knelt and prostrated themselves to Yahweh, nostrils to the ground**
UST Then they … bowed down with their faces touching the ground, and they worshiped Yahweh
(וַיִּקְּדוּ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ לַיהוָה אַפַּיִם אָרְצָה)

Nostrils here represent the nose, and the nose represents all of the face. Alternate translation: [they knelt down and then lay down with their faces on the ground to worship Yahweh.]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Ezra	Ezra
And … blessed	Then … praised
Yahweh	Yahweh
the … God	God
Amen	We agree
Amen	We agree
And they knelt	Then they … bowed down
and prostrated themselves	and they worshiped
to Yahweh	Yahweh

Nehemiah 8:7

ULT	UST
And Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites were causing the people to understand the law. And the people were in their place.	*Then Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, who were all Levites, explained the meaning of the laws {of Moses} to the people who were standing there.*

ULT **And Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah**
UST Then Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah
(וַיֵּשׁוּעַ וּבָנִי וְשֵׁרֵבְיָה ׀ יָמִין עַקּוּב שַׁבְּתַי ׀ הוֹדִיָּה מַעֲשֵׂיָה קְלִיטָא עֲזַרְיָה יוֹזָבָד חָנָן פְּלָאיָה)

These are the names of thirteen men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and the Levites**
UST who were all Levites
(וְהַלְוִיִּם)

This expression could mean something like, “yes, the Levites,” indicating that all of these men were Levites. That means that they were descendants of Levi and had a special assignment, helping the priests. Alternate translation: [who were Levites.]

ULT **were causing the people to understand the law. And the people were in their place**
UST explained the meaning of the laws {of Moses} to the people who were standing there
(מְבִינִים אֶת־הָעָם לַתּוֹרָה וְהָעָם עַל־עָמְדָם)

The implication is that Ezra paused regularly throughout the morning to allow this. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [explained the meaning of the Law to the people as they stood in their places in the crowd. Ezra paused regularly to allow this.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Azariah	Azariah
and the Levites	who were all Levites
were causing … to understand	explained the meaning

ULT	UST
the law	of the laws {of Moses}

Nehemiah 8:8

ULT	UST
And they read aloud carefully from the book, from the law of God, and set the interpretation. And they understood the reading.	*They read clearly from the scroll of the law of God, and they explained what it meant, so that the people understood what {Ezra and the others} were reading.*

ULT And they read aloud carefully from the book, from the law of God
UST They read clearly from the scroll of the law of God
(וַיִּקְרְאוּ בַסֵּפֶר בְּתוֹרַת הָאֱלֹהִים מְפֹרָשׁ)

This probably indicates that each of the Levites who circulated among the crowd likely had his own written copy of the Law of Moses and used that to teach the people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [Each of these Levites had his own the scroll of the law of God and read aloud from it]

ULT carefully
UST clearly
(מְפֹרָשׁ)

The exact meaning of this Hebrew term is unknown. This expression could mean that the Levites read loudly and clearly so that the groups they were talking to within the crowd could hear and understand them. It could also mean that they went over one section at a time with the people, after Ezra had read that section to everyone. It might also imply that the people could not understand the language in which the book of the Law was written, so the Levites needed to interpret it into the language that the people could understand. However, none of these possibilities are certain. Alternate translation: [clearly] or [one section at a time]

ULT from the book, from the law of God
UST from the scroll of the law of God
(בַסֵּפֶר בְּתוֹרַת הָאֱלֹהִים)

These two phrases mean similar things. You do not need to repeat both of them in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [from the Law of Moses]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **and set the interpretation**
UST and they explained what it meant
(וְשׂוֹם שֶׂכֶל)

The exact meaning of this phrase in Hebrew is unknown. Most likely, it means either: (1) that the Levites were interpreting from one language into another, because the people could not understand the language in which the book of the Law was written, or (2) that the Levites were explaining the meaning of the Law to the people because it was difficult to understand. Alternate translation: [and they explained what it meant]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **the interpretation**
UST what it meant
(שֶׂכֶל)

Interpretation is an abstract noun that refers to the meaning of the Law of Moses. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a phrase that uses a verb such as “mean.” Alternate translation: [what it meant]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **And they understood the reading**
UST so that the people understood what {Ezra and the others} were reading
(וַיָּבִינוּ בַּמִּקְרָא)

Here **they** refers to the people in the crowd. Alternate translation: [That way the people in the crowd could understand what Ezra was reading]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
from the law of God	of the law of God
the interpretation	what it meant

Nehemiah 8:9

ULT	UST
And Nehemiah, who was the Tirshatha, and Ezra, the priest, the scribe, and the Levites who were causing the people to understand, said to all the people: "Today is holy; it belongs to Yahweh your God. Do not mourn and do not weep." For all the people were weeping after they heard the words of the law.	*Then the people began to cry from sadness when they heard what the law said. So Nehemiah (who was the governor), Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were explaining the meaning to the people, said to all the people, "Today is a festival day on which you are supposed to worship Yahweh your God. Do not mourn or cry!"*

ULT Nehemiah, who was the Tirshatha
UST Nehemiah (who was the governor
(נְחֶמְיָה הוּא הַתִּרְשָׁתָא)

As in 7:65 and 7:70, **Tirshatha** is the formal Persian title of the governor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could simply say "governor," or you could state the title and then explain it. Alternate translation: [Nehemiah the governor] or [Nehemiah the Tirshatha (that is, the governor)]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT Nehemiah, who was the Tirshatha
UST Nehemiah (who was the governor
(נְחֶמְיָה הוּא הַתִּרְשָׁתָא)

This is the first time that Nehemiah appears as a character while someone else is telling the story. Previously in the book, he has been the one telling the story, and so he has referred to himself as "I." To give him more of an introduction here, you could say something like, "Nehemiah, who was the governor" or "Nehemiah, who was the Tirshatha (that is, the governor)."

Support Reference: Introduction of New and Old Participants

ULT and Ezra, the priest, the scribe
UST Ezra the priest and scribe
(וְעֶזְרָא הַכֹּהֵן ׀ הַסֹּפֵר)

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers who Ezra was. Alternate translation: [Ezra, who was a priest and a scribe]

Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

ULT **and the Levites who were causing the people to understand**
UST and the Levites who were explaining the meaning to the people
(וְהַלְוִיִּם֮ הַמְבִינִים֒ אֶת־הָעָם)

See how you translated this phrase in 8:7. Alternate translation: [The Levites who were explaining the meaning of the Law to the people.]

ULT **Today is holy; it belongs to Yahweh**
UST Today is a festival day on which you are supposed to worship Yahweh
(הַיּ֤וֹם קָדֹשׁ־הוּא֙ לַיהוָ֔ה)

As a note to verse 8:1 explains, this particular holiday was the Festival of Trumpets. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [This is a holy day, set apart to worship Yahweh. It is the Festival of Trumpets.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Today is holy; it belongs to Yahweh**
UST Today is a festival day on which you are supposed to worship Yahweh
(הַיּ֤וֹם קָדֹשׁ־הוּא֙ לַיהוָ֔ה)

These two phrases mean similar things. The leaders were reminding the people that this was one of the festival days that Yahweh had told them to set apart as special times of worship and celebration. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [This is a special day for worshiping Yahweh.]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **Do not mourn and do not weep**
UST Do not mourn or cry
(אַל־תִּתְאַבָּ֖לוּ וְאַל־תִּבְכּ֑וּ)

The leaders are saying that since this is a day for celebration, it is not appropriate for the people to be weeping. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this connection by beginning this sentence with a word such as “so.” Alternate translation: [So do not mourn or cry.]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **Do not mourn and do not weep**
UST Do not mourn or cry
(אַל־תִּתְאַבָּלוּ וְאַל־תִּבְכּוּ)

Mourn and **weep** mean the same thing. The leaders use both words together to emphasize that the people should be cheerful, not sad, on a festival day. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these words in a single expression. Alternate translation: [So you should not be crying]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **all the people were weeping after they heard the words of the law**
UST the people began to cry from sadness when they heard what the law said
(בּוֹכִים כָּל־הָעָם כְּשָׁמְעָם אֶת־דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could put this sentence first in the verse, since it gives the reason for the results that are described in the rest of the verse. Alternate translation: [The people in the crowd began to weep when they heard what was in the Law of Moses.]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **all the people were weeping after they heard the words of the law**
UST the people began to cry from sadness when they heard what the law said
(בּוֹכִים כָּל־הָעָם כְּשָׁמְעָם אֶת־דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה)

The implication is that the people began to weep because they recognized that they had not been obeying what God had commanded them in the Law of Moses. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [The people in the crowd began to weep when they heard what was in the Law of Moses, because they recognized that they had not been obeying what it commanded.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **to all the people**
UST to all the people
(לְכָל־הָעָם)

This is a generalization that indicates there was great weeping among the people. Alternate translation: [the people in the crowd]

Support Reference: Hyperbole

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Nehemiah	Nehemiah
the Tirshatha	the governor
and Ezra	Ezra
the priest	the priest
the scribe	and scribe
and the Levites	and the Levites
who were causing … to understand	who were explaining the meaning
is holy	Today is a festival day on which you are supposed to worship Yahweh
belongs to Yahweh	Today is a festival day on which you are supposed to worship Yahweh
your God	your God
Do … mourn	Do … mourn
were weeping	began to cry from sadness
the law	the law

Nehemiah 8:10

ULT	UST
And he said to them, "Go, eat the fat and drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared, for today is holy, belonging to our Lord. And do not grieve, for, the joy of Yahweh, it is your strength."	*Then Nehemiah said to them, "{Now} go home, eat some good food, and drink something sweet. And share some of it with those who are not able to afford {rich food and drink}, because today is a holy day set apart {to worship} our Lord. So do not grieve, because the joy that Yahweh gives will strengthen you."*

ULT And he said to them
UST Then Nehemiah said to them
(וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם)

The story does not specify who said this. However, it is probably either Nehemiah or Ezra, since they are named at the beginning of the previous verse. And since what follow are instructions for how to observe a religious occasion, it is most likely Ezra. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could suggest that. Alternate translation: [Ezra told them]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT Go, eat the fat and drink the sweet
UST {Now} go home, eat some good food, and drink something sweet
(לְכוּ אִכְלוּ מַשְׁמַנִּים וּשְׁתוּ מַמְתַקִּים)

This could mean, "Go home" and do this, since the people would likely have their holiday meals at home. Or it could mean, "Go ahead" and do this, even though you are feeling sad. Alternate translation: [Go home and celebrate with a good meal] or [Go ahead, celebrate with a good meal.]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT eat the fat and drink the sweet
UST eat some good food, and drink something sweet
(אִכְלוּ מַשְׁמַנִּים וּשְׁתוּ מַמְתַקִּים)

The fat and **the sweet** are figurative ways of referring to food and drink that is particularly tasty and shared in celebrations. The speaker is describing this food and drink by things associated with it, the fatness and the sweetness. Alternate translation: [Celebrate with a good meal.]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **eat the fat and drink the sweet**
UST eat some good food, and drink something sweet
(אִכְלוּ מַשְׁמַנִּים וּשְׁתוּ מַמְתַקִּים)

Eating and drinking are used together here to convey a single idea, celebrating. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them into a single phrase. Alternate translation: [Celebrate with a good meal.]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared**
UST And share some of it with those who are not able to afford {rich food and drink}
(וְשִׁלְחוּ מָנוֹת לַאֲשֶׁר נָכוֹן לוֹ)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [Share some of your meal with those who have not prepared anything for themselves]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared**
UST And share some of it with those who are not able to afford {rich food and drink}
(וְשִׁלְחוּ מָנוֹת לַאֲשֶׁר נָכוֹן לוֹ)

This may actually refer to the poor and indicate that they would not be able to afford rich food and drink. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [share some of your meal with the poor, who cannot afford rich food and drink.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **for today is holy, belonging to our Lord**
UST because today is a holy day set apart {to worship} our Lord
(כִּי־קָדוֹשׁ הַיּוֹם לַאֲדֹנֵינוּ)

These two phrases mean similar things. As in 8:9, together they mean, “This is a special day for worshiping our Lord.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases like that.

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **for today is holy, belonging to our Lord**
UST because today is a holy day set apart {to worship} our Lord
(כִּי־קָדֹושׁ הַיֹּום לַאֲדֹנֵינוּ)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could move this phrase to the beginning of the quotation because it gives the reason for the resulting actions that are described in the rest of the quotation. You could also connect this phrase to the ones that would then follow with a word like "so," to show the connection. Alternate translation: [Today is a holy day set apart to worship our Lord. So …]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **And do not grieve**
UST So do not grieve
(וְאַל־תֵּעָצֵבוּ)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this same idea with an active form, and you could say what is causing the action. Alternate translation: [You have recognized that you have not obeyed the Law of Moses, but do not let that make you sad]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **for, the joy of Yahweh, it is your strength**
UST because the joy that Yahweh gives will strengthen you
(כִּי־חֶדְוַת יְהוָה הִיא מָעֻזְּכֶם)

The implication is that if a person is truly sorry for disobeying, Yahweh does not want that person to fear punishment or to grieve for the way they have offended. Instead, Yahweh wants them to be encouraged that they can live in a new way and to be happy about that. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [because Yahweh wants you to be happy and encouraged about living in a new way]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the joy of … your strength**
UST the joy that Yahweh gives … strengthen you
(חֶדְוַת & מָעֻזְּכֶם)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the ideas behind the abstract nouns **joy** and **strength** with adjectives. Alternate translation: [happy … encouraged]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
is holy	is a holy day set apart
belonging to our Lord	{to worship} our Lord
the joy of	the joy that Yahweh gives
Yahweh	the joy that Yahweh gives

Nehemiah 8:11

ULT	UST
And the Levites caused all the people to be silent, saying, "Hush, for today is holy. And do not grieve."	*The Levites also told the people {who were crying} to stop, saying, "Today is a holy day! So, shhh. Do not grieve."*

ULT **caused all the people to be silent**
UST told the people {who were crying} to stop
(מַחְשִׁים לְכָל־הָעָם)

These are two overstatements that emphasize how encouraging the Levites were trying to be. **All the people** does not mean everyone in the crowd, but those who were crying. **Be silent** does not mean "say nothing" or "make no noise," but "stop crying." (Certainly the Levites hoped that these people would soon be talking and laughing with others at celebration meals.) Alternate translation: [encouraged the people who were weeping to stop crying]

Support Reference: Hyperbole

ULT **Hush, for today is holy. And do not grieve**
UST Today is a holy day! So, shhh. Do not grieve
(הַסּוּ כִּי הַיּוֹם קָדֹשׁ וְאַל־תֵּעָצֵבוּ)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could put your translation of "for today is holy" first since it gives the reason for the resulting actions in the other two phrases. You could also show the connection by using a word such as "so." Alternate translation: [This is a day of celebration, so stop crying now, and do not be sad]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **Hush**
UST shhh
(הַסּוּ)

This is a word that signals to a person that they should be quiet. If your language has a similar expression, you can use it in your translation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could also give the meaning in this context. Alternate translation: [Shhh] or [Stop crying now]

ULT **And do not grieve**
UST Do not grieve
(וְאַל־תֵּעָצֵבוּ)

If you expressed the idea behind this phrase with an active form in 8:10 and you said there what was causing the action, you would not need to repeat that information here. Alternate translation: [do not be sad]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And the Levites	The Levites also
is holy	is a holy day

Nehemiah 8:12

ULT	UST
And all the people went to eat and to drink and to send away portions and to make a great rejoicing, for they understood the words that had been made known to them.	*So all the people went {home} to eat and drink and share what they had. And they were very happy, because they understood {the meaning of} the words that {Ezra had read and} the others had explained to them.*

ULT **And all the people went to eat and to drink and to send away portions and to make a great rejoicing**
UST So all the people went {home} to eat and drink and share what they had. And they were very happy
(וַיֵּלְכוּ כָל־הָעָם לֶאֱכֹל וְלִשְׁתּוֹת וּלְשַׁלַּח מָנוֹת וְלַעֲשׂוֹת שִׂמְחָה גְּדוֹלָה)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could put the last phrase at the beginning of the sentence since it gives the reason for the rest of the actions. Alternate translation: [So the people celebrated by eating and drinking and sharing with the poor]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **to eat and to drink**
UST to eat and drink
(לֶאֱכֹל וְלִשְׁתּוֹת)

The implication is that they enjoyed the special food and drink described in 8:10. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [eating rich foods and drinking sweet drinks]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **to eat and to drink**
UST to eat and drink
(לֶאֱכֹל וְלִשְׁתּוֹת)

Eating and drinking are used together here to convey a single idea, celebrating. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them into a single phrase. Alternate translation: [celebrating with festive meals]

Support Reference: Doublet

> ULT **and to send away portions**
> UST and share what they had
> (וּלְשַׁלַּח מָנוֹת)

The implication is that they sent these portions to the poor, who would not have been able to afford rich food and drink, as described in 8:10. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [sharing with the poor]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **and to make a great rejoicing**
> UST And they were very happy
> (וְלַעֲשׂוֹת שִׂמְחָה גְדוֹלָה)

The abstract noun **rejoicing** can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: [and to rejoice greatly]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

> ULT **for they understood the words that had been made known to them**
> UST because they understood {the meaning of} the words that {Ezra had read and} the others had explained to them
> (כִּי הֵבִינוּ בַּדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר הוֹדִיעוּ לָהֶם)

The implication is that the leaders helped the people recognize that being able to understand Yahweh's law should be a source of joy and encouragement to them. They should not be sad or discouraged because they had disobeyed in the past, because now they would know how to obey. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [because now that they were able to understand God's law, they would be able to obey it in the future]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **for they understood the words that had been made known to them**
UST because they understood {the meaning of} the words that {Ezra had read and} the others had explained to them
(כִּי הֵבִינוּ֙ בַּדְּבָרִ֔ים אֲשֶׁ֖ר הוֹדִ֥יעוּ לָהֶֽם)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could put this phrase at the beginning of the verse since it gives the reason for the rest of the actions that the verse describes. You could show the connection by using a word like “so” after this phrase. Alternate translation: [the people realized that they would be able to obey God’s law in the future because now they were able to understand it. So …]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **they understood the words that had been made known to them**
UST they understood {the meaning of} the words that {Ezra had read and} the others had explained to them
(הֵבִינוּ֙ בַּדְּבָרִ֔ים אֲשֶׁ֖ר הוֹדִ֥יעוּ לָהֶֽם)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: [they understood God’s law when Ezra and the Levites explained it to them]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
a … rejoicing	happy
they understood	they understood
had been made known	{Ezra had read and} the others had explained

Nehemiah 8:13

ULT	UST
And on the second day, the heads of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe, even to give attention to the words of the law.	*On the next day, the clan leaders of all the people and the priests and the Levites met together with Ezra the scribe. They wanted {to study} carefully what was written in the law {that Yahweh had given to Moses}. They wanted to understand it {better}.*

ULT And on the second day
UST On the next day
(וּבַיּוֹם הַשֵּׁנִי)

Alternate translation: [On day 2] or [On the next day]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT were gathered to
UST met together with
(נֶאֱסְפוּ & אֶל)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [gathered to meet with]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT the heads of the fathers of all the people
UST the clan leaders of all the people … They … They
(רָאשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת לְכָל־הָעָם)

As in 7:70, this seems to be an abbreviated way of saying “the heads of father’s houses.” The full expression “father’s house” or “house of the father” is used in 7:61. See how you translated it there, and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: [some clan leaders from throughout Judah]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT the heads of
UST the … leaders of … They … They
(רָאשֵׁי)

Head here is a figurative way of saying “leader.” Alternate translation: [leaders]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Ezra the scribe**
UST Ezra the scribe
(עֶזְרָא הַסֹּפֵר)

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers who Ezra was. Alternate translation: [Ezra, who was a scribe]

Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

ULT **even to give attention to the words of the law**
UST wanted {to study} carefully what was written in the law {that Yahweh had given to Moses} … wanted to understand it {better}
(וּלְהַשְׂכִּיל אֶל־דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could put this phrase at the beginning of the verse, since it gives the reason for the rest of the actions that the verse describes. You could show the connection by using a word like "so" after this phrase. Alternate translation: [the people realized that they needed to understand God's law much better. So …]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **even to give attention to the words of the law**
UST wanted {to study} carefully what was written in the law {that Yahweh had given to Moses} … wanted to understand it {better}
(וּלְהַשְׂכִּיל אֶל־דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה)

The implication is that while the people realized this, they also realized it would not be practical for large crowds to gather in Jerusalem every day so that all the people could receive Ezra's teaching at once. Instead, they asked the family and religious leaders in Judah to meet with Ezra and learn from him so that they could then pass the teachings along. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [The people realized that they needed to understand God's law much better, so they asked their family and religious leaders to meet with Ezra and learn more things from him that they could then pass along.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And on the … day	On … day
the priests	and the priests
and the Levites	and the Levites
were gathered	met together
Ezra	Ezra

ULT	UST
the scribe	the scribe
the law	the law {that Yahweh had given to Moses} … it

Nehemiah 8:14

ULT	UST
And they found written in the law that Yahweh commanded by the hand of Moses: that the sons of Israel should live in huts during the feast in the seventh month;	*They learned that the law said that Yahweh had told Moses to command the Israelite people to live in shelters during a festival in the seventh month. {This was so that they would remember that their ancestors had lived in shelters when they walked in the wilderness after leaving Egypt.}*

ULT **And they found written in the law that Yahweh commanded by the hand of Moses**
UST They learned that the law said that Yahweh had told Moses to command
(וַיִּמְצְאוּ כָּתוּב בַּתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה)

Found does not mean that these leaders were looking for something, but that they learned this as they were studying with Ezra. Alternate translation: [they learned that in the Law, Yahweh had commanded through Moses]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **And they found written in the law that Yahweh commanded by the hand of Moses**
UST They learned that the law said that Yahweh had told Moses to command
(וַיִּמְצְאוּ כָּתוּב בַּתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה)

Because it was already the seventh month, it seems likely that Ezra showed this passage to the leaders intentionally because it was something they could and should obey immediately. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Ezra showed them something that Yahweh had commanded through Moses that they could do right away]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **by the hand of Moses**
UST had told Moses
(בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה)

Here, **hand** represents control and action. Alternate translation: [through Moses]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **that the sons of Israel should live in huts during the feast in the seventh month**
UST the Israelite people to live in shelters during a festival in the seventh month. {This was so that they would remember that their ancestors had lived in shelters when they walked in the wilderness after leaving Egypt … }
(אֲשֶׁר֙ יֵשְׁבוּ֙ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל בַּסֻּכֹּ֖ות בֶּחָ֑ג בַּחֹ֣דֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִֽי)

This refers to the commandment establishing the Festival of Tabernacles. The purpose of this festival was to remind the Israelites that their ancestors had lived in temporary shelters when they traveled through the wilderness from Egypt to Canaan. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [The people of Israel should live in temporary shelters during the Festival of Tabernacles to remind them that their ancestors lived in shelters when they traveled through the wilderness from Egypt to Canaan]

ULT **the sons of Israel**
UST the Israelite people
(בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Sons here means **descendants**. In this context it includes both men and women. Alternate translation: [the people of Israel]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **should live in huts**
UST to live in shelters … This was so that they would remember that their ancestors had lived in shelters when they walked in the wilderness after leaving Egypt
(יֵשְׁבוּ֙ & בַּסֻּכֹּ֖ות)

As 8:15 explains, these **huts** or temporary shelters were to be made from leafy tree branches. The people were supposed to live in these shelters as their home for a week. This was a way of remembering and celebrating the way Yahweh had protected their ancestors when they had only temporary shelters to live in. Alternate translation: [stay in temporary shelters]

ULT **during the feast in the seventh month**
UST during a festival in the seventh month
(בֶּחָ֑ג בַּחֹ֣דֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִֽי)

This means the Festival of Tabernacles, which Yahweh commanded the people to celebrate in the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

> ULT **in the seventh month**
> UST in the seventh month
> (בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי)

This means the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. Alternate translation: [month 7]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in the law	the law said
Yahweh	Yahweh
Moses	Moses
Israel	the Israelite
during the feast	during a festival
in the … month	in the … month

Nehemiah 8:15

ULT	UST
and that they should cause others to hear and cause a sound to pass throughout all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, "Go out to the mountain, and bring branches of olive, and branches of oil trees, and branches of myrtle, and branches of palms, and branches of leafy trees, to make huts, as it is written."	*{They} also {learned} that they should publicly proclaim, in all their towns and in Jerusalem, that the people should go into the hills and cut branches. These should be from olive trees, wild olive trees, myrtle trees, palm trees, and shade trees. They must bring these branches and make shelters {to live in during the festival}. That was what the scroll instructed.*

ULT **and that they should cause others to hear and cause a sound to pass**
UST {They} also {learned} that they should publicly proclaim
(וַאֲשֶׁר יַשְׁמִיעוּ וְיַעֲבִירוּ קוֹל)

These two phrases mean similar things. They describe how the family and religious leaders were supposed to send a message to everyone in Judah. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [they should publicly proclaim]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **throughout all their cities and in Jerusalem**
UST in all their towns and in Jerusalem
(בְּכָל־עָרֵיהֶם וּבִירוּשָׁלִָם)

Here the story describes the whole population of the province of Judah by referring to its smaller cities and towns and to its large capital city of Jerusalem. The expression includes everything in between these two extremes. Alternate translation: [to everyone in Judah,] otherwise "both in Jerusalem and in all the towns"

Support Reference: Merism

ULT **Go out to the mountain, and bring branches of olive, and branches of oil trees, and branches of myrtle, and branches of palms, and branches of leafy trees, to make huts, as it is written**

UST the people should go into the hills and cut branches. These should be from olive trees, wild olive trees, myrtle trees, palm trees, and shade trees. They must bring these branches and make shelters {to live in during the festival}. That was what the scroll instructed

(צְאוּ הָהָר וְהָבִיאוּ עֲלֵי־זַיִת וַעֲלֵי־עֵץ שֶׁמֶן וַעֲלֵי הֲדַס וַעֲלֵי תְמָרִים וַעֲלֵי עֵץ עָבֹת לַעֲשֹׂת סֻכֹּת כַּכָּתוּב)

This is the content of the message that the leaders sent out to the people of Judah. Alternate translation: [The Law of Moses commands us to go out into the hill country and get branches from olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees to make shelters]

ULT **to the mountain**

UST into the hills

(הָהָר)

The phrase can refer either to a single mountain or to a range of mountains and hills, which seems to be the meaning here. In this case one mountain would be used to represent the entire range. Alternate translation: [into the hill country]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **as it is written**

UST That was what the scroll instructed

(כַּכָּתוּב)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say what is doing the action. Alternate translation: [as the Law of Moses commands us to do]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and in Jerusalem	and in Jerusalem
olive	These should be from olive trees
oil	wild olive trees
palms	palm trees

Nehemiah 8:16

ULT	UST
And the people went out and brought and made huts for themselves, a man on his roof, and in their courtyards, and in the courtyards of the house of God, and in the open area of the gate of water, and in the open area of the gate of Ephraim.	*So the people went out {of the towns and cut branches} and brought {them} to make shelters for themselves. They built shelters on the {flat} roofs {of their houses}, in their courtyards, in the courtyards of the temple, in the plaza near the Water Gate, and in the plaza near the Ephraim Gate.*

ULT **And the people went out and brought**
UST So the people went out {of the towns and cut branches} and brought {them}
(וַיֵּצְאוּ הָעָם֙ וַיָּבִיאוּ֙)

Here the story is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. The meaning is clear from the context. Alternate translation: [the people went out and got branches]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **and made huts for themselves, a man on his roof**
UST to make shelters for themselves. They built shelters on the {flat} roofs {of their houses}
(וַיַּעֲשׂוּ֩ לָהֶ֨ם סֻכּ֜וֹת אִ֣ישׁ עַל־גַּגּ֗וֹ)

In this context, **a man** is an idiom that means “each person” and likely “each family.” It does not mean only an adult male. Alternate translation: [and each family built shelters on their roofs]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **on his roof**
UST on the {flat} roofs {of their houses}
(עַל־גַּגּ֗וֹ)

In this culture, roofs were flat and were reached by stairs that led up to them from outside the house. So a shelter could stand on the flat roof and the family could use it as a temporary home. Alternate translation: [on their flat roofs]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and in their courtyards**
UST in their courtyards
(וּבְחַצְרֹתֵיהֶם)

In this culture, houses were built around an open courtyard. So a shelter could be set up there, within the walls of the house. Alternate translation: [and in the courtyards within the walls of their homes]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and in the courtyards of the house of God**
UST in the courtyards of the temple
(וּבְחַצְרוֹת בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים)

As in 6:10, here the book speaks of the temple as the "house of God," as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: [and in the temple courtyards]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and in the open area of the gate of water**
UST in the plaza near the Water Gate
(וּבִרְחוֹב שַׁעַר הַמָּיִם)

Here the story is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. The meaning is clear from the context, since this same location is described in 8:1 and 8:3. Alternate translation: [and in the square in front of the Water Gate]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **the gate of water**
UST the Water Gate
(שַׁעַר הַמָּיִם)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. See how you translated it in 3:26, 8:1, and 8:3. Alternate translation: [the Water Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT and in the open area of the gate of Ephraim
UST and in the plaza near the Ephraim Gate
(וּבִרְחֹוב שַׁעַר אֶפְרָיִם)

Here the story is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. The meaning is clear from the context. Alternate translation: [and in the square in front of the Ephraim Gate]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT the gate of Ephraim
UST the Ephraim Gate
(שַׁעַר אֶפְרָיִם)

This is the name of another one of the gates of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [the Ephraim Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and in their courtyards	in their courtyards
and in the courtyards of	in the courtyards of
the house of God	the temple
the gate of	the … Gate
the gate of	the … Gate
Ephraim	Ephraim

Nehemiah 8:17

ULT	UST
And all the assembly, the ones who returned from the captivity, made huts, and they dwelt in the huts. For the sons of Israel had not done thus from the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day. And there was extremely great rejoicing.	*All of the Israelite people who had returned from Babylon built shelters and lived in them {for one week}. Now the Israelite people had never celebrated {that festival} like this since Joshua the son of Nun {led them into this territory}. This was the {first} time they were doing it. And the people were very happy.*

ULT **all the assembly, the ones who returned from the captivity**
UST All of the Israelite people who had returned from Babylon
(כָּל־הַקָּהָל הַשָּׁבִים מִן־הַשִּׁבְי)

These two phrases mean similar things. They refer to the people of Judah who had returned to their homeland from the exile. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [all the people of Judah who had returned home from exile]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **the assembly**
UST the Israelite people
(הַקָּהָל)

The Old Testament often uses this expression to refer to the main body of the people of Israel. The expression envisions the way God called them out of Egypt and brought them together as a nation. At this point in their history, this main body was the people who had returned to Judah from exile. Alternate translation: [all the people of Judah who had returned home from exile]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the sons of Israel had not done thus from the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day**
UST the Israelite people had never celebrated {that festival} like this since Joshua the son of Nun {led them into this territory}. This was the {first} time they were doing it
(לֹא־עָשׂוּ מִימֵי יֵשׁוּעַ בִּן־נוּן כֵּן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד הַיּוֹם הַהוּא)

Alternate translation: [the people of Israel had never before celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles by living in shelters, going all the way back to the time of Joshua the son of Nun]

ULT **from the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day**
UST since Joshua the son of Nun {led them into this territory}. This was the {first} time they were doing it
(מִימֵי֙ יֵשׁ֣וּעַ בִּן־נ֔וּן & עַד הַיּ֥וֹם הַה֖וּא)

Since it was Joshua who led the people of Israel into the land of Canaan, his time was the earliest time when they could have celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles to commemorate the journey from Egypt to Canaan. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [from the time that Joshua the son of Nun had first led them into this land until the present day]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **from the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day**
UST since Joshua the son of Nun {led them into this territory}. This was the {first} time they were doing it
(מִימֵי֙ יֵשׁ֣וּעַ בִּן־נ֔וּן & עַד הַיּ֥וֹם הַה֖וּא)

Here the story is describing an entire time period by speaking of its beginning and ending in order to include everything in between. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this meaning with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [for the entire time they had lived in this land]

Support Reference: Merism

ULT **from the days of Joshua the son of Nun**
UST since Joshua the son of Nun {led them into this territory}
(מִימֵי֙ יֵשׁ֣וּעַ בִּן־נ֔וּן)

The term **day** is used here to refer to a period of time. Alternate translation: [from the time of Joshua the son of Nun]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Joshua the son of Nun**
UST Joshua the son of Nun
(יֵשׁ֣וּעַ בִּן־נ֔וּן)

Joshua is the name of a man, and Nun is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the sons of Israel**
UST the Israelite people
(בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Sons here means “descendants.” In this context it includes both men and women. Alternate translation: [the people of Israel]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **And there was extremely great rejoicing**
UST And the people were very happy
(וַתְּהִי שִׂמְחָה גְּדוֹלָה מְאֹד)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **rejoicing** with an adjective. Alternate translation: [the people were very joyful]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the assembly	the Israelite people
the captivity	Babylon
Joshua	Joshua
day	This was the {first} time they were doing it
Israel	Israelite
from the days of	since … led them into this territory
rejoicing	And the people were … happy

Nehemiah 8:18

ULT	UST
And he read aloud from the book of the law of God, day by day, from the first day to the last day. And they made a seven-days feast, and on the eighth day an assembly, according to the ordinance.	*Every day during that week {Ezra} read aloud {to the people} from the scroll of the law of God. They celebrated the festival for seven days. On the eighth day, they called for all the people to come together {so they could hold a ceremony to bring the festival to an end}. That was what the scroll instructed.*

ULT **And he read aloud from the book of the law of God**
UST {Ezra} read aloud {to the people} from the scroll of the law of God
(וַיִּקְרָא בְּסֵפֶר תּוֹרַת הָאֱלֹהִים)

He means Ezra, as stated explicitly in 8:3 and 8:13. The implication is that Ezra continued to read to the family and religious leaders who had asked him to keep teaching them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Each day throughout the festival, Ezra continued to read to the leaders from the Law of Moses]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **day by day**
UST Every day
(יוֹם ו בְּיוֹם)

This is an idiom that means **each day** or **every single day**.

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **from the first day to the last day**
UST during that week
(מִן־הַיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן עַד הַיּוֹם הָאַחֲרוֹן)

The story is describing the entire festival by speaking of two extreme parts of it, its first day and its last day. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this meaning with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [throughout the entire festival]

Support Reference: Merism

ULT **And they made a seven-days feast, and on the eighth day an assembly, according to the ordinance**

UST They celebrated the festival for seven days. On the eighth day, they called for all the people to come together {so they could hold a ceremony to bring the festival to an end}. That was what the scroll instructed

(וַיַּעֲשׂוּ־חָג שִׁבְעַת יָמִים וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי עֲצֶרֶת כַּמִּשְׁפָּט)

They means the people of Judah. The **ordinance** refers to the command in the Law of Moses to end the Festival of Tabernacles by gathering all of the Israelites together for a closing ceremony after seven days. Alternate translation: [The people of Judah celebrated the Festival of Tabernacles for seven days, and on the eighth day they held a closing ceremony together, as the Law of Moses commanded]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and on the eighth day**

UST On the eighth day

(וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי)

Alternate translation: [on day 8]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the law of God	the law of God
day by	Every day
day	Every day
the … day	during that week
the … day	during that week
days	for … days
a … feast	the festival
and on the … day	On the … day
an assembly	they called for all the people to come together {so they could hold a ceremony to bring the festival to an end}
according to the ordinance	That was what the scroll instructed

Nehemiah 9

Nehemiah 9 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

This chapter and the next one form a single section.

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Prayer to God

The people prayed and thanked God for his care for them and the blessings he gave to them. They also confessed their sin of disobeying him. (See: bless, blessed, blessing; and confess, confession; and sin, sinful, sinner, sinning)

Learning from their ancestor's mistakes

This chapter teaches that the Jews learned from the mistakes of their ancestors. They became determined to worship Yahweh alone, to not intermarry with other peoples, and to worship Yahweh as the law of Moses instructed them. (See: law, law of Moses, law of Yahweh, law of God)

Recalling the great power of God

It was common to recall the great things God did for Israel. This is a reminder to Israel of God's power. It is intended to bring the people to repentance and proper worship of Yahweh. (See: repent, repentance)

Nehemiah 9:1

ULT	UST
And on day 24 of this month the sons of Israel were gathered in fasting and in sackcloth, and dust was upon them.	*Two days later, the Israelite people gathered together again. {To show that they were sorry for their sins,} they went without food, they wore {clothes made from} rough cloth, and they put dirt on their {heads}.*

ULT **And on day 24 of this month**
UST Two days later
(וּבְיוֹם֩ עֶשְׂרִ֨ים וְאַרְבָּעָ֜ה לַחֹ֣דֶשׁ הַזֶּ֗ה)

This month means the seventh month of that year according to the Hebrew calendar, as specified in 8:2 and 8:14. The Law of Moses said to observe the Festival of Tabernacles from the fifteenth through the twenty-second days of that month. The implication is that after that joyful celebration, the people were given one full day to rest and prepare for the gathering that this chapter describes. It had a different and more solemn purpose. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [On the twenty-fourth day of the seventh month of that year, two days after the joyful Festival of Tabernacles had ended]

Support Reference: Hebrew Months

ULT **And on day 24 of this month**
UST Two days later
(וּבְיוֹם֩ עֶשְׂרִ֨ים וְאַרְבָּעָ֜ה לַחֹ֣דֶשׁ הַזֶּ֗ה)

Alternate translation: [On day 24 of month 7]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT **the sons of Israel were gathered**
UST the Israelite people gathered together again. {To show that they were sorry for their sins,} they … they … they
(נֶֽאֱסְפ֥וּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵ֖ל)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [the people of Israel gathered together]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **the sons of Israel were gathered**
UST the Israelite people gathered together again. {To show that they were sorry for their sins,} they … they … they
(נֶאֱסְפוּ בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל)

The implication is that people from all the cities and towns the province of Judah gathered together again in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [people from all over Judah gathered together again in Jerusalem]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the sons of Israel**
UST the Israelite people … they … they … they
(בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Sons here means "descendants." In this context it includes both men and women, and it refers specifically to the Israelites who were now living in Judah. Alternate translation: [the people of Israel] or [people from all over Judah]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and in sackcloth, and dust was upon them**
UST wore {clothes made from} rough cloth, and … put dirt on their {heads}
(וּבְשַׂקִּ֖ים וַאֲדָמָ֥ה עֲלֵיהֶֽם)

The people did these things to show symbolically how sorry they were for their sins. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [The people refrained from eating, wore rough clothing, and put dust on their heads to show that they were sorry for their sins]

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT **and dust was upon them**
UST and … put dirt on their {heads}
(וַאֲדָמָ֥ה עֲלֵיהֶֽם)

Them in this sentence refers to the people, but it does not mean that they covered themselves entirely in dust. The story is using the whole person to refer to one part of the person, the head, which is where people in this culture put dust to express sorrow. Alternate translation: [the people … put dust on their heads]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And on day	Two days later
of … month	Two days later
Israel	the Israelite people … they … they … they
were gathered	gathered together again. {To show that they were sorry for their sins … }
in fasting	went without food
and in sackcloth	wore {clothes made from} rough cloth

Nehemiah 9:2

ULT	UST
And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all the sons of a foreigner. And they stood, and they confessed concerning their sins and the iniquities of their fathers.	*The descendants of Israel separated themselves away from all the descendants of foreigners. They stood there and confessed their own sins and the wicked things their ancestors had done.*

ULT **And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all the sons of a foreigner**
UST The descendants of Israel separated themselves away from all the descendants of foreigners
(וַיִּבָּדְלוּ זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכֹּל בְּנֵי נֵכָר)

The Israelites were conducting this ceremony as a special act of repentance for how they and their ancestors had disobeyed God. They were acknowledging how they had failed to fulfill the special assignment God had given them of modeling the blessings of living according to his ways, so it would not have been appropriate for people from other nations to take part in the ceremony. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [The people of Israel did not allow anyone from any other nation to take part in this ceremony because it was going to be a time of repentance for how they and their ancestors had disobeyed Yahweh]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the seed of Israel**
UST The descendants of Israel
(זֶרַע יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here, **seed** means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [the descendants of Israel] or [the Israelites]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **from all the sons of a foreigner**
UST away from all the descendants of foreigners
(מִכֹּל בְּנֵי נֵכָר)

Sons here means **descendants**. Alternate translation: [all people from other nations]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **And they stood, and they confessed concerning their sins and the iniquities of their fathers**
UST They stood there and confessed their own sins and the wicked things their ancestors had done
(וַיַּעַמְדוּ וַיִּתְוַדּוּ עַל־חַטֹּאתֵיהֶם וַעֲוֹנֹת אֲבֹתֵיהֶם)

Here, **stood** probably does not mean "standing up," since the next verse says that they "rose up," which probably means that they got up from kneeling. As they were showing sorrow for their sins, they would likely have knelt to worship God, as in 8:6. So **stood** probably means instead that they remained in place, by implication for some time, and made a thorough confession. Alternate translation: [they remained in place as they confessed all the wrong things that they and their ancestors had done]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **their fathers**
UST their ancestors had done
(אֲבֹתֵיהֶם)

Fathers here means "ancestors." Alternate translation: [their ancestors]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the seed of	The descendants of
Israel	Israel
a foreigner	foreigners
and they confessed	and confessed
their sins	their own sins
and the iniquities of	and the wicked things

Nehemiah 9:3

ULT	UST
And they rose up in their place, and they read aloud the book of the law of Yahweh their God a fourth of the day, and a fourth of the day were confessing and prostrating themselves to Yahweh their God.	*They stood in place and {listened to someone} read from the scroll of the law of Yahweh their God for three hours. Then for another three hours they confessed their sins and bowed down and worshiped Yahweh their God.*

ULT **And they rose up in their place**
UST They stood in place
(וַיָּקֻומוּ עַל־עָמְדָֽם)

Rose up here likely means **stood up**. As in 8:5, the people would have stood up to show respect as they listened to the reading from the Law of Moses. Alternate translation: [Then the people stood up where they were]

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT **and they read aloud the book of**
UST and {listened to someone} read from the scroll of
(וַיִּקְרְאוּ בְּסֵ֣פֶר)

The people themselves did not read from the book. **They** here likely means Ezra and the Levites, who read similarly to the crowd that gathered on the occasion described in 8:1–12. Alternate translation: [as their leaders read to them]

ULT **the book of the law of Yahweh their God**
UST from the scroll of the law of Yahweh their God
(בְּסֵ֣פֶר תּוֹרַ֣ת יְהוָ֣ה אֱלֹהֵיהֶ֑ם)

This is another of the various ways that this story describes a book containing the Law of Moses. Alternate translation: [from the Law of Moses] or [from the law that Yahweh had given through Moses]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

> ULT **a fourth of the day, and a fourth of the day**
> UST for three hours. Then for another three hours
> (רְבִעִ֣ית הַיֹּ֔ום וּרְבִעִ֖ית)

In this culture the day and the night were each divided into four equal parts of three hours each. So this means that the people listened to a reading of the Law for three hours, and then they spent the next three hours in prayer and confession. Alternate translation: [for three hours, and then for another three hours]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the law of Yahweh	the law of Yahweh
their God	their God
the day	for three hours
and a fourth of the day	Then for another three hours
were confessing	they confessed their sins
and prostrating themselves	and bowed down and worshiped
to Yahweh	Yahweh
their God	their God

Nehemiah 9:4

ULT	UST
And Jeshua rose up on the stairs of the Levites, and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, Kenani. And they cried out with a loud voice to Yahweh their God.	*{Some of} the Levites stood up on the stairs, including Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, another {man} named Bani, and Kenani. And they cried out {sorrowfully} in a loud voice to Yahweh their God.*

ULT **And Jeshua rose up on the stairs of the Levites, and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, Kenani**

UST {Some of} the Levites stood up on the stairs, including Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, another {man} named Bani, and Kenani

(וַיָּקָם עַל־מַעֲלַה הַלְוִיִּם יֵשׁוּעַ וּבָנִי קַדְמִיאֵל שְׁבַנְיָה בֻּנִּי שֵׁרֵבְיָה בָּנִי כְנָנִי)

The name of the stairs suggests that the men listed were Levites. That is, they were descendants of Levi who had the special assignment of helping the priests. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could suggest this in your translation. Alternate translation: [Eight Levites named Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Kenani climbed up the stairs leading to the platform]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And … rose up on the stairs of the Levites**

UST {Some of} the Levites stood up on the stairs, including

(וַיָּקָם עַל־מַעֲלַה הַלְוִיִּם)

In context, the **stairs of the Levites** seem to be stairs that led up to the platform that was built for the occasion described in chapter 8, or to another platform or platforms similar to it that allowed religious leaders to be seen and heard during large gatherings. The stairs likely had this name because they enabled the Levites to move back and forth from up on the platform to down among the people. Here, they also serve as a raised platform of their own on which the Levites can stand and be seen and heard. Alternate translation: [climbed up onto the stairs to the platform] or [the stairs that had been built for the Levites]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **And … rose up on**
UST stood up on
(וַיָּקָם עַל)

Rose up in this context seems to mean that these men climbed up onto the stairs and stood on them. Alternate translation: [climbed up onto]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **And … rose up**
UST stood up
(וַיָּקָם)

It seems that in this verse the story is describing something that happened during the second three-hour period, at the same time as the people were praying and confessing. You could indicate this with an introductory phrase. Alternate translation: [While the people were doing this]

Support Reference: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

ULT **Jeshua … and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, Kenani**
UST Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, another {man} named Bani, and Kenani
(יֵשׁוּעַ וּבָנִי קַדְמִיאֵל שְׁבַנְיָה בֻּנִּי שֵׁרֵבְיָה בָּנִי כְנָנִי)

These are the names of eight men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **And they cried out with a loud voice to Yahweh their God**
UST And they cried out {sorrowfully} in a loud voice to Yahweh their God
(וַיִּזְעֲקוּ בְקוֹל גָּדוֹל אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם)

The implication is that they did this to offer public prayers of confession on behalf of the people, and perhaps also to guide the people to pray themselves on particular topics. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [They prayed to Yahweh their God on behalf of the people, speaking loudly so that everyone could hear them.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the Levites	{Some of} the Levites … including
And they cried out	And they cried out {sorrowfully}
Yahweh	Yahweh

ULT	UST
their God	their God

Nehemiah 9:5

ULT	UST
And the Levites, Jeshua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, Pethahiah, said: "Rise up! Bless Yahweh your God from eternity to eternity! And may they bless your glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.	*Then some Levites spoke. They were named Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah. They said, "Stand up and praise Yahweh your God, who has always {lived} and will {live} forever! Yahweh, we praise your glorious name! Your name is more important than everything else that is good and wonderful!*

ULT the Levites
UST some Levites … They were named … They
(הַלְוִיִּם)

This phrase indicates that the eight men listed were Levites. If you said in your translation that the eight men listed in 8:4 were also Levites, here you could say, "Eight more Levites named."

ULT Jeshua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, Pethahiah
UST Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah
(יֵשׁוּעַ וְקַדְמִיאֵל בָּנִי חֲשַׁבְנְיָה שֵׁרֵבְיָה הוֹדִיָּה שְׁבַנְיָה פְּתַחְיָה)

These are the names of eight men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT Rise up
UST Stand up
(קוּמוּ)

Here, **rise up** seems to mean "get up from a kneeling posture." This would have symbolized that a new part of the ceremony was beginning. The people were to move from sorrowful confession to a resolute and joyful rededication of their community to God.

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT **Bless Yahweh your God from eternity to eternity**
UST and praise Yahweh your God, who has always {lived} and will {live} forever! Yahweh
(בָּרֲכוּ אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִן־הָעוֹלָם עַד־הָעוֹלָם)

The Levites speak these words to the people. They are not telling the people to praise God during all the time from eternity past to eternity future. Rather, they are using an idiom, "from eternity to eternity," to mean that Yahweh is the God who has always existed and will always exist. If it would be helpful in your language, you could put it in those terms. Alternate translation: [Praise Yahweh, your God, who has always existed and will always exist]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **And may they bless your glorious name**
UST we praise your glorious name! Your name
(וִיבָרְכוּ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדֶךָ)

In this sentence, the Levite who is speaking turns abruptly from addressing the people to addressing God. (**Your** in the previous sentence meant the people, while **your** here refers to God.) This is somewhat like the places earlier in the book where Nehemiah stops addressing his readers and speaks directly to God in prayer. However, here the people are meant to hear and do what is being described. So If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these as words that continue to be directed to the people, as in the previous sentence. Alternate translation: [Praise his glorious name]

Support Reference: Aside

ULT **And may they bless your glorious name**
UST we praise your glorious name! Your name
(וִיבָרְכוּ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדֶךָ)

As in 1:9, **name** is a figurative way of referring to the fame or reputation of a person. This is described by something associated with it, how well known someone's name is and how people react to hearing it. God's reputation, in turn, is based on what he has done and what this reveals about who he is, and so his "name" would also represent that. Alternate translation: [praise you for who you are and what you have done]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **which is exalted above all blessing and praise**
UST is more important than everything else that is good and wonderful
(וּמְרוֹמַם עַל־כָּל־בְּרָכָה וּתְהִלָּה)

Here God's name is described in a spatial metaphor as being higher than or lifted up above blessing and praise. This means that all of the things that people could do to honor and praise God could never be sufficient to acknowledge how much honor and praise he actually deserves. Alternate translation: [we can never bless you and praise you as much as you deserve]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **above all blessing and praise**
UST than everything else that is good and wonderful
(עַל־כָּל־בְּרָכָה וּתְהִלָּה)

Blessing and **praise** are abstract nouns that refer to the act of openly honoring someone for their character and actions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind these words with the verb forms of these words. Alternate translation: [we can never bless you and praise you as much as you deserve]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **above all blessing and praise**
UST than everything else that is good and wonderful
(עַל־כָּל־בְּרָכָה וּתְהִלָּה)

In this context, **blessing** and **praise** mean basically the same thing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these words. Alternate translation: [we can never acknowledge you sufficiently]

Support Reference: Doublet

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the Levites	some Levites … They were named … They
Bless	and praise
Yahweh	Yahweh … Yahweh
your God	your God
eternity	who has always {lived}
eternity	{live} forever
And may they bless	we praise
your glorious	your glorious … Your name

ULT	UST
which is exalted	is more important
blessing	good
and praise	and wonderful

Nehemiah 9:6

ULT	UST
You alone are he, Yahweh: you yourself made the heavens, the heavens of the heavens and all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you cause all of them to live; and the host of the heavens prostrates themselves to you.	*You are Yahweh, and no one else. You made the heavens that are above everything, and all that lives in the heavens {above the earth}. You made the earth and everything that is on it, and you made the seas and everything that is in them. You are the one who causes all living things to be alive. Everything that {lives} in the heavens {above the earth} worships you.*

ULT **You alone are he, Yahweh**
UST You are Yahweh, and no one else
(אַתָּה־הוּא יְהוָה לְבַדֶּךָ)

At the end of the previous verse, the Levites started speaking to God, but they still meant for the people to hear their words and do what they said. Now the Levites are addressing God directly in prayer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate this with an introductory phrase. Alternate translation: [Then these Levites prayed to God and said, ‘Yahweh, you are the only true God]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **You alone are he, Yahweh**
UST You are Yahweh, and no one else
(אַתָּה־הוּא יְהוָה לְבַדֶּךָ)

This means **you alone are the one** or **you are the only one**. Alternate translation: [You, Yahweh, are the only true God]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the heavens, the heavens of the heavens**
UST the heavens that are above everything
(אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם שְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמָיִם)

In the ancient Hebrew cosmology, the first phrase likely referred to the sky, which was envisioned as a solid dome above the earth (See: the note to 1:9). The second phrase likely referred to the realm beyond the sky, which was understood to be the dwelling place of God. Alternate translation: [the sky and everything beyond it]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **and all their host**
UST and all that lives in the heavens {above the earth}
(וְכָל־צְבָאָם)

Host means army. The “host of heaven” is likely a figurative expression for the stars, which seem like a large army in the sky. However, this phrase might refer to heavenly beings which dwell in heaven with God. Alternate translation: [and all the stars]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and you cause all of them to live**
UST You are the one who causes all living things to be alive
(וְאַתָּה מְחַיֶּה אֶת־כֻּלָּם)

Them means everything living on the land and in the seas. Alternate translation: [You give life to all of these creatures] or [you are the one who created all of these living things]

ULT **and the host of the heavens prostrates themselves to you**
UST Everything that {lives} in the heavens {above the earth} worships you
(וּצְבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם לְךָ מִשְׁתַּחֲוִים)

Earlier in the sentence, the **host of heaven** was a figurative way of describing the stars as if they were an army. Now here, the stars themselves represent the angels of heaven. Alternate translation: [all the angels bow down and worship you]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Yahweh	Yahweh
the heavens	the heavens
the heavens of	that are above everything
the heavens	that are above everything
the earth	the earth
and the host of the heavens	Everything that {lives} in the heavens {above the earth}
prostrates themselves	worships

Nehemiah 9:7

ULT	UST
You are he, Yahweh, the God who chose Abram. Also, you brought him out from Ur of the Chaldees. Also, you made his name 'Abraham.'	*You are Yahweh! You are the God who chose Abram and brought him out of {the city of} Ur, where the Chaldean people {lived}. You changed his name to Abraham.*

ULT You are he, Yahweh, the God who chose Abram
UST You are Yahweh! You are the God who chose Abram … You
(אַתָּה־הוּא יְהוָה הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר בָּחַרְתָּ בְּאַבְרָם)

Alternate translation: [You, Yahweh, are the God who chose Abram]

ULT chose Abram
UST chose Abram
(בָּחַרְתָּ בְּאַבְרָם)

Abram was the ancestor of the Israelites. God chose to make him and his descendants a community that would model for the whole world the blessings of living according to his ways. The Levites mention this first because it is the very beginning of the Israelites' history as God's chosen people. They will describe the rest of this history, up to their present day, in the rest of their prayer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain this. Alternate translation: [chose Abram to be the ancestor of your people]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT Abram
UST Abram
(בְּאַבְרָם)

This is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Also, you brought him out from Ur of the Chaldees**
UST and brought him out of {the city of} Ur, where the Chaldean people {lived}
(וְהוֹצֵאתָ֖ו מֵאֻ֣ור כַּשְׂדִּ֑ים)

Throughout their prayer, the Levites assume that the people listening will understand the significance of the details they mention for the Israelites' history as God's chosen people. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could give the reason why God brought Abram out of this city. Alternate translation: [He was living among the Chaldean people in the city of Ur, but you told him to leave there and go to a land that you would give to his descendants]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **from Ur of the Chaldees**
UST of {the city of} Ur, where the Chaldean people {lived}
(מֵאֻ֣ור כַּשְׂדִּ֑ים)

This is the name of a city and a people group. Alternate translation: [the city of Ur, where the Chaldean people lived]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Also, you made his name 'Abraham**
UST changed his name to Abraham
(וַתָּ֤שֶׂם שְׁמֹו֙ אַבְרָהָ֔ם)

Once again the Levites assume that their listeners will understand the significance of this detail. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could give the reason why God changed Abram's name to Abraham. Alternate translation: [You changed his name to Abraham, 'father of a multitude,' because he would be like a father to many nations]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
from Ur of	of {the city of} Ur
Yahweh	Yahweh
the God	the God
Abram	Abram
the Chaldees	where the Chaldean people {lived}
Abraham	Abraham

Nehemiah 9:8

ULT	UST
Also, you found his heart faithful before your face: and cut with him the covenant, to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give to his seed; and you have caused your words to stand, for you are righteous.	*You saw that he was faithful to you in his inner being. You made a promise to him {pledged with blood}, promising that you would give a land {to him} and to his descendants. This was the land where the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, and the Girgashites {lived}. And you did what you promised, because you {always} do what is right.*

ULT **Also, you found his heart faithful before your face**
UST You saw that he was faithful to you in his inner being
(וּמָצָאתָ אֶת־לְבָבוֹ נֶאֱמָן לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here, **found** is an idiom for someone discovering something to be true. It does not mean that God was looking for something he had lost. Alternate translation: [You recognized that he was completely loyal to you]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Also, you found his heart faithful before your face**
UST You saw that he was faithful to you in his inner being
(וּמָצָאתָ אֶת־לְבָבוֹ נֶאֱמָן לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here, Abraham's **heart** represents his thoughts and will, that is, his inner being. Alternate translation: [You recognized that he was completely loyal to you]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Also, you found his heart faithful before your face**
UST You saw that he was faithful to you in his inner being
(וּמָצָאתָ אֶת־לְבָבוֹ נֶאֱמָן לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here, **face** is a metaphor for a person's perception, referring to God's perception of Abraham. Alternate translation: [You recognized that he was completely loyal to you]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **and cut with him the covenant**
> UST You made a promise to him {pledged with blood}, promising
> (וְכָרֹ֨ות עִמֹּ֜ו הַבְּרִ֗ית)

To **cut** a covenant is a Hebrew idiom for making a solemn agreement with a person. The expression comes from the way animals were cut into pieces during covenant ceremonies to show what the parties wanted God to do to anyone who broke the agreement. But the meaning here is idiomatic. It is not a direct reference to such a ceremony, but only to the making of the covenant. Alternate translation: [you made an agreement with him] or [you made a promise to him]

Support Reference: Idiom

> ULT **to his seed**
> UST to his descendants
> (לְזַרְעֹ֑ו)

As in verse 2, **seed** means "descendants." Alternate translation: [to his descendants]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites**
> UST the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, and the Girgashites
> (הַכְּנַעֲנִ֨י הַחִתִּ֜י הָאֱמֹרִ֣י וְהַפְּרִזִּ֛י וְהַיְבוּסִ֥י וְהַגִּרְגָּשִׁ֖י)

These are the names of six people groups.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

> ULT **and you have caused your words to stand**
> UST And you did what you promised
> (וַתָּ֨קֶם֙ אֶת־דְּבָרֶ֔יךָ)

As in 5:13, **words** means the promises that God made to Abraham, and **stand** means stay in place rather than go away. The Levites are speaking of God's promises as if they were a living thing that could move around or not. Alternate translation: [you have kept all of your promises]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT for you are righteous
UST because you {always} do what is right
(כִּי צַדִּיק אָתָּה)

Alternate translation: [because you always do what is right]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
faithful	he was faithful
the covenant	a promise … {pledged with blood}, promising
the land of	a land … This was the land where … lived
the Canaanites	the Canaanites
the Hittites	the Hittites
the Amorites	the Amorites
and the Perizzites	the Perizzites
and the Jebusites	the Jebusites
and the Girgashites	and the Girgashites
to his seed	to his descendants
are righteous	{always} do what is right

Nehemiah 9:9

ULT	UST
And you saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and you heard their cry at the Sea of Reeds.	*You saw how {the Egyptians} mistreated our ancestors in Egypt. You heard them cry out {to you for help} when they were beside the Sea of Reeds.*

ULT **And you saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and you heard their cry at the Sea of Reeds**

UST You saw how {the Egyptians} mistreated our ancestors in Egypt. You heard them cry out {to you for help} when they were beside the Sea of Reeds

(וַתֵּ֣רֶא אֶת־עֳנִ֣י אֲבֹתֵ֔ינוּ בְּמִצְרָ֖יִם וְאֶת־זַעֲקָתָ֣ם שָׁמַ֔עְתָּ עַל־יַ֖ם־סֽוּף׃)

Here the Levites are describing how, centuries later, God rescued their ancestors, Abraham's descendants, from slavery in Egypt. In this verse they describe that entire experience generally by reference to its first episode and its final episode, to include everything in between. (In 9:10 and 9:11 they will add further specific details.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could describe the entire experience in a single phrase here. (However, you could also explain these episodes separately. See the next two notes.) Alternate translation: [You rescued our fathers from slavery in Egypt by defeating Pharaoh]

Support Reference: Merism

ULT **And you saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt**

UST You saw how {the Egyptians} mistreated our ancestors in Egypt

(וַתֵּ֣רֶא אֶת־עֳנִ֣י אֲבֹתֵ֔ינוּ בְּמִצְרָ֖יִם)

Affliction is an abstract noun that refers to the way the Israelites suffered when Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, forced them to serve him as slaves. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a verb such as "suffer." Alternate translation: [you saw how badly our ancestors were suffering as slaves in Egypt]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **And you saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt**
UST You saw how {the Egyptians} mistreated our ancestors in Egypt
(וַתֵּ֣רֶא אֶת־עֳנִ֔י אֲבֹתֵ֖ינוּ בְּמִצְרָ֑יִם)

The implication is that God not only saw how the Israelites were suffering, but also was moved to action out of compassion for them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [you saw how badly our ancestors were suffering as slaves in Egypt, and so you delivered them from slavery]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **our fathers**
UST our ancestors
(אֲבֹתֵ֖ינוּ)

Fathers here means "ancestors." Alternate translation: [our ancestors]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and you heard their cry at the Sea of Reeds**
UST You heard them cry out {to you for help} when they were beside the Sea of Reeds
(וְאֶת־זַעֲקָתָ֖ם שָׁמַ֣עְתָּ עַל־יַ֥ם־סֽוּף)

The Levites continue to rehearse the details of Israelite history without explaining their significance because they assume their listeners will already understand this. This is a reference to something that happened after God had freed their ancestors from slavery and they had left Egypt. Pharaoh regretted letting them go and pursued them with his army. Helplessly trapped against the shores of the Red Sea as Pharaoh's army approached, the Israelites cried out to God for rescue. Alternate translation: [you answered their prayer when they cried to you for help from the shores of the Red Sea]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and you heard their cry**
UST You heard them cry out {to you for help}
(וְאֶת־זַעֲקָתָ֖ם שָׁמַ֣עְתָּ)

Heard is an idiom that means that God both heard and answered the Israelites' prayer in the way described in 9:11. Alternate translation: [you answered their prayer]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the Sea of Reeds**
UST the Sea of Reeds
(יַם־סוּף)

This is the name of a body of water near Egypt. Alternate translation: [the Red Sea]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the affliction of	how … mistreated
in Egypt	the Egyptians … in Egypt
their cry	them cry out {to you for help}
the Sea of Reeds	the Sea of Reeds

Nehemiah 9:10

ULT	UST
And you gave signs and wonders to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all the people of his land, because you knew that they were acting presumptuously toward them. And you made for yourself a name, as it is this day.	*You knew that {the leaders of Egypt} were treating {our ancestors} very arrogantly. So you performed miracles for Pharaoh and his officials and all the people of Egypt. {These proved you are the true God.} You made yourself famous, and you are still famous!*

ULT **And you gave signs and wonders to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all the people of his land**
UST you performed miracles for Pharaoh and his officials and all the people of Egypt. {These proved you are the true God … }
(וַתִּתֵּן אֹתֹת וּמֹפְתִים בְּפַרְעֹה וּבְכָל־עֲבָדָיו וּבְכָל־עַם אַרְצוֹ)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain why God did this. Alternate translation: [You did amazing things that were signs to Pharaoh, his officials, and the people of Egypt that you are the one true God and that they should not have enslaved your people]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And you gave signs and wonders**
UST you performed miracles … These proved you are the true God
(וַתִּתֵּן אֹתֹת וּמֹפְתִים)

Signs and **wonders** are words that mean similar things. They both describe powerful things that God did. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these words. Alternate translation: [you did miracles]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **because you knew that they were acting presumptuously toward them**
UST You knew that {the leaders of Egypt} were treating {our ancestors} very arrogantly. So
(כִּי יָדַעְתָּ כִּי הֵזִידוּ עֲלֵיהֶם)

They means Pharaoh, his officials, and the people of Egypt. **Them** means the Israelites. If it would be helpful in your language, you could put this sentence first in the verse since it gives the reason for the results that are described in the rest of the verse. You could show the connection by using a word like “so” after this sentence. Alternate translation: [You knew that Pharaoh, his officials, and the people of Egypt were oppressing our ancestors, and so]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **And you made for yourself a name, as it is this day**
UST You made yourself famous, and you are still famous
(וַתַּעַשׂ־לְךָ שֵׁם כְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה)

As in 9:5, **name** is a figurative way of referring to the fame or reputation of a person. Alternate translation: [When you did this, you won the reputation that you sill have today]

Support Reference: Metonymy

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
signs	miracles … These proved you are the true God
and wonders	miracles … These proved you are the true God
to Pharaoh	for Pharaoh
his servants	and his officials
his land	Egypt
you knew	You knew
they were acting presumptuously	{the leaders of Egypt} were treating … very arrogantly
as it is … day	and you are still famous

Nehemiah 9:11

ULT	UST
And you split open the sea before their face, and they passed through the midst of the sea on the dry land. And you cast their pursuers into the depths, like a stone in mighty waters.	*You divided the sea in front of {your people Israel}, and they {walked} through the middle of the sea on dry land. But you drowned {the soldiers of the Egyptian army} under the waters. They sank as a stone sinks in deep water!*

ULT **And you split open the sea before their face**
UST You divided the sea in front of {your people Israel}
(וְהַיָּם בָּקַעְתָּ לִפְנֵיהֶם)

In 9:10 the Levites provided more specific details about how God delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. In this verse they focus on the details of the final episode in the deliverance experience. Still, they assume that their readers will be familiar with these details and understand their significance. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain these details more fully. Alternate translation: [When the Israelites left Egypt, Pharaoh pursued them with his army, and they were trapped by the shores of the Red Sea. But you opened up the sea in front of them]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And … the sea**
UST the sea
(וְהַיָּם)

As in 9:9, this refers to the Red Sea, a body of water near Egypt. Alternate translation: [the Red Sea]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **before their face**
UST in front of {your people Israel}
(לִפְנֵיהֶם)

Here, **face** refers the front of a group. Alternate translation: [in front of them]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT and they passed through the midst of the sea on the dry land
UST and they {walked} through the middle of the sea on dry land
(וַיַּעַבְרוּ בְתוֹךְ־הַיָּם בַּיַּבָּשָׁה)

They refers to the Israelites. Alternate translation: [so that they were able escape through the Red Sea by walking on dry ground]

ULT And you cast their pursuers into the depths
UST But you drowned {the soldiers of the Egyptian army} under the waters. They sank … sinks
(וְאֶת־רֹדְפֵיהֶם הִשְׁלַכְתָּ בִּמְצוֹלֹת)

This is a figurative way of describing how that God made the waters of the Red Sea come back over the Egyptian army so that all of its soldiers were drowned. It was as if God had thrown them into deep water. Alternate translation: [but you made the waters come back and drown the army that was chasing them]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT their pursuers
UST the soldiers of the Egyptian army … They
(רֹדְפֵיהֶם)

Alternate translation: [the soldiers of the Egyptian army, who were chasing them]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT like a stone in mighty waters
UST as a stone … in deep water
(כְּמוֹ־אֶבֶן בְּמַיִם עַזִּים)

In this image, the Levites describe God throwing the Egyptians into the sea the way a person would throw a stone into water. The picture is that, just as a stone would disappear completely under the water, the Egyptian soldiers did the same. Alternate translation: [They disappeared completely, the way a stone would that was thrown into deep water]

Support Reference: Simile

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
a stone	a stone
mighty	deep

Nehemiah 9:12

ULT	UST
And you led them with a pillar of cloud by day, and with a pillar of fire by night to shine for them on the way in which they should go.	*During the day you led {your people} by a cloud {that looked like a huge} pillar. At night you led them by a fire {that looked like a huge} pillar. It shone on the path in front of them to show them where they should walk.*

ULT **And you led them with a pillar of cloud by day, and with a pillar of fire by night to shine for them on the way in which they should go**
UST During the day you led {your people} by a cloud {that looked like a huge} pillar. At night you led them by a fire {that looked like a huge} pillar. It shone on the path in front of them to show them where they should walk
(וּבְעַמּוּד עָנָן הִנְחִיתֵם יוֹמָם וּבְעַמּוּד אֵשׁ לַיְלָה לְהָאִיר לָהֶם אֶת־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר יֵלְכוּ־בָהּ)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases since the first phrase gives the reason for the result that is described in the second phrase. Alternate translation: [To show the people the way that they should go, you sent a pillar of cloud to go ahead of them during the day and a pillar of fire to light up the way at night]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **And you led them with a pillar of cloud by day, and with a pillar of fire by night to shine for them on the way in which they should go**
UST During the day you led {your people} by a cloud {that looked like a huge} pillar. At night you led them by a fire {that looked like a huge} pillar. It shone on the path in front of them to show them where they should walk
(וּבְעַמּוּד עָנָן הִנְחִיתֵם יוֹמָם וּבְעַמּוּד אֵשׁ לַיְלָה לְהָאִיר לָהֶם אֶת־הַדֶּרֶךְ אֲשֶׁר יֵלְכוּ־בָהּ)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain why did this. Alternate translation: [To get from Egypt to the land you had promised them, the Israelites had to cross a trackless desert. To show them what way they should go, you went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud during the day and a pillar of fire by night. The pillar of fire lit up the way ahead]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And … with a pillar of	{that looked like a huge} pillar
by day	During the day
and with a pillar of	{that looked like a huge} pillar

Nehemiah 9:13

ULT	UST
And you came down on the mountain of Sinai and spoke with them from heaven. And you gave to them just judgments and laws of truth, good statutes and commandments.	*When {our ancestors} were at Sinai Mountain, you appeared to them and spoke to them from heaven. You gave them honest instructions and trustworthy laws. You gave them good rules and commands.*

ULT **And you came down on the mountain of Sinai and spoke with them**
UST When {our ancestors} were at Sinai Mountain, you appeared to them and spoke to them
(וְעַל הַר־סִינַי יָרַדְתָּ וַתְּדַבֵּר עִמָּהֶם)

Came down is a way of saying that God appeared to the people. Since God spoke to them from heaven, he did not actually come down from heaven to earth. So this is a figurative expression. Alternate translation: [you appeared to the people of Israel at Mount Sinai, where you spoke to them from heaven]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the mountain of Sinai**
UST Sinai Mountain
(הַר־סִינַי)

This is the name of a mountain. Alternate translation: [Mount Sinai]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **just judgments and laws of truth, good statutes and commandments**
UST honest instructions and trustworthy laws … good rules and commands
(מִשְׁפָּטִים יְשָׁרִים וְתוֹרוֹת אֱמֶת חֻקִּים וּמִצְוֹת טוֹבִים)

Just judgments and **laws of truth** mean similar things. The expressions **good statutes** and **commandments** also mean something similar to each other and to the first two expressions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine all of these phrases into one comprehensive phrase. Alternate translation: [many trustworthy instructions about how to live in the right way,] otherwise “instructions and rules that are just and reliable, and laws and commands that are good”

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **judgments**
UST instructions
(מִשְׁפָּטִים)

This term refers to Yahweh giving the Israelites instructions in the law. It may or may not include a sense of Yahweh passing sentence as a judge. Alternate translation: [instructions]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Sinai	Sinai
from heaven	from heaven
judgments	instructions
just	honest
and laws of	and … laws
good	good
statutes	rules

Nehemiah 9:14

ULT	UST
And you made known to them your holy sabbath. And you charged them with commandments, and statutes, and a law, by the hand of Moses your servant.	*You taught them about your Sabbath {day of rest}. It is set apart {from the other days of the week}. You gave commands and rules and laws for the people by your servant Moses.*

ULT **And you made known to them your holy sabbath**
UST You taught them about your Sabbath {day of rest}. It is set apart {from the other days of the week}
(וְאֶת־שַׁבַּת קָדְשְׁךָ הוֹדַעְתָּ לָהֶם)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain what the Sabbath was. Alternate translation: [You commanded them to set apart the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath, a special day for rest and worship]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **sabbath**
UST Sabbath {day … }
(שַׁבַּת)

This is the name of a religious observance.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **And you charged them with commandments, and statutes, and a law**
UST You gave commands and rules and laws for the people
(וּמִצְוֹת וְחֻקִּים וְתוֹרָה צִוִּיתָ לָהֶם)

Commandments, **statutes**, and **law** mean similar things. Together they are a comprehensive description of the Law of Moses. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them in a single phrase. Alternate translation: [You told them to obey everything you had commanded,] otherwise “you gave them commands and rules and laws”

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT by the hand of Moses
UST by … Moses
(בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה)

Here, **hand** represents control and action. Alternate translation: [you gave them to Moses to give to the people]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT your servant
UST your servant
(עַבְדֶּךָ)

The Old Testament often describes Moses by the title "servant of Yahweh." While Moses was also God's servant in a more literal sense, this title is a figurative expression that indicates that God used Moses to give his law to his people, the way a master would have a servant deliver a message. Alternate translation: [your special messenger]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
you made known	You taught … about
your holy	your … of rest}. It is set apart {from the other days of the week}
sabbath	Sabbath {day … }
and statutes	and rules
and a law	and laws
Moses	Moses
your servant	your servant

Nehemiah 9:15

ULT	UST
And you gave to them bread from heaven for their hunger, and you brought out for them water from a rock for their thirst. And you said to them to go in to possess the land that you had raised your hand to give to them.	*When they were hungry, you gave them bread from heaven. When they were thirsty, you gave them water from a rock. You told them to go and take the land {of Canaan}, which you had promised with a vow to give them.*

ULT And you gave to them bread from heaven for their hunger
UST When they were hungry, you gave them bread from heaven
(וְלֶחֶם מִשָּׁמַיִם נָתַתָּה לָהֶם לִרְעָבָם)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases since the first phrase gives the reason for the resulting action that is described in the second phrase. Alternate translation: [because they were hungry, you provided a special food for them]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT And you gave to them bread from heaven for their hunger
UST When they were hungry, you gave them bread from heaven
(וְלֶחֶם מִשָּׁמַיִם נָתַתָּה לָהֶם לִרְעָבָם)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain why the people were hungry. Alternate translation: [because they were hungry in the desert where no crops could grow, you provided a special food for them]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT And … bread from heaven
UST bread from heaven
(וְלֶחֶם מִשָּׁמַיִם)

This is a figurative way of describing the special food that God provided for the Israelites in the desert. Because it had not grown from the ground, it was as if God had sent it from heaven. The Israelites gave this food the name “manna.” If it would be helpful to your readers, you could call it by this name after providing a plain description. Alternate translation: [and a special food, manna.]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT And … bread from heaven
UST bread from heaven
(וְלֶחֶם מִשָּׁמַיִם)

This expression used bread to refer to food in general. It describes all food by the name of one kind of food, bread. Alternate translation: [special food]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT and you brought out for them water from a rock for their thirst
UST When they were thirsty, you gave them water from a rock
(וּמַיִם מִסֶּלַע הוֹצֵאתָ לָהֶם לִצְמָאָם)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases since the first phrase gives the reason for the resulting action that is described in the second phrase. Alternate translation: [because they were thirsty, you made water flow out of a rock for them to drink]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT and you brought out for them water from a rock for their thirst
UST When they were thirsty, you gave them water from a rock
(וּמַיִם מִסֶּלַע הוֹצֵאתָ לָהֶם לִצְמָאָם)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain why the people were thirsty. Alternate translation: [because they were thirsty in the desert where there was no water, you made water flow out of a rock for them to drink]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT And you said to them to go in to possess
UST You told them to go and take
(וַתֹּאמֶר לָהֶם לָבוֹא לָרֶשֶׁת)

Alternate translation: [you commanded them to enter and occupy]

ULT **the land that you had raised your hand to give to them**
UST the land {of Canaan}, which you had promised with a vow to give them
(אֶת־הָאָ֔רֶץ אֲשֶׁר־נָשָׂאתָ אֶת־יָדְךָ֖ לָתֵ֣ת לָהֶֽם)

In this culture, a person would raise their hand when they swore an oath. Here the Levites are describing the action of swearing an oath by referring to the gesture associated with that action, raising a hand. Alternate translation: [the land that you swore to give them]

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT **the land that you had raised your hand to give to them**
UST the land {of Canaan}, which you had promised with a vow to give them
(אֶת־הָאָ֔רֶץ אֲשֶׁר־נָשָׂאתָ אֶת־יָדְךָ֖ לָתֵ֣ת לָהֶֽם)

The Levites assume that their listeners will understand that this means the land of Canaan. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [the land of Canaan, which you swore to give them]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And … bread	bread
from heaven	from heaven
to possess	and take
the land	the land {of Canaan}

Nehemiah 9:16

ULT	UST
But they and our fathers, they acted presumptuously. And they stiffened their neck and did not listen to your commandments.	*But our ancestors were proud and stubborn. They refused to obey what you commanded them {to do}.*

ULT But they and our fathers, they acted presumptuously
UST But our ancestors were proud … They
(וְהֵם וַאֲבֹתֵינוּ הֵזִידוּ)

They could mean the Israelites at the time of Moses, and **our fathers** could mean the Israelites after the time of Moses. However, the next verse says that the people who showed this pride and stubbornness disobeyed God's command to enter Canaan and instead chose a leader to take them back to Egypt. So this expression could also mean "they, yes, our fathers." Alternate translation: [they, our own ancestors, were arrogant]

ULT and our fathers
UST our ancestors
(וַאֲבֹתֵינוּ)

Fathers here means **ancestors**. Alternate translation: [our ancestors]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT And they stiffened their neck and did not listen
UST and stubborn … refused to obey
(וַיַּקְשׁוּ אֶת־עָרְפָּם וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ)

These two phrases mean similar things. The Levites are using the repetition to acknowledge how serious it was that their own ancestors disobeyed God's command. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [they stubbornly refused to obey,] otherwise "they were proud and stubborn, so they refused to obey"

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT And they stiffened their neck
UST and stubborn
(וַיַּקְשׁוּ אֶת־עָרְפָּם)

This is a figurative way of saying that the people stubbornly refused to obey.

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and did not listen to your commandments**
UST refused to obey what you commanded them {to do}
(וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ אֶל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ)

Listen in this context is an idiom that means not just to hear a commandment, but to obey it. Alternate translation: [They refused to obey what you commanded them to do.]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
they acted presumptuously	were proud

Nehemiah 9:17

ULT	UST
And they refused to hear, and they did not remember your wonderful deeds that you performed with them. And they stiffened their neck and in their rebellion chose a head in order to return to their servitude. But you are a God of forgiveness, gracious and compassionate, long of nostrils and abounding in covenant faithfulness, and you did not forsake them.	*They refused to obey you. They did not consider all the miracles that you had performed for them. They became stubborn and rebelled against you. They appointed a leader to take {them} back {to Egypt}, where they would be slaves {again}! But you are a God who forgives us. You act kindly and mercifully {toward us}. You do not become angry quickly. Instead, you faithfully love {us} very much. So you did not leave {our ancestors} alone {in the desert}.*

ULT **And they refused to hear**
UST They refused to obey you
(וַיְמָאֲנוּ לִשְׁמֹעַ)

Alternate translation: [And they would not obey]

ULT **And they refused to hear**
UST They refused to obey you
(וַיְמָאֲנוּ לִשְׁמֹעַ)

This is a reference to the command that is described in 9:15. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [they would not obey your command to enter and occupy the land of Canaan]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and they did not remember your wonderful deeds that you performed with them**
UST They did not consider all the miracles that you had performed for them
(וְלֹא־זָכְרוּ נִפְלְאֹתֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ עִמָּהֶם)

The implication is that if they had done this, they would not have been afraid to go into Canaan and fight to take possession of it. They would have realized that the same God who defeated Pharaoh to deliver them from slavery could also defeat the nations living in Canaan. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [They did not remember the miracles that you had done to deliver them from Egypt, and so they were afraid that the nations that lived in Canaan would defeat them.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And they stiffened their neck**
UST They became stubborn
(וַיַּקְשׁוּ אֶת־עָרְפָּם)

As in 9:16, this is a metaphor meaning that the people stubbornly refused to obey.

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and in their rebellion chose a head in order to return to their servitude**
UST and rebelled against you. They appointed a leader to take {them} back {to Egypt}, where they would be slaves {again}
(וַיִּתְּנוּ־רֹאשׁ לָשׁוּב לְעַבְדָתָם בְּמִרְיָם)

The Israelites would know that this referred to their ancestors wanting to return to Egypt. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [they disobeyed God and appointed a leader to take them back to Egypt, where they had been slaves]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **a head**
UST a leader
(רֹאשׁ)

Head here is a figurative way of saying "leader." Alternate translation: [leader]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **in order to return to their servitude**
UST to take {them} back {to Egypt}, where they would be slaves {again}
(לָשׁוּב לְעַבְדָתָם)

Servitude is an abstract noun that refers to the condition of slavery that the Israelites experienced in Egypt. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a concrete noun such as "slave." Alternate translation: [back to Egypt where they had been slaves]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **are a God of forgiveness**
UST are a God who forgives us
(אֱלֹוהַּ סְלִיחֹות)

Forgiveness is an abstract noun that represents a readiness not to hold a person's offenses against them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a verb such as "forgive." Alternate translation: [a God who is always ready to forgive]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **gracious and compassionate**
UST You act kindly and mercifully {toward us}
(חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם)

Gracious and **compassionate** mean similar things. The Levites use them together to emphasize how merciful God is. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these words into a single expression. Alternate translation: [genuinely merciful,] otherwise "who acts kindly and mercifully toward us"

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **long of nostrils**
UST do not become angry quickly
(אֶרֶךְ־אַפַּיִם)

This is a figurative way of saying that a person does not lose their temper easily or quickly. Alternate translation: [very patient]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and abounding in covenant faithfulness**
UST Instead, you faithfully love {us} very much
(וְרַב־חֶסֶד)

Faithfulness is an abstract noun that describes the quality of a person who will dependably keep their word and fulfill their responsibilities. **Covenant faithfulness** refers specifically to God keeping all the promises he made to the people of Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with an expression such as "keep promises." Alternate translation: [you always keep the promises you make to your people]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT and abounding in covenant faithfulness
UST Instead, you faithfully love {us} very much
(וְרַב־חֶסֶד)

Here the Levites speak of this quality of Yahweh as if it were an abundant food crop that he could share with people. Alternate translation: [who loves his people very much]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT and you did not forsake them
UST So you did not leave {our ancestors} alone {in the desert}
(וְלֹא עֲזַבְתָּם)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could elaborate on what this means. Alternate translation: [so you did not abandon them there in the desert]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
your wonderful deeds	all the miracles
in their rebellion	and rebelled against you
are a God of	are a God
forgiveness	who forgives us
gracious	You act kindly
and compassionate	and mercifully {toward us}
covenant faithfulness	you faithfully love {us}
you did … forsake them	you did … leave {our ancestors} alone {in the desert}

Nehemiah 9:18

ULT	UST
Even when they made for themselves a calf image and said, 'This is your God who brought you up from Egypt,' and they performed great blasphemies,	*Indeed {you did not leave them alone}, even though they made an idol for themselves {that resembled} a calf. They said {about the idol}, 'This is our god, who brought us up out of Egypt.' By doing that they insulted you greatly.*

ULT **Even when they made for themselves a calf image and said, 'This is your God who brought you up from Egypt**
UST Indeed {you did not leave them alone}, even though they made an idol for themselves {that resembled} a calf. They said {about the idol}, 'This is our god, who brought us up out of Egypt
(אַף כִּי־עָשׂוּ לָהֶם֙ עֵ֣גֶל מַסֵּכָ֔ה וַיֹּאמְר֕וּ זֶ֥ה אֱלֹהֶ֖יךָ אֲשֶׁ֣ר הֶעֱלָ֑ךְ מִמִּצְרַ֔יִם)

The Levites continue to recount details of Israelite history and assume that their listeners will understand the significance of these details. This was a particularly grievous act of disobedience, which is why the Levites say "even when." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance in your translation. Alternate translation: [Even when the Israelites made an idol in the shape of a calf and gave it credit for delivering them from slavery in Egypt, right at Mount Sinai where you were giving Moses the Ten Commandments]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and they performed great blasphemies**
UST By doing that they insulted you greatly
(וַיַּעֲשׂוּ נָאָצוֹת גְּדֹלוֹת)

Blasphemy means to worship or honor something other than God as divine. The Old Testament stresses repeatedly that this is offensive and insulting to God. Alternate translation: [When they did this, they insulted you horribly]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
a calf	{that resembled} a calf
image	an idol
your God	is our god
from Egypt	out of Egypt

ULT	UST
blasphemies	they insulted you

Nehemiah 9:19

ULT	UST
still you, in your great mercies, did not forsake them in the wilderness. He did not take away the pillar of cloud from over them by day to lead them on the way, nor the pillar of fire by night to shine for them and on the way in which they should go.	*But because you always act mercifully, you did not leave them alone in the desert. During the daytime, the cloud {that looked like a huge} pillar above them continued to lead them in the way {you wanted them to go}. And during the night, the fire {that looked like a huge} pillar shone on the path in front of them to show them where to walk.*

ULT **still you, in your great mercies, did not forsake them in the wilderness**
UST But because you always act mercifully, you did not leave them alone in the desert
(וְאַתָּה בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ הָרַבִּים לֹא עֲזַבְתָּם בַּמִּדְבָּר)

Alternate translation: [Even so, because you are always merciful, you did not abandon them in the desert]

ULT **He did not take away the pillar of cloud from over them by day to lead them on the way, nor the pillar of fire by night to shine for them and on the way in which they should go**
UST During the daytime, the cloud {that looked like a huge} pillar above them continued to lead them in the way {you wanted them to go}. And during the night, the fire {that looked like a huge} pillar shone on the path in front of them to show them where to walk
(אֶת־עַמּוּד֨ הֶעָנָ֜ן לֹא־סָ֣ר מֵעֲלֵיהֶ֗ם בְּיוֹמָם֙ לְהַנְחֹתָ֣ם בַּדָּ֔רֶךְ וְאֶת־עַמּ֥וּד הָאֵ֛שׁ בַּלַּ֥יְלָה לְהָאִ֥יר לָהֶ֖ם וְאֶת־הַדֶּ֑רֶךְ אֲשֶׁ֖ר יֵלְכ֥וּ־בָֽהּ)

See how you translated the similar sentence in 10:12. If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases since the first phrase gives the reason for the result that is described in the second phrase. Alternate translation: [To show the people the way that they should go, the pillar of cloud continued to go ahead of them during the day, and the pillar of fire continued to light up the way ahead at night]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in your … mercies	because … act mercifully
did … forsake them	you did … leave them alone
in the wilderness	in the desert
the pillar of	{that looked like a huge} pillar
by day	During the daytime

ULT	UST
the pillar of	{that looked like a huge} pillar

Nehemiah 9:20

ULT	UST
And you gave your good spirit to give them insight. And you did not withhold your manna from their mouth, and you gave them water for their thirst.	*You gave them your good Spirit to instruct them. You continued to give them manna when they were hungry, and you gave them water when they were thirsty.*

ULT And … your good spirit
UST your good Spirit
(וְרוּחֲךָ֤ הַטּוֹבָה֙)

This seems to be a reference to God in person. If your language uses capitalization or some other convention to indicate that a word is referring to God, you could use it here. Alternate translation: [your good Spirit]

ULT And you did not withhold your manna from their mouth, and you gave them water for their thirst
UST them … You continued to give them manna when they were hungry, and you gave them water when they were thirsty
(וּמָנְךָ֖ לֹא־מָנַ֣עְתָּ מִפִּיהֶ֑ם וּמַ֥יִם נָתַ֖תָּה לָהֶ֥ם לְצִמְאָֽם)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of the phrases in each clause since in both cases the first phrase gives the reason for the result that is described in the second phrase. Alternate translation: [Because they were hungry, you continued to feed them with manna, and because they were thirsty, you gave them water]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT And … your manna
UST manna
(וּמָנְךָ֖)

This was the special food that Yahweh provided for the Israelites in the desert. See the note in 9:15. Alternate translation: [special food] or [that special food, manna]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT you did not withhold … from their mouth
UST You continued to give … when they were hungry
(לֹא־מָנַעְתָּ מִפִּיהֶם)

Here the Levites describe being nourished by food by referring to something associated with it, the mouth that eats the food. If it would be helpful in your language, you could describe this more generally. Alternate translation: [you continued to feed them]

ULT you did not withhold … from their mouth
UST You continued to give … when they were hungry
(לֹא־מָנַעְתָּ מִפִּיהֶם)

This is a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. Alternate translation: [you generously gave them manna]

Support Reference: Litotes

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
good	good
And … your … spirit	your … Spirit
And … your manna	manna

Nehemiah 9:21

ULT	UST
And you sustained them forty years in the wilderness; they did not lack. Their clothes did not wear out, and their feet did not swell.	*For forty years you took care of them in the desert. During all that time, they had everything they needed. Their clothes did not wear out. Their feet did not swell up, {even though they were continually walking}.*

ULT **And you sustained them forty years in the wilderness; they did not lack**
UST For forty years you took care of them in the desert. During all that time, they had everything they needed
(וְאַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה כִּלְכַּלְתָּם בַּמִּדְבָּר לֹא חָסֵרוּ)

The first phrase is implicitly giving a reason for the result that is described in the second phrase. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make that explicit. “Because you took care of them for forty years in the desert, they did not lack anything all that time.”

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **and their feet did not swell**
UST Their feet did not swell up, {even though they were continually walking}
(וְרַגְלֵיהֶם לֹא בָצֵקוּ)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain why the feet of the Israelites would otherwise have swollen as they traveled through the desert. Alternate translation: [their feet did not swell up, even though they were walking all the time]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
years	For forty years … During all that time
in the wilderness	in the desert

Nehemiah 9:22

ULT	UST
And you gave to them kingdoms and peoples, and you allocated to them as far as the corners. And they took possession of the land of Sihon, even the land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of Og, the king of Bashan.	*You helped {our ancestors} to defeat {the armies of great} kings {who ruled} many people. {By doing that,} you allowed {our ancestors} to settle in every part {of this land}. They took over the land that King Sihon ruled from {the city of} Heshbon and the land that King Og ruled in the Bashan {area}.*

ULT **And you gave to them kingdoms and peoples**
UST You helped {our ancestors} to defeat {the armies of great} kings {who ruled} many people
(וַתִּתֵּ֣ן לָהֶ֔ם מַמְלָכוֹת֙ וַעֲמָמִ֔ים)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say explicitly how Yahweh did this. Alternate translation: [You helped our ancestors to defeat stronger armies so that they could conquer kingdoms and the people who lived in them]

ULT **And you gave to them kingdoms and peoples**
UST You helped {our ancestors} to defeat {the armies of great} kings {who ruled} many people
(וַתִּתֵּ֣ן לָהֶ֔ם מַמְלָכוֹת֙ וַעֲמָמִ֔ים)

Kingdoms and **peoples** mean similar things. They are two different ways of describing the groups that the Israelites defeated. The repetition emphasizes how remarkable it was for Yahweh to enable the Israelites to defeat these stronger opponents. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these words into a single expression. Alternate translation: [you enabled them to defeat the nations that were living there]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **and you allocated to them as far as the corners**
UST By doing that,} you allowed {our ancestors} to settle in every part {of this land}
(וַתַּחְלְקֵ֥ם לְפֵאָ֖ה)

Here the land of Canaan is described as if it were a regular shape that had defined corners. Alternate translation: [you enabled them to possess every part of the land]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the land of Sihon, even the land of the king of Heshbon**
UST the land that King Sihon ruled from {the city of} Heshbon
(אֶת־אֶ֣רֶץ סִיחֹ֔ון וְאֶת־אֶ֖רֶץ מֶ֣לֶךְ חֶשְׁבֹּ֑ון)

These two phrases mean the same thing. The repetition is used for clarity. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [the land over which King Sihon ruled from the city of Heshbon]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **and the land of Og, the king of Bashan**
UST and the land that King Og ruled in the Bashan {area}
(וְאֶת־אֶ֖רֶץ עֹ֣וג מֶ֣לֶךְ־הַבָּשָׁ֑ן)

Alternate translation: [Bashan, the land where King Og ruled]

ULT **Sihon … Og**
UST the land that King Sihon ruled from {the city of} Heshbon … Og
(סִיחֹון & עֹוג)

These are the names of two kings.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Heshbon … Bashan**
UST the land that King Sihon ruled from {the city of} Heshbon … in the Bashan {area}
(חֶשְׁבֹּון & הַבָּשָׁן)

These are names of the places where these two kings ruled.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
kingdoms	to defeat {the armies of great} kings
And they took possession of	They took over
the land of	the land that King Sihon ruled from {the city of} Heshbon
Sihon	the land that King Sihon ruled from {the city of} Heshbon
the land of	the land that King Sihon ruled from {the city of} Heshbon
the king of	the land that King Sihon ruled from {the city of} Heshbon
Heshbon	

ULT	UST
	the land that King Sihon ruled from {the city of} Heshbon
the land of	and the land that … ruled
Og	Og
the king of	King
Bashan	in the Bashan {area}

Nehemiah 9:23

ULT	UST
And you multiplied their sons like the stars of the heavens. And you brought them to the land that you said to their fathers to enter in order to possess it.	*You gave so many children to {our ancestors} that they were like the stars {in the sky}. You brought them into this land, which you had told their parents to enter and take for themselves {so that they could live there}.*

ULT **And you multiplied their sons like the stars of the heavens**
UST You gave so many children to {our ancestors} that they were like the stars {in the sky}
(וּבְנֵיהֶם הִרְבִּיתָ כְּכוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמָיִם)

Their refers to the Israelites. This is a comparison, a figure of speech that says the number of children the Israelites had was like the number of stars in the sky. Alternate translation: [You enabled them to have as many children as there are stars in the sky]

Support Reference: Simile

ULT **And you multiplied their sons like the stars of the heavens**
UST You gave so many children to {our ancestors} that they were like the stars {in the sky}
(וּבְנֵיהֶם הִרְבִּיתָ כְּכוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמָיִם)

This is an exaggeration for emphasis. Alternate translation: [You enabled them to have a very large number of children]

Support Reference: Hyperbole

ULT **And … their sons**
UST children to {our ancestors} … they
(וּבְנֵיהֶם)

Sons here means “descendants.” In this context it includes both boys and girls. Alternate translation: [and children]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **And you brought them to the land that you said to their fathers to enter in order to possess it**
UST You brought them into this land, which you had told their parents to enter and take for themselves {so that they could live there}
(וַתְּבִיאֵם אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־אָמַרְתָּ לַאֲבֹתֵיהֶם לָבוֹא לָרֶשֶׁת)

This is the same **land** described in verse 15, the land of Canaan. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [You brought them back to the land of Canaan, the land that you had commanded the previous generation to enter and occupy]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **to their fathers**
UST their parents
(לַאֲבֹתֵיהֶם)

While **fathers** means "ancestors" throughout much of this prayer, in this case the word is intended more literally. It means the previous generation of Israelites, who had disobeyed when God told them the first time to occupy the land. But since both men and women were involved in the disobedience, you could use a term that would not limit the meaning to men, if it would be helpful in your language. Alternate translation: [to the previous generation]

Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
you multiplied	You gave so many
the heavens	the sky
the land	this land
in order to possess it	and take for themselves {so that they could live there}

Nehemiah 9:24

ULT	UST
And the sons went in and possessed the land, and before their face you subdued the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites. And you gave them into their hands, and their kings, and the peoples of the land, to do with them according to their will.	*Their children went in and took the land. You enabled them to defeat the people who were living there. They were {the descendants of} Canaan. You enabled them to conquer their kings and all the people who {lived} there. They were able to do whatever they wanted to those people.*

ULT **And the sons went in and possessed the land, and before their face you subdued the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites**

UST Their children went in and took the land. You enabled them to defeat the people who were living there. They were {the descendants of} Canaan

(וַיָּבֹאוּ הַבָּנִים וַיִּירְשׁוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וַתַּכְנַע לִפְנֵיהֶם אֶת־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִים)

These two phrases mean similar things. The Israelites of the next generation possessing the land is equivalent to Yahweh defeating its inhabitants when the Israelites fought against them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [You enabled the next generation of Israelites to defeat the people who were living in the land of Canaan so that they could occupy the land themselves]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **the sons**

UST Their children

(הַבָּנִים)

This means literally the children of the generation that refused to enter the land. But since both men and women were involved in occupying the land, you could use a term that would not limit the meaning to men, if it would be helpful in your language. Alternate translation: [the next generation of Israelites]

Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT and before their face you subdued the inhabitants of the land
UST You enabled them to defeat the people who were living there
(וַתַּכְנַע לִפְנֵיהֶם אֶת־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ)

Here, **face** means the front of a group, in this case the Israelite army that was fighting against the Canaanites. Alternate translation: [when the Israelites opposed them in battle, you defeated the people who were living in the land]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites
UST the people who were living there. They were {the descendants of} Canaan
(אֶת־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִים)

These two phrases mean similar things. The repetition is used for clarity. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them. Alternate translation: [the Canaanites who lived there,] otherwise “the people who lived here in this land, the descendants of Canaan”

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT And you gave them into their hands, and their kings, and the peoples of the land, to do with them according to their will
UST You enabled them to conquer their kings and all the people who {lived} there. They were able to do whatever they wanted to those people
(וַתִּתְּנֵם בְּיָדָם וְאֶת־מַלְכֵיהֶם וְאֶת־עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ לַעֲשׂוֹת בָּהֶם כִּרְצוֹנָם)

The Levites continue to recount details of Israelite history and assume that their listeners will understand the significance of these details. This sentence means, “You gave the Canaanites into the hands of the Israelites, that is, you gave their kings and the Canaanite people into the hands of the Israelites.” The implication is that once the Israelites had defeated the armies that the kings were leading, they could then do anything they wanted with the people who were living in the land. In other words, Yahweh gave the kings “into their hands” by defeating them, and as a result, the people were “in their hands” to do with whatever they wanted. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [You enabled them to defeat the armies that the Canaanite kings were leading, and then they could do whatever they wanted with the people of Canaan]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And you gave them into their hands**
UST You enabled them to conquer
(וַתִּתְּנֵם בְּיָדָם)

Here, **hand** represents power and control. To give something into a person's hand is to give that person control over that thing. Alternate translation: [enabled the Israelites to defeat them]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and possessed	and took
the land	the land
the land	there
the Canaanites	They were {the descendants of} Canaan
their kings	their kings
the land	who {lived} there

Nehemiah 9:25

ULT	UST
And they captured fortified cities and fat ground. And they possessed houses full of all good things, hewn cisterns, vineyards, and olive orchards, and food trees in abundance. And they ate and were satisfied and grew fat and reveled in your great goodness.	*{Our ancestors} captured cities that had walls around them. They took possession of fertile fields. They took possession of houses that were already full of all kinds of good things, and wells that someone had already dug. They took possession of many vineyards and groves of olive trees and fruit trees. They ate all that they wanted and became fat. They enjoyed {all} the many good things you did {for them}.*

ULT **And they captured fortified cities and fat ground**
UST {Our ancestors} captured cities that had walls around them. They took possession of fertile fields
(וַיִּלְכְּדוּ עָרִים בְּצֻרוֹת וַאֲדָמָה שְׁמַנָּה)

They means the Israelites who were entering Canaan.

ULT **and fat ground**
UST fertile fields
(וַאֲדָמָה שְׁמַנָּה)

This means land that can produce abundantly and make its inhabitants fat (as described later in this verse). The rich character of the soil is being described by something associated with it, the well-fed character of the people it sustains. Alternate translation: [fertile land]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **And they possessed**
UST They took possession of … They took possession of
(וַיִּירָשׁוּ)

This means that, from people who had already built or planted them, they took possession of the things on the list that follows. Alternate translation: [they took possession of]

> **ULT hewn cisterns**
> **UST** and wells that someone had already dug
> (בֹּרוֹת חֲצוּבִים)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. (This verse is not saying that the Israelites did three things, captured cities, possessed houses, and dug cisterns.) Alternate translation: [cisterns that someone else had already dug]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

> **ULT cisterns**
> **UST** and wells
> (בֹּרוֹת)

Cisterns are underground reservoirs where people store water. In this area they were typically hewn out of the underlying rock. Alternate translation: [water storage areas]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

> **ULT and food trees**
> **UST** and fruit trees
> (וְעֵץ מַאֲכָל)

This means trees that grow things that are good to eat. In this area, these would have included both fruit and nut trees. Alternate translation: [and fruit and nut trees]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

> **ULT and were satisfied**
> **UST** all that they wanted
> (וַיִּשְׂבְּעוּ)

It is clear from the context that this was likely true literally, but this statement could also be a figurative way of saying that just as a person who has more than enough to eat stops being concerned, so the Israelites became complacent and stopped thinking about Yahweh. Alternate translation: [and they became complacent]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And they captured	{Our ancestors} captured … They took possession of
And they possessed	

ULT	UST
	They took possession of … They took possession of
houses	houses
good things	good things
cisterns	and wells
vineyards	vineyards
and olive orchards	and … olive trees
in your … goodness	{all} the … good things you did {for them}

Nehemiah 9:26

ULT	UST
And they disobeyed and rebelled against you, and they cast your law behind their back. And they killed your prophets, who testified against them in order to bring them back to you. And they performed great blasphemies.	*But they turned against you. They rejected your law. They killed the prophets who warned them that they should return to {obeying} you. They {said and} did very evil things {against you}.*

ULT **And they disobeyed and rebelled against you**
UST But they turned against you
(וַיַּמְרוּ וַיִּמְרְדוּ בָּךְ)

Disobeyed and **rebelled** mean similar things. The Levites use them together to emphasize how serious an offense it was for the Israelites to turn against Yahweh after he had blessed them so greatly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these words. Alternate translation: [they turned against you]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **and they cast your law behind their back**
UST They rejected your law
(וַיַּשְׁלִכוּ אֶת־תּוֹרָתְךָ אַחֲרֵי גַּוָּם)

The Levites are saying that the Israelites treated the law as if it were a worthless item that a person would toss away. Alternate translation: [They considered your law worthless and paid no attention to it]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **testified against them**
UST warned them
(הֵעִידוּ בָם)

Alternate translation: [warned them about all the wrong things they were doing]

ULT And they performed great blasphemies
UST They {said and} did very evil things {against you}
(וַיַּעֲשׂוּ נָאָצוֹת גְּדוֹלֹת)

As in 9:18, **blasphemy** means to worship as divine or give honor to something other than God. This is likely a reference to the way the Israelites started worshiping other gods. (That is why the prophets needed to try to "bring them back" to Yahweh.) Alternate translation: [they worshiped other gods]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and rebelled	But they turned
your law	They rejected your law
they killed	They killed
your prophets	the prophets
testified	warned
blasphemies	evil things {against you}

Nehemiah 9:27

ULT	UST
And you gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they harassed them. And in the time of their distress they cried out to you, and you yourself heard from heaven. And, according to your many mercies, you gave to them saviors, and they saved them from the hand of their adversaries.	*So you allowed their enemies to defeat them. But when their enemies caused them to suffer, they called out to you. You heard them from heaven, and because you are very merciful, you sent them people to help them. Those {leaders} rescued them from their enemies.*

ULT And you gave them into the hand of their adversaries
UST So you allowed their enemies to defeat them
(וַתִּתְּנֵם֙ בְּיַ֣ד צָרֵיהֶ֔ם)

Here, **hand** represents power and control. Alternate translation: [you allowed their enemies to defeat them]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT and they harassed them
UST caused them to suffer
(וַיְצָרֻ֖ לָהֶ֑ם)

They means the enemies, and **them** means the Israelites. Alternate translation: [The enemies of the Israelites made them suffer]

ULT And, according to your many mercies
UST and because you are very merciful
(וּכְרַחֲמֶ֙יךָ֙ הָרַבִּ֔ים)

Alternate translation: [because of your great mercy] or [because you are very merciful]

ULT you gave to them saviors
UST them … you sent them people to help them. Those {leaders}
(תִּתֵּ֥ן לָהֶ֖ם מוֹשִׁיעִ֑ים)

This is a reference to the time in Israelite history when God sent the judges to lead the Israelite tribes in fighting back against their enemies. Alternate translation: [you sent the judges to rescue them]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT and they saved them from the hand of their adversaries
UST rescued them from their enemies
(וַיּוֹשִׁיעֻם מִיַּד צָרֵיהֶם)

Here, **hand** represents power and control. Alternate translation: [they rescued them from their enemies]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
their adversaries	their enemies
their distress	their enemies
they cried out	they called out
from heaven	from heaven
And, according to your … mercies	and because you are … merciful
saviors	people to help them. Those {leaders}
and they saved them	rescued them
their adversaries	their enemies

Nehemiah 9:28

ULT	UST
And after rest belonged to them, they returned to doing evil before your face. And you left them to the hand of their enemies, and they oppressed them. And they returned and cried out to you, and you yourself heard from heaven and delivered them many times according to your mercies.	*But when there was {a time of} peace {again}, {our ancestors} again did evil things that you {hated}. So you allowed their enemies to conquer {them} and rule over them. But {whenever} they returned to you and cried out to you again {to help them}, you heard them from heaven. You rescued them many times, because you {always} act mercifully.*

ULT **And after rest belonged to them, they returned to doing evil before your face**
UST But when there was {a time of} peace {again}, {our ancestors} again did evil things that you {hated}
(וּכְנֻוֹחַ לָהֶם יָשֻׁובוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת־רַע לְפָנֶיךָ)

This sentence draws a contrast between how the Israelites should have responded when God delivered them and how they actually responded. You could begin the sentence with a word like “but” or “however” or “nevertheless” to indicate this contrast.

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **And after rest belonged to them**
UST But when there was {a time of} peace {again}, {our ancestors}
(וּכְנֻוֹחַ לָהֶם)

Rest is an abstract noun that indicates that the Israelites had relief from suffering and that there was no more war in the land after they defeated their enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the same idea with a different phrase. Alternate translation: [after they had defeated their enemies]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **they returned to doing evil before your face**
UST again did evil things that you {hated}
(יָשֻׁובוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת־רַע לְפָנֶיךָ)

Here, **face** seems to refer to a person’s opinion or judgment, by association with the way they use the eyes in their face to see things and the way their facial expression shows what they think of those things. So this would mean that the Israelites did things that Yahweh considered to be wrong. Alternate translation: [they went back to doing things that you consider wrong]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **And you left them to the hand of their enemies, and they oppressed them**
UST So you allowed their enemies to conquer {them} and rule over them
(וַתִּתְּעַזְּבֵם בְּיַד אֹיְבֵיהֶם וַיִּרְדּוּ בָם)

Here, **hand** represents power and control. Alternate translation: [you allowed their enemies to defeat them, and they ruled over them harshly]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **And you left them**
UST So you allowed
(וַתִּתְּעַזְּבֵם)

This phrase indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the results of what the previous sentence described. Alternate translation: [and so you left them]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **And they returned and cried out to you**
UST But {whenever} they returned to you and cried out to you again {to help them}
(וַיָּשׁוּבוּ וַיִּזְעֲקוּ)

They means the Israelites. **Returned** and **cried out** mean similar things. Both terms describe how the Israelites realized that they should have remained loyal to Yahweh and that they desperately needed his help. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use one expression for both terms. Alternate translation: [The Israelites asked you again to help them]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **according to your mercies**
UST because you {always} act mercifully
(כְּרַחֲמֶיךָ)

Alternate translation: [because of your mercy] or [because you are merciful]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
evil	evil things
their enemies	their enemies
and cried out to you	and cried out to you … to help them
from heaven	from heaven
and delivered them	You rescued them

ULT	UST
according to your mercies	because you {always} act mercifully

Nehemiah 9:29

ULT	UST
And you testified against them to bring them back to your law. But as for them, they acted presumptuously and did not listen to your commandments. And, concerning your judgments, they sinned against them, which, if a person does, then he will live by them. And they gave a stubborn shoulder, and stiffened their neck, and did not hear.	*You warned them that they should return to {obeying} your laws {again}. But they became proud {and stubborn}. They would not listen to your commands. They sinned by disobeying your decrees, even though a person lives by obeying them. They purposely ignored what you commanded them to do. They became stubborn and refused to obey.*

ULT **And you testified against them**
UST You warned them
(וַתָּעֵד בָּהֶם)

Yahweh did not personally tell the Israelites all the wrong things they were doing. Rather, as 9:26 explains by using the same expression, Yahweh sent prophets to do this. The Levites are describing the prophets by association with Yahweh, whose message they were bringing. Alternate translation: [you sent prophets to warn the Israelites about all the wrong things they were doing]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **to bring them back to your law**
UST that they should return to {obeying} your laws {again}
(לַהֲשִׁיבֵם אֶל־תּוֹרָתֶךָ)

The prophets were actually trying to make the people loyal to Yahweh himself once again by calling them to obey Yahweh's law. The Levites are describing Yahweh by reference to something associated with him, his law. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [to make them loyal to you once again]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **and did not listen to your commandments**
UST They would not listen to your commands
(וְלֹא־שָׁמְעוּ לְמִצְוֹתֶיךָ)

As in 9:16, **listen** in this context is an idiom that means not just to hear a command, but to obey it. If your language has a word for "listen" that also means "obey," you could use it here. Alternate translation: [did not heed your commands]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **And, concerning your judgments, they sinned against them**
UST They sinned by disobeying your decrees
(וּבְמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ חָטְאוּ־בָם)

The people were actually sinning against Yahweh himself. The Levites are describing Yahweh by reference to something associated with him, his "judgments," meaning the instructions in his law. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [they sinned against you by disobeying your instructions]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **And, concerning your judgments**
UST your decrees
(וּבְמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ)

As in 9:13, this term refers to Yahweh giving the Israelites instructions in the law. It may or may not include a sense of Yahweh passing sentence as a judge. Alternate translation: [And concerning your instructions]

ULT **which, if a person does, then he will live by them**
UST even though a person lives by obeying them
(אֲשֶׁר־יַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם וְחָיָה בָהֶם)

Live here does not mean physically live or die. Rather, "live" means to be spiritually alive in relationship with God and to be happy and blessed as a result. The difference between being alive in this way and being separated from God is like the difference between being alive and being dead. Alternate translation: [If a person follows your law, then he is spiritually alive and happy and blessed]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **And they gave a stubborn shoulder, and stiffened their neck**
UST They purposely ignored what you commanded them to do. They became stubborn
(וַיִּתְּנוּ כָתֵף סוֹרֶרֶת וְעָרְפָּם הִקְשׁוּ)

These are images of an ox refusing to allow its owner to put a yoke on its shoulders. Here they are a metaphor that represents the people being stubborn. Alternate translation: [They became stubborn]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and did not hear**
UST and refused to obey
(וְלֹא שָׁמֵעוּ)

Like **listen** earlier in this verse, “hear” in this context is an idiom that means not just to hear a command, but to obey it. If your language has a word for “hear” that also means “obey,” you could use it here. Alternate translation: [did not heed]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And you testified	You warned
your law	your laws
they acted presumptuously	became proud {and stubborn}
And, concerning your judgments	your decrees
they sinned	They sinned … disobeying

Nehemiah 9:30

ULT	UST
And you continued with them many years, and you testified against them with your spirit by the hand of your prophets, but they did not give an ear. And you gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands.	*You were patient with them for a long time. You warned them by {the messages} your Spirit gave to your prophets. But they did not listen {to those messages}. So again you allowed {the armies} of the nations nearby to defeat them.*

ULT **And you continued with them many years**
UST You were patient with them for a long time
(וַתִּמְשֹׁךְ עֲלֵיהֶם שָׁנִים רַבּוֹת)

Alternate translation: [you put up with them for a long time]

ULT **many years**
UST for a long time
(שָׁנִים רַבּוֹת)

This is a figurative expression for “a long time.” The Levites are describing time by referring to something associated with it, the years in which time is measured. Alternate translation: [for a long time]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **and you testified against them with your spirit by the hand of your prophets**
UST You warned them by {the messages} your Spirit gave to your prophets
(וַתָּעַד בָּם בְּרוּחֲךָ בְּיַד־נְבִיאֶיךָ)

As in 9:20, **spirit** here seems to be a reference to God in person. If your language uses capitalization or some other convention to indicate that a word is referring to God, you could use it here. Alternate translation: [you spoke through the prophets by your Spirit to warn the Israelites about all the wrong things they were doing]

> ULT **by the hand of your prophets**
> UST by {the messages} … your prophets
> (בְּיַד־נְבִיאֶיךָ)

This is a figurative way of saying that God had the prophets deliver his message to the Israelites the way a servant would carry a message in his hand. Alternate translation: [through the prophets]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **but they did not give an ear**
> UST But they did not listen {to those messages}
> (וְלֹא הֶאֱזִינוּ)

The Levites are describing the act of listening here by reference to something associated with it, the ear that hears. Alternate translation: [but they refused to listen]

Support Reference: Metonymy

> ULT **but they did not give an ear**
> UST But they did not listen {to those messages}
> (וְלֹא הֶאֱזִינוּ)

Listening in this context means not just to hear but to obey. Alternate translation: [but they refused to obey]

Support Reference: Idiom

> ULT **And you gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands**
> UST So again you allowed {the armies} of the nations nearby to defeat them
> (וַתִּתְּנֵם בְּיַד עַמֵּי הָאֲרָצוֹת)

Here, **hand** represents power and control. See how you translated this expression in verse 27, where it occurs twice. Alternate translation: [you allowed the neighboring peoples to defeat them]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT And you gave them
UST So again you allowed
(וְתִתְּנֵם)

This word indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the results of what the previous sentence described. Alternate translation: [As a result, you gave them]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
years	for a long time
and you testified	You warned
with your spirit	your Spirit gave to
your prophets	your prophets
the lands	nearby

Nehemiah 9:31

ULT	UST
But, in your many mercies, you did not make a complete end of them, and you did not forsake them. For you are a gracious and merciful God.	*But because you act very mercifully, you did not destroy them completely. You never left them alone. Yes, you are a very gracious and merciful God!*

ULT But, in your … mercies
UST But because you act … mercifully
(וּבְרַחֲמֶיךָ)

This sentence draws a contrast between what God could have done to the people, based on what they deserved, and what God actually did in his mercy. You could begin the sentence with a word like “but” or “however” to indicate this contrast.

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT But, in your many mercies
UST But because you act very mercifully
(וּבְרַחֲמֶיךָ הָרַבִּים)

Alternate translation, as in 9:27: [But because you are very merciful]

ULT you did not make a complete end of them, and you did not forsake them
UST you did not destroy them completely. You never left them alone
(לֹא־עֲשִׂיתָם כָּלָה וְלֹא עֲזַבְתָּם)

These two phrases do not describe separate things. They mean something similar. They describe what the people deserved for refusing to obey Yahweh. The first phrase describes what the people would have experienced in their lives. They would have been completely destroyed. The second phrase describes what they would have experienced in their relationship with Yahweh. He would have given up on them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [You did not abandon them to complete destruction]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT and you did not forsake them
UST You never left them alone
(וְלֹא עֲזַבְתָּם)

Alternate translation: [you did not give up on them]

ULT gracious and merciful
UST very gracious and merciful
(חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם)

Gracious and **merciful** mean similar things. The Levites use them together to emphasize that God did not punish the Israelites the way they deserved. You do not need to repeat both words in your translation if that would make the meaning less clear for your readers. Alternate translation: [very merciful]

Support Reference: Doublet

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
But, in your … mercies	But because you act … mercifully
a complete end	you did … destroy them completely
you did … forsake them	You … left them alone
gracious	very gracious
and merciful	and merciful
are a … God	a … God

Nehemiah 9:32

ULT	UST
So now, our God, the great, mighty, and fearsome God, who keeps the covenant and covenant faithfulness, do not let all the hardship be little before your face, that has found us, our kings, our leaders, and our priests, and our prophets, and our fathers, and all your people from the days of the kings of Assyria until this day.	*Our God, you are great and mighty and awesome! You {always} fulfill {your} promises and {always} faithfully love {us}! So now {we are praying}: Do not ignore all our difficulties. Consider all the troubles that our kings, our leaders, our priests, our prophets, our ancestors, and all of your people have experienced. We have been experiencing these troubles since {the armies of} the kings of Assyria {conquered us} until now. We are still experiencing them today.*

ULT **So now**
UST So now {we are praying}
(וְעַתָּה)

This phrase indicates that the Levites believe that what they are about to ask for should be the results of what they have just described. Specifically, because he is merciful, God helped the Israelites in the past even though they did not deserve it. And so the Levites are praying for God to be merciful and help the Israelites now even though they do not deserve it. Alternate translation: [and that is why we are praying this now]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **the great, mighty, and fearsome God**
UST you are great and mighty and awesome
(הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא)

As in 1:5, **great** and **fearsome** mean similar things. “Mighty” also means something similar. The Levites use all of these words together to emphasize how much respect God deserves. You do not need to repeat all three words in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. However, there is a slight difference in meaning, and you could also bring that out in your translation. “Great” and “mighty” refer to how powerful God is objectively. “Fearsome” reflects how people should respond to God’s greatness subjectively. They should “fear” God. This does not mean that they should be afraid of him, but that they should show him respect and reverence. Alternate translation: [the God who deserves total respect] (A doublet can involve the use of more than two words.)

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **who keeps the covenant and covenant faithfulness**
UST You {always} fulfill {your} promises and {always} faithfully love {us}
(שֹׁמֵר הַבְּרִית וְהַחֶסֶד)

As in 1:5, **covenant** and **covenant faithfulness** mean similar things. The Levites said the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to emphasize how certain it is that God will keep his promises. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. However, there is a slight difference in meaning, and you could bring that out in your translation even if you combine the phrases. The "covenant" is God's promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their descendants. "Covenant faithfulness" is a character quality of God. He is inwardly disposed to keep all of his promises, and he always does so faithfully. So you could say something like, "you always keep your promises faithfully because of who you are."

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **do not let all the hardship be little before your face**
UST Do not ignore all our difficulties. Consider all the troubles … these troubles … them
(אַל־יִמְעַט לְפָנֶיךָ אֵת כָּל־הַתְּלָאָה)

Here the Levites speak of something being small to mean that it is insignificant and not worthy of being noticed and addressed. Alternate translation: [do not regard our sufferings as insignificant]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **do not let all the hardship be little before your face**
UST Do not ignore all our difficulties. Consider all the troubles … these troubles … them
(אַל־יִמְעַט לְפָנֶיךָ אֵת כָּל־הַתְּלָאָה)

As in 9:28, **face** refers to a person's opinion or judgment, by association with the way they use the eyes in their face to see things and the way their facial expression shows what they think of those things. So the Levites would be praying that God would not regard their suffering as insignificant. Alternate translation: [do not regard our sufferings as insignificant]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the hardship … that has found us**
UST all our difficulties … all the troubles that … have experienced. We have been experiencing these troubles … We are … experiencing them
(הַתְּלָאָה אֲשֶׁר־מְצָאַתְנוּ)

Here the Levites speak of the suffering that the Israelites have experienced as if it were a living thing that has looked for them and found them in order to cause them harm. Alternate translation: [the sufferings we have experienced]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **the hardship … that has found us**
UST all our difficulties … all the troubles that … have experienced. We have been experiencing these troubles … We are … experiencing them
(הַתְּלָאָה אֲשֶׁר־מְצָאַתְנוּ)

Hardship is an abstract noun that refers to the suffering that the Israelites have experienced as a result of being conquered and dominated by foreign nations. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a verb such as “suffer.” Alternate translation: [how much we have suffered]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **and our fathers**
UST our ancestors
(וְלַאֲבֹתֵינוּ)

Fathers here means **ancestors**. Alternate translation: [our ancestors]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **from the days of the kings of Assyria until this day**
UST since {the armies of} the kings of Assyria {conquered us} until now … still … today
(מִימֵי מַלְכֵי אַשּׁוּר עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה)

The implication is that the Levites are talking about the suffering that the Israelites have experienced specifically because foreign nations have conquered them, beginning with the Assyrians who first conquered the northern part of Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [from the time Israel was first conquered by the Assyrian kings until now]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **from the days of the kings of Assyria until this day**
UST since {the armies of} the kings of Assyria {conquered us} until now … still … today
(מִימֵי מַלְכֵי אַשּׁוּר עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה)

This is a figure of speech in which the Levites are describing an entire time period by reference to its beginning and end, in order to include everything in between. Alternate translation: [the entire time we have been under foreign domination]

Support Reference: Merism

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
our God	Our God
mighty	and mighty
and fearsome	and awesome
the … God	you are
the covenant	{your} promises
and covenant faithfulness	and {always} faithfully love {us}
the hardship	all our difficulties … all the troubles … these troubles … them
our kings	our kings
our leaders	our leaders
and our priests	our priests
and our prophets	our prophets
from the days of	since … conquered us
the kings of	{the armies of} the kings
Assyria	of Assyria
day	now … today

Nehemiah 9:33

ULT	UST
And you are righteous concerning all that has come upon us. For you have acted faithfully; but as for us, we have acted wickedly.	*{We know that} you have acted fairly in {letting} all these things happen to us. Yes, you have treated {us} as {we} deserve. But we have done evil things.*

ULT And you are righteous concerning all that has come upon us
UST {We know that} you have acted fairly in {letting} all these things happen to us
(וְאַתָּה צַדִּיק עַל כָּל־הַבָּא עָלֵינוּ)

Here the word **righteous** refers to God's actions as being a reflection of his righteous character. Alternate translation: [we acknowledge you have done the right thing in allowing all this to happen to us]

ULT all that has come upon us
UST {letting} all these things happen to us
(כָּל־הַבָּא עָלֵינוּ)

Here the Levites speak of the suffering that the Israelites have experienced as if it were a living thing that has come up to them in order to cause them harm. Alternate translation: [everything we have suffered]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT For you have acted faithfully; but as for us, we have acted wickedly
UST Yes, you have treated {us} as {we} deserve. But we have done evil things
(כִּי־אֱמֶת עָשִׂיתָ וַאֲנַחְנוּ הִרְשָׁעְנוּ)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could place this sentence before the previous one since it gives the reason for the results that are described in that other sentence. You could show the connection by using a word like "so" after this sentence. Alternate translation: [You have always done what you said you would do, and you have never abandoned us. But we have done many wrong things. And so]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
are righteous	have acted fairly
faithfully	as {we} deserve

ULT	UST
we have acted wickedly	have done evil things

Nehemiah 9:34

ULT	UST
And our kings, our leaders, our priests, and our fathers have not done your law. And they have not attended to your commandments or to your testimonies that you testified against them.	*{In the past,} our kings, our leaders, our priests and our {other} ancestors did not obey your laws. They did not listen to your commands or the warnings that you gave them.*

ULT **and our fathers**
UST and our {other} ancestors
(וַאֲבֹתֵינוּ)

Fathers here means "ancestors." Alternate translation: [our ancestors]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **have not done your law. And they have not attended to your commandments or to your testimonies**
UST In the past … did not obey your laws. They did not listen to your commands or the warnings
(לֹא עָשׂוּ תוֹרָתֶךָ וְלֹא הִקְשִׁיבוּ אֶל־מִצְוֹתֶיךָ וּלְעֵדוֹתֶיךָ)

These two phrases mean similar things. The Levites use the repetition to confess how completely the people have disobeyed what God told them to do. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [have completely disobeyed everything you told them to do]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **And they have not attended to**
UST They did not listen to
(וְלֹא הִקְשִׁיבוּ אֶל)

Not paying attention to a command, like not listening to it, is a figurative way of saying not obeying it. Alternate translation: [have disobeyed]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **your commandments or to your testimonies**
UST your commands or the warnings
(מִצְוֹתֶיךָ וּלְעֵדְוֹתֶיךָ)

These two terms mean similar things. You do not need to repeat both of them in your translation if that would make the meaning less clear for your readers. Alternate translation: [everything you told them to do]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **or to your testimonies that you testified against them**
UST or the warnings that you gave them
(וּלְעֵדְוֹתֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הַעִידֹתָ בָּהֶם)

As in 9:26, 9:29, and 9:30, this expression means to warn someone about what they are doing. So here it is referring to "the warnings that you gave them to warn them." You do not need to repeat the idea of "warn" twice in your translation if that would be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [the many warnings you gave them]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
our kings	our kings
our leaders	our leaders
our priests	our priests
your law	your laws
or to your testimonies	or the warnings
you testified	you gave

Nehemiah 9:35

ULT	UST
And as for them, they did not serve you in their kingdom, and in your great goodness that you gave to them, and in the wide and fat land that you gave before their face. And they did not turn away from their evil deeds.	*They had their own kings. They {enjoyed} the many good things that you provided in this large and fertile land that you gave them. But {even then,} they did not serve you. They would not stop doing evil things.*

ULT **And as for them, they did not serve you in their kingdom**
UST They had their own kings. They … But {even then,} they did not serve you. They
(וְהֵם בְּמַלְכוּתָם֙ & לֹ֣א עָבָ֔דוּךָ)

Them means the people and their leaders, as listed in 9:32 and 9:34. **Serve** is another way of saying "obey." The implied meaning is that the Israelites did not obey Yahweh even when they had a kingdom of their own, before other nations conquered them. Alternate translation: [They did not obey you even while they had a kingdom of their own]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and in your great goodness that you gave to them**
UST {enjoyed} the many good things that you provided
(וּבְטוּבְךָ֣ הָרָ֔ב אֲשֶׁר־נָתַ֖תָּ לָהֶ֑ם)

Goodness is an abstract noun that refers to all the good things that God gave to the Israelites. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with an adjective such as "good." Alternate translation: [even while they enjoyed the good things you gave them]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **and in the wide and fat land**
UST in this large and fertile land
(וּבָאָ֣רֶץ הָרְחָבָ֔ה וְהַשְּׁמֵנָ֖ה)

These two terms mean similar things. They both indicate that the land God gave to the Israelites was good for growing crops. There was a lot of room in it, and the soil was good. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these terms. Alternate translation: [the fertile land]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **and in the … and fat land**
UST in this … and fertile land
(וּבָאָרֶץ & וְהַשְּׁמֵנָה)

As in 9:25, "fat" means land that can produce abundantly and feed its inhabitants well. The rich character of the soil is being described by something associated with it, the well-fed character of the people it sustains. Alternate translation: [fertile land]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **that you gave before their face**
UST that you gave them
(אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתָּ לִפְנֵיהֶם)

Here, **face** means the front of a person. This expression is saying that God "put this land right in front of" the Israelites, emphasizing that God enabled them to defeat their enemies to get it. It was a gift from God, not something that the Israelites got for themselves. Alternate translation: [that you freely gave to them]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **And they did not turn away from their evil deeds**
UST would not stop doing evil things
(וְלֹא־שָׁבוּ מִמַּעַלְלֵיהֶם הָרָעִים)

Here, **turning away from** something is a figurative expression that means giving it up. Alternate translation: [they would not stop doing wrong things]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
they did … serve you	even then … did … serve you
in their kingdom	had their own kings
and in your … goodness	{enjoyed} the … good things
and in the … land	in this … land
evil	evil things

Nehemiah 9:36

ULT	UST
Behold us today; we are servants. And the land that you gave to our fathers, to eat its fruit and its goodness; behold us, we are servants in it!	*Consider our situation! Today we {live like} slaves here in this land that you gave to our ancestors. You gave them this land so that they could enjoy all the good things that grow here. But consider us now! We are {like} slaves on this land.*

ULT **Behold**
UST Consider our situation
(הִנֵּה)

Behold is a term meant to focus the attention of the listener on what the speaker is about to say. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use some emphatic term or expression in your language that would have this same effect.

ULT **today**
UST Today
(הַיּוֹם)

This does not necessarily mean on this particular day, but rather at this time. Alternate translation: [This is how things are now]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **to our fathers**
UST to our ancestors … them
(לַאֲבֹתֵינוּ)

Fathers here means “ancestors.” Alternate translation: [our ancestors]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **its fruit and its goodness**
UST all the good things that grow here
(אֶת־פִּרְיָהּ וְאֶת־טוּבָהּ)

These two expressions mean similar things. They both refer to the crops that grow in the land the Israelites were promised. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these expressions. Alternate translation: [all the good things that grow here]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **its fruit**
UST that grow here
(אֶת־פִּרְיָהּ)

This means all the crops of the land, not just the fruit that grew on the trees. The Levites are using one particular food to refer to all food.

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **its goodness**
UST all the good things
(טוּבָהּ)

Goodness is an abstract noun that refers to the tasty and nourishing food that grows in the land. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a different phrase. Alternate translation: [the good things that grow here]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **Behold**
UST Consider our situation
(הֵנָּה)

Behold is a term meant to focus the attention of the listener on what the speaker is about to say. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use some emphatic term or expression in your language that would have this same effect.

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
are servants	{live like} slaves
And the land	here … this land … this land
its fruit	that grow here
its goodness	all the good things
are servants	are {like} slaves

Nehemiah 9:37

ULT	UST
And its great produce belongs to the kings whom you have given to be over us in our sins, and to be ruling over our bodies and over our livestock, according to their will. And we are in great distress.	*The kings whom you have allowed to rule over us are enjoying {all} the good things that grow here. This is because we have sinned. They rule over our bodies and our cattle. They do whatever they please. We feel great distress.*

ULT **And its great produce**
UST {all} the good things that grow here
(וּתְבוּאָתָהּ מַרְבָּה)

Produce (pró-duce) is an abstract noun that refers to the crops that grow in the land. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a verb such as "produce" (pro-dúce). Alternate translation: [all that this land produces]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **belongs to the kings whom you have given to be over us in our sins**
UST The kings whom you have allowed to rule over us are enjoying … This is because we have sinned
(לַמְּלָכִים אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתָּה עָלֵינוּ בְּחַטֹּאותֵינוּ)

The implication is that foreign kings now rule over the Israelites because Yahweh is punishing the Israelites for disobeying him. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [the kings who now rule over us because you are punishing us for disobeying you]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **belongs to the kings whom you have given to be over us … and to be ruling over our bodies and over our livestock**
UST The kings whom you have allowed to rule over us are enjoying … They rule over our bodies and our cattle
(לַמְּלָכִים אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתָּה עָלֵינוּ & וְעַל־גְּוִיֹּתֵינוּ מִשְׁלִים וּבִבְהֶמְתֵּנוּ)

These two phrases mean similar things. In each phrase, the Levites are describing how foreign kings now rule over the Israelites. The second phrase intensifies the first by specifying that the Israelites serve these kings as slaves, and that the Israelites do not even own the animals they work with. You do not need to repeat both phrases in your translation if that might be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [You have allowed foreign kings to rule over us as slaves who own nothing]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **according to their will**
UST They do whatever they please
(כִּרְצוֹנָם)

Alternate translation: [as they see fit]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And its … produce	things that grow here
belongs to the kings	The kings … are enjoying
in our sins	This is because we have sinned
to be ruling	They rule
and over our livestock	and our cattle
And … are in … distress	feel … distress

Nehemiah 9:38

ULT	UST
And in all of this, we are cutting a faithful covenant, and writing even on a sealed document our leaders, our Levites, our priests."	*Because of all this, we {the Israelite people} are making a solemn agreement. We are writing it on a scroll. We will write down {the names of} our leaders, our Levites, and our priests. Then we will seal the scroll."*

ULT **And in all of this**
UST Because of all this
(וּבְכָל־זֹּאת)

This phrase indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the actions that the people are taking in response to everything that the Levites have just said. That is, they are doing this because they and their ancestors had disobeyed and Yahweh had punished them. Alternate translation: [In light of all this]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **we are cutting a faithful covenant**
UST we {the Israelite people} are making a solemn agreement
(אֲנַחְנוּ כֹרְתִים אֲמָנָה)

The word **faithful** here does not mean that the covenant will act in a certain way, but that the people themselves are promising to be faithful to this covenant. Alternate translation: [we are making a covenant that we promise to keep]

ULT **we are cutting a … covenant**
UST we {the Israelite people} are making
(אֲנַחְנוּ כֹרְתִים)

As in 9:8, to "cut" a covenant is a Hebrew idiom for making a solemn agreement with a person. Review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: [we are making a covenant]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **and writing even on a sealed document our leaders, our Levites, our priests**
UST We are writing it on a scroll. We will write down {the names of} our leaders, our Levites, and our priests. Then we will seal the scroll
(וְכֹתְבִים וְעַל־הֶחָתוּם שָׂרֵינוּ לְוִיֵּנוּ כֹּהֲנֵינוּ)

The implication is that the Israelites had scribes write this covenant on a scroll, the leaders wrote their names on it representing all the people, and then the Israelites sealed the document to make it official and to preserve it. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [We are writing this covenant on a scroll. The community leaders, the Levites, and the priests will sign it. And then we will seal it]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **our leaders**
UST {the names of} our leaders
(שָׂרֵינוּ)

This means the community leaders. From the document itself, it appears that these included both Nehemiah as the governor (10:1) and various tribal and extended-family leaders (10:14–27).

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
faithful	a solemn agreement
are cutting a … covenant	are making
a sealed document	a scroll … Then we will seal the scroll
our leaders	{the names of} our leaders
our Levites	our Levites
our priests	and our priests

Nehemiah 10

Nehemiah 10 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

This chapter concludes the passage beginning in chapter 9.

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

The vow

By signing this document, the people vowed or agreed to obey God, not to buy things on the Sabbath, and to pay their temple tax. (See: oath, vow, swear, swearing, swear by, sworn; and Sabbath; and temple, house, house of God)

Nehemiah 10:1

ULT	UST
And on the sealed documents were: Nehemiah, the Tirshatha, the son of Hacaliah, and Zedekiah,	*These are {the names of} the people who signed the agreement: Nehemiah the governor, the son of Hacaliah; Zedekiah the scribe.*

ULT And on the sealed documents were
UST These are {the names of} the people who signed the agreement
(וְעַל הַֽחֲתוּמִֽים)

Alternate translation: [These are the names that the leaders signed on the scroll before it was sealed.]

ULT Nehemiah, the Tirshatha, the son of Hacaliah
UST Nehemiah the governor, the son of Hacaliah
(נְחֶמְיָה הַתִּרְשָׁתָא בֶּן־חֲכַלְיָה)

As in 7:65 and 7:70, this was the formal Persian title of the governor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the title and then explain it. Alternate translation: [Nehemiah son of Hacaliah, the Tirshatha (that is, the governor)]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT Nehemiah … the son of Hacaliah, and Zedekiah
UST Nehemiah … the son of Hacaliah; Zedekiah the scribe
(נְחֶמְיָה & בֶּן־חֲכַלְיָה וְצִדְקִיָּה)

As in 1:1, Nehemiah is the name of a man, and Hacaliah is the name of his father. Zedekiah is also the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT and Zedekiah
UST Zedekiah the scribe
(וְצִדְקִיָּה)

This could mean the same man who is called “Zadok the scribe” in 13:13. That man seems to have been the official secretary for Nehemiah. Other documents from this time suggest that the name of the scribe would have come second in a list like this, right after the government official in charge. Alternate translation: [Zedekiah the scribe] or [Zedekiah the secretary.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the sealed documents	These are {the names of} the people who signed the agreement
Nehemiah	Nehemiah
the Tirshatha	the governor
and Zedekiah	Zedekiah the scribe

Nehemiah 10:2

ULT	UST
Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,	*{The priests who signed the agreement included:} Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,*

ULT Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah

UST { … The priests who signed the agreement included:} Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah

(שְׂרָיָה עֲזַרְיָה יִרְמְיָה)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Azariah	Azariah
Jeremiah	Jeremiah

Nehemiah 10:3

ULT	UST
Pashhur, Amariah, Malkijah,	*Pashhur, Amariah, Malkijah,*

ULT Pashhur, Amariah, Malkijah
UST Pashhur, Amariah, Malkijah
(פַּשְׁחוּר אֲמַרְיָה מַלְכִּיָּה)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:4

ULT	UST
Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluk,	*Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluk,*

ULT Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluk
UST Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluk
(חַטּוּשׁ שְׁבַנְיָה מַלּוּךְ)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:5

ULT	UST
Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,	*Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,*

ULT Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah
UST Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah
(חָרִם מְרֵמוֹת עֹבַדְיָה)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Obadiah	Obadiah

Nehemiah 10:6

ULT	UST
Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,	*Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,*

ULT Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch
UST Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch
(דָּנִיֵּאל גִּנְּתוֹן בָּרוּךְ)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Daniel	Daniel
Baruch	Baruch

Nehemiah 10:7

ULT	UST
Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,	*Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,*

ULT Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin
UST Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin
(מְשֻׁלָּם אֲבִיָּה מִיָּמִן)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Abijah	Abijah

Nehemiah 10:8

ULT	UST
Maaziah, Bilgai, Shemaiah. These were the priests.	*Maaziah, Bilgai, and Shemaiah. Those are {the names of} the priests {who signed the agreement}.*

ULT Maaziah, Bilgai, Shemaiah
UST Maaziah, Bilgai, and Shemaiah
(מַעַזְיָה בִלְגַּי שְׁמַעְיָה)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT These were the priests
UST Those are {the names of} the priests {who signed the agreement}
(אֵלֶּה הַכֹּהֲנִים)

Alternate translation: [These are the names of the priests who signed the covenant.]

ULT These were the priests
UST Those are {the names of} the priests {who signed the agreement}
(אֵלֶּה הַכֹּהֲנִים)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could place this sentence at the beginning of verse 2 since it introduces the list of priests. That way the list of priests would be like the list of Levites in verses 9–13 and the list of leaders in verses 14–27. Both of those lists have an introductory phrase like this at the beginning. Alternate translation: [These are the names of the priests who signed the covenant]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the priests	the names of} the priests {who signed the agreement}

Nehemiah 10:9

ULT	UST
And the Levites were: even Jeshua, the son of Azaniah; Binnui, from the sons of Henadad; Kadmiel;	*The Levites {who signed the agreement} were: Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui from the clan of Henadad, Kadmiel,*

ULT **And the Levites were**
UST The Levites {who signed the agreement} were
(וְהַלְוִיִּם)

Alternate translation: [These are the names of the Levites who signed the covenant.]

ULT **And the Levites were**
UST The Levites {who signed the agreement} were
(וְהַלְוִיִּם)

From the contexts in which the names of these men appear elsewhere in the book of Nehemiah, it seems that they were leaders of the Levites. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [These are the names of the Levites who signed the covenant. First, their leaders]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **even Jeshua, the son of Azaniah**
UST Jeshua the son of Azaniah
(וַיֵּשׁוּעַ בֶּן־אַזַנְיָה)

Jeshua is the name of a man, and Azaniah is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Binnui … Henadad**
UST Binnui … Henadad
(בִּנּוּי & חֲנָדָד)

Binnui and Henadad are both names of men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Binnui, from the sons of Henadad**
UST Binnui from the clan of Henadad
(בִּנּוּי מִבְּנֵי חֲנָדָד)

Sons here means **descendants**. Alternate translation: [Binnui, one of the descendants of Henadad]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Kadmiel**
UST Kadmiel
(קַדְמִיאֵל)

Kadmiel is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And the Levites were	The Levites {who signed the agreement} were

Nehemiah 10:10

ULT	UST
also their brothers, Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,	*{Some of} their associates also {signed the agreement, including}: Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,*

ULT also their brothers
UST Some of} their associates also {signed the agreement, including}
(וַאֲחֵיהֶם)

Here, **brother** likely refers to the rest of the Levites who signed the covenant as fellow Levites of the three leaders. Alternate translation: [Next, their fellow Levites]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan
UST Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan
(שְׁבַנְיָה הוֹדִיָּה קְלִיטָא פְּלָאיָה חָנָן)

These are the names of five men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:11

ULT	UST
Mika, Rehob, Hashabiah,	*Mika, Rehob, Hashabiah,*

ULT Mika, Rehob, Hashabiah
UST Mika, Rehob, Hashabiah
(מִיכָא רְחֹוב חֲשַׁבְיָה)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:12

ULT	UST
Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,	*Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,*

ULT Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah
UST Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah
(זַכּוּר שֵׁרֵבְיָה שְׁבַנְיָה)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:13

ULT	UST
Hodiah, Bani, Beninu.	*Hodiah, Bani, and Beninu.*

ULT Hodiah, Bani, Beninu
UST Hodiah, Bani, and Beninu
(הוֹדִיָּה בָנִי בְּנִינוּ)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:14

ULT	UST
The heads of the people were: Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani,	*The Israelite leaders {who signed the agreement} were: Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, and Bani,*

ULT **The heads of the people were**
UST The Israelite leaders {who signed the agreement} were
(רָאשֵׁי הָעָם)

Alternate translation: [These are the names of the community leaders who signed the covenant]

ULT **The heads of the people were**
UST The Israelite leaders {who signed the agreement} were
(רָאשֵׁי הָעָם)

Here, **head** is a figurative way of saying “leader.” Alternate translation: [community leaders]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani**
UST Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, and Bani
(פַּרְעֹשׁ פַּחַת מוֹאָב עֵילָם זַתּוּא בָּנִי)

These are the names of five men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Elam	Elam

Nehemiah 10:15

ULT	UST
Bunni, Azgad, Bebai,	*Bunni, Azgad, Bebai,*

ULT Bunni, Azgad, Bebai
UST Bunni, Azgad, Bebai
(בִּנּוּי עַזְגָּד בֵּבָי)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:16

ULT	UST
Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin,	*Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin,*

ULT Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin
UST Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin
(אֲדֹנִיָּה בִגְוַי עָדִין)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Adonijah	Adonijah

Nehemiah 10:17

ULT	UST
Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur,	*Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur,*

ULT Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur
UST Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur
(אָטֵר חִזְקִיָּה עַזּוּר)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Hezekiah	Hezekiah

Nehemiah 10:18

ULT	UST
Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai,	*Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai,*

ULT Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai
UST Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai
(הוֹדִיָּה חָשֻׁם בֶּצָי)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:19

ULT	UST
Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,	*Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,*

ULT Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai
UST Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai
(חָרִיף עֲנָתוֹת נובי)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:20

ULT	UST
Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,	*Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,*

ULT **Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir**
UST Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir
(מַגְפִּיעָשׁ מְשֻׁלָּם חֵזִיר)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:21

ULT	UST
Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua,	*Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua,*

ULT Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua
UST Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua
(מְשֵׁיזַבְאֵל צָדוֹק יַדּוּעַ)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Zadok	Zadok

Nehemiah 10:22

ULT	UST
Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,	*Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,*

ULT Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah
UST Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah
(פְּלַטְיָה חָנָן עֲנָיָה)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:23

ULT	UST
Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub,	*Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub,*

> ULT **Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub**
> UST Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub
> (הוֹשֵׁעַ חֲנַנְיָה חַשּׁוּב)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Hoshea	Hoshea
Hananiah	Hananiah

Nehemiah 10:24

ULT	UST
Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek,	*Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek,*

ULT Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek
UST Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek
(הַלּוֹחֵשׁ פִּלְחָא שׁוֹבֵק)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:25

ULT	UST
Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,	*Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,*

ULT Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah
UST Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah
(רְחוּם חֲשַׁבְנָה מַעֲשֵׂיָה)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:26

ULT	UST
Ahiah, Hanan, Anan,	*also Ahiah, Hanan, Anan,*

ULT **Ahiah, Hanan, Anan**
UST also Ahiah, Hanan, Anan
(וַאֲחִיָּה חָנָן עָנָן)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:27

ULT	UST
Malluk, Harim, Baanah.	*Malluk, Harim, and Baanah.*

ULT **Malluk, Harim, Baanah**
UST Malluk, Harim, and Baanah
(מַלּוּךְ חָרִם בַּעֲנָה)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 10:28

ULT	UST
And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the ones who sing, the Nethinim, and all the ones who were separating themselves from the peoples of the lands to the law of God, their wives, their sons and their daughters, all who were knowing, being able to understand,	*The rest of the people {joined in this solemn agreement. This included} the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, and the {temple} workers. {It also included} everyone who agreed only to worship and obey the God of Israel, along with their wives and their sons and daughters who were {old enough} to understand what they were {doing}.*

ULT And the rest of the people
UST The rest of the people {joined in this solemn agreement. This included} … It also included
(וּשְׁאָר הָעָם)

This means everyone else in the groups that are listed next, even if they did not sign the covenant personally. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [And everyone else in the following groups, whether or not they signed their name on the scroll]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT the gatekeepers
UST the gatekeepers
(הַשּׁוֹעֲרִים)

This means the people who were responsible to open and close the gates that controlled access to the city and the temple. See how you translated this term in 7:1.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT the ones who sing
UST the singers
(הַמְשֹׁרְרִים)

As in 7:1, this means vocal musicians who led in worship, in processions, and ceremonies, producing music and chants that emphasized and enhanced the occasion. Alternate translation: [the singers]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **the Nethinim**
UST and the {temple} workers
(הַנְּתִינִים)

As in 3:26, the term **Nethinim** describes servants who worked in the temple. Alternate translation: [the temple servants]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **and all the ones who were separating themselves from the peoples of the lands to the law of God**
UST everyone who agreed only to worship and obey the God of Israel
(וְכָל־הַנִּבְדָּל מֵעַמֵּי הָאֲרָצוֹת אֶל־תּוֹרַת הָאֱלֹהִים)

This could mean one of two things. (1) It could be referring to people from other nations who had converted and become Jews. Alternate translation: [people from other nations who had become Jews and would now obey the law of God]; (2) It might not be a reference to a distinct group, but rather a description of something that was true of everyone from any of the previously named groups who agreed to the covenant. As in 9:2, it would be a description of how the Israelites needed to reject the influence and practices of other people groups in order to follow the law of God faithfully. Alternate translation: [that is, everyone who resolved to reject foreign influences and obey the law of God]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the ones who were separating themselves from the peoples of the lands**
UST who agreed only to worship and obey the God of Israel
(הַנִּבְדָּל מֵעַמֵּי הָאֲרָצוֹת)

Separate is a figurative way of describing the act of rejecting an influence, as if this were a physical separation. In 9:2 the separation actually was physical (only Israelites could attend that assembly), but here it would be figurative. Alternate translation: [resolved to reject foreign influences]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **their sons and their daughters, all who were knowing, being able to understand**
UST and their sons and daughters who were {old enough} to understand what they were {doing}
(בְּנֵיהֶם וּבְנֹתֵיהֶם כֹּל יוֹדֵעַ מַבְדִּין)

Like the similar phrases in 8:2 and 8:3, this is likely an idiom that refers to children who could understand what the covenant was about. Alternate translation: [their children who were old enough to understand the covenant] or [all who were old enough to understand what promising to obey God meant]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the priests	the priests
the Levites	the Levites
the gatekeepers	the gatekeepers
the lands	who agreed only to worship and obey the God of Israel
the law of God	who agreed only to worship and obey the God of Israel
who were knowing	were {old enough} to understand what they were {doing}
being able to understand	were {old enough} to understand what they were {doing}

Nehemiah 10:29

ULT	UST
were clinging to their brothers, their nobles, and were entering into a curse and into an oath: to walk in the law of God, which was given by the hand of Moses the servant of God; and to keep and to do all the commandments of Yahweh our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes;	*They {all} joined with their leaders, who were important people, and together they all made a solemn agreement to obey {all} the laws that God had given by Moses his servant. They agreed that they would strictly obey everything that Yahweh our God had commanded, yes, {all of} his instructions.*

ULT **were clinging to**
UST They {all} joined with … together
(מַחֲזִיקִים עַל)

Here, **clinging to** is a figurative way of describing people who did not actually sign the scroll, as their leaders did, but who agreed with them and joined in the same purpose. Alternate translation: [agreed with] or [joined in the same purpose with]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **their brothers**
UST their leaders
(אֲחֵיהֶם)

Here, **brother** likely means that the leaders who signed the scroll were fellow Jews of the rest of the people. Alternate translation: [their fellow Jews]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **their nobles**
UST who were important people
(אַדִּירֵיהֶם)

See how you translated this term in 2:16. Alternate translation: [the leading citizens]

ULT **and were entering into a curse and into an oath**
UST and … they all made a solemn agreement
(וְבָאִים בְּאָלָה וּבִשְׁבוּעָה)

Here the story describes the covenant by two things associated with it. As part of the covenant, the people swore an oath to keep its terms, and they also said that anyone who broke its terms should be cursed. (That is, God should punish them.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning behind this figure. Alternate translation: [they made a serious agreement]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **and were entering into a curse and into an oath**
UST and … they all made a solemn agreement
(וְבָאִים בְּאָלָה וּבִשְׁבוּעָה)

Entering is a figurative way of saying that the people became parties to this agreement with God. The expression speaks as if the covenant were something that the people could physically go inside of, in order to become a part of it. Alternate translation: [they became parties to the covenant]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **to walk in the law of God**
UST to obey {all} the laws … God
(לָלֶכֶת בְּתוֹרַת הָאֱלֹהִים)

As in 5:9, **walk** is an idiom that describes a person's conduct in life. Alternate translation: [to live their lives in obedience to the law of God]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **which was given by the hand of Moses**
UST that … had given by Moses
(אֲשֶׁר נִתְּנָה בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [which Moses gave to the people]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **by the hand of Moses**
UST by Moses
(בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה)

Here, as in 9:14, **hand** represents control and action. Alternate translation: [Moses gave to the people]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Moses the servant of God**
UST Moses his servant
(מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד־הָאֱלֹהִים)

As in 9:14, Moses is called the **servant** of God. While Moses was also God's servant in a more literal sense, this title is a figurative expression in the Old Testament that indicates that God used Moses to give his Law to his people the way a master would have a servant deliver a message. Alternate translation: [your special messenger]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and to keep and to do**
UST They agreed that they would strictly obey
(וְלִשְׁמֹר וְלַעֲשׂוֹת)

Keep and **do** mean similar things. The repetition emphasizes the people's resolve to keep God's law. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these terms. Alternate translation: [carefully follow]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **all the commandments of Yahweh our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes**
UST everything that Yahweh our God had commanded, yes, {all of} his instructions
(אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹת יְהוָה אֲדֹנֵינוּ וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו וְחֻקָּיו)

As in 1:7, **commandments**, **judgments**, and **statutes** mean basically the same thing. They refer to provisions in the Law of Moses. Here again the repetition emphasizes the people's resolve to obey everything in God's law. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them into a single phrase. Alternate translation: [everything Yahweh our Lord has commanded,] otherwise "the commands, rules, and laws of Yahweh our Lord" (A doublet can involve the use of more than two words.)

Support Reference: Doublet

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
their nobles	who were important people
into a curse	a solemn agreement
and into an oath	a solemn agreement
in the law of God	{all} the laws … God
Moses	Moses
the servant of	his servant
God	his servant
Yahweh	Yahweh
our Lord	our God
and his judgments	yes, {all of} his instructions
and his statutes	yes, {all of} his instructions

Nehemiah 10:30

ULT	UST
and that we would not give our daughters to the peoples of the land, and we would not take their daughters for our sons;	*This is what {they promised to do}: "We will not give our daughters {in marriage} to people {who live} in this land {who do not worship Yahweh}. We will not allow our sons to marry their daughters.*

ULT **and that we would not give our daughters to the peoples of the land, and we would not take their daughters for our sons**
UST This is what {they promised to do}: "We will not give our daughters {in marriage} to people {who live} in this land {who do not worship Yahweh}. We will not allow our sons to marry their daughters
(וַאֲשֶׁר לֹא־נִתֵּן בְּנֹתֵינוּ לְעַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת־בְּנֹתֵיהֶם לֹא נִקַּח לִבְנֵינוּ)

These two phrases mean similar things. They both indicate that the Jews are promising here not to let their children marry people from the other groups living in the area. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [We promise that we will not allow any one of our children to marry someone from another people group]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **we would … give**
UST We will … give … in marriage
(נִתֵּן)

Here and through to the end of this chapter, the pronoun "we" includes Nehemiah and the Jewish people, but not the readers of this book.

Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **to the peoples of the land**
UST to people {who live} in this land {who do not worship Yahweh}
(לְעַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ)

This refers to other people groups who live in the land and who do not worship Yahweh. The implication is that intermarriage with these groups would lead the Israelites to compromise their loyalty to Yahweh. Alternate translation: [the people of this land who do not worship Yahweh]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the land	who live} in this land {who do not worship Yahweh}

Nehemiah 10:31

ULT	UST
and, on the sabbath or on a holy day, we would not take from the peoples of the land, the ones bringing goods and all kinds of grain to sell on the day of the sabbath; and we would leave alone the seventh year and interest of every hand.	*People from other groups {who live} in this land might bring merchandise and all kinds of food to sell on Sabbath days. But we will not buy anything from them on a Sabbath {day} or any other sacred day. Every seventh year, we will let {the fields} rest {and not plant any crops. That same year} we will not make anyone pay back {anything they owe} to another person.*

ULT **and, on the sabbath … we would not take from the peoples of the land, the ones bringing goods and all kinds of grain to sell on the day of the sabbath**
UST People from other groups {who live} in this land might bring merchandise and all kinds of food to sell on Sabbath days. But we will not buy anything from them on a Sabbath {day}
(וְעַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ הַמְבִיאִים אֶת־הַמַּקָּחוֹת וְכָל־שֶׁבֶר בְּיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לִמְכֹּור לֹא־נִקַּח מֵהֶם בַּשַּׁבָּת)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that is described in the first phrase. Alternate translation: [If people from other groups bring goods or grain to sell on the Sabbath, we will not buy any from them.]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **on the sabbath**
UST on a Sabbath {day}
(בַּשַּׁבָּת)

The implication is that the Israelites are promising not to buy anything because the Sabbath is a day for rest and worship, not for buying and selling. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [on the Sabbath, we will not buy any from them, because Yahweh has told us not to buy or sell on the Sabbath]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **or on a holy day**
UST or any other sacred day
(וּבְיוֹם קֹדֶשׁ)

Alternate translation: [on a festival day] or [during a festival]

ULT **and we would leave alone the seventh year**
UST Every seventh year, we will let {the fields} rest {and not plant any crops. That same year}
(וְנִטֹּשׁ אֶת־הַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִית)

Here the covenant leaves out one or more words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. **Leave alone** means "leave our fields alone," that is, do not plant or harvest any crops, and **the seventh year** means "in the seventh year." Alternate translation: [we will not grow anything in our fields every seventh year]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **and we would leave alone the seventh year**
UST Every seventh year, we will let {the fields} rest {and not plant any crops. That same year}
(וְנִטֹּשׁ אֶת־הַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִית)

The seventh year refers to the commandment in the Law of Moses to allow fields to rest one year out of every seven. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [We will leave our fields alone and not work them during the seventh year, because the law commands us not to grow any crops then.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the seventh year**
UST Every seventh year … That same year
(אֶת־הַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁבִיעִית)

Alternate translation: [year seven]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT **and we would leave alone … and interest of every hand**
UST we will let {the fields} rest {and not plant any crops … } … we will not make anyone pay back {anything they owe} to another person
(וְנִטֹּשׁ & וּמַשָּׂא כָּל־יָד)

This could mean one of several things. (1) As in 5:7–12, it could be a promise not to charge any interest on loans to fellow Israelites. (2) It could mean that during the seventh year, no loan payments would be collected. (3) It could mean that during the seventh year, all debts would be cancelled. Alternate translation: [we will not charge interest on loans to our fellow Israelites] or [during the seventh year, we will not collect loan payments] or [during the seventh year, we will cancel all the debts of our fellow Israelites.]

ULT **and interest of every hand**
UST we will not make anyone pay back {anything they owe} to another person
(וּמַשָּׂא כָל־יָד)

Here, **hand** seems to refer to a debt by reference to something associated with it, the way debts were formalized by the borrower grasping the hand of the lender. Alternate translation: [interest on any debt]

Support Reference: Metonymy

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
on the sabbath	on a Sabbath {day}
holy	any other sacred
or on a … day	or … day
the land	from other groups {who live} in this land
grain	food
on the day of	on … days
the sabbath	Sabbath
the … year	year … year

Nehemiah 10:32

ULT	UST
Also, we caused to stand for us commandments to give over us a third of a shekel in a year for the service of the house of our God:	*We each also agreed to a pledge that {every} year we would pay 4 grams of silver for the {supplies} needed for the temple.*

ULT Also, we caused to stand for us commandments
UST We each also agreed to a pledge
(וְהֶעֱמַדְנוּ עָלֵינוּ מִצְוֹת)

As in 5:13, the covenant speaks of the commitments the people are making as if they were living things that could **stand**, that is, stay in place rather than go away. The people are saying that they will make sure this commitment does not "go away." Alternate translation: [we are making a firm commitment]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT to give over us
UST that … we would pay
(לָתֵת עָלֵינוּ)

Alternate translation: [each one of us will contribute]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT a third of a shekel
UST 4 grams of silver
(שְׁלִשִׁית הַשֶּׁקֶל)

In ancient times, a silver shekel weighed about 11 grams or about a third of an ounce. You could try to express this in terms of modern money values, but if you did, that could cause your Bible translation to become outdated and inaccurate over time since those values can change from year to year. Instead, you could give the equivalent weight or use the biblical term in the text and give the weight in a note. Alternate translation: [a third of a shekel each year] or [four grams of silver each year]

Support Reference: Biblical Money

ULT **a third of a shekel**
UST 4 grams of silver
(שְׁלִשִׁית הַשָּׁקֶל)

A **third** means one part out of three equal parts.

Support Reference: Fractions

ULT **for the service of the house of our God**
UST for the {supplies} needed for the temple
(לַעֲבֹדַת בֵּית אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

The abstract noun **service** describes all the things needed for worship in the temple, as listed in the next verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [everything that is needed for worship in the temple]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the house of our God**
UST the temple
(בֵּית אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

As in 6:10 and 8:16, here the covenant speaks of the temple as the **house of God**, as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: [the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in a year	{every} year
the house of	the temple
our God	the temple

Nehemiah 10:33

ULT	UST
for the bread in rows and the continual offering, and for the continual burnt offering, the sabbaths, the new moons, for the appointed times, and for the holy things, and for the sin offerings to cover over for Israel, and all the work of the house of our God.	*{Here is a list of those supplies.} The {sacred} bread that is placed {before God}. The grain that is {burned on the altar} each day. {The animals that} are completely burned up {on the altar} each day. The sacred offerings for the Sabbath days and for celebrating each new moon and other {festivals} that {God} told {us to celebrate}. {Other} offerings that are dedicated {to God}. {The animals} to be sacrificed to atone for the sins of the Israelite people. Anything else {that is needed} for the work of {taking care of} the temple.*

ULT **for the bread in rows**

UST Here is a list of those supplies.} The {sacred} bread that is placed {before God}
(לְלֶחֶם הַמַּעֲרֶכֶת)

This refers to the 12 unleavened cakes made of fine flour that the law required to be set out freshly every Sabbath day in two rows of six on the table in the Holy Place. This is sometimes called the “showbread.” Alternate translation: [the bread that is set out in rows]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **and the continual offering, and for the continual burnt offering**

UST The grain that is {burned on the altar} each day. {The animals that} are completely burned up {on the altar} each day
(וּמִנְחַת הַתָּמִיד וּלְעוֹלַת הַתָּמִיד)

This likely refers to a grain offering and an animal offering that were burned on the temple altar each day. Alternate translation: [the daily grain and animal offerings]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **the sabbaths, the new moons, for the appointed times**
UST The sacred offerings for the Sabbath days and for celebrating each new moon and other {festivals} that {God} told {us to celebrate}
(הַשַּׁבָּתוֹת הֶחֳדָשִׁים לַמּוֹעֲדִים)

This actually refers to the offerings that would be made at these times. The offerings are being described by something associated with them, the occasions on which they are offered. Alternate translation: [offerings made on the Sabbath, on the new moon festival, and during other festivals]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **and for the holy things**
UST Other} offerings that are dedicated {to God}
(וְלַקֳּדָשִׁים)

This likely refers to offerings that would be dedicated and offered to God on behalf of the people on other occasions. Alternate translation: [and offerings needed for any other occasion]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **and for the sin offerings to cover over for Israel**
UST {The animals} to be sacrificed to atone for the sins of the Israelite people
(וְלַחַטָּאוֹת לְכַפֵּר עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל)

As Nehemiah does in 4:5, the covenant speaks here of sins as if they were an object that could be physically hidden. Alternate translation: [offerings made to ask God to forgive the sins of Israel]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and all the work of the house of our God**
UST Anything else {that is needed} for the work of {taking care of} the temple
(וְכָל מְלֶאכֶת בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

This seems to refer to the ongoing work of cleaning, maintaining, and repairing all of the furnishings and equipment used in the temple worship. Alternate translation: [and anything else needed to maintain worship in the temple]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT the house of our God
UST the temple
(בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

Here again the covenant speaks of the temple as the **house of God**, as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: [the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
for the bread in	{Here is a list of those supplies.} The {sacred} bread
and … offering	The grain that is {burned on the altar}
and for … burnt offering	The animals that} are completely burned up {on the altar}
the sabbaths	The sacred offerings for the Sabbath days
the new moons	and for celebrating each new moon
and for the holy things	Other} offerings that are dedicated {to God}
and for the sin offerings	{The animals} to be sacrificed … the sins of
Israel	the Israelite people
the work of	that is needed} for the work of {taking care of}
the house of	the temple
our God	the temple

Nehemiah 10:34

ULT	UST
And we cast lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people: concerning the offering of pieces of wood, to bring them to the house of our God, for the house of our fathers at the appointed times year by year, for burning on the altar of Yahweh our God as written in the law;	*We have cast lots to determine when each clan of the priests, the Levites, and {the rest of} the people will bring an offering of wood to the temple. Each clan will do this at an appointed time every year. {The Levites will use} the wood to burn {the sacrifices} on the altar that belongs to Yahweh our God. He commanded this in the law {he gave through Moses}.*

ULT **And we cast lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people: concerning the offering of pieces of wood, to bring them to the house of our God, for the house of our fathers**

UST We have cast lots to determine when each clan of the priests, the Levites, and {the rest of} the people will bring an offering of wood to the temple. Each clan will do this

(וְהַגּוֹרָלוֹת הִפַּלְנוּ עַל־קׇרְבַּן הָעֵצִים הַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם וְהָעָם לְהָבִיא לְבֵית אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְבֵית־אֲבֹתֵינוּ)

Alternate translation: [We agree to determine by lot what time each year the various extended families among the priests, the Levites, and the people will be responsible for bringing an offering of wood to the temple.]

ULT **And we cast lots among**

UST We have cast lots

(וְהַגּוֹרָלוֹת הִפַּלְנוּ)

A **lot** was a physical object that was used in various ways to make a selection among different possibilities. Use the term in your language that would best describe such an object for your readers.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **to the house of our God**

UST to the temple

(לְבֵית אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

Here again the covenant speaks of the temple as the “house of God,” as if it were God’s dwelling place. Alternate translation: [the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT for the house of our fathers
UST each clan of … Each clan
(לְבֵית־אֲבֹתֵינוּ)

This seems to be an abbreviated way of saying "our father's houses." The full expression "father's house" or "house of the father" is used in 7:61. See how you translated it there, and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: [taking turns by clan]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT year by year
UST every year
(שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה)

This is an idiom that means "each year" or "every year."

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT for burning
UST The Levites will use} the wood to burn {the sacrifices}
(לִבְעֹר)

Burning is an abstract noun that describes how the wood these families agreed to bring to the temple would be used for fuel for the sacrifices offered on the altar. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a verb such as "burn." You could also say who would do the action. Alternate translation: [for the Levites to burn]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT as written in the law
UST He commanded this in the law {he gave through Moses}
(כַּכָּתוּב בַּתּוֹרָה)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [as the law commands]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And … lots among	lots
the priests	the priests
the Levites	the Levites
offering of	an offering of
to the house of	to the temple

ULT	UST
our God	to the temple
for the house of	each clan of … Each clan
appointed	appointed
year by	every
year	year
the altar of	the altar that belongs to
Yahweh	Yahweh
our God	our God
in the law	in the law {he gave through Moses}

Nehemiah 10:35

ULT	UST
and to bring the firstfruits of our soil and the firstfruits of all the fruit of every tree, year by year, to the house of Yahweh;	*We will also bring {an offering} to the temple every year from the first {grain} that we {harvest} and from all the first fruit that {grows on} all our trees.*

ULT the firstfruits of our soil
UST an offering … from the first {grain} that we {harvest}
(אֶת־בִּכּוּרֵי אַדָּמָתֵנוּ)

Here the covenant speaks of the soil of the land as if it were a tree that would bear fruit. Alternate translation: [the first crops that grow in our fields]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT year by year
UST every year
(שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה)

This is an idiom that means **each year** or **every year**.

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT to the house of Yahweh
UST to the temple
(לְבֵית יְהוָה)

The covenant continues to speak of the temple as the **house of God**, as if it were God's dwelling place. Here the expression is modified slightly and it says **Yahweh** instead of **our God**. Alternate translation: [to the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the firstfruits of	an offering … from the first
and the firstfruits of	and from … the first
the fruit of	fruit that {grows on}
year by	every
year	year
to the house of Yahweh	to the temple

Nehemiah 10:36

ULT	UST
and the firstborns of our sons and our livestock, as written in the law, even the firstborns of our herds and our flocks, to bring them to the house of our God, to the priests, the ones who minister in the house of our God.	*We will also do something else that God commanded. We will bring our firstborn sons to the temple {for dedication}, and our firstborn calves and lambs and goats {as sacrifices}, to the priests who minister in the temple.*

ULT **and the firstborns of our sons and our livestock … even the firstborns of our herds and our flocks, to bring them to the house of our God**

UST We will also … We will bring our firstborn sons to the temple {for dedication}, and our firstborn calves and lambs and goats {as sacrifices}

(וְאֶת־בְּכֹרוֹת בָּנֵינוּ וּבְהֶמְתֵּינוּ & וְאֶת־בְּכוֹרֵי בְקָרֵינוּ וְצֹאנֵינוּ לְהָבִיא לְבֵית אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

Firstborn means specifically the firstborn male offspring in every case, as the law specifies. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain that the law required the Israelites to bring the firstborn males from their families to the temple for a different reason than the reason for which it required them to bring the firstborn males from among their domesticated animals. Alternate translation: [We promise to bring our firstborn sons to the temple to dedicate them to God, and we promise to bring the first male offspring of all of our animals to the temple so that the priests can offer them to God as sacrifices]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **as written in the law**

UST do something else that God commanded

(כַּכָּתוּב בַּתּוֹרָה)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [as the law commands]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **to the house of our God … in the house of our God**

UST to the temple … in the temple

(לְבֵית אֱלֹהֵינוּ & בְּבֵית אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

The covenant continues to speak of the temple as the **house of God**, as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: [the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **to the priests, the ones who minister in the house of our God**
UST to the priests who minister in the temple
(לַכֹּהֲנִ֔ים הַמְּשָׁרְתִ֖ים בְּבֵ֣ית אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

These two phrases mean the same thing. The covenant uses the repetition for clarity. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these phrases. Alternate translation: [the priests who serve in the temple]

Support Reference: Doublet

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the firstborns of	our firstborn
and our livestock	and our … calves … as sacrifices
in the law	do something else that God commanded
the firstborns of	firstborn
our herds	and goats
and our flocks	and lambs
to the house of	to the temple
our God	to the temple
to the priests	to the priests
the ones who minister	who minister
in the house of	in the temple
our God	in the temple

Nehemiah 10:37

ULT	UST
And we will bring: the first of our dough and our offerings, and the fruit of every tree, wine, and oil, for the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and a tithe of our soil for the Levites. And they, the Levites, will be the ones receiving tithes in all the cities of our labor.	*We will also bring supplies to the priests that {they} can store in the temple. These will include the first grain that we {harvest}, the first flour we {make}, the first fruit from all {our} trees, and the first wine and olive oil {that we produce}. We will also bring 10 percent of our harvest to the Levites. We will allow them to collect this 10 percent right in all the towns where we work.*

ULT **And … the first of our dough and our offerings, and the fruit of every tree, wine, and oil**

UST We will also … the first grain that we {harvest}, the first flour we {make}, the first fruit from all {our} trees, and the first wine and olive oil {that we produce}

(וְאֶת־רֵאשִׁית עֲרִיסֹתֵינוּ וּתְרוּמֹתֵינוּ וּפְרִי כָל־עֵץ תִּירוֹשׁ וְיִצְהָר)

The words **the first of** at the start of this list apply to every item on the list. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could repeat that idea throughout the list. Alternate translation: [the first of the flour that we make, a first portion of the food offerings we bring to the temple, the first fruit from each of our fruit trees, and the first of the wine and oil that we produce each year]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **our dough**

UST the … grain that we {harvest}

(עֲרִיסֹתֵינוּ)

Possible meanings are that this refers to: (1) dough made from coarse flour, (2) coarse flour, or (3) ground grain.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **to the chambers of the house of our God**

UST that {they} can store in the temple

(אֶל־לִשְׁכוֹת בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

This phrase explains where the people are agreeing to deliver the items on the preceding list, which are special contributions for the priests. Alternate translation: [to the rooms where things are stored in the temple] or [to the storehouses in the temple]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **the house of our God**
UST in the temple
(בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

The covenant continues to speak of the temple as the "house of God," as if it were the place where God lived, since God's presence was in the temple. Alternate translation: [the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and a tithe of our soil**
UST 10 percent of our harvest
(וּמַעְשַׂר אַדְמָתֵנוּ)

Here, the covenant speaks of the soil as a way of referring to the crops that grow in the soil. Alternate translation: [one tenth of the crops that grow in our fields]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **and a tithe of**
UST 10 percent of
(וּמַעְשַׂר)

This means a tenth (1/10) or one part out of ten equal parts.

Support Reference: Fractions

ULT **And they, the Levites, will be the ones receiving tithes in all the cities of our labor**
UST We will allow them to collect this 10 percent right in all the towns where we work
(וְהֵם הַלְוִיִּם מַעַשְׂרִים בְּכֹל עָרֵי עֲבֹדָתֵנוּ)

This phrase explains where the people are agreeing to deliver this tithe of crops, which is a special contribution for the Levites. Alternate translation: [The Levites can collect this contribution of one tenth of our crops right in the cities where we live and work]

ULT **in all the cities of our labor**
UST right in all the towns where we work
(בְּכֹל עָרֵי עֲבֹדָתֵנוּ)

The abstract noun **labor** refers to how the people would work the land in order to grow crops. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a verb such as **work**. Alternate translation: [the cities where we live and work]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and our offerings	the … flour we {make}
and the fruit of	the … fruit from
wine	and the … wine
and oil	and olive oil {that we produce}
for the priests	to the priests
the house of	in the temple
our God	in the temple
and a tithe of	10 percent of
for the Levites	to the Levites
the Levites	We will allow them
will be the ones receiving tithes	to collect this 10 percent
will be the ones receiving tithes	to collect this 10 percent
our labor	we work

Nehemiah 10:38

ULT	UST
And a priest who is a son of Aaron will be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes. And the Levites will bring a tithe of the tithe to the house of our God, to the chambers of the house of the treasury.	*A priest, one of the descendants of Aaron, will be with the Levites {and supervise} them when they collect that 10 percent. Then the Levites must bring 10 percent of what they have received to the temple. {The priests will put it} in the storerooms and it will support {them}.*

ULT **And a priest who is a son of Aaron will be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes**
UST A priest, one of the descendants of Aaron, will be with the Levites {and supervise} them when they collect that 10 percent
(וְהָיָה הַכֹּהֵן בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן עִם־הַלְוִיִּם בַּעֲשֵׂר הַלְוִיִּם)

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain why a priest will be present. Alternate translation: [a priest will be present to supervise when the people give their tithes to the Levites]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **a priest who is a son of Aaron**
UST A priest, one of the descendants of Aaron
(הַכֹּהֵן בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן)

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers who the priests were. Alternate translation: [one of the priests, who are descendants of Aaron]

Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

ULT **who is a son of Aaron**
UST one of the descendants of Aaron
(בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן)

Son here means “descendant.” Alternate translation: [a descendant of Aaron]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **when the Levites receive tithes**
> UST when they collect that 10 percent
> (בַּעֲשֵׂר הַלְוִיִּם)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could state from whom the Levites will receive these tithes. Alternate translation: [when the people give their tithes to the Levites]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **when … receive tithes … a tithe of the tithe**
> UST when … collect that 10 percent … 10 percent of what they have received
> (בַּעֲשֵׂר & אֶת־מַעֲשַׂר הַמַּעֲשֵׂר)

A “tithe” means a tenth (1/10) or one part out of ten equal parts.

Support Reference: Fractions

> ULT **And the Levites will bring a tithe of the tithe to the house of our God**
> UST Then the Levites must bring 10 percent of what they have received to the temple
> (וְהַלְוִיִּם יַעֲלוּ אֶת־מַעֲשַׂר הַמַּעֲשֵׂר לְבֵית אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

The implication is that in the way the Levites will help support the priests, in the same way the people will support the priests through the tithes described in verse 37. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [the Levites will bring one tenth of the tithes they receive to the temple, to help support the priests]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **to the house of our God**
> UST to the temple
> (לְבֵית אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

The covenant continues to speak of the temple as the **house of God**, as if it were God’s dwelling place. Alternate translation: [the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **to the chambers of the house of the treasury**
UST The priests will put it} in the storerooms and it will support {them}
(אֶל־הַלְּשָׁכוֹת לְבֵית הָאוֹצָר)

Like the similar phrase in 10:37, this phrase explains where the Levites are to deliver the ten percent of the tithes that they will contribute. Alternate translation: [to the rooms where things are stored in the temple] or [the rooms in the temple treasury]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
a priest	A priest
Aaron	Aaron
the Levites	the Levites … them
the Levites	they
when … receive tithes	when … collect that 10 percent
when … receive tithes	when … collect that 10 percent
And the Levites	Then the Levites
a tithe of	10 percent of
the tithe	what they have received
to the house of	to the temple
our God	to the temple
of the house of the	the storerooms and it will support {them}

Nehemiah 10:39

ULT	UST
For the sons of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring to the chambers the offerings of grain, wine, and oil. And there shall be the vessels for the sanctuary, and the priests, the ones who are ministering, and the gatekeepers, and the ones who sing. And we shall not neglect the house of our God.	*That is how it will work. The Israelites and the Levites will bring their offerings of grain, wine, and olive oil to those storerooms. That is where {the priests} will store the equipment for the temple. And that is where {they will keep the food supplies} for the priests, the gatekeepers, and the singers who are serving at that time. We promise that we will keep taking care of the temple."*

ULT **the chambers**
UST those storerooms
(הַלְּשָׁכוֹת)

This is an abbreviated way of saying "the chambers of the house of the treasury" as in 10:38. Alternate translation: [the rooms where things are stored in the temple] or [the rooms in the temple treasury]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **the sons of Israel and the sons of Levi**
UST The Israelites and the Levites
(בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבְנֵי הַלֵּוִי)

Sons here means "descendants." The term is referring to the groups that were descended from the men named Israel and Levi. Alternate translation: [the Israelites and the Levites]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **And there shall be the vessels for the sanctuary, and the priests, the ones who are ministering, and the gatekeepers, and the ones who sing**
UST That is where {the priests} will store the equipment for the temple. And that is where {they will keep the food supplies} for the priests, the gatekeepers, and the singers who are serving at that time
(וְשָׁם כְּלֵי הַמִּקְדָּשׁ וְהַכֹּהֲנִים הַמְשָׁרְתִים וְהַשּׁוֹעֲרִים וְהַמְשֹׁרְרִים)

There means in those same storerooms. The phrase **the vessels for** at the start of this list applies to every item on the list. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could repeat that idea throughout the list. Alternate translation: [In those same rooms we will also store equipment for the temple, equipment that the priests use when they are on duty, tools that the gatekeepers use, and instruments for the musicians]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **the vessels for**
UST the equipment for … { … the food supplies} for
(כְּלֵי)

Here the covenant uses one type of equipment that the storerooms would hold, **vessels** or "jars" or "containers," to refer to all the different types of equipment on the list in this verse. Alternate translation: [equipment]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **And we shall not neglect the house of our God**
UST We promise that we will keep taking care of the temple
(וְלֹא נַעֲזֹב אֶת־בֵּית אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

This is a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. Alternate translation: [we will make sure that we provide for the temple]

Support Reference: Litotes

ULT **the house of our God**
UST the temple
(אֶת־בֵּית אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

The covenant continues to speak of the temple as the **house of God**, as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: [the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Israel	The Israelites
Levi	and the Levites
the offerings of	their offerings of
grain	grain
wine	wine
and oil	and olive oil
the sanctuary	the temple
and the priests	the priests
the ones who are ministering	who are serving at that time
and the gatekeepers	the gatekeepers
the house of	the temple
our God	the temple

Nehemiah 11

Nehemiah 11 Chapter Introduction

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

The places where the Jews lived

Some people lived in Jerusalem, but most people lived in villages and towns away from Jerusalem. They lived there in order to farm the land and raise their animals. The city with its walls was there to provide all of the people with protection if enemies attacked them.

Nehemiah 11:1

ULT	UST
And the leaders of the people dwelt in Jerusalem. And the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine hands were in the cities.	*So the {Israelite} leaders settled in Jerusalem {with their families}. The rest of the people cast lots to select one family out of ten to live in Jerusalem. That was the city set apart {for God}. The remaining nine families lived in the {other} towns.*

ULT **cast lots**
UST cast lots
(הִפִּ֣ילוּ גוֹרָל֔וֹת)

As in 10:34, a **lot** was a physical object that was used in various ways to make a selection among different possibilities. Use the term in your language that would best describe such an object for your readers.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **one out of ten**
UST one family out of ten
(אֶחָד מִן־הָעֲשָׂרָה)

This means “one out of ten people.”

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **in Jerusalem the holy city**
UST in Jerusalem. That was the city set apart {for God}
(בִּירוּשָׁלַ֖͏ִם עִ֣יר הַקֹּ֑דֶשׁ)

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers about the special status that Jerusalem had, which was why it was so important for that city to be well populated. As in 1:9, the list is acknowledging Jerusalem as the place from which God chose to start making himself famous throughout the world, and as the city where God chose to put his temple. Alternate translation: [Jerusalem, the special city that God chose]

Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

ULT and nine hands were in the cities
UST The remaining nine families lived in the {other} towns
(וְתֵשַׁע הַיָּדוֹת בָּעָרִים)

Here the list is using the term **hand** to refer to an entire person. Alternate translation: [the other nine out of ten people remained in the cities and towns where they had been living]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the leaders of	the … leaders … with their families
in Jerusalem	in Jerusalem
lots	lots
in Jerusalem	in Jerusalem
the holy city	That was the city set apart {for God}
the holy	set apart {for God}

Nehemiah 11:2

ULT	UST
And the people blessed all the men, the ones who freely offered to dwell in Jerusalem.	*The people {asked God to} bless all those who volunteered to live in Jerusalem.*

ULT **all the men**
UST all those
(לְכֹל֙ הָאֲנָשִׁ֔ים)

In this context, **a man** means “everyone.” Alternate translation: [everyone who]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And … blessed	{asked God to} bless
in Jerusalem	in Jerusalem

Nehemiah 11:3

ULT	UST
And these are the heads of the province who dwelt in Jerusalem. And in the cities of Judah they dwelt, a man on his property, in their cities: Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the Nethinim, and the sons of the servants of Solomon.	*These are {the names of} the provincial officials who settled in Jerusalem. But in the towns of Judah, everyone lived on his own family property in their towns. This included the Israelites, the priests, the Levites, the temple servants, and the descendants of the servants of Solomon.*

ULT **the heads of the province**
UST the provincial officials
(רָאשֵׁי הַמְּדִינָה)

Head here is a figurative way of saying **leader**. Alternate translation: [provincial leaders]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **And in the cities of Judah**
UST But in the towns of Judah
(וּבְעָרֵי יְהוּדָה)

This sentence explains a contrasting idea before the story goes on to develop the idea that the previous sentence introduces. This chapter is a list of the provincial leaders, priests, Levites, gatekeepers, temple servants, and singers who lived in Jerusalem. The previous sentence introduces the first part of that list, but before the list gives the names of the provincial leaders, it explains that most of the people who had returned to the province of Judah kept on living on their ancestral lands in other cities and towns. You could begin this sentence with a word like "but" to indicate this contrast.

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **And in the cities of Judah … in their cities**
UST But in the towns of Judah … in their towns
(וּבְעָרֵי יְהוּדָה & בְּעָרֵיהֶם)

These two phrases mean the same thing and you do not need to repeat both of them if that would be confusing for your readers.

ULT **a man on his property**
UST everyone … on his own family property … This included
(אִישׁ בַּאֲחֻזָּתוֹ)

In this context, **a man** means "each person," and the expression may be understood to indicate "each family." Alternate translation: [each family on its own property]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Israel**
UST the Israelites
(יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here the list refers to all of the Israelites as if they were a single person, their ancestor, Israel. Alternate translation: [the Israelites]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **and the Nethinim**
UST the temple servants
(וְהַנְּתִינִים)

As in 3:26, the term **Nethinim** describes servants who worked in the temple. Alternate translation: [the temple servants]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **and the sons of the servants of Solomon**
UST and the descendants of the servants of Solomon
(וּבְנֵי עַבְדֵי שְׁלֹמֹה)

Sons means "descendants." Alternate translation: [the descendants of the laborers who had worked for the kingdom]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the servants of Solomon**
UST the servants of Solomon
(עַבְדֵי שְׁלֹמֹה)

As in 7:57, this phrase refers to people whom Solomon first conscripted as laborers. They and their descendants remained conscripted laborers under later kings. Review the note to 7:57 if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: [laborers who had worked for the kingdom]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the province	the provincial
in Jerusalem	in Jerusalem
Judah	Judah
Israel	the Israelites
the priests	the priests
and the Levites	the Levites
the servants of	the servants of
Solomon	Solomon

Nehemiah 11:4

ULT	UST
And some from the sons of Judah and from the sons of Benjamin dwelt in Jerusalem. Those from the sons of Judah were: Athaiah, the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel, from the sons of Perez;	*But some of the people of Judah and some of the people of Benjamin stayed and lived in Jerusalem. Here are {the names of} the leaders who lived in Jerusalem. From the descendants of Judah, one of them was Athaiah the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel, a descendant of Perez.*

ULT And … in Jerusalem
UST But … in Jerusalem
(וּבִירוּשָׁלִַם)

This sentence provides further information about the situation the book is describing here. In addition to the people who were living in various other cities and towns in the province of Judah, there were other people already living in Jerusalem. So the city was not empty, but it did need to be more fully populated. You could use a word like “moreover” to show that this is further background information.

Support Reference: Background Information

ULT from the sons of Judah and from the sons of Benjamin
UST some of the people of Judah and some of the people of Benjamin
(מִבְּנֵי יְהוּדָה וּמִבִּנְיָמִן)

Sons here means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [some people from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT Those from the sons of Judah were
UST Here are {the names of} the leaders who lived in Jerusalem. From the descendants of Judah
(מִבְּנֵי יְהוּדָה)

Sons here means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [those from the tribe of Judah]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Athaiah, the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel**
UST one of them was Athaiah the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalalel
(עֲתָיָה בֶן־עֻזִּיָּה בֶן־זְכַרְיָה בֶן־אֲמַרְיָה בֶן־שְׁפַטְיָה בֶן־מַהַלַלְאֵל)

These are the names of six men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Athaiah**
UST one of them was Athaiah
(עֲתָיָה)

The implication is that Athaiah was one of the leaders of the people from the tribe of Judah who lived in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Their leader, Athaiah]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **from the sons of Perez**
UST a descendant of Perez
(מִבְּנֵי־פָרֶץ)

Sons here means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [one of the descendants of Perez]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Judah	Judah
Benjamin	Benjamin
And … in Jerusalem	But … in Jerusalem
Judah	Judah
Uzziah	Uzziah
Zechariah	Zechariah

Nehemiah 11:5

ULT	UST
and Maaseiah, the son of Baruch, the son of Kol-Hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, a son of the Shilonite.	*Another one was Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Kol-Hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, who was one of the descendants of Shelah.*

ULT **and Maaseiah, the son of Baruch, the son of Kol-Hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah**
UST Another one was Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Kol-Hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah
(וּמַעֲשֵׂיָה בֶן־בָּרוּךְ בֶּן־כָּל־חֹזֶה בֶּן־חֲזָיָה בֶן־עֲדָיָה בֶן־יוֹיָרִיב בֶּן־זַכַרְיָה)

These are the names of seven men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and Maaseiah**
UST Another one was Maaseiah
(וּמַעֲשֵׂיָה)

The implication is that Maaseiah was another leader of the people from the tribe of Judah who lived in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [another leader, Maaseiah]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **a son of the Shilonite**
UST who was one of the descendants of Shelah
(בֶּן־הַשִּׁלֹנִי)

Most likely, the Shiloni were the clan descended from Judah's son Shelah. Here the phrase **son of** indicates that Maaseiah shared in the quality of belonging to this clan. Alternate translation: [one of the descendants of Shelah]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Baruch	Baruch

ULT	UST
Zechariah	Zechariah

Nehemiah 11:6

ULT	UST
All the sons of Perez, the ones dwelling in Jerusalem, were 468 men of strength.	*Altogether 468 men who were descendants of Perez lived in {the city of} Jerusalem. These men were {very} brave and skilled in combat.*

ULT **All the sons of Perez, the ones dwelling in Jerusalem, were 468 men of strength**
UST Altogether 468 men who were descendants of Perez lived in {the city of} Jerusalem. These men were {very} brave and skilled in combat
(כָּל־בְּנֵי־פֶ֖רֶץ הַיֹּשְׁבִ֣ים בִּירוּשָׁלִָ֑ם אַרְבַּ֥ע מֵא֛וֹת שִׁשִּׁ֥ים וּשְׁמֹנָ֖ה אַנְשֵׁי־חָֽיִל׃)

Alternate translation: [The total number of the descendants of Perez who settled in Jerusalem who were able to fight in the army was 468]

ULT **the sons of Perez, the ones dwelling in Jerusalem**
UST men who were descendants of Perez lived in {the city of} Jerusalem
(בְּנֵי־פֶ֖רֶץ הַיֹּשְׁבִ֣ים בִּירוּשָׁלִָ֑ם)

Sons here means **descendants**. Alternate translation: [the descendants of Perez who lived in Jerusalem]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **were 468 men of strength**
UST 468 … These men were {very} brave and skilled in combat
(אַרְבַּ֥ע מֵא֛וֹת שִׁשִּׁ֥ים וּשְׁמֹנָ֖ה אַנְשֵׁי־חָֽיִל׃)

The abstract noun **strength** refers to the way these men were able to use weapons and fight to defend the city if necessary. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with a verb such as **fight**. Alternate translation: [468 men who were able to fight in the army]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **were 468**
UST 468
(אַרְבַּ֥ע מֵא֛וֹת שִׁשִּׁ֥ים וּשְׁמֹנָ֖ה)

Alternate translation: [four hundred and sixty-eight]

Support Reference: Numbers

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in Jerusalem	in {the city of} Jerusalem

Nehemiah 11:7

ULT	UST
And these are the sons of Benjamin: Sallu, the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiah;	*These are the descendants of Benjamin {who decided to live in Jerusalem}. One of them was Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiah.*

ULT **the sons of Benjamin**
UST the descendants of Benjamin
(בְּנֵי בִנְיָמִן)

Sons here means **descendants**. Alternate translation: [the people from the tribe of Benjamin]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the sons of Benjamin**
UST the descendants of Benjamin
(בְּנֵי בִנְיָמִן)

This means specifically the people from the tribe of Benjamin who lived in Jerusalem. The list is speaking in abbreviated form here. Alternate translation: [the people from the tribe of Benjamin who lived in Jerusalem]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **Sallu, the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiah**
UST One of them was Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiah
(סַלָּא בֶן־מְשֻׁלָּם בֶּן־יוֹעֵד בֶּן־פְּדָיָהוּ בֶן־קוֹלָיָה בֶן־מַעֲשֵׂיָה בֶּן־אִיתִיאֵל בֶּן־יְשַׁעְיָה)

These are the names of eight men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Sallu**
UST One of them was Sallu
(סַלָּא)

The implication is that Sallu was one of the leaders of the people from the tribe of Benjamin who lived in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Their main leader was Sallu]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Benjamin	Benjamin

Nehemiah 11:8

ULT	UST
and after him, Gabbai, Sallai, 928.	*Two men who assisted him were Gabbai and Sallai. Altogether 928 people {from the tribe of Benjamin settled in Jerusalem}.*

ULT **and after him, Gabbai, Sallai**
UST Two men who assisted him were Gabbai and Sallai
(וְאַחֲרָיו גַּבַּי סַלָּי)

After is a figurative way of saying that these two men were also leaders, but they were subordinate to Sallu. Alternate translation: [Two other leaders who assisted him were Gabbai and Sallai]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Gabbai, Sallai**
UST Gabbai and Sallai
(גַּבַּי סַלָּי)

These are the names of two men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **928**
UST Altogether 928 people {from the tribe of Benjamin settled in Jerusalem}
(תְּשַׁע מֵאוֹת עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁמֹנָה)

As in 11:6, the number given represents the total number of men from this tribe who were able to use weapons and fight to defend the city if necessary. The list is speaking in abbreviated form here. Alternate translation: [The total number of the men from the tribe of Benjamin living in Jerusalem who were able to fight in the army was 928.]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **928**
UST Altogether 928 people {from the tribe of Benjamin settled in Jerusalem}
(תְּשַׁע מֵאוֹת עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁמֹנָה)

Alternate translation: [nine hundred and twenty-eight men]

Support Reference: Numbers

Nehemiah 11:9

ULT	UST
And Joel the son of Zichri was the overseer for them. And Judah, the son of Hassenuah, was the second over the city.	*Their leader was Joel the son of Zichri. Judah the son of Hassenuah was {the official who was} second in command in Jerusalem.*

ULT **And Joel the son of Zichri**
UST Joel the son of Zichri
(וְיוֹאֵל בֶּן־זִכְרִי)

Joel is the name of a man, and Zichri is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **was the overseer for them**
UST Their leader was
(פָּקִיד עֲלֵיהֶם)

This means that when these men from the tribe of Benjamin formed a fighting unit, Joel was their commander. Alternate translation: [the commander of the troops from the tribe of Benjamin]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **And Judah, the son of Hassenuah**
UST Judah the son of Hassenuah
(וִיהוּדָה בֶן־הַסְּנוּאָה)

Judah is the name of a man, and Hassenuah is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **was the second over the city**
UST was {the official who was} second in command in Jerusalem
(עַל־הָעִיר מִשְׁנֶה)

This phrase could mean a number of things. (1) Since this list does not name the person who was first in charge of the city, and it also does not describe other parts of the city and who was responsible for them, this phrase most likely means that Judah was second in command, after Joel, over the forces that would be formed from men living in the city. If that is the meaning, then the list is describing these troops by reference to something associated with them, the city they would come from. (2) However, it could mean that Judah was something like the deputy mayor of the whole city. (3) It could also mean that Judah was responsible for one part of the city. Alternate translation: [second in command over troops from the city]

Support Reference: Metonymy

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And Joel	Joel
was the overseer	leader was
And Judah	Judah

Nehemiah 11:10

ULT	UST
From the priests: Jedaiah the son of Joiarib; Jakin;	*The priests {who settled in Jerusalem} included Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, and Jachin.*

ULT From the priests
UST The priests {who settled in Jerusalem} included
(מִן־הַכֹּהֲנִים)

The implication is that this next section of the list will name the men who were leaders of the priests. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [Here are the names of the leaders of the priests who settled in Jerusalem]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT Jedaiah the son of Joiarib
UST Jedaiah the son of Joiarib
(יְדַעְיָה בֶּן־יוֹיָרִיב)

Jedaiah is the name of a man, and Joiarib is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT Jakin
UST and Jachin
(וְיָכִין)

This is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the priests	The priests

Nehemiah 11:11

ULT	UST
Seraiah, the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the leader of the house of God;	*Another priest was Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub. He was in charge of the temple.*

ULT **Seraiah, the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub**
UST Another priest was Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub
(שְׂרָיָה בֶן־חִלְקִיָּה בֶּן־מְשֻׁלָּם בֶּן־צָדוֹק בֶּן־מְרָיוֹת בֶּן־אֲחִיטוּב)

These are the names of six men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the leader of the house of God**
UST He was in charge of the temple
(נְגִד בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים)

This is background information that helps identify Seraiah further. Alternate translation: [the priest in charge of the temple]

Support Reference: Background Information

ULT **the house of God**
UST the temple
(בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים)

Here the list speaks of the temple as the **house of God** as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: [the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Hilkiah	Hilkiah
Zadok	Zadok
the leader of	He was in charge of
the house of God	the temple

Nehemiah 11:12

ULT	UST
and their brothers, who were doing the work for the house, were 822; and Adaiah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malkijah;	*Another 822 of their associates {settled in Jerusalem and} performed work for the temple. Another priest {who settled in Jerusalem} was Adaiah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malkijah.*

ULT and their brothers, who were doing the work for the house, were 822
UST Another 822 of their associates {settled in Jerusalem and} performed work for the temple
(וַאֲחֵיהֶם עֹשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה לַבָּיִת שְׁמֹנֶה מֵאוֹת עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁנָיִם)

Alternate translation: [The total number of their fellow priests who were serving in the temple was 822]

ULT and their brothers
UST Another … of their associates
(וַאֲחֵיהֶם)

Here, **brother**, is a figurative way of saying "fellow priest," although it is possible that some of the biological brothers of Joiarib, Jakin, and Seraiah were included in this group. Alternate translation: [their fellow priests]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT who were doing the work for the house
UST {settled in Jerusalem and} performed work for the temple
(עֹשֵׂי הַמְּלָאכָה לַבָּיִת)

Here, **house** is an abbreviated way of saying "house of God," and that is a figurative way of referring to the temple. Alternate translation: [who served in the temple]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT were 822
UST 822
(שְׁמֹנֶה מֵאוֹת עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁנָיִם)

"eight hundred and twenty-two men"

Support Reference: Numbers

ULT and Adaiah
UST Another priest {who settled in Jerusalem} was Adaiah
(וְעַדָיָה)

The implication is that Adaiah was another leader of the priests who settled in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [Another leader of the priests who settled in Jerusalem was Adaiah]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT and Adaiah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malkijah
UST Another priest {who settled in Jerusalem} was Adaiah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malkijah
(וַעֲדָיָה בֶּן־יְרֹחָם בֶּן־פְּלַלְיָה בֶּן־אַמְצִי בֶן־זְכַרְיָה בֶּן־פַּשְׁחוּר בֶּן־מַלְכִּיָּה)

These are the names of seven men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the work	work
for the house	for the temple
Zechariah	Zechariah

Nehemiah 11:13

ULT	UST
and his brothers, the heads of fathers, were 242; and Amashsai, the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer;	*Another 242 of his associates, including the leaders of their ancestral clans, {settled in Jerusalem}. {Another priest who settled there} was Amashsai the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer.*

ULT **and his brothers, the heads of fathers**
UST Another … of his associates, including the leaders of their ancestral clans, {settled in Jerusalem}
(וְאֶחָיו רָאשֵׁים לְאָבוֹת)

In this case, **his brothers** seems to be a figurative way of saying "his fellow leaders," since the list specifies that these associates of Adaiah were leaders of clans. Alternate translation: [the family leaders who helped him]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the heads of fathers**
UST including the leaders of their ancestral clans
(רָאשֵׁים לְאָבוֹת)

As in 7:70 and 8:13, this seems to be an abbreviated way of saying "the heads of father's houses." The full expression "house of the father" or "father's house" is used in 7:61. See how you translated it there, and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: [clan leaders]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **the heads**
UST including the leaders
(רָאשֵׁים)

Here, **head** is a figurative way of saying **leader**. Alternate translation: [leaders]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **were 242**
UST 242
(מָאתַיִם אַרְבָּעִים וּשְׁנָיִם)

It seems unlikely that there were 242 family leaders assisting Adaiah. Rather, in context, this seems to be the number of priests that Adaiah and the family leaders who helped him were responsible for. Alternate translation: [they were responsible for 242 priests]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **were 242**
UST 242
(מָאתַיִם אַרְבָּעִים וּשְׁנָיִם)

“two hundred and forty-two men”

Support Reference: Numbers

ULT **and Amashsai**
UST {Another priest who settled there} was Amashsai
(וַעֲמַשְׁסַי)

The implication is that Amashsai was another leader of the priests who settled in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [Another leader of the priests who settled in Jerusalem was Amashsai]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and Amashsai, the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer**
UST {Another priest who settled there} was Amashsai the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer
(וַעֲמַשְׁסַי בֶּן־עֲזַרְאֵל בֶּן־אַחְזַי בֶּן־מְשִׁלֵּמוֹת בֶּן־אִמֵּר)

These are the names of five men. In this context, “son” means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:14

ULT	UST
and their brothers, mighty men of strength, were 128. And Zabdiel the son of Haggedolim was overseer for them.	*Another 128 of their associates who were strong men {settled in Jerusalem}. Their leader was Zabdiel the son of Haggedolim.*

ULT and their brothers, mighty men of strength, were 128
UST Another 128 of their associates who were strong men {settled in Jerusalem}
(וַאֲחֵיהֶם גִּבֹּורֵי חַיִל מֵאָה עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁמֹנָה)

The implication is that this is the total number of priests that Amashsai was responsible for. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Amashsai was responsible for 128 priests who were capable of working in the temple]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT and their brothers
UST Another … of their associates … settled in Jerusalem
(וַאֲחֵיהֶם)

Here, in context, **brothers** is a figurative way of saying “fellow priests” as in 11:12, although it is possible that some of the biological brothers of Amashsai were included in this group. **Their** is plural because it is describing this group in reference to all of the other priests, not just to Amashsai. Alternate translation: [their fellow priests]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT mighty men of strength
UST who were strong men
(גִּבֹּורֵי חַיִל)

In this context, the abstract noun **strength** likely refers to the way these men were physically capable of doing the required work in the temple. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind it with an adjective such as “capable.” Alternate translation: [men who were capable of working in the temple]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **were 128**
UST 128
(מֵאָה עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁמֹנָה)

Alternate translation: [one hundred and twenty-eight]

Support Reference: Numbers

ULT **And … was overseer for them**
UST Their leader was
(וּפָקִיד עֲלֵיהֶם)

This appears to mean that while Amashsai was responsible overall for this group of priests, Zabdiel supervised their day-to-day work. Alternate translation: [Zabdiel was their supervisor]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Zabdiel the son of Haggedolim**
UST Zabdiel the son of Haggedolim
(זַבְדִּיאֵל בֶּן־הַגְּדוֹלִים)

Zabdiel is the name of a man, and Haggedolim is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
mighty men of	who were … men
And … was overseer	leader was

Nehemiah 11:15

ULT	UST
And from the Levites: Shemaiah, the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni;	*One of the Levites {who settled in Jerusalem} was Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni.*

ULT **And from the Levites**
UST One of the Levites {who settled in Jerusalem}
(וּמִן־הַלְוִיִּם)

The implication is that this next section of the list will name the men who were leaders of the Levites. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [Here are the names of the leaders of the Levites who settled in Jerusalem. One of them was]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Shemaiah, the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni**
UST was Shemaiah the son of Hasshub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni
(שְׁמַעְיָה בֶן־חַשּׁוּב בֶּן־עַזְרִיקָם בֶּן־חַשַׁבְיָה בֶּן־בּוּנִי)

These are the names of five men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the Levites	the Levites {who settled in Jerusalem}

Nehemiah 11:16

ULT	UST
and Shabbethai and Jozabad, from the heads of the Levites, were over the work outside of the house of God;	*Two others were Shabbethai and Jozabad, who supervised the work outside the temple and were leaders of the Levites.*

ULT and Shabbethai and Jozabad
UST Two others were Shabbethai and Jozabad
(וְשַׁבְּתַי וְיוֹזָבָד)

These are the names of two men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT from the heads of the Levites
UST and were leaders of the Levites
(מֵרָאשֵׁי הַלְוִיִּם)

Head here is a figurative way of saying **leader**. Alternate translation: [who were also leaders of the Levites]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT were over the work outside of the house of God
UST who supervised the work outside the temple
(עַל־הַמְּלָאכָה הַחִיצֹנָה לְבֵית הָאֱלֹהִים)

Here the list speaks of the temple as the **house of God** as if it were God's dwelling place. **Outside** refers to all of the duties that Levites had that did not involve working inside the temple itself. (For example, collecting offerings, as described in 10:37–38.) Alternate translation: [supervised all the work that the Levites did outside the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the Levites	the Levites
were over	who supervised
the work	the work
of the house of God	the temple

Nehemiah 11:17

ULT	UST
and Mattaniah, the son of Mika, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, the head of the beginning who offered the thanksgiving prayer; and Bakbukiah, second from his brothers; and Abda, the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.	*Another Levite {who settled in Jerusalem} was Mattaniah, who directed the temple choir when they sang the prayers to thank God. He was the son of Mika, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph. His assistant choir director was Bakbukiah. Another Levite was Abda, the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.*

ULT **and Mattaniah, the son of Mika, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph**
UST Another Levite {who settled in Jerusalem} was Mattaniah … He was the son of Mika, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph
(וּמַתַּנְיָה בֶן־מִיכָה בֶּן־זַבְדִּי בֶן־אָסָף)

These are the names of four men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and Mattaniah**
UST Another Levite {who settled in Jerusalem} was Mattaniah
(וּמַתַּנְיָה)

The implication is that Mattaniah was another leader of the Levites who settled in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Another leader of the Levites who settled in Jerusalem was]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the head of the beginning who offered the thanksgiving prayer**
UST who directed the temple choir when they sang the prayers to thank God
(רֹאשׁ הַתְּחִלָּה יְהוֹדָה לַתְּפִלָּה)

Head here is a figurative way of saying **leader**. Alternate translation: [the director of the Levite choir]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the head of the beginning**
UST who directed the temple choir
(רֹאשׁ הַתְּחִלָּה)

This expression seems to indicate that Mattaniah told the Levite musicians who sang in the temple when to begin singing; that is, he was the director of their choir. As the choir director, he would have done many other things as well. For example, he would keep the tempo, have the choir sing louder or softer, and tell the choir when to stop singing. Here the list is describing the work of directing the choir by reference to one aspect of it, starting the singing. Alternate translation: [the director]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **who offered the thanksgiving prayer**
UST when they sang the prayers to thank God
(יְהוֹדֶה לַתְּפִלָּה)

Here the book is describing the choir by reference to one kind of thing it was associated with, the prayers of thanksgiving that it sang. Alternate translation: [of the choir]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **who offered the thanksgiving prayer**
UST when they sang the prayers to thank God
(יְהוֹדֶה לַתְּפִלָּה)

While the list says that Mattaniah offered this prayer really, the whole choir did so with him as its director. The list is referring to the entire choir by the name of one member, Mattaniah. Alternate translation: [of the choir]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **and Bakbukiah … and Abda**
UST Bakbukiah. Another Levite was Abda
(וּבַקְבֻּקְיָה & וְעַבְדָא)

The implication is that Bakbukiah and Abda were further leaders of the Levites who settled in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [Two other leaders of the priests who settled in Jerusalem were]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and Bakbukiah**
UST Bakbukiah
(וּבַקְבֻּקְיָה)

This is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **second from his brothers**
UST His assistant choir director was
(מִשְׁנֶה מֵאֶחָיו)

Here, **brother** likely refers to the other the Levites in this division. The expression means that Bakbukiah was another leader who assisted Mattaniah with the Levite choir. It could also possibly mean that he directed a second group of singers. Alternate translation: [who assisted Mattaniah with the Levite choir]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **second**
UST assistant
(מִשְׁנֶה)

Alternate translation: [the next in command]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT **and Abda, the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun**
UST Another Levite was Abda, the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun
(וַעַבְדָּא בֶּן־שַׁמּוּעַ בֶּן־גָּלָל בֶּן־יְדִיתוּן)

These are the names of four men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Asaph	Asaph
the … prayer	to thank God

Nehemiah 11:18

ULT	UST
All the Levites in the holy city were 284.	*Altogether, 284 Levites settled in {Jerusalem}, the city set apart {for God}.*

ULT All the Levites in the holy city were 284
UST Altogether, 284 Levites settled in {Jerusalem}, the city set apart {for God}
(כָּל־הַלְוִיִּם בָּעִיר הַקֹּדֶשׁ מָאתַיִם שְׁמֹנִים וְאַרְבָּעָה)

Alternate translation: [The total number of Levites who settled in Jerusalem was 284]

ULT in the holy city
UST settled in {Jerusalem}, the city set apart {for God}
(בָּעִיר הַקֹּדֶשׁ)

As in 11:1, this phrase describes Jerusalem as the place from which God chose to start making himself famous throughout the world, and as the city where God chose to put his temple.
Alternate translation: [Jerusalem, the special city that God chose]

Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

ULT were 284
UST 284
(מָאתַיִם שְׁמֹנִים וְאַרְבָּעָה)

Alternate translation: [two hundred and eighty-four]

Support Reference: Numbers

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the Levites	Levites
in the holy city	settled in {Jerusalem}, the city set apart {for God}
the holy	set apart {for God}

Nehemiah 11:19

ULT	UST
And the gatekeepers, Akkub, Talmon, and their brothers, the ones who guarded at the gates, were 172.	*The gatekeepers {who settled in Jerusalem} included Akkub, Talmon, and 172 of their associates who kept watch at the gates.*

ULT And the gatekeepers
UST The gatekeepers {who settled in Jerusalem} included
(וְהַשּׁוֹעֲרִים)

The implication is that this next section of the list will name the men who were leaders of the gatekeepers. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [Here are the names of the leaders of the gatekeepers who settled in Jerusalem:] followed by the list of names.

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT And the gatekeepers
UST The gatekeepers {who settled in Jerusalem} included
(וְהַשּׁוֹעֲרִים)

This means the people who were responsible to open and close the gates that controlled access to the city or perhaps the temple. See how you translated this term in 7:1.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT Akkub, Talmon
UST Akkub, Talmon
(עַקּוּב טַלְמוֹן)

These are the names of two men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT and their brothers, the ones who guarded at the gates, were 172
UST and 172 of their associates who kept watch at the gates
(וְאֲחֵיהֶם הַשֹּׁמְרִים בַּשְּׁעָרִים מֵאָה שִׁבְעִים וּשְׁנָיִם)

The list is speaking in abbreviated form here. Alternate translation: [These leaders and their fellow gatekeepers amounted to a total of 172 gatekeepers who settled in Jerusalem.]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **and their brothers, the ones who guarded at the gates**
UST and … of their associates who kept watch at the gates
(וַאֲחֵיהֶם הַשֹּׁמְרִים בַּשְּׁעָרִים)

Here, in context, **brother** seems to be a figurative way of saying "fellow gatekeepers," although it is possible that some of the biological brothers of Akkub and Talmon were included in this group. Alternate translation: [their fellow gatekeepers]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **were 172**
UST 172
(מֵאָה שִׁבְעִים וּשְׁנָיִם)

Alternate translation: [one hundred and seventy-two men]

Support Reference: Numbers

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And the gatekeepers	The gatekeepers {who settled in Jerusalem} included
the ones who guarded	who kept watch
at the gates	at the gates

Nehemiah 11:20

ULT	UST
And the rest of Israel, the priests, the Levites, were in all the cities of Judah, a man in his inheritance.	*The rest of the Israelite people, including the priests and the Levites, all lived on their own property in all the other towns in Judea.*

ULT And the rest of Israel
UST The rest of the Israelite people
(וּשְׁאָר יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here the list refers to all of the Israelites by something associated with them, the name of their ancestor, Israel. Alternate translation: [all the other the Israelites]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT were in all the cities of Judah, a man in his inheritance
UST all lived on their own property in all the other towns in Judea
(בְּכָל־עָרֵי יְהוּדָה אִישׁ בְּנַחֲלָתוֹ)

In this context, **a man** means "each person," and as in 11:3, it may be understood to indicate "each family." Alternate translation: [continued to live in all the other cities of Judah, each family on its own ancestral land]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT a man in his inheritance
UST all … on their own property
(אִישׁ בְּנַחֲלָתוֹ)

The abstract noun **inheritance** refers to the land that was passed down through the generations in each Israelite family. The Levites did not have territory of their own, but they had some towns and surrounding pasturelands as their property. Alternate translation: [each family on its own ancestral land]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the … Israel	the Israelite people
the priests	including the priests
the Levites	and the Levites
Judah	Judea

ULT	UST
in his inheritance	on their own property

Nehemiah 11:21

ULT	UST
And the Nethinim were dwelling in the Ophel, and Ziha and Gishpa were over the Nethinim.	*The {temple} workers lived on Ophel {Hill in Jerusalem}; and Ziha and Gishpa supervised them.*

ULT And the Nethinim
UST The {temple} workers
(וְהַנְּתִינִים)

The term **Nethinim** describes servants who worked in the temple. Alternate translation: [the temple servants]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT in the Ophel
UST on Ophel {Hill in Jerusalem}
(בָּעֹפֶל)

This is probably the name of a geographic feature, a fortified extension of the hill that the Jerusalem temple was located on. See how you translated this term in 3:26–27. Alternate translation: [Ophel Hill]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT and Ziha and Gishpa
UST and Ziha and Gishpa
(וְצִיחָא וְגִשְׁפָּא)

These are the names of two men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT were over the Nethinim
UST supervised them
(עַל־הַנְּתִינִים)

This is a figurative way of saying that Ziha and Gishpa were the leaders of this group. Alternate translation: [were the leaders of the temple servants]

Support Reference: Metaphor

Nehemiah 11:22

ULT	UST
And the overseer of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi, the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mika, from the sons of Asaph, the ones who sang, who were over the work of the house of God.	*The man who supervised the Levites who lived in Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mika. Uzzi was one of the descendants of Asaph. These were the singers responsible for the music in the temple {services}.*

ULT **And the overseer of the Levites in Jerusalem was**
UST The man who supervised the Levites who lived in Jerusalem was
(וּפְקִיד הַלְוִיִּם בִּירוּשָׁלָ͏ִם)

Alternate translation: [the supervisor of the Levites who settled in Jerusalem]

ULT **Uzzi, the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mika**
UST Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mika. Uzzi
(עֻזִּי בֶן־בָּנִי֙ בֶּן־חֲשַׁבְיָ֔ה בֶּן־מַתַּנְיָ֖ה בֶּן־מִיכָ֑א)

These are the names of five men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **from the sons of Asaph**
UST was one of the descendants of Asaph
(מִבְּנֵ֥י אָסָֽף)

Sons here means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [who were descendants of Asaph]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the ones who sang**
UST These were the singers
(הַמְשֹׁרְרִ֔ים)

Here the list supplies some background information that reminds readers what the Levites in the temple were primarily responsible for. Alternate translation: [and who performed music]

Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

ULT **who were over the work of the house of God**
UST responsible for the music in the temple {services}
(לַנֹּגֵד מְלֶאכֶת בֵּית־הָאֱלֹהִים)

Here the list speaks of the temple as the **house of God** as if it were God's dwelling place. By contrast with the Levites described in 11:16, these Levites were responsible for all the duties that had to be performed inside the temple itself. Alternate translation: [who were responsible for the work that was done inside the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And the overseer of … was	The man who supervised … was
the Levites	the Levites who
in Jerusalem	lived in Jerusalem
Asaph	Asaph
the work of	the music in
the house of God	the temple {services}

Nehemiah 11:23

ULT	UST
For the commandment of the king was upon them, that support for the ones who sang was a daily matter in its day.	*Now the king {of Persia} had said {that his kingdom would provide support} for the singers. The king had said to give them whatever they needed to maintain the singing in the temple services.*

ULT **For**
UST Now
(כִּי)

This word indicates that the information that follows provides further background information about this situation. You could express the same meaning with a word that indicates this in your language.

Support Reference: Background Information

ULT **the commandment of the king was upon them**
UST the king {of Persia} had said {that his kingdom would provide support} for the singers
(מִצְוַת הַמֶּלֶךְ עֲלֵיהֶם)

Here the list speaks of the commandment as if it rested upon the Levite singers. Alternate translation: [the king had given orders concerning them]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **that support for the ones who sang**
UST The king had said to give them … to maintain the singing in the temple services
(וֶאֱמָנָה עַל־הַמְשֹׁרְרִים)

The abstract noun **support** refers to an order that the king had given for his own kingdom to pay for the costs of worship in the temple. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the same idea with a verb such as “subsidize.” Alternate translation: [to subsidize the expenses of the Levite singers]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **was a daily matter in its day**
UST whatever they needed
(דְּבַר־יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ)

This is an idiom that means “as each day required.”

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the king	the king {of Persia}
in its day	whatever they needed

Nehemiah 11:24

ULT	UST
And Pethahiah, the son of Meshezabel, from the sons of Zerah, the son of Judah, was at the hand of the king for every matter of the people.	*Pethahiah was the {ambassador} to the king {of Persia} for any matter pertaining to the {Israelites}. He was the son of Meshezabel, who was one of the descendants of Zerah, the son of Judah.*

ULT **And Pethahiah, the son of Meshezabel**
UST Pethahiah … He was the son of Meshezabel
(וּפְתַחְיָה בֶּן־מְשֵׁיזַבְאֵל)

Pethahiah is the name of a man, and Meshezabel is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **from the sons of Zerah**
UST who was one of the descendants of Zerah
(מִבְּנֵי־זֶרַח)

Sons here means "descendants." Alternate translation: [one of the descendants of Zerah]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Zerah, the son of Judah**
UST Zerah, the son of Judah
(זֶרַח בֶּן־יְהוּדָה)

Zerah is the name of a man, and Judah is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **was at the hand of the king**
UST was the {ambassador} to the king {of Persia}
(לְיַד הַמֶּלֶךְ)

Here, **hand** means **side** and describing Zerah as the king's advisor by reference to something associated with that role, the place that he would usually occupy next to the king. Alternate translation: [was an advisor to the king]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **for every matter of the people**
UST for any matter pertaining to the {Israelites}
(לְכָל־דָּבָר לָעָם)

People here means the Jewish people. Alternate translation: [for all matters concerning the Jewish people]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Judah	Judah
the king	the king {of Persia}

Nehemiah 11:25

ULT	UST
And for the villages in their fields, some from the sons of Judah dwelt: in Kiriath Arba and its daughters; and in Dibon and its daughters; and in Jekabzeel and its villages;	*Some of the descendants of Judah did not settle in Jerusalem. They lived in {towns and} villages near their farms. These included {the city of} Kiriath-Arba and its neighboring villages, {the city of} Dibon and its neighboring villages, and {the town of} Jekabzeel and its neighboring villages.*

ULT **And for**
UST in
(וְאֶל)

After describing the various groups that settled in Jerusalem and their leaders, the list said in 11:20 that all the other the Israelites continued to live in the other cities of Judah. In 11:21–24 the list gave additional details about some other things, but it is now returning to speak about those cities and towns outside of Jerusalem. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate this with a phrase such as “and as for”

ULT **the villages in their fields**
UST {towns and} villages near their farms
(הַחֲצֵרִים בִּשְׂדֹתָם)

This refers to settlements and the adjacent agricultural land. It is as if the villages are **in** the fields because the fields surround the villages. Alternate translation: [the towns where there was farmland]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the villages in their fields**
UST {towns and} villages near their farms
(הַחֲצֵרִים בִּשְׂדֹתָם)

The implication is that these are the places where people lived who did not settle in Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [the towns outside Jerusalem where there was farmland]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **some from the sons of Judah**
UST Some of the descendants of Judah
(מִבְּנֵי יְהוּדָה)

Sons here means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [some of the descendants of Judah] or [some of the people of Judah]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **in Kiriath Arba … and in Dibon … and in Jekabzeel**
UST These included {the city of} Kiriath-Arba … {the city of} Dibon … and {the town of} Jekabzeel
(בְּקִרְיַת הָאַרְבַּע & וּבְדִיבֹן & וּבִיקַבְצְאֵל)

These are the names of three towns.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **in Kiriath Arba and its daughters; and in Dibon and its daughters; and in Jekabzeel and its villages**
UST These included {the city of} Kiriath-Arba and its neighboring villages, {the city of} Dibon and its neighboring villages, and {the town of} Jekabzeel and its neighboring villages
(בְּקִרְיַת הָאַרְבַּע וּבְנֹתֶיהָ וּבְדִיבֹן וּבְנֹתֶיהָ וּבִיקַבְצְאֵל וַחֲצֵרֶיהָ)

In this context, referring to the **daughters** of a town is a figurative way of describing the small communities that have grown up around it. (These communities were likely started by people from the town, and they depended on the town the way a child depends on a parent.) Here and in verses 27, 28, 30, and 31, use whatever term would convey this concept most clearly in your language. But be careful to distinguish between this term and the one that is used generally for the places in this part of the list. For example, if you translate “daughters” as “villages,” then use a word like “town” for the places named on the list and other places that the list describes with the same word. Alternate translation: [in Kiriath Arba and its villages, in Dibon and its villages, and in Jekabzeel and the surrounding towns.]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Judah	Judah
in Kiriath Arba	These included {the city of} Kiriath-Arba

Nehemiah 11:26

ULT	UST
and in Jeshua; and in Moladah; and in Beth-Palet;	*{Some descendants of Judah} also {lived} in {the town of} Jeshua, {the town of} Moladah, {the town of} Beth-Pelet,*

ULT and in Jeshua; and in Moladah; and in Beth-Palet

UST {Some descendants of Judah} also {lived} in {the town of} Jeshua, {the town of} Moladah, {the town of} Beth-Pelet

(וּבְיֵשׁוּעַ וּבְמוֹלָדָה וּבְבֵית פָּלָט)

These are the names of three towns.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:27

ULT	UST
and in Hazar-Shual; and in Beersheba and its daughters;	*{the town of} Hazar-Shual, and {the city of} Beersheba and its neighboring villages.*

ULT and in Hazar-Shual; and in Beersheba

UST {the town of} Hazar-Shual, and {the city of} Beersheba

(וּבַחֲצַר שׁוּעָל וּבִבְאֵר שָׁבַע)

These are the names of two towns.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and in Beersheba	and {the city of} Beersheba

Nehemiah 11:28

ULT	UST
and in Ziklag; and Mekonah and its daughters;	*{Some} also {lived} in {the town of} Ziklag, {the town of} Mekonah and its neighboring villages,*

ULT and in Ziklag; and Mekonah

UST {Some} also {lived} in {the town of} Ziklag, {the town of} Mekonah
(וּבְצִקְלַג וּבִמְכֹנָה)

These are the names of two towns.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:29

ULT	UST
and in En-Rimmon; and in Zorah; and in Jarmuth;	*{the town of} En-Rimmon, {the town of} Zora, {the town of} Jarmuth,*

ULT and in En-Rimmon; and in Zorah; and in Jarmuth

UST {the town of} En-Rimmon, {the town of} Zora, {the town of} Jarmuth
(וּבְעֵין רִמּוֹן וּבְצָרְעָה וּבְיַרְמוּת)

These are the names of three towns.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and in En-Rimmon	{the town of} En-Rimmon

Nehemiah 11:30

ULT	UST
Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages; Lachish and its fields; Azekah and its daughters. And they encamped from Beersheba as far as the valley of Hinnom:	*{the towns of} Zanoah and Adullam and the nearby villages, {the city of} Lachish and the nearby farms, and {the town of} Azekah and the nearby villages. {All of} those people settled {in the territory of Judah, in the area} between Beersheba {in the south} and the Valley of Hinnom {in the north}.*

ULT **Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages; Lachish and its fields; Azekah and its daughters**
UST {the towns of} Zanoah and Adullam and the nearby villages, {the city of} Lachish and the nearby farms, and {the town of} Azekah and the nearby villages
(זָנֹחַ עֲדֻלָּם וְחַצְרֵיהֶם לָכִישׁ וּשְׂדֹתֶיהָ עֲזֵקָה וּבְנֹתֶיהָ)

These are the names of cities or towns. Alternate translation: [in Zanoah and Adullam and the nearby towns, in Lachish and the surrounding farmland, and in Azekah and its villages]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **And they encamped from Beersheba as far as the valley of Hinnom**
UST All of} those people settled {in the territory of Judah, in the area} between Beersheba {in the south} and the Valley of Hinnom {in the north}
(וַיַּחֲנוּ מִבְּאֵר־שֶׁבַע עַד־גֵּיא־הִנֹּם)

Encamped is a figurative way of saying that the people of Judah lived throughout this area. They were no longer living in tents, but in permanent houses. Alternate translation: [And so the people of Judah were living throughout the area from Beersheba to the valley of Hinnom]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **And they encamped**
UST {All of} those people settled
(וַיַּחֲנוּ)

This phrase indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the results of what the previous sentences have described. If the people from the tribe of Judah lived in all these towns, then they were spread out over the whole area that the next phrase indicates. Alternate translation: [and so]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **And they encamped**
UST {All of} those people settled
(וַיַּחֲנוּ)

They refers to the people of Judah, looking back to the start of this part of the list in 11:25.

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
from Beersheba	in the territory of Judah, in the area} between Beersheba {in the south} and the Valley of Hinnom {in the north}

Nehemiah 11:31

ULT	UST
and the sons of Benjamin from Geba, at Mikmash, and Aija, and Bethel and its daughters,	*Some people who were descendants of Benjamin {settled in these cities and towns}: Geba, Michmas, Aija, Bethel and its neighboring villages,*

ULT **and the sons of**
UST Some people who were descendants of … settled in these cities and towns
(וּבְנֵי)

This phrase indicates that a different group will now be in focus, the people of the tribe of Benjamin. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate this contrast with an expression such as “for their part.”

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **and the sons of Benjamin**
UST Some people who were descendants of Benjamin {settled in these cities and towns}
(וּבְנֵי בִנְיָמִן)

Sons here means “descendants.” Alternate translation: [the people of the tribe of Benjamin]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **from Geba**
UST Geba
(מִגֶּבַע)

Here the list is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. The meaning is that the people of the tribe of Benjamin lived in different towns, beginning with Geba and including the rest of the towns that the list names afterwards. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [lived in other towns, including Geba]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **from Geba, at Mikmash, and Aija, and Bethel**
UST Geba, Michmas, Aija, Bethel
(מִגֶּבַע מִכְמָשׂ וַעַיָּה וּבֵית־אֵל)

These are the names of four towns.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and Bethel and its daughters**
UST Bethel and its neighboring villages
(וּבֵית־אֵל וּבְנֹתֶיהָ)

As in 11:25 (and also in verses 27, 28, 30, and 31), **daughters** is a figurative way of speaking of the small communities that grow up around a town. Review the note to 11:25 if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: [Bethel and its villages]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Benjamin	Benjamin
and Bethel	Bethel

Nehemiah 11:32

ULT	UST
Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah,	*Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah,*

ULT **Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah**
UST Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah
(עֲנָתוֹת נֹב עֲנַנְיָה)

These are the names of three towns.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:33

ULT	UST
Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim,	*Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim,*

ULT **Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim**
UST Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim
(חָצֹור ׀ רָמָה גִּתָּיִם)

These are the names of three towns.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Ramah	Ramah

Nehemiah 11:34

ULT	UST
Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat,	*Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat,*

ULT Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat
UST Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat
(חָדִיד צְבֹעִים נְבַלָּט)

These are the names of three towns.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 11:35

ULT	UST
Lod, and Ono, the valley of the craftsmen;	*Lod, and Ono the Valley of Craftsmen.*

ULT **Lod, and Ono**
UST Lod, and Ono
(לֹ֣ד וְאוֹנֹ֑ו)

These are the names of two towns.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the valley of the craftsmen**
UST the Valley of Craftsmen
(גֵּ֥י הַחֲרָשִֽׁים)

Here the list supplies some background information that reminds readers what the town of Ono was known for. It was a center for craftsmen. Alternate translation: [which was a center for craftsmen]

Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Nehemiah 11:36

ULT	UST
and some from the Levites, who were divisions of Judah, in Benjamin.	*Some Levites who had previously lived in {the territory of} Judah {went and settled} in {the land that had belonged to the old tribe of} Benjamin.*

ULT and some from
UST Some
(וּמִן)

This phrase indicates that yet another group will now be in focus. If it would be helpful in your language, you could indicate this contrast with an expression such as “finally” (since this is also the last group on the list). Alternate translation: [Finally, from]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT and some from the Levites, who were divisions of Judah, in Benjamin
UST Some Levites who had previously lived in {the territory of} Judah {went and settled} in {the land that had belonged to the old tribe of} Benjamin
(וּמִן־הַלְוִיִּם מַחְלְקוֹת יְהוּדָה לְבִנְיָמִין)

Here the list is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. The meaning seems to be that certain sections of the Levite community that had previously lived in the territory that had belonged to the tribe of Judah went to live in the territory that had belonged to the tribe of Benjamin rather than returning to their former homeland. Alternate translation: [some of the Levites whose families had lived in the territory of Judah now went to live in the territory of Benjamin]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **and some from the Levites, who were divisions of Judah, in Benjamin**
UST Some Levites who had previously lived in {the territory of} Judah {went and settled} in {the land that had belonged to the old tribe of} Benjamin
(וּמִן־הַלְוִיִּם מַחְלְקוֹת יְהוּדָה לְבִנְיָמִין)

The book does not say explicitly why these Levites moved to a different area. However, one reasonable inference in light of the overall themes of the book of Nehemiah is that they did this so that there would be people throughout the entire area where the Israelites were living who could explain the law to them. If that would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [some of the Levites whose families had lived in the territory of Judah now went to live in the territory of Benjamin so that they could teach God's law to the people living there]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the Levites	Levites
Judah	{the territory of} Judah
in Benjamin	{went and settled} in {the land that had belonged to the old tribe of} Benjamin

Nehemiah 12

Nehemiah 12 Chapter Introduction

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Dedication of the wall

In the ancient Near East, it was common to dedicate an important structure to a god. When it was completed, the wall was dedicated to Yahweh. Long lists of people are present, indicating that “everyone” was present for this and praised Yahweh. (See: god, false god, goddess, idol, idolater, idolatrous, idolatry)

Nehemiah 12:1

ULT	UST
And these are the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,	*These are {the names of} the priests and Levites who returned {from Babylonia} with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and with Joshua {the Supreme Priest}. The priests included Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,*

ULT **And these are the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua**

UST These are {the names of} the priests and Levites who returned {from Babylonia} with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and with Joshua {the Supreme Priest}

(וְאֵלֶּה הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם אֲשֶׁר עָלוּ עִם־זְרֻבָּבֶל בֶּן־שְׁאַלְתִּיאֵל וְיֵשׁוּעַ)

The implication of the list in verses 1–25 of this chapter is that the priests and Levites had dependable records of their ancestry. So when Nehemiah called them back into service for the dedication of the wall and the collection of offerings, as described in the rest of this chapter, he was employing the people with exactly the lineage that the law required. Throughout this book, Nehemiah stresses how he made sure that the people of Judah were not only organized and well-protected, but also obedient to the law. This is one more example of that latter concern. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Here is a record that shows that the priests and Levites had dependable records of their ancestry. It begins with the priests who first returned to Judah with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, their governor, and with Joshua the high priest.]

ULT **came up**

UST returned {from Babylonia}

(עָלוּ)

As in 7:6 and 7:61, **went up** means “traveled from Babylon back to Judah,” since that involves going from a river valley up into the mountains. Alternate translation: [returned to Judah from Babylon]

Support Reference: Idiom

> ULT **with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel**
> UST with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel
> (עִם־זְרֻבָּבֶל בֶּן־שְׁאַלְתִּיאֵל)

This was the man who led the first group of Jews who returned to the province of Judah about a hundred years before the time of Nehemiah. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this more explicitly. Alternate translation: [under the leadership of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, their governor]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel**
> UST with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel
> (עִם־זְרֻבָּבֶל בֶּן־שְׁאַלְתִּיאֵל)

Zerubbabel is the name of a man, and Shealtiel is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

> ULT **and Jeshua**
> UST and with Joshua {the Supreme Priest}
> (וְיֵשׁוּעַ)

This was the other leader of the first group of Jews who returned to the province of Judah. While Zerubbabel was the governor and civil authority, Joshua was the high priest and religious authority. Alternate translation: [and under the leadership of Joshua the high priest]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra**
> UST The priests included Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra
> (שְׂרָיָה יִרְמְיָה עֶזְרָא)

The list now names the priests who returned to Judah in this first group. Alternate translation: [The priests were:]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra**
> UST The priests included Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra
> (שְׂרָיָה יִרְמְיָה עֶזְרָא)

These are names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the priests	the priests
and the Levites	and Levites
Zerubbabel	Zerubbabel
Jeremiah	Jeremiah
Ezra	Ezra

Nehemiah 12:2

ULT	UST
Amariah, Malluk, Hattush,	*Amariah, Malluk, Hattush,*

ULT Amariah, Malluk, Hattush
UST Amariah, Malluk, Hattush
(אֲמַרְיָה מַלּוּךְ חַטּוּשׁ)

These are names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:3

ULT	UST
Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth,	*Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth,*

ULT **Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth**
UST Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth
(שְׁכַנְיָה רְחֻם מְרֵמֹת)

These are names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:4

ULT	UST
Iddo, Ginnethon, Abijah,	*Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah,*

ULT Iddo, Ginnethon, Abijah
UST Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah
(עִדּוֹא גִנְּתֹוי אֲבִיָּה)

These are names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Abijah	Abijah

Nehemiah 12:5

ULT	UST
Mijamin, Moadiah, Bilgah,	*Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah,*

ULT Mijamin, Moadiah, Bilgah
UST Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah
(מִיְמִין מַעַדְיָה בִּלְגָּה)

These are names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:6

ULT	UST
Shemaiah and Joiarib, Jedaiah,	*Shemaiah, and Joiarib, Jedaiah,*

ULT Shemaiah and Joiarib, Jedaiah
UST Shemaiah, and Joiarib, Jedaiah
(שְׁמַעְיָה וְיוֹיָרִיב יְדַעְיָה)

These are names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:7

ULT	UST
Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah. These were the heads of the priests and their brothers in the days of Jeshua.	*Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, and Jedaiah. All those men were leaders of the priests, their associates, during the time when Joshua {was the Supreme Priest}.*

ULT **Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah**
UST Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, and Jedaiah
(סַלּוּ עָמֹוק חִלְקִיָּה יְדַעְיָה)

These are names of four men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **These were the heads of the priests and their brothers in the days of Jeshua**
UST All those men were leaders of the priests, their associates, during the time when Joshua {was the Supreme Priest}
(אֵלֶּה רָאשֵׁי הַכֹּהֲנִים וַאֲחֵיהֶם בִּימֵי יֵשׁוּעַ)

This is a summary statement about the 22 men who have just been named. Alternate translation: [These men were the leaders of the priests in their own divisions while Joshua was the high priest.]

Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

ULT **the heads of the priests and their brothers**
UST leaders of the priests, their associates
(רָאשֵׁי הַכֹּהֲנִים וַאֲחֵיהֶם)

Here, **heads** is a figurative way of saying “leaders.” Alternate translation: [the leaders of the priests in their own divisions]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the heads of the priests and their brothers**
UST leaders of the priests, their associates
(רָאשֵׁי הַכֹּהֲנִים וַאֲחֵיהֶם)

In this context, **and** means "that is," so the full expression means, "the leaders of the priests, that is, the ones who were their 'brothers.'" **Brothers** itself is a figurative way of saying "fellow priests," and in this context specifically means "the priests in their own divisions." (King David had divided the priests into divisions so that they could rotate their responsibilities, and the Israelites reconstituted these divisions after the exile.) It is possible that some of the people in each division were the biological brothers of the leaders named, since the divisions were created based on close kinship ties, but the word "brother" is essentially figurative. Alternate translation: [their fellow priests]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **in the days of Jeshua**
UST during the time when Joshua {was the Supreme Priest}
(בִּימֵי יֵשׁוּעַ)

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: [in the time of Joshua]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Hilkiah	Hilkiah
the priests	the priests
in the days of	during the time when

Nehemiah 12:8

ULT	UST
And the Levites were: Jeshua; Binnui; Kadmiel; Sherebiah; Judah; Mattaniah, he and his brothers were over the thanksgiving songs;	*The Levites {who returned} included Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah. Mattaniah and his associates led {the people in singing songs} to thank {God}.*

ULT **And the Levites were**
UST The Levites {who returned} included
(וְהַלְוִיִּם)

Here the list is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: [And these were the leaders of the Levites who first returned to Judah with Zerubbabel the governor and with Joshua the high priest]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **Jeshua; Binnui; Kadmiel; Sherebiah; Judah; Mattaniah**
UST Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah
(יֵשׁוּעַ בִּנּוּי קַדְמִיאֵל שֵׁרֵבְיָה יְהוּדָה מַתַּנְיָה)

These are the names of six men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **he and his brothers were over the thanksgiving songs**
UST Mattaniah and his associates led {the people in singing songs} to thank {God}
(עַל־הַיְדוֹת הוּא וְאַחָיו)

He refers to Mattaniah. **Brothers** means “fellow Levite leaders.” Alternate translation: [Mattaniah and his fellow Levite leaders were responsible for directing the choir.]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **were over the thanksgiving songs**
UST led {the people in singing songs} to thank {God}
(עַל־הַיְדוֹת)

As in 11:17, here the book is describing the choir by reference to one kind of thing it was associated with, the songs of thanksgiving that it sang. Alternate translation: [directed the choir]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **were over the thanksgiving songs**
UST led {the people in singing songs} to thank {God}
(עַל־הַיָּדוֹת)

Over is a figurative way of saying that Mattaniah and his colleagues were responsible for this group. Alternate translation: [were responsible for directing the choir]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the thanksgiving songs**
UST the people in singing songs} to thank {God}
(הַיָּדוֹת)

One responsibility of the Levite choir was to sing prayers of thanksgiving. But it sang many other things as well. Here the list is describing everything the choir sang by reference to one kind of thing it sang, prayers of thanksgiving. Alternate translation: [the choir]

Support Reference: Metonymy

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And the Levites were	The Levites {who returned} included
Judah	Judah

Nehemiah 12:9

ULT	UST
and Bakbukiah and Unni, their brothers, were opposite them in the service watches.	*Their associates Bakbukiah and Unni {stood} opposite them during the worship services {and led a choir that sang responses}.*

ULT **and Bakbukiah and Unni**
UST Bakbukiah and Unni
(וּבַקְבֻקְיָה וּעַנּוֹ)

These are the names of two men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **their brothers**
UST Their associates
(אֲחֵיהֶם)

Brothers here means **their fellow Levite leaders**.

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **were opposite them in the service watches**
UST stood} opposite them during the worship services {and led a choir that sang responses}
(לְנֶגְדָּם לְמִשְׁמָרוֹת)

This phrase could mean one of two things. (1) It could mean that Mattaniah and his associates directed one choir, and Bakbukiah and Unni directed a second choir that stood opposite to this first one and sang responses to what it sang. (2) It could mean that Bakbukiah and Unni took turns with Mattaniah and his associates in assuming the responsibilities of directing a single Levite choir. Alternate translation: [led a second choir that sang responses] or [took turns with them directing the Levite choir]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in the service watches	during the worship services {and led a choir that sang responses}

Nehemiah 12:10

ULT	UST
And Jeshua fathered Joiakim; and Joiakim fathered Eliashib; and Eliashib, Joiada;	*Joshua {the Supreme Priest} was the father of Joiakim. Joiakim was the father of Eliashib. Eliashib was the father of Joiada.*

ULT **And Jeshua fathered Joiakim; and Joiakim fathered Eliashib; and Eliashib, Joiada**
UST Joshua {the Supreme Priest} was the father of Joiakim. Joiakim was the father of Eliashib. Eliashib was the father of Joiada
(וְיֵשׁוּעַ הוֹלִיד אֶת־יוֹיָקִים וְיוֹיָקִים הוֹלִיד אֶת־אֶלְיָשִׁיב וְאֶלְיָשִׁיב אֶת־יוֹיָדָע)

Here the book is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: [Joshua was the father of Joiakim, Joiakim was the father of Eliashib, Eliashib was the father of Joiada]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **And Jeshua fathered Joiakim; and Joiakim fathered Eliashib; and Eliashib, Joiada**
UST Joshua {the Supreme Priest} was the father of Joiakim. Joiakim was the father of Eliashib. Eliashib was the father of Joiada
(וְיֵשׁוּעַ הוֹלִיד אֶת־יוֹיָקִים וְיוֹיָקִים הוֹלִיד אֶת־אֶלְיָשִׁיב וְאֶלְיָשִׁיב אֶת־יוֹיָדָע)

Since this list actually continues into the next verse, for clarity you may wish to end this verse with the punctuation that your language uses to indicate that a series is continuing, rather than with the punctuation it uses to show that a sentence is ending.

ULT **And Jeshua fathered Joiakim; and Joiakim fathered Eliashib; and Eliashib, Joiada**
UST Joshua {the Supreme Priest} was the father of Joiakim. Joiakim was the father of Eliashib. Eliashib was the father of Joiada
(וְיֵשׁוּעַ הוֹלִיד אֶת־יוֹיָקִים וְיוֹיָקִים הוֹלִיד אֶת־אֶלְיָשִׁיב וְאֶלְיָשִׁיב אֶת־יוֹיָדָע)

This is a record of the succession of the Jewish high priests for several generations beginning with Joshua, the high priest who accompanied the first group that returned to Judah from exile. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [When Joshua died, his son Joiakim succeeded him as high priest. When Joiakim died, his son Eliashib succeeded him as high priest. When Eliashib died, his son Joiada succeeded him as high priest]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Nehemiah 12:11

ULT	UST
and Joiada fathered Jonathan; and Jonathan fathered Jaddua.	*Joiada was the father of Jonathan. Jonathan was the father of Jaddua.*

ULT and Joiada fathered Jonathan; and Jonathan fathered Jaddua
UST Joiada was the father of Jonathan. Jonathan was the father of Jaddua
(וְיוֹיָדָע הוֹלִיד אֶת־יוֹנָתָן וְיוֹנָתָן הוֹלִיד אֶת־יַדּוּעַ)

Alternate translation, if continuing the sentence from the previous verse: [Joiada was the father of Jonathan, and Jonathan was the father of Jaddua.] Alternate translation, if making explicit that this is the succession of high priests: [When Joiada died, his son Jonathan succeeded him as high priest. When Jonathan died, his son Jaddua succeeded him as high priest]

ULT and Joiada … Jonathan … Jaddua
UST Joiada … Jonathan … Jaddua
(וְיוֹיָדָע & אֶת־יוֹנָתָן & אֶת־יַדּוּעַ)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Jonathan	Jonathan
and Jonathan	Jonathan

Nehemiah 12:12

ULT	UST
And in the days of Joiakim priests were the heads of the fathers: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah;	*When Joiakim was {the Supreme Priest}, these priests were the leaders of their clans. Meraiah was the leader of the clan of Seraiah. Hananiah was the leader of the clan of Jeremiah.*

ULT **And in the days of Joiakim priests were the heads of the fathers**
UST When Joiakim was {the Supreme Priest}, these priests were the leaders of their clans
(וּבִימֵ֣י יוֹיָקִ֗ים הָי֤וּ כֹהֲנִים֙ רָאשֵׁ֣י הָאָב֔וֹת)

Here the book is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. “Priests were” is an abbreviated way of saying “these are the priests who were.” Alternate translation: [These are the priests who were clan leaders while Joiakim was the high priest]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **And in the days of Joiakim**
UST When Joiakim was {the Supreme Priest}
(וּבִימֵ֣י יוֹיָקִ֗ים)

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: [while Joiakim was the high priest]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the heads of the fathers**
UST the leaders of their clans
(רָאשֵׁ֣י הָאָב֔וֹת)

This seems to be an abbreviated way of saying “the heads of father’s houses.” The full expression “house of the father” or “father’s house” is used in 7:61. See how you translated it there, and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: [clan leaders]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **the heads of**
UST the leaders of
(רָאשֵׁ֣י)

Head here is a figurative way of saying “leader.” Alternate translation: [leaders]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah
UST Meraiah was the leader of the clan of Seraiah. Hananiah was the leader of the clan of Jeremiah
(לִשְׂרָיָה מְרָיָה לִירְמְיָה חֲנַנְיָה)

In this list the book continues to leave out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: [Meraiah was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Seraiah. Hananiah was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Jeremiah]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT Joiakim … of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah
UST Joiakim … Meraiah was the leader of the clan of Seraiah. Hananiah was the leader of the clan of Jeremiah
(יְוֹיָקִים & לִשְׂרָיָה מְרָיָה לִירְמְיָה חֲנַנְיָה)

These are the names of five men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And in the days of	When … was {the Supreme Priest}
priests	these priests
of Jeremiah	was the leader of the clan of Jeremiah
Hananiah	Hananiah

Nehemiah 12:13

ULT	UST
of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan;	*Meshullam was {the leader of the clan} of Ezra. Jehohanan was {the leader of the clan} of Amariah.*

ULT of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan
UST Meshullam was {the leader of the clan} of Ezra. Jehohanan was {the leader of the clan} of Amariah
(לְעֶזְרָא מְשֻׁלָּם לַאֲמַרְיָה יְהוֹחָנָן)

Alternate translation: [Meshullam was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Ezra. Jehohanan was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Amariah]

ULT of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan
UST Meshullam was {the leader of the clan} of Ezra. Jehohanan was {the leader of the clan} of Amariah
(לְעֶזְרָא מְשֻׁלָּם לַאֲמַרְיָה יְהוֹחָנָן)

These are the names of four men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
of Ezra	was {the leader of the clan} of Ezra

Nehemiah 12:14

ULT	UST
of Malluk, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph;	*Jonathan was {the leader of the clan} of Malluchi. Joseph was {the leader of the clan} of Shecaniah.*

ULT of Malluk, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph
UST Jonathan was {the leader of the clan} of Malluchi. Joseph was {the leader of the clan} of Shecaniah
(לְמַלּוּכִי יְוֹנָתָן לִשְׁבַנְיָה יוֹסֵף)

Alternate translation: [Jonathan was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Malluk. Joseph was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Shebaniah]

ULT of Malluk, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph
UST Jonathan was {the leader of the clan} of Malluchi. Joseph was {the leader of the clan} of Shecaniah
(לְמַלּוּכִי יְוֹנָתָן לִשְׁבַנְיָה יוֹסֵף)

These are the names of four men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Jonathan	Jonathan

Nehemiah 12:15

ULT	UST
of Harim, Adna; of Meremoth, Helkai;	*Adna was {the leader of the clan} of Harim. Helkai was {the leader of the clan} of Meraioth.*

ULT of Harim, Adna; of Meremoth, Helkai
UST Adna was {the leader of the clan} of Harim. Helkai was {the leader of the clan} of Meraioth
(לְחָרֵם עַדְנָא לִמְרָיוֹת חֶלְקָי)

Alternate translation: [Adna was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Harim. Helkai was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Meremoth]

ULT of Harim, Adna; of Meremoth, Helkai
UST Adna was {the leader of the clan} of Harim. Helkai was {the leader of the clan} of Meraioth
(לְחָרֵם עַדְנָא לִמְרָיוֹת חֶלְקָי)

These are the names of four men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:16

ULT	UST
of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam;	*Zechariah was {the leader of the clan} of Iddo. Meshullam was {the leader of the clan} of Ginnethon.*

ULT of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam
UST Zechariah was {the leader of the clan} of Iddo. Meshullam was {the leader of the clan} of Ginnethon
(לעדיא זְכַרְיָה לְגִנְּתוֹן מְשֻׁלָּם)

Alternate translation: [Zechariah was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Iddo. Meshullam was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Ginnethon]

ULT of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam
UST Zechariah was {the leader of the clan} of Iddo. Meshullam was {the leader of the clan} of Ginnethon
(לעדיא זְכַרְיָה לְגִנְּתוֹן מְשֻׁלָּם)

These are the names of four men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Zechariah	Zechariah

Nehemiah 12:17

ULT	UST
of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai;	*Zichri was {the leader of the clan} of Abijah. Piltai was {the leader of the clan} of Miniamin and {the clan} of Moadiah.*

ULT **of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai**
UST Zichri was {the leader of the clan} of Abijah. Piltai was {the leader of the clan} of Miniamin and {the clan} of Moadiah
(לַאֲבִיָּה זִכְרִי לְמִנְיָמִין לְמוֹעַדְיָה פִּלְטָי)

It appears that the name of the leader of the Miniamin clan has accidentally been lost from the text. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [Zichri was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Abijah. Piltai was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Moadiah. It is no longer known who was the leader at this time of the clan whose ancestor was Miniamin]

ULT **of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai**
UST Zichri was {the leader of the clan} of Abijah. Piltai was {the leader of the clan} of Miniamin and {the clan} of Moadiah
(לַאֲבִיָּה זִכְרִי לְמִנְיָמִין לְמוֹעַדְיָה פִּלְטָי)

These are the names of five men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
of Abijah	was {the leader of the clan} of Abijah

Nehemiah 12:18

ULT	UST
of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan;	*Shammua was {the leader of the clan} of Bilgah. Jehonathan was {the leader of the clan} of Shemaiah.*

ULT **of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan**
UST Shammua was {the leader of the clan} of Bilgah. Jehonathan was {the leader of the clan} of Shemaiah
(לְבִלְגָּה שַׁמּוּעַ לִשְׁמַעְיָה יְהוֹנָתָן)

Alternate translation: [Shammua was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Bilgah. Jehonathan was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Shemaiah]

ULT **of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan**
UST Shammua was {the leader of the clan} of Bilgah. Jehonathan was {the leader of the clan} of Shemaiah
(לְבִלְגָּה שַׁמּוּעַ לִשְׁמַעְיָה יְהוֹנָתָן)

These are the names of four men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:19

ULT	UST
of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi;	*Mattenai was {the leader of the clan} of Joiarib. Uzzi was {the leader of the clan} of Jedaiah.*

ULT **of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi**
UST Mattenai was {the leader of the clan} of Joiarib. Uzzi was {the leader of the clan} of Jedaiah
(וְיֹיָרִיב מַתְּנַי לִידַעְיָה עֻזִּי)

Alternate translation: [Mattenai was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Joiarib. Uzzi was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Jedaiah]

ULT **of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi**
UST Mattenai was {the leader of the clan} of Joiarib. Uzzi was {the leader of the clan} of Jedaiah
(וְיֹיָרִיב מַתְּנַי לִידַעְיָה עֻזִּי)

These are the names of four men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:20

ULT	UST
of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber;	*Kallai was the {leader of the clan} of Sallai. Eber was {the leader of the clan} of Amok.*

ULT **of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber**

UST Kallai was the {leader of the clan} of Sallai. Eber was {the leader of the clan} of Amok (לְסַלַּי קַלָּי לְעָמּוֹק עֵבֶר)

Alternate translation: [Kallai was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Sallai. Eber was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Amok]

ULT **of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber**

UST Kallai was the {leader of the clan} of Sallai. Eber was {the leader of the clan} of Amok (לְסַלַּי קַלָּי לְעָמּוֹק עֵבֶר)

These are the names of four men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

Nehemiah 12:21

ULT	UST
of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethanel.	*Hashabiah was {the leader of the clan} of Hilkiah. Nethanel was {the leader of the clan} of Jedaiah.*

ULT of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethanel
UST Hashabiah was {the leader of the clan} of Hilkiah. Nethanel was {the leader of the clan} of Jedaiah
(לְחִלְקִיָּה חֲשַׁבְיָה לִירַעְיָה נְתַנְאֵל)

Alternate translation: [Hashabiah was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Hilkiah. Nethanel was the leader of the clan whose ancestor was Jedaiah]

ULT of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethanel
UST Hashabiah was {the leader of the clan} of Hilkiah. Nethanel was {the leader of the clan} of Jedaiah
(לְחִלְקִיָּה חֲשַׁבְיָה לִירַעְיָה נְתַנְאֵל)

These are the names of four men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
of Hilkiah	was {the leader of the clan} of Hilkiah

Nehemiah 12:22

ULT	UST
In the days of Eliashib, the Levites Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, were written as heads of fathers: also the priests, during the reign of Darius the Persian.	*{Some scribes} wrote down {the names of} the clan leaders of the Levites during the time when Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua were {Supreme Priests}. They wrote down {the names of} the clan leaders of the priests when Darius was king of Persia.*

ULT **In the days of Eliashib, the Levites Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, were written as heads of fathers**
UST {Some scribes} wrote down {the names of} the clan leaders of the Levites during the time when Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua were {Supreme Priests}. They wrote down {the names of} the clan leaders of
(הַלְוִיִּם בִּימֵי אֶלְיָשִׁיב יוֹיָדָע וְיוֹחָנָן וְיַדּוּעַ כְּתוּבִים רָאשֵׁי אָבוֹת)

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. The meaning seems to be, “During the times when Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua served as high priest, the Israelites kept records of which Levites were the clan leaders”

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **In the days of Eliashib … Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua**
UST during the time when Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua were {Supreme Priests}
(בִּימֵי אֶלְיָשִׁיב יוֹיָדָע וְיוֹחָנָן וְיַדּוּעַ)

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: [the times when Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua served as high priest]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Eliashib … Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua**
UST Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua
(אֶלְיָשִׁיב יוֹיָדָע וְיוֹחָנָן וְיַדּוּעַ)

These are the names of four men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **were written as**
UST {Some scribes} wrote down … They wrote down
(כְּתוּבִים)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: [the Israelites kept records]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **heads of fathers**
UST {the names of} the clan leaders of … {the names of} the clan leaders of
(רָאשֵׁי אָבוֹת)

This seems to be an abbreviated way of saying "the heads of father's houses." The full expression "house of the father" or "father's house" is used in 7:61. See how you translated it there, and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: [clan leaders]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **heads of**
UST {the names of} the … leaders of … {the names of} the … leaders of
(רָאשֵׁי)

Head here is a figurative way of saying "leader." Alternate translation: [leaders]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **also the priests, during the reign of Darius the Persian**
UST the priests when Darius was king of Persia
(וְהַכֹּהֲנִים עַל־מַלְכוּת דָּרְיָוֶשׁ הַפָּרְסִי)

Here again the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. The meaning seems to be, "The Israelites also made records during the reign of Darius III of which priests were the heads of their clans"

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT Darius the Persian
UST Darius … of Persia
(דָּרְיָוֶשׁ הַפָּרְסִי)

The Persian king named Darius who reigned at the time of Jaddua, the last high priest mentioned in this verse, was Darius III Codomannus. The implication is therefore that the phrase “Darius the Persian” refers to him. (Since he reigned about a hundred years after Nehemiah lived, it is probable that scribes added this information to the book later on to bring it up to date.) If it would be helpful to your readers, you could make this likely identification explicit. Alternate translation: [Darius III] or [Darius Codomannus] or [Darius III Codomannus]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
In the days of	during the time when … were {Supreme Priests}
the Levites	the Levites
also the priests	the priests
the reign of	was king
Darius	Darius
the Persian	of Persia

Nehemiah 12:23

ULT	UST
The sons of Levi, the heads of fathers, were written in the book of the events of days even until the days of Johanan, the son of Eliashib.	*{Scribes} recorded {the names of} the clan leaders of the Levites in their record books up until the time when Johanan the descendant of Eliashib was {the Supreme Priest}.*

ULT **The sons of Levi, the heads of fathers, were written**
UST {Scribes} recorded {the names of} the clan leaders of the Levites
(בְּנֵי לֵוִי רָאשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת כְּתוּבִּים)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: [Scribes recorded the names of the Levites who were clan leaders]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **The sons of Levi, the heads of fathers, were written**
UST {Scribes} recorded {the names of} the clan leaders of the Levites
(בְּנֵי לֵוִי רָאשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת כְּתוּבִּים)

Sons here means "descendants," so this phrase refers to the descendants of Levi or the Levites. Alternate translation: [the Levites who were clan leaders]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the heads of fathers**
UST { … of} the clan leaders
(רָאשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת)

This seems to be an abbreviated way of saying "the heads of father's houses." The full expression "house of the father" or "father's house" is used in 7:61. See how you translated it there, and review the note there if that would be helpful. Alternate translation: [clan leaders]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **the heads of**
UST of … leaders
(רָאשֵׁי)

Head here is a figurative way of saying "leader." Alternate translation: [leaders]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **in the book of the events of days**
UST in their record books
(עַל־סֵפֶר דִּבְרֵי הַיָּמִים)

This is an idiom that describes a regular record of the events. Alternate translation: [in their chronicles]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **even until the days of Johanan**
UST up until the time when Johanan … was {the Supreme Priest}
(וְעַד־יְמֵי יוֹחָנָן)

The term **days** is used here to refer to a particular period of time. Alternate translation: [through the time when Johanan was the high priest]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Johanan**
UST Johanan
(יוֹחָנָן)

Johanan is the name of a man. The context indicates that he was a Jewish high priest, and so he seems to be the same man who is called “Jonathan” in verse 11. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the same name both here and in verse 11, either “Johanan” or “Jonathan”

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the son of Eliashib**
UST the descendant of Eliashib
(בֶּן־אֶלְיָשִׁיב)

Eliashib is the name of a man. Verse 12:10 shows that Johanan/Jonathan was not actually his son, but his grandson. So **son** here means “descendant.” Alternate translation: [the grandson of Eliashib] or [the descendant of Eliashib]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Levi	of the Levites
days	their record books

ULT	UST
the days of	the time when … was {the Supreme Priest}

Nehemiah 12:24

ULT	UST
And the heads of the Levites were Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua, the son of Kadmiel, with their brothers opposite them, service watch by service watch, to praise and give thanks by the commandment of David, the man of God.	*Hashabiah, Serebiah, and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel were Levite leaders {who directed one choir}. Their associates {stood} opposite them {directing another choir}. The singers praised {God} and gave thanks {to him}, with one group facing the other. This was what King David, the man who served God faithfully, had instructed.*

ULT **And the heads of the Levites were … to praise and give thanks**
UST were Levite leaders {who directed one choir} … The singers praised {God} and gave thanks {to him}
(וְרָאשֵׁי֙ הַלְוִיִּ֔ם & לְהַלֵּ֖ל לְהוֹד֑וֹת)

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This sentence seems to mean "The Levite leaders who directed the choir that sang songs of praise and thanksgiving were …" You could say something like that as an alternate translation if it would be helpful to your readers.

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **And the heads of the Levites were**
UST were Levite leaders {who directed one choir}
(וְרָאשֵׁי֙ הַלְוִיִּ֔ם)

Head here is a figurative way of saying "leader." Alternate translation: [the leaders of the Levites] or [the Levite leaders]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Hashabiah, Sherebiah**
UST Hashabiah, Serebiah
(חֲשַׁבְיָ֣ה שֵׁרֵבְיָ֔ה)

These are the names of two men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and Jeshua, the son of Kadmiel**
UST and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel
(וְיֵשׁוּעַ בֶּן־קַדְמִיאֵל)

Jeshua is the name of a man, and Kadmiel is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **with their brothers opposite them, service watch by service watch**
UST Their associates {stood} opposite them {directing another choir} … with one group facing the other
(וַאֲחֵיהֶם לְנֶגְדָּם & מִשְׁמָר לְעֻמַּת מִשְׁמָר)

As in 12:9, this could mean one of two things. (1) It could mean that Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeshua directed one choir, and other Levite leaders directed a second choir that stood opposite to this first one and sang responses to what it sang. (2) It could mean that other Levite leaders took turns with these three men in assuming the responsibilities of directing a single Levite choir. Alternate translation: [their fellow Levite leaders directed a second choir that sang responses] or [their fellow Levite leaders took turns with them directing the choir]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **with their brothers**
UST Their associates
(וַאֲחֵיהֶם)

Brothers here means **their fellow Levite leaders**.

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **to praise and give thanks**
UST The singers praised {God} and gave thanks {to him}
(לְהַלֵּל לְהוֹדוֹת)

Alternate translation: [the choir that sang songs of praise and thanksgiving]

ULT **by the commandment of David, the man of God**
UST This was what King David, the man who served God faithfully, had instructed
(בְּמִצְוַת דָּוִיד אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִים)

Here the book offers some background information to remind readers of the character of David, who had been a great founding king of Israel. Alternate translation: [as King David, that godly man, had commanded]

Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the Levites	Levite
service watch	with one group
service watch	the other
to praise	The singers praised {God}
David	King David
the man of God	the man who served God faithfully

Nehemiah 12:25

ULT	UST
Mattaniah, and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub, were guardians, gatekeepers, a guard at the storehouses of the gates.	*Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub were gatekeepers. They {stood} guard at the storerooms near the gates.*

ULT **Mattaniah, and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub**
UST Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub
(מַתַּנְיָה וּבַקְבֻקְיָה עֹבַדְיָה מְשֻׁלָּם טַלְמֹון עַקּוּב)

These are the names of six men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **were guardians, gatekeepers, a guard at the storehouses of the gates**
UST were gatekeepers. They {stood} guard at the storerooms near the gates
(שֹׁמְרִים שׁוֹעֲרִים מִשְׁמָּר בַּאֲסַפֵּי הַשְּׁעָרִים)

Since, in context, these men appear to have been Levites, the **gates** described are likely the gates of the temple. It seems that there were rooms above the temple gateways that were used as storehouses or treasuries, and these men were responsible for overseeing and protecting them. Alternate translation: [guarded the store rooms above the gateways to the temple]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Obadiah	Obadiah
gatekeepers	They {stood} guard
a guard	They {stood} guard
at the storehouses of	at the storerooms near
the gates	the gates

Nehemiah 12:26

ULT	UST
These were in the days of Joiakim, the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and Ezra, the priest, the scribe.	*They did that {work} during the time when Joiakim, the son of Jeshua and grandson of Jozadak, was {the Supreme Priest}. They did it {again} during the time when Nehemiah {served} as governor and Ezra {served} as priest and scribe.*

ULT **These were**
UST They did that {work}
(אֵ֣לֶּה)

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This seems to mean, "These are the names of the men who served in this capacity." You could say something like that if it would be helpful to your readers.

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **in the days of Joiakim**
UST during the time when Joiakim … was {the Supreme Priest}
(בִּימֵ֣י יוֹיָקִ֗ים)

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: [during the time when Joiakim … was the high priest]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Joiakim, the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak**
UST Joiakim, the son of Jeshua and grandson of Jozadak
(יוֹיָקִ֗ים בֶּן־יֵשׁ֙וּעַ֙ בֶּן־יוֹצָדָ֔ק)

Joiakim is the name of a man, Joshua is the name of his father, and Jozadak is the name of his grandfather.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT and in the days of Nehemiah the governor
UST They did it {again} during the time when Nehemiah {served} as governor
(וּבִימֵ֣י נְחֶמְיָ֔ה הַפֶּחָ֖ה)

This would have been one generation later, since 3:1 says that Eliashib was the high priest during the time of Nehemiah, and 12:10 says that Eliashib was the son of Joiakim. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [and also in the next generation, during the time when Nehemiah was the governor]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT and in the days of Nehemiah the governor
UST They did it {again} during the time when Nehemiah {served} as governor
(וּבִימֵ֣י נְחֶמְיָ֔ה הַפֶּחָ֖ה)

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: [and also during the time when Nehemiah was the governor]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT and Ezra, the priest, the scribe
UST and Ezra {served} as priest and scribe
(וְעֶזְרָ֥א הַכֹּהֵ֖ן הַסּוֹפֵֽר)

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers who Ezra was. Alternate translation: [and he worked with Ezra, who was a priest and a scribe]

Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in the days of	during the time when … was {the Supreme Priest}
and in the days of	They did it {again} during the time when
Nehemiah	Nehemiah {served} as
the governor	governor
and Ezra	and Ezra {served} as
the priest	priest
the scribe	and scribe

Nehemiah 12:27

ULT	UST
And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, they sought out the Levites from all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to perform the dedication with rejoicing, and with thanksgivings, and with song, cymbals, lyres, and harps.	*When {we} dedicated the wall around Jerusalem, we summoned the Levites from all the places {where} they were {living}. We brought them to Jerusalem to assist in dedicating the wall by rejoicing and giving thanks and by singing {accompanied by} cymbals and harps and other stringed instruments.*

ULT **And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem**
UST When {we} dedicated the wall around Jerusalem
(וּבַחֲנֻכַּ֥ת חוֹמַ֖ת יְרוּשָׁלִָֽם)

In this book, Nehemiah tells his personal story from 1:1 through 7:5. In that story, he explains how he was concerned not just to restore the city of Jerusalem physically by rebuilding its wall, but also to restore its population by bringing in people who were genuine Israelites, and to restore worship by making sure that the priests and Levites who were doing assigned tasks had dependable records of their ancestry. He includes the long series of lists from 7:6 through 12:26 to document that these priests, Levites, and Israelites had the lineage that the Law of Moses required. Now Nehemiah resumes his personal story, and he tells what he did next. He organized a worship ceremony to dedicate the city wall. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could put some introductory and transitional sentence here to show how the book is progressing. Alternate translation: [once we had brought many more Israelites to live in Jerusalem, and once we had established the priests and Levites in their tasks, we held a ceremony to dedicate the rebuilt wall of Jerusalem]

Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT **And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem**
UST When {we} dedicated the wall around Jerusalem
(וּבַחֲנֻכַּ֥ת חוֹמַ֖ת יְרוּשָׁלִָֽם)

The abstract noun **dedication** refers to the way the wall would be set apart for a special purpose. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a verb such as “set apart.” Alternate translation: [to set apart the wall of Jerusalem for a special purpose]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem
UST When {we} dedicated the wall around Jerusalem
(וּבַחֲנֻכַּ֥ת חוֹמַ֖ת יְרוּשָׁלָֽ͏ִם)

Dedicating the wall was a symbolic way of dedicating, or rather rededicating, the entire city to the special purpose that God had chosen it for. The rebuilt wall now defined Jerusalem once again as a distinct place, the place from which God had chosen to start making himself famous throughout the world. Alternate translation: [to set apart the wall of Jerusalem for a special purpose, to show that God had set apart the city for a special purpose]

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT they sought out the Levites from all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to perform the dedication
UST we summoned the Levites from all the places {where} they were {living}. We brought them to Jerusalem to assist in dedicating the wall
(בִּקְשׁ֣וּ אֶת־הַלְוִיִּ֗ם מִכָּל־מְקוֹמֹתָם֙ לַהֲבִיאָ֣ם לִירוּשָׁלַ֔͏ִם לַעֲשׂ֥וֹת חֲנֻכָּ֖ה)

All their places means all the other places in the province of Judah besides Jerusalem where the Levites were living. As 11:20 explained, other than the people who agreed to settle in Jerusalem, all of the other Israelites, including the Levites, lived on their family properties in other cities and towns in the province of Judah. Alternate translation: [we brought the Levites back to Jerusalem from all the places where they were living so that they could take part in the dedication ceremony]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT they sought out
UST we summoned
(בִּקְשׁ֣וּ)

They refers to the people who organized the dedication ceremony. Since Nehemiah is resuming his own story here, and since he was one of the organizers, If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this as “we.” “We” would not include the addressees, if your language makes that distinction.

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT **to perform the dedication with rejoicing, and with thanksgivings**
UST to assist in dedicating the wall by rejoicing and giving thanks
(לַעֲשׂוֹת חֲנֻכָּה וְשִׂמְחָה וּבְתוֹדוֹת)

Rejoicing and **thanksgivings** mean similar things. Together they describe how the Israelites would celebrate as they dedicated the completed wall. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine these words. Alternate translation: [to lead a celebration to dedicate the wall,] otherwise “to celebrate the dedication by praising and thanking God”

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **and with song, cymbals, lyres, and harps**
UST and by singing {accompanied by} cymbals and harps and other stringed instruments
(וּבְשִׁיר מְצִלְתַּיִם נְבָלִים וּבְכִנֹּרוֹת)

And with does not mean “in addition to,” but “by means of.” This next phrase provides further information about how the Levites would conduct the ceremony. Alternate translation: [with songs accompanied by cymbals, harps, and lyres]

ULT **cymbals**
UST cymbals
(מְצִלְתַּיִם)

These are two thin, round metal plates that are hit together to make a loud sound.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **lyres, and harps**
UST and harps and other stringed instruments
(נְבָלִים וּבְכִנֹּרוֹת)

These are two different types of stringed instruments.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And at the dedication of	When {we} dedicated
Jerusalem	around Jerusalem
they sought out	we summoned
the Levites	the Levites
to Jerusalem	to Jerusalem
the dedication	in dedicating the wall
with rejoicing	by rejoicing

ULT	UST
lyres	and other stringed instruments
and harps	and harps

Nehemiah 12:28

ULT	UST
And the sons of the ones who sang gathered themselves, both from the circle around Jerusalem and from the villages of the Netophatites,	*We summoned the Levites who {were used to} singing {together}. They came to Jerusalem from nearby areas where they had settled around the city. They also came from places around {the village of} Netophah {southeast of Jerusalem}.*

ULT And … gathered themselves
UST We summoned … They came to
(וַיֵּאָסְפוּ)

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This seems to mean "gathered together in Jerusalem for the dedication ceremony." You could say something like that if it would be helpful to your readers.

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT the sons of the ones who sang
UST the Levites who {were used to} singing {together}
(בְּנֵי הַמְשֹׁרְרִים)

As in 3:8 and 3:31, **son of** here is a figurative expression that indicates that a person shares the qualities of something. In this case, the book is describing people who share the quality of being singers. (Verse 12:27 indicates that these were specifically Levites.) Alternate translation: [the Levite singers]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT both from the circle around Jerusalem
UST Jerusalem from nearby areas where they had settled around the city
(וּמִן־הַכִּכָּר סְבִיבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָ͏ִם)

This is a figurative way of referring to the towns that the singers had built for themselves all around Jerusalem, as 12:29 describes. These villages seemed to form a circle around the city. Alternate translation: [from the towns they had built around Jerusalem]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and from the villages of the Netophatites**
UST They also came from places around {the village of} Netophah {southeast of Jerusalem}
(וּמִן־חַצֵרֵי נְטֹפָתִי)

The **Netophatites** means the people who lived in the town of Netophath, and so their villages would be all the towns in that area where they lived. Alternate translation: [from the towns around Netophath] or [from the towns of the Netophathites]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and from the villages of the Netophatites**
UST They also came from places around {the village of} Netophah {southeast of Jerusalem}
(וּמִן־חַצֵרֵי נְטֹפָתִי)

Netophath was located southeast of Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [from the towns around Netophath, southeast of Jerusalem.]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And … gathered themselves	We summoned … They came to
Jerusalem	Jerusalem … the city

Nehemiah 12:29

ULT	UST
and from Beth-Gilgal and from the fields of Geba and Azmaveth; for the ones who sang had built villages for themselves around Jerusalem.	*They also came from {three places northeast of} Jerusalem, Beth-Gilgal and the areas around Geba and Azmaveth. {We summoned} those singers because they had built villages to live in near Jerusalem.*

ULT and from Beth-Gilgal and from the fields of Geba and Azmaveth
UST They also came from {three places northeast of} … Beth-Gilgal and the areas around Geba and Azmaveth
(וּמִבֵּית הַגִּלְגָּל וּמִשְׂדוֹת גֶּבַע וַעֲזְמָוֶת)

The places listed in this verse are northeast of Jerusalem. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [they also came from three places northeast of Jerusalem, the town of Beth-Gilgal and the rural areas around the towns of Geba and Azmaveth]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT and from Beth-Gilgal
UST They also came from {three places northeast of} … Beth-Gilgal
(וּמִבֵּית הַגִּלְגָּל)

This is the name of a town. Alternate translation: [from the town of Beth-Gilgal]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT and from the fields of Geba and Azmaveth
UST and the areas around Geba and Azmaveth
(וּמִשְׂדוֹת גֶּבַע וַעֲזְמָוֶת)

Geba and Azmaveth are the names of towns. Alternate translation: [from the rural areas around the towns of Geba and Azmaveth]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **for the ones who sang had built villages for themselves around Jerusalem**
UST Jerusalem … {We summoned} those singers because they had built villages to live in near Jerusalem
(כִּי חֲצֵרִים בָּנוּ לָהֶם הַמְשֹׁרְרִים סְבִיבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָ͏ִם)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could put this sentence at the start of 12:28, since it gives the reason for the results that are described in the rest of 12:28 and 12:29. You could show the connection by using a word like "so" after this phrase. Alternate translation: [The singers were living in towns they had built all around Jerusalem. So …]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and from Beth-Gilgal	They also came from {three places northeast of} … Beth-Gilgal
Jerusalem	Jerusalem … Jerusalem

Nehemiah 12:30

ULT	UST
And the priests and the Levites purified themselves. And they purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.	*The priests and Levites performed rituals to make themselves acceptable {to God}. Then they performed {similar} rituals to purify the other people, the gates, and the wall.*

ULT And the priests and the Levites purified themselves. And they purified the people, and the gates, and the wall

UST The priests and Levites performed rituals to make themselves acceptable {to God}. Then they performed {similar} rituals to purify the other people, the gates, and the wall

(וַיִּטַּהֲרוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם וַיְטַהֲרוּ אֶת־הָעָם וְאֶת־הַשְּׁעָרִים וְאֶת־הַחוֹמָה)

This sentence draws a contrast between the joyful celebration that is about to begin in this part of the story and the solemn ceremony that the priests and Levites performed beforehand. You could begin the sentence with a phrase such as “but first” to indicate this contrast. Alternate translation: [But first the priests and Levites performed a ceremony to make themselves clean, and they did the same thing for the people, the gates, and the wall]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT And … purified themselves

UST performed rituals to make themselves acceptable {to God}

(וַיִּטַּהֲרוּ)

Nehemiah expects his readers to know specifically how the priests and Levites did this, but the details are no longer certain. They may have sprinkled themselves, the people, the gates, and the walls with water or with blood, or they may have offered sacrifices. But while the details are uncertain, the purpose of the ceremony is clear. It was to show that the Israelites wanted this place and everyone in it to be acceptable to God. So while it might be best not to suggest how the priests and Levites performed this ceremony, since that is unknown, you could say explicitly what the purpose was if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [And they performed a ceremony to show that they wanted to be clean and acceptable to God]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the priests	The priests
and the Levites	and Levites
And … purified themselves	performed rituals to make themselves acceptable {to God}

ULT	UST
And they purified the gates	Then they performed {similar} rituals to purify the gates

Nehemiah 12:31

ULT	UST
And I caused the officials of Judah to go up on top of the wall. And I caused to stand two great thanksgiving groups, and processions to the right hand on top of the wall toward the gate of dung.	*Then I gathered the leaders of Judah together on top of the wall. I assigned them {to lead} two large groups that would march {around the city} on top of the wall, thanking {God}. {As they faced the city, one group} walked to the right toward the Rubbish Gate.*

ULT **And I caused … to go up**
UST Then I gathered … together
(וְאַעֲלָה)

In this context, the conjunction **and** indicates that the events the story will now describe came after the event it has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as **then**.

Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT **And I caused the officials of Judah to go up on top of the wall. And I caused to stand two great thanksgiving groups, and processions**
UST Then I gathered the leaders of Judah together on top of the wall. I assigned them {to lead} two large groups that would march {around the city} … thanking {God}
(וְאַעֲלָה אֶת־שָׂרֵי יְהוּדָה עַל־הַחוֹמָה וָאַעֲמִידָה שְׁתֵּי תוֹדֹת גְּדוֹלוֹת וְתַהֲלֻכֹת)

The implication here, which is confirmed in 12:32 and 12:40, is that Nehemiah had these leaders of Judah go up onto the wall so that they could accompany two large groups that would "process" or march around the city on top of the wall while giving thanks to God. They would march in opposite directions and meet up on the far side of the city. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say something like that explicitly.

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **two great thanksgiving groups, and processions**
UST two large groups that would march {around the city} … thanking {God}
(שְׁתֵּי תוֹדֹת גְּדוֹלוֹת וְתַהֲלֻכֹת)

Having two groups walk on top of the wall in opposite directions all around Jerusalem, while sacred musicians played music was a symbolic way of dedicating the rebuilt wall to God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could also say that explicitly.

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT to the right hand on top of the wall toward the gate of dung
UST on top of the wall … {As they faced the city, one group} walked to the right toward the Rubbish Gate
(לַיָּמִין מֵעַל לַחוֹמָה לְשַׁעַר הָאַשְׁפֹּת)

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This sentence seems to mean "The first group marched to the right on top of the wall in the direction of the Rubbish Gate." You could say something like that if it would be helpful to your readers.

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT to the right hand
UST {As they faced the city, one group} walked to the right
(לַיָּמִין)

Here, **hand** means **side**. Alternate translation: [turned to their right and marched]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT to the right hand
UST {As they faced the city, one group} walked to the right
(לַיָּמִין)

Based on the information the book provides, the perspective is of a person facing in towards the city from the top of the wall. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [turned to their right, as they faced the city, and marched]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT toward the gate of dung
UST toward the Rubbish Gate
(לְשַׁעַר הָאַשְׁפֹּת)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. See how you translated it in 2:13 and 3:13–14. Alternate translation: [the Rubbish Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the officials of	the leaders of
Judah	Judah
toward the gate of	toward the … Gate

ULT	UST
dung	Rubbish

Nehemiah 12:32

ULT	UST
And after them went Hoshaiah with half of the officials of Judah,	*Hoshaiah and half of the leaders of Judah marched behind that group.*

ULT And after them went Hoshaiah with half of the officials of Judah
UST Hoshaiah and half of the leaders of Judah marched behind that group
(וַיֵּלֶךְ אַחֲרֵיהֶם הוֹשַׁעְיָה וַחֲצִי שָׂרֵי יְהוּדָה)

Alternate translation: [Hoshaiah and half of the leaders of Judah marched behind this group]

ULT Hoshaiah
UST Hoshaiah
(הוֹשַׁעְיָה)

This is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the officials of Judah	the leaders of Judah

Nehemiah 12:33

ULT	UST
and Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam,	*{The people who marched with that group} included Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam,*

ULT and Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam
UST {The people who marched with that group} included Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam
(וְעַזַרְיָה עֶזְרָא וּמְשֻׁלָּם)

Based on what 12:33–36 says about the composition of this group, it appears that Ezra walked in front of it (12:36), Hoshaiah and half of the leaders of Judah walked behind it (12:32), and the group itself was made up of a large number of people from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, along with the other leaders who are named, and priests playing musical instruments. In that case, the word **and** would be indicating this sentence, which continues through to most of verse 12:36, will provide further information about the situation the book has been describing. You could indicate that with a phrase such as "within the group itself were …"

ULT and Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam
UST {The people who marched with that group} included Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam
(וְעַזַרְיָה עֶזְרָא וּמְשֻׁלָּם)

These are the names of three men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and Azariah	{The people who marched with that group} included Azariah
Ezra	Ezra

Nehemiah 12:34

ULT	UST
Judah, and Benjamin, and Shemaiah, and Jeremiah.	*Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, and Jeremiah.*

ULT Judah, and Benjamin
UST Judah, Benjamin
(יְהוּדָה וּבִנְיָמִן)

One possibility is that these were individual leaders named Judah and Benjamin. However, in the context of the book, this most likely means "people from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin." Their counterparts in the other group would be the other "half of the people" mentioned in 12:38. And since 12:31 says that these were "great" or large processional groups, you could translate this as "large numbers of people from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin."

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT and Shemaiah, and Jeremiah
UST Shemaiah, and Jeremiah
(וּשְׁמַעְיָה וְיִרְמְיָה)

These are the names of two men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and Jeremiah	and Jeremiah
and Benjamin	Benjamin

Nehemiah 12:35

ULT	UST
And some from the sons of the priests had trumpets: Zechariah, the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph;	*Some descendants of the priests {also marched with that group} playing musical instruments. They included Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph.*

ULT **And some from the sons of the priests**
UST Some descendants of the priests {also marched with that group}
(וּמִבְּנֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים)

Son of here is a figurative expression that indicates that a person shares the qualities of something. In this case, the book is describing people who share the quality of being priests. Alternate translation: [some from among the priests]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Zechariah, the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph**
UST They included Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph
(זְכַרְיָה בֶן־יוֹנָתָן בֶּן־שְׁמַעְיָה בֶּן־מַתַּנְיָה בֶּן־מִיכָיָה בֶּן־זַכּוּר בֶּן־אָסָף)

These are the names of seven men. In this context, **son** means literally that the next man named is the father of the man just named.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the priests	priests
had trumpets	playing musical instruments
Zechariah	They included Zechariah
Jonathan	Jonathan
Asaph	Asaph

Nehemiah 12:36

ULT	UST
and his brothers, Shemaiah, and Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel and Judah, Hanani, with the instruments of song of David, the man of God. And Ezra the scribe was before their face.	*Some associates {of Zechariah} also {marched and played musical instruments}. They included Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani. They all were playing {the same kinds of} musical instruments that King David, the man who served God faithfully, {had told the Levite musicians to play many years previously}. Ezra the scribe {marched} in front of this group.*

ULT **and his brothers**
UST Some associates {of Zechariah} also {marched and played musical instruments}
(וְאָחָיו)

Here, **brother** is a figurative way of saying "fellow priest," although it is possible that some of the biological brothers of Zechariah were included in this group. Alternate translation: [his fellow priests]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Shemaiah, and Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel and Judah, Hanani**
UST They included Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani
(שְׁמַעְיָה וַעֲזַרְאֵל מְלַלַּי גִּלַּלַי מָעַי נְתַנְאֵל וִיהוּדָה חֲנָנִי)

These are the names of eight men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **with the instruments of song of David, the man of God**
UST They all were playing {the same kinds of} musical instruments that King David, the man who served God faithfully, {had told the Levite musicians to play many years previously}
(בִּכְלֵי־שִׁיר דָּוִיד אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים)

This likely means the cymbals, harps, and lyres mentioned in 12:27. Those were the instruments that King David had originally instructed the Levite musicians to play. The people honored that religious tradition on this occasion. Alternate translation: [with cymbals, harps, and lyres, the instruments that King David, that godly man, had originally instructed the Levite musicians to play]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **David, the man of God**
UST that King David, the man who served God faithfully, {had told the Levite musicians to play many years previously}
(דָּוִיד אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים)

Here the book offers some background information to remind readers of the character of David, who had been a great founding king of Israel. Alternate translation: [King David, that godly man]

Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

ULT **And Ezra the scribe was before their face**
UST Ezra the scribe {marched} in front of this group
(וְעֶזְרָא הַסּוֹפֵר לִפְנֵיהֶם)

Here, **face** means the front of a group of people. Alternate translation: [Ezra the scribe walked in front of this group]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **And Ezra the scribe**
UST Ezra the scribe
(וְעֶזְרָא הַסּוֹפֵר)

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers who Ezra was. Alternate translation: [Ezra, who was a scribe]

Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
David	that King David … had told the Levite musicians to play many years previously
the man of God	the man who served God faithfully
And Ezra	Ezra
the scribe	the scribe

Nehemiah 12:37

ULT	UST
And by the gate of the spring and opposite them, they went up on the stairs of the city of David, at the ascent of the wall on top of the house of David and as far as the gate of water, east.	*When the people in this group reached the Fountain Gate, they went up the steps that were in front of them to {the area known as} the City of David. Then they went along the top of the wall past the location of the {royal} palace of David, and then to the Water Gate, on the east {side of the temple}.*

ULT **And by the gate of the spring and opposite them, they went up on the stairs of the city of David, at the ascent of the wall**

UST When the people in this group reached the Fountain Gate, they went up the steps that were in front of them to {the area known as} the City of David. Then they went along the top of the wall

(וְעַל־שַׁעַר הָעַיִן וְנֶגְדָּם עָלוּ עַל־מַעֲלוֹת עִיר דָּוִיד בַּמַּעֲלֵה לַחוֹמָה)

The implication, which the original audience of the book would apparently have understood, is that when this first procession reached the place described, rather than continue walking on the wall, which was about to follow a winding course around a hill, they took these stairs straight up the hill, and they rejoined the wall at the place where it went up to the top of the hill. Alternate translation: [When they reached the Fountain Gate, they left the wall and went up the stairs that were in front of them that led to the City of David. They came back onto the wall at the place where it reached the top of the hill they had just climbed]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the gate of the spring**

UST the Fountain Gate

(שַׁעַר הָעַיִן)

This is the name of one of the gates of Jerusalem. See how you translated it in 2:14 and 3:15. Alternate translation: [the Fountain Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the city of David**
UST {the area known as} the City of David
(עִיר דָּוִיד)

This was one part of Jerusalem. See how you translated it in 3:15. Alternate translation: [the City of David]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **on top of the house of David**
UST past the location of the {royal} palace of David
(מֵעַל֙ לְבֵ֣ית דָּוִ֔יד)

This means that as the group walked on the top of the wall once again, at this point they were higher than this palace where David had lived. (In 3:25 this same building is called "the upper house of the king," meaning the royal palace that was located in a more elevated part of the city.) Alternate translation: [They walked along the wall, above the palace where David had lived]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **of the house of David**
UST the {royal} palace of David
(לְבֵ֣ית דָּוִ֔יד)

This building is called a **house** because David had lived in it. Alternate translation: [the palace where David had lived]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and as far as the gate of water, east**
UST and then to the Water Gate, on the east {side of the temple}
(וְעַ֖ד שַׁ֣עַר הַמַּ֑יִם מִזְרָֽח)

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This sentence is indicating that once this group reached the Water Gate, it stopped. This left them just to the east of the temple. As 12:39 explains, the other group stopped just to the west of the temple, and the two groups joined together in the temple area. Alternate translation: [until they reached the Water Gate, and there they stopped, on the east side of the temple]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the gate of	the … Gate
the spring	Fountain
the city of David	{the area known as} the City of David
of the house of David	the {royal} palace of David
the gate of	the … Gate

Nehemiah 12:38

ULT	UST
And the second thanksgiving group, the one proceeding to the opposite direction, and I after it, with half of the people on top of the wall, on top of the tower of ovens even as far as the broad wall,	*The other group of those who were {singing and} thanking {Yahweh} marched to the left on top of the wall. I followed them with half of the people. We marched past the Tower of the Ovens to the Broad Wall.*

ULT **And the … thanksgiving group**
UST The … group of those who were {singing and} thanking {Yahweh}
(וְהַתּוֹדָה)

The conjunction **And** introduces the description in 12:38 and 12:39 of what the second group was doing while the first group was following the route described in 12:31–37. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a word such as "meanwhile" to indicate this.

Support Reference: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

ULT **And the second thanksgiving group, the one proceeding to the opposite direction**
UST The other group of those who were {singing and} thanking {Yahweh} marched to the left
(וְהַתּוֹדָה הַשֵּׁנִית הַהוֹלֶכֶת לְמוֹאל)

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: [Meanwhile, the second group turned to its left and walked on top of the wall in the opposite direction, with musicians playing songs of thanksgiving as they went.]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **and I after it**
UST I followed them
(וַאֲנִי אַחֲרֶיהָ)

I refers to Nehemiah here, as in 12:31. If you think it would be helpful to your readers, you could state his name explicitly. Alternate translation: [I, Nehemiah, walked behind this second group]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **with half of the people on top of the wall**
UST on top of the wall … with half of the people
(וַחֲצִי הָעָם מֵעַל לְהַחוֹמָה)

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This seems to be a reference to the counterparts of the people mentioned in 12:34. Alternate translation: [with the other half of the people from the tribes and Judah and Benjamin who were walking with their leaders on top of the wall to dedicate it to God]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **on top of the tower of ovens**
UST We marched past the Tower of the Ovens
(מֵעַל לְמִגְדַּל הַתַּנּוּרִים)

This is the name of one of the towers of the Jerusalem wall. See how you translated it in 3:11. Alternate translation: [They went along the wall above the Tower of the Ovens]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **even as far as the broad wall**
UST to the Broad Wall
(וְעַד הַחוֹמָה הָרְחָבָה)

This is the name of one of the features of the Jerusalem wall. See how you translated it in 3:8. Alternate translation: [and continued to the Broad Wall]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
of the tower of	the Tower of

Nehemiah 12:39

ULT	UST
and on top of the gate of Ephraim, and above the gate of old, and above the gate of fish and the tower of Hananel and the tower of the hundred, even as far as the gate of sheep: and they stood in the gate of the guard.	*From there {we marched} past the Ephraim Gate, the Jeshanah Gate, the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel, and the Tower of the Hundred Soldiers to the Sheep Gate. We finished marching near a gate that {leads into the temple area}.*

ULT **and on top of the gate of Ephraim, and above the gate of old, and above the gate of fish**

UST From there {we marched} past the Ephraim Gate, the Jeshanah Gate, the Fish Gate

(וּמֵעַל לְשַׁעַר־אֶפְרַיִם וְעַל־שַׁעַר הַיְשָׁנָה וְעַל־שַׁעַר הַדָּגִים)

These are the names of three of the gates of Jerusalem. See how you translated them in 8:16, 3:6, and 3:3. Alternate translation: [they went over the Ephraim Gate, the Old Gate, and the Fish Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and the tower of Hananel and the tower of the hundred**

UST the Tower of Hananel, and the Tower of the Hundred Soldiers

(וּמִגְדַּל חֲנַנְאֵל וּמִגְדַּל הַמֵּאָה)

These are the names of two of the towers on the Jerusalem wall. See how you translated them in 3:1. Alternate translation: [They walked past the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **even as far as the gate of sheep**

UST to the Sheep Gate

(וְעַד שַׁעַר הַצֹּאן)

This is the name of one of the gates of the Jerusalem wall. See how you translated it in 3:1 and 3:32. Alternate translation: [and continued to the Sheep Gate]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT and they stood in the gate of the guard
UST We finished marching near a gate that {leads into the temple area}
(וַֽיַּעַמְד֔וּ בְּשַׁ֖עַר הַמַּטָּֽרָה)

This is apparently the name of one of the gates of the Jerusalem temple. Verse 3:25 describes repairs that were made to the wall near the "court of the guard," which was in the temple precincts, so presumably this was the gate that led into that court. "Stood" means "stood still," that is, "stopped moving." The people were already standing up to walk. Alternate translation: [This second group stopped when it reached the Gate of the Guard]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
of the gate of	past the … Gate
Ephraim	Ephraim
the gate of	the … Gate
the gate of	the … Gate
and the tower of	the Tower of
and the tower of	and the Tower of
the gate of	the … Gate
sheep	Sheep
in the gate of	near a gate
the guard	that {leads into the temple area}

Nehemiah 12:40

ULT	UST
And the two thanksgiving groups stood at the house of God: also I, and half of the prefects with me;	*Both of the groups {reached} the temple {as they were singing and} giving thanks. They stood {in their places there}. I was there with the half of the city officials who had come with me.*

ULT **And the two thanksgiving groups stood at the house of God**
UST Both of the groups {reached} the temple {as they were singing and} giving thanks. They stood {in their places there}
(וַתַּעֲמֹדְנָה שְׁתֵּי הַתּוֹדֹת בְּבֵית הָאֱלֹהִים)

The implication is that both groups followed routes that led them around the city from their common starting point to places on either side of the temple. They then joined together for a concluding ceremony in or near the temple. Alternate translation: [both groups that had walked around the city to dedicate the wall came down from it and stood in an open area in front of the temple]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And … stood**
UST reached … They stood {in their places there}
(וַתַּעֲמֹדְנָה)

This word indicates that the event the story will now describe came after the events it has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as “then.”

Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT **also I, and half of the prefects with me**
UST I was there with the half of the city officials who had come with me
(וַאֲנִי וַחֲצִי הַסְּגָנִים עִמִּי)

Nehemiah now provides further details for the second group, which he had accompanied, similar to the details he provided for the first group in verses 32–36. Alternate translation: [My group included the other half of the leaders of Judah]

Support Reference: Background Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
at the house of God	the temple
the prefects	the city officials

Nehemiah 12:41

ULT	UST
and the priests, Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, Hananiah, with trumpets;	*{My group} included the priests Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah. All of them were blowing trumpets.*

ULT **Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, Hananiah**
UST Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah
(אֶלְיָקִ֔ים מַעֲשֵׂיָ֕ה מִ֠נְיָמִין מִיכָ֣יָה אֶלְיוֹעֵינַ֣י זְכַרְיָ֥ה חֲנַנְיָ֖ה)

These are the names of seven men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and the priests	{My group} included the priests
Eliakim	Eliakim
Zechariah	Zechariah
Hananiah	and Hananiah
with trumpets	All of them were blowing trumpets

Nehemiah 12:42

ULT	UST
and Maaseiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malkijah, and Elam, and Ezer. And the ones who sang made themselves heard, with Jezrahiah the overseer.	*{Others who were blowing trumpets} included Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malkijah, Elam, and Ezer. The singers sang with Jezrahiah who was their leader.*

ULT and Maaseiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malkijah, and Elam, and Ezer

UST {Others who were blowing trumpets} included Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malkijah, Elam, and Ezer

(וּמַעֲשֵׂיָה וּשְׁמַעְיָה וְאֶלְעָזָר וְעֻזִּי וְיהוֹחָנָן וּמַלְכִּיָּה וְעֵילָם וְעֶזֶר)

These are the names of eight men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT And the ones who sang made themselves heard, with Jezrahiah the overseer

UST The singers sang with Jezrahiah who was their leader

(וַיַּשְׁמִיעוּ הַמְשֹׁרְרִים וְיִזְרַחְיָה הַפָּקִיד)

Alternate translation: [The singers sang loudly, with Jezrahiah directing their choir]

ULT with Jezrahiah

UST with Jezrahiah

(וְיִזְרַחְיָה)

This is the name of a man.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and Eleazar	Eleazar
and Elam	Elam
the overseer	who was their leader

Nehemiah 12:43

ULT	UST
And on that day they sacrificed great sacrifices, and they rejoiced, for God had made them glad with great rejoicing. Yes, even the women and the children rejoiced, so the rejoicing of Jerusalem was heard from far away.	*The people offered many sacrifices that day. They {all} rejoiced because God had made them very happy. The women and the children rejoiced along with the men, so the sound of the celebration in Jerusalem was so loud that people far away could hear it.*

ULT **on that day**
UST that day
(בַּיּוֹם־הַהוּא)

This is a flexible expression that can mean either **on that same day** or **around that time**. But since this verse continues to describe the celebrations for the dedication of the wall, here it likely means **on that same day**.

Support Reference: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

ULT **for God had made them glad with great rejoicing**
UST because God had made them very happy
(כִּי הָאֱלֹהִים שִׂמְּחָם שִׂמְחָה גְדוֹלָה)

The abstract noun **rejoicing** describes how happy the people were as they held this celebration to dedicate the wall. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with an adjective such as **happy**. Alternate translation: [God had made them all very happy]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **so the rejoicing of Jerusalem was heard from far away**
UST so the sound of the celebration in Jerusalem was so loud that people far away could hear it
(וְתִשָּׁמַע שִׂמְחַת יְרוּשָׁלִַם מֵרָחוֹק)

In this case the abstract noun **rejoicing** refers to the loud sound that the singers and the people made as they held the ceremony to dedicate the rebuilt wall. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this abstract noun with a concrete noun such as “sound.” Alternate translation: [the sound that the people made as they celebrated in Jerusalem was so loud that even other people who were far away could hear it]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **so the rejoicing of Jerusalem was heard from far away**
UST so the sound of the celebration in Jerusalem was so loud that people far away could hear it
(וַתִּשָּׁמַע שִׂמְחַת יְרוּשָׁלִַם מֵרָחוֹק)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: [the sound that the people made as they celebrated in Jerusalem was so loud that even other people who were far away could hear it]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **the rejoicing of Jerusalem**
UST the sound of the celebration in Jerusalem
(שִׂמְחַת יְרוּשָׁלִַם)

Here the story speaks of Jerusalem as if it were a living thing that could celebrate. Alternate translation: [the sound that the people made as they celebrated in Jerusalem]

Support Reference: Personification

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
on … day	day
And … they sacrificed	The people offered
sacrifices	sacrifices
and they rejoiced	They {all} rejoiced
God	God
had made them glad with	had made them
rejoicing	happy
rejoiced	rejoiced
the rejoicing of	the sound of the celebration in
Jerusalem	Jerusalem

Nehemiah 12:44

ULT	UST
And on that day men were appointed over the chambers for the storehouses, for the offerings, for the firstfruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions of the law for the priests and for the Levites. For Judah rejoiced over the priests and over the Levites, the ones who were standing.	*On that day {we} appointed men to be in charge of the storerooms. That was where {the priests} kept the money and the food and the grain and the tithes. {The people} brought these things from the fields near the cities into the storerooms for the priests and the Levites, as Moses had commanded in the law. {The people of} Judah did all this because they were so happy about the priests and the Levites serving {in the temple}.*

ULT **on that day**
UST On that day
(בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא)

As noted for 12:43, this is a flexible expression that can mean either **on that same day** or **around that time**. So here it could mean either that men were appointed to be in charge of the store rooms on the same day as the dedication celebration, or else at around the same time, perhaps shortly afterwards, once all of the activity of the celebration was over. Alternate translation: [on the same day that they held the ceremony to dedicate the rebuilt wall] or [around this same time]

Support Reference: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

ULT **And … men were appointed over the chambers for the storehouses**
UST {we} appointed men to be in charge of the storerooms. That was where {the priests} kept the money
(וַיִּפָּקְדוּ אֲנָשִׁים עַל־הַנְּשָׂכוֹת לָאוֹצָרוֹת &)

This is referring implicitly to the six Levites whose names are listed in 12:25. The **chambers** are the storerooms above the gateways to the temple. (Review the note to 12:25 if that would be helpful.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [we appointed six Levites to be in charge of the store rooms above the gateways to the temple]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And … men were appointed**
UST {we} appointed men
(וַיִּפָּקְדוּ & אֲנָשִׁים)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. In the context of this episode, saying "we" would indicate Nehemiah and his fellow leaders. ("We" would not include the addressee, if your language makes that distinction.) Alternate translation: [we appointed six Levites]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **for the offerings, for the firstfruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities**
UST and the food and the grain and the tithes. {The people} brought these things from the fields near the cities into the storerooms
(לַתְּרוּמוֹת֙ לָֽרֵאשִׁ֔ית וְלַמַּעֲשְׂרוֹת֙ לִכְנ֣וֹס בָּהֶ֔ם לִשְׂדֵ֖י הֶעָרִ֑ים)

In their covenant, these were the things the people promised to provide in order to support the priests and the Levites. (See 10:36–39.) If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [so that they could collect the offerings, firstfruits, and tithes that the Israelites would bring in from the fields around their cities, as they had promised to do in their covenant]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the portions of the law for the priests and for the Levites**
UST for the priests and the Levites, as Moses had commanded in the law
(מָנָ֣אוֹת הַתּוֹרָ֔ה לַכֹּהֲנִ֖ים וְלַלְוִיִּֽם)

The abstract noun **portion** refers to the part of each crop that the law commanded the Israelites to give to the temple to support the priests and Levites. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a different phrase. Alternate translation: [these were the things that the law commanded the Israelites to give from their harvests to support the priests and Levites]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **For Judah rejoiced over the priests and over the Levites, the ones who were standing**
UST The people of} Judah did all this because they were so happy about the priests and the Levites serving {in the temple}
(כִּי שִׂמְחַת יְהוּדָה עַל־הַכֹּהֲנִים וְעַל־הַלְוִיִּם הָעֹמְדִים)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could place this sentence first in the verse since it gives the reason for the results that are described in the rest of the verse. You could also show the connection by using a word like "so" after this phrase. Alternate translation: [The people of Judah were very happy that the priests and the Levites were once again serving in the roles that the law had assigned to them. So …]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **rejoiced over the priests and over the Levites**
UST they were so happy about the priests and the Levites
(שִׂמְחַת & עַל־הַכֹּהֲנִים וְעַל־הַלְוִיִּם)

In this context, **over** is a spatial metaphor that indicates **for** or **because of**. Alternate translation: [were very happy that]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the ones who were standing**
UST serving {in the temple}
(הָעֹמְדִים)

Standing means that the priests and the Levites were serving in the roles that the law had assigned to them. This meaning can be made explicit. Alternate translation: [serving in the roles that the law had assigned to them]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
on … day	On … day
And … were appointed	{we} appointed
for the storehouses	the money
for the offerings	and the food
for the firstfruits	and the grain
and for the tithes	and the tithes
to gather	{The people} brought these things
the law	in the law
for the priests	for the priests

ULT	UST
and for the Levites	and the Levites
Judah	{The people of} Judah
rejoiced	they were so happy
the priests	the priests
the Levites	the Levites

Nehemiah 12:45

ULT	UST
And they kept the service watch of their God and the service watch of purification, also the ones who sang and the gatekeepers, according to the commandment of David and Solomon his son.	*The priests and the Levites served God by performing rituals to purify things. The singers and the gatekeepers also {did their work} as King David and his son Solomon had declared they should.*

ULT **And they kept**
UST The priests and the Levites
(וְיִשְׁמְרוּ)

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the results of what the previous verse described. Specifically, the temple personnel were able to perform their duties regularly because the people had organized regular support for them. Alternate translation: [and so]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **And they kept the service watch of their God and the service watch of purification**
UST The priests and the Levites served God by performing rituals to purify things
(וְיִשְׁמְרוּ מִשְׁמֶרֶת אֱלֹהֵיהֶם וּמִשְׁמֶרֶת הַטָּהֳרָה)

They means the priests and Levites. The abstract noun **service**, in the phrase **service watch of their God**, refers to the duties that God had commanded the priests and Levites to perform in the law. In the phrase “service of purification,” this abstract noun refers to one of those duties in particular, the duty of performing a ceremony for themselves and for others that expressed a desire to be ceremonially clean, that is, acceptable to God. The story describes in 12:30 how they performed such a ceremony on this occasion. Alternate translation: [So the priests and Levites were able to perform the duties that God had commanded, including performing ceremonies of purification]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT also the ones who sang and the gatekeepers
UST The singers and the gatekeepers
(וְהַמְשֹׁרְרִים וְהַשֹּׁעֲרִים)

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This phrase seems to mean that the singers and gatekeepers were able to perform their assigned duties too. Using a new sentence, you could say that explicitly if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [The singers and the gatekeepers were also able to perform their assigned duties]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT according to the commandment of David and Solomon his son
UST also {did their work} as King David and his son Solomon had declared they should
(כְּמִצְוַת דָּוִיד שְׁלֹמֹה בְנוֹ)

This phrase provides background information that explains that it was King David and King Solomon, his son, who established the duties of the temple singers and gatekeepers. Alternate translation: [as King David and King Solomon, his son, had commanded them to do]

Support Reference: Background Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the service watch of	served
their God	God
and the service watch of	by performing rituals
purification	to purify things
and the gatekeepers	and the gatekeepers
David	King David
and Solomon	and … Solomon

Nehemiah 12:46

ULT	UST
For in the days of David and Asaph, from ancient time there was a head of the ones who sang, and songs of praise and thanksgiving to God.	*{We did all this} because that was how it was in the days of old, when David was {king} and Asaph was {in charge of the temple musicians}. There was someone to lead the singers, and they sang songs to praise and thank God.*

ULT **For**
UST {We did all this} because that was how it was
(כִּי)

This word indicates that this sentence will provide further information about the situation that the book is describing here. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use a word or expression in your own language that indicates the same thing.

Support Reference: Background Information

ULT **in the days of David and Asaph, from ancient time there was**
UST in the days of old, when David was {king} and Asaph was {in charge of the temple musicians}
(בִּימֵי דָוִיד וְאָסָף מִקֶּדֶם)

The expression **from before** is an idiom that means **ever since a long time ago**. Alternate translation: [ever since the time of David and Asaph long ago]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **in the days of David and Asaph**
UST in the days … when David was {king} and Asaph was {in charge of the temple musicians}
(בִּימֵי דָוִיד וְאָסָף)

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: [in the time of David and Asaph]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **David and Asaph**
UST David was {king} and Asaph was {in charge of the temple musicians}
(דָּוִיד וְאָסָף)

These are the names of two men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and Asaph**
UST and Asaph was {in charge of the temple musicians}
(וְאָסָף)

The book assumes that the original audience would know that Asaph was the man whom David first appointed to be the director of the Levite singers. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [ever since David first appointed Asaph to lead the singers]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **a head of the ones who sang**
UST There was someone to lead the singers
(רֹאשׁ הַמְשֹׁרְרִים)

Head here is a figurative way of saying **leader**. Alternate translation: [the Levite choir has had an appointed director]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and songs of praise and thanksgiving to God**
UST and they sang songs to praise and thank God
(וְשִׁיר־תְּהִלָּה וְהֹדוֹת לֵאלֹהִים)

Here the book leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Alternate translation: [and they have sung songs of praise and thanksgiving to God]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in the days of	in the days … when
David	David was {king}
and Asaph	and Asaph was {in charge of the temple musicians}
from ancient time there was	of old
praise	to praise
to God	God

Nehemiah 12:47

ULT	UST
And in the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah, all Israel was giving the portions of the ones who sang and the gatekeepers, as a daily matter in its day. And they were consecrating for the Levites, and the Levites were consecrating for the sons of Aaron.	*During the time when Zerubbabel was {the governor}, the people all contributed the food that the singers and temple gatekeepers needed each day. They did the same during the time when Nehemiah was {the governor}. They gave a tenth {of their crops} to the Levites, and the Levites gave a tenth {of that} to the priests, who were descendants of Aaron, {the first Supreme Priest}.*

ULT **And … all**
UST all
(וְכָל)

This word indicates that this sentence will provide further information about the situation that the book is describing here. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use a word or expression in your own language that indicates the same thing.

Support Reference: Background Information

ULT **in the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah**
UST During the time when Zerubbabel was {the governor} … during the time when Nehemiah was {the governor}
(בִּימֵי זְרֻבָּבֶל וּבִימֵי נְחֶמְיָה)

Alternate translation: [just as they had done in the time of Zerubbabel, so now in the time of Nehemiah]

ULT **in the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah**
UST During the time when Zerubbabel was {the governor} … during the time when Nehemiah was {the governor}
(בִּימֵי זְרֻבָּבֶל וּבִימֵי נְחֶמְיָה)

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: [the time of Zerubbabel … the time of Nehemiah]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **in the days of Zerubbabel**
UST During the time when Zerubbabel was {the governor}
(בִּימֵי זְרֻבָּבֶל)

As 12:1 explains, this was the man who led the first group of Jews who returned to the province of Judah, about a hundred years before the time of Nehemiah. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this more explicitly. Alternate translation: [in the time of Zerubbabel, who led the first group back to the province of Judah from exile]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Zerubbabel … Nehemiah**
UST Zerubbabel … Nehemiah
(זְרֻבָּבֶל & נְחֶמְיָה)

These are the names of two men.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **And in the days of Zerubbabel and in the days of Nehemiah, all Israel was giving the portions of the ones who sang**
UST During the time when Zerubbabel was {the governor}, the people all contributed the food that the singers … They did the same during the time when Nehemiah was {the governor}. They
(וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּימֵי זְרֻבָּבֶל וּבִימֵי נְחֶמְיָה נֹתְנִים מְנָיוֹת הַמְשֹׁרְרִים)

As in 12:44, the abstract noun **portion** refers to the part of each crop that the Israelites contributed to support the temple personnel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a different phrase. Alternate translation: [all the Israelites contributed from their harvests to support the singers and the gatekeepers]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **as a daily matter in its day**
UST needed each day
(דְּבַר־יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ)

As in 11:23, this is an idiom that means **as each day required**

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **And they were consecrating for the Levites, and the Levites were consecrating for the sons of Aaron**
UST gave a tenth {of their crops} to the Levites, and the Levites gave a tenth {of that} to the priests, who were descendants of Aaron, {the first Supreme Priest}
(וּמַקְדִּשִׁים לַלְוִיִּם וְהַלְוִיִּם מַקְדִּשִׁים לִבְנֵי אַהֲרֹן)

They means the Israelites, as in the previous sentence. **Consecrating** means **setting apart**. This is likely a reference to the tithe or 1/10 of crops that the Israelites promised in their covenant to give to support the Levites, and to the tithe of this tithe that the Levites then contributed to support the priests, as described in 10:37–38. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [The Israelites also gave a tenth of their crops to support the Levites, just as they had promised, and the Levites gave a tenth of this tenth to support the priests]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in the days of	During the time when … was {the governor}
Zerubbabel	Zerubbabel
and in the days of	during the time when … was {the governor}
Nehemiah	Nehemiah
Israel	the people … They … They
and the gatekeepers	and temple gatekeepers
in its day	each day
And they were consecrating	gave a tenth {of their crops}
for the Levites	to the Levites
and the Levites	and the Levites
were consecrating	gave a tenth {of that}
Aaron	Aaron, {the first Supreme Priest}

Nehemiah 13

Nehemiah 13 Chapter Introduction

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem

Nehemiah was eager to make sure that the Jews kept their promise to obey the law. When he returned from Persia, he found many things wrong: one of the store rooms in the temple had been converted into a guest room for Tobiah, the Levites had not received their portions for working in the temple, people were working on the Sabbath, and many had married heathen wives. (See: promise, promised; law, law of Moses, law of Yahweh, law of God; and temple, house, house of God; and Sabbath)

Nehemiah 13:1

ULT	UST
On that day it was read in the book of Moses, in the ears of the people, and it was found written in it, that no Ammonite or Moabite shall enter into the assembly of God until eternity.	*Then someone read out loud to the people from a scroll {that contained the law that God gave to} Moses. They learned that the {law} said that no Ammonites or Moabites should ever join the {Israelite} people {when they gathered together to worship God}.*

ULT **On that day**
UST Then
(בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא)

As noted for 12:43 and 12:44, this is a flexible expression that can mean either "on that same day" or "around that time." Either meaning might fit the context here, so you could choose to say either one in your translation.

ULT **it was read in the book of Moses**
UST someone read … from a scroll {that contained the law that God gave to} Moses
(נִקְרָא בְּסֵפֶר מֹשֶׁה)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: [we read from the scroll that contained the Law of Moses]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **in the ears of the people**
UST out loud to the people
(בְּאָזְנֵי הָעָם)

Here, **ears** stand for hearing. Alternate translation: [out loud so that all the people could hear]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **and it was found written in it**
UST They learned that the {law} said
(וְנִמְצָא כָּתוּב בּוֹ)

Found is an idiom that means "could be found there" or "was there." The expression means that this was something that was in the law. And since Nehemiah and the other leaders were reading this out loud to the people, their purpose was to show them that this was in the law. Alternate translation: [and we showed them that it said]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **and it was found written in it**
UST They learned that the {law} said
(וְנִמְצָא כָּתוּב בּוֹ)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: [we showed them that it said]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **Ammonite or Moabite**
UST Ammonites or Moabites
(עַמֹּנִי וּמֹאָבִי)

These are the names of the members of two people groups.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **shall enter into the assembly of God**
UST should … join … Israelite … when they gathered together to worship God
(יָבֹוא & בִּקְהַל הָאֱלֹהִים)

The expression **assembly of God** can refer either to the entire Israelite community, as in 7:66 and 8:17, or to the community gathered for a legal proceeding, as in 5:7 and 5:13, or gathered for a religious ceremony, as in 8:2 and 8:18. The last meaning is probably in view here. This statement likely means that Ammonites and Moabites were not allowed to join the Israelites in their worship of Yahweh in the temple or on public occasions. For example, 9:2 describes how the Israelites did not allow any foreigners to take part in their ceremony of national repentance. (Later in this chapter, in 13:23–27, Nehemiah will describe how he took the further measure of expelling foreigners from the Israelite community itself.) Alternate translation: [could join with the Israelites when they worshiped Yahweh]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT until eternity
UST ever
(עַד־עוֹלָם)

This expression means that this was a permanent regulation in the Law of Moses. It was not a regulation that applied just to a specific period and that might change afterwards. Alternate translation: [This was a permanent rule.]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
On … day	Then
Moses	{ … that God gave to} Moses
Ammonite	Ammonites
or Moabite	or Moabites
into the assembly of	Israelite … when they gathered together
God	to worship God
eternity	ever

Nehemiah 13:2

ULT	UST
For they did not meet the sons of Israel with bread and with water. And he hired Balaam against them to curse them, but our God overturned the curse to a blessing.	*{The law said this} because {the people of Ammon and the people of Moab} did not give any food or water to the Israelites {while they were traveling through their areas after leaving Egypt}. Instead, they paid Balaam to get him to curse the Israelites. But our God turned that attempt to curse Israel into a blessing.*

ULT **For**
UST {The law said this} because
(כִּי)

This word indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the reasons for what the previous sentence described. Alternate translation: [they could not come into the assembly because]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **they did not meet the sons of Israel with bread and with water**
UST the people of Ammon and the people of Moab} did not give any food or water to the Israelites {while they were traveling through their areas after leaving Egypt}
(לֹא קִדְּמוּ אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּלֶּחֶם וּבַמָּיִם)

The assumption is that readers will know what historical incident this statement is referring to. It is a reference to the time when the Israelites were traveling from Egypt to Canaan through the desert. They were basically refugees. It could have been expected, as a basic act of compassion, that the Ammonites and Moabites would help provide for their needs as they passed through their territories but they refused to do this. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [they did not help meet the needs of the Israelites when they were refugees traveling through their territories]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the sons of Israel**
UST to the Israelites {while they were traveling through their areas after leaving Egypt}
(אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Sons here means “descendants.” The descendants of Israel were the Israelites. Alternate translation: [the Israelites]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **they did … meet … with bread and with water**
UST {the people of Ammon and the people of Moab} did … give any food or water
(קִדְּמוּ בַלֶּחֶם וּבַמָּיִם)

Bread stands for food, and water stands for drink, and together both terms probably represent assistance in general. Alternate translation: [provide food and drink] or [provide the help they needed]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **And he hired Balaam against them to curse them, but our God overturned the curse to a blessing**
UST Instead, they paid Balaam to get him to curse the Israelites. But our God turned that attempt to curse Israel into a blessing
(וַיִּשְׂכֹּר עָלָיו אֶת־בִּלְעָם לְקַלְלָו וַיַּהֲפֹךְ אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַקְּלָלָה לִבְרָכָה)

The assumption once again is that readers will know what historical incident this is referring to. This is a reference to the way the king of Moab hired a prophet named Balaam to curse the Israelites, but instead God made Balaam speak words of blessing about them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [The Moabites also hired a prophet named Balaam to curse the Israelites, but God made him speak words of blessing instead]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Balaam**
UST Balaam
(אֶת־בִּלְעָם)

This is a man's name.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Israel	to the Israelites {while they were traveling through their areas after leaving Egypt}
with bread	food
Balaam	Balaam
to curse them	to get him to curse
our God	our God
the curse	that attempt to curse Israel

ULT	UST
to a blessing	into a blessing

Nehemiah 13:3

ULT	UST
And it happened that, as soon as they heard the law, they separated all the mixed company from Israel.	*So the people obeyed that law. They sent away all the people whose ancestors had come from other countries.*

ULT And it happened
UST So
(וַיְהִי)

This phrase indicates that the events the story will now describe came after the things it has just described. You can use an expression in your own language that will indicate this clearly.

Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT as soon as they heard the law
UST the people obeyed that law
(כְּשָׁמְעָם אֶת־הַתּוֹרָה)

As in 9:29, **hear** in this context is an idiom that means not just to hear something audibly, but to understand a command and recognize the need to obey it. Alternate translation: [when they realized that this was what the law commanded]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT that … they separated all the mixed company from Israel
UST They sent away all the people whose ancestors had come from other countries
(וַיַּבְדִּילוּ כָל־עֵרֶב מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל)

Mixed company is an expression that describes people who were not Israelites. It indicates that if they were present, then the group would be mixed, part Israelite and part non-Israelite. Alternate translation: [They no longer allowed foreigners to worship with the Israelites]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the law	that law
from Israel	away

Nehemiah 13:4

ULT	UST
Now, before the face of this, Eliashib the priest, nearly-related to Tobiah, was being put in the chamber of the house of our God.	*When he became the {Supreme} Priest, Eliashib got control of the storerooms in the temple. Now he was related to Tobiah.*

ULT **Now, before the face of this**
UST When he became
(וְלִפְנֵי מִזֶּה)

This phrase indicates that the events the story will now relate came before the events it has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a phrase such as "but before all this happened."

Support Reference: Background Information

ULT **Now, before the face of this**
UST When he became
(וְלִפְנֵי מִזֶּה)

In this book, the expression **face** often refers to the front of a person, place, or object. Here the expression has the further figurative significance of "in front of" or "before" a certain time. Alternate translation: [before this time]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Eliashib**
UST Eliashib
(אֶלְיָשִׁיב)

This is a man's name. See how you translated it in 3:1.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Eliashib the priest**
UST the {Supreme} Priest, Eliashib
(אֶלְיָשִׁיב הַכֹּהֵן)

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers who Eliashib was. As we learn in 3:1, 3:20, and 12:10, he was actually the Jewish high priest during the time of Nehemiah. Alternate translation: [the high priest]

Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

ULT Eliashib the priest … was being put
UST the {Supreme} Priest, Eliashib got control of
(אֶלְיָשִׁיב הַכֹּהֵן נָתוּן)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in active form. Alternate translation: [they appointed Eliashib the priest] or [the leaders appointed Eliashib the priest]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT was being put in the chamber of the house of our God
UST got control of the storerooms in the temple
(נָתוּן בְּלִשְׁכַּת בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

This is most likely a figurative way of saying that as high priest, Eliashib had responsibility for and control over all the rooms in the temple. Alternate translation: [since he had control over]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT nearly-related to Tobiah
UST Now he was related to Tobiah
(קָרוֹב לְטוֹבִיָּה)

Since Tobiah was an Ammonite, Eliashib could not have been his close blood relative. So this expression must refer to a connection by marriage. We learn in 6:18 that both Tobiah and his son had married Jewish women, and one or both of these women may have been relatives of Eliashib. Alternate translation: [who was related to Tobiah by marriage]

ULT in the chamber of the house of our God
UST the storerooms in the temple
(בְּלִשְׁכַּת בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

Here one **chamber** or room is used to mean “every chamber” or room in the temple. Alternate translation: [every room in the temple]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT the house of our God
UST the temple
(בֵּית־אֱלֹהֵינוּ)

As often in this book, Nehemiah speaks of the temple here as the **house of God**, as if it were God’s dwelling place. Alternate translation: [the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the priest	the {Supreme} Priest
the house of	the temple
our God	the temple

Nehemiah 13:5

ULT	UST
And he made for him a great chamber, and there previously they were putting offerings: the frankincense; and the vessels; and the tithes of the grain, the wine, and the oil, the commandment for the Levites, and the ones who sang, and the gatekeepers; and the offerings of the priests.	*He allowed {Tobiah} to have a large room in which the priests used to store supplies. These included the grain offerings and the incense, the equipment for the temple, and the tithes of grain and wine and olive oil. {God} had commanded {the people to bring} these to the Levites, the singers, and the gatekeepers. This room had also held the offerings for the priests.*

ULT **And he made**
UST He allowed
(וַיַּעַשׂ)

In this context, the conjunction **and** indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the reason for what the previous sentence described, or what made it possible. Alternate translation: [and so] unless you used the word “since” to introduce the last phrase in 13:4, in which case the connection would already be clear and you would not need to use any connecting phrase here.

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **for him**
UST Tobiah
(לוֹ)

Verse 13:7 indicates that **him** refers to Tobiah. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly here. Alternate translation: [he allowed Tobiah to move into a large room in the temple]

ULT **and there previously they were putting offerings**
UST in which the priests used to store supplies. These included the grain offerings … had also held
(וְשָׁם הָיוּ לְפָנִים נֹתְנִים אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה)

They means the Israelites, and **offerings**, if it is a general term (See: next note), means the contributions that they gave to support the priests and Levites, as described in 12:44. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [This was the room that the Israelites had previously been using to store the offerings they brought to the temple to support the priests and Levites]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **offerings**
UST the grain offerings
(אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה)

The word **offerings** could be referring generally to all of the contributions that the Israelites brought, which would then be listed in the rest of this verse, or it could be the first specific item on the list, the daily grain offering, as described in 10:33. Alternate translation: [the offerings they brought] or [the daily grain offering]

ULT **the frankincense**
UST and the incense
(הַלְּבוֹנָה)

This term refers to a mixture of fragrant spices that was burned to produce smoke that had a pleasant smell. The law specified a special blend of spices that it said could only be used in the temple by the priests. Alternate translation: [the sacred incense]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **and the vessels**
UST the equipment for the temple
(וְהַכֵּלִים)

As in 10:39, here Nehemiah uses one type of equipment that the storerooms would hold, **vessels** or "jars" or "containers," to refer to all the different types of equipment that the priests and Levites would have used in the temple. Alternate translation: [the temple equipment]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **and the tithes of the grain, the wine, and the oil**
UST and the tithes of grain and wine and olive oil
(וּמַעְשַׂר הַדָּגָן הַתִּירוֹשׁ וְהַיִּצְהָר)

This means the portion, one tenth, of their crops and produce that the Israelites had promised to contribute to support the temple personnel, as described in 10:37–38. Alternate translation: [the tenth of their crops and produce]

ULT **and the tithes of**
UST and the tithes of
(וּמַעְשַׂר)

A **tithe** means a tenth (1/10) or one part out of ten equal parts.

Support Reference: Fractions

ULT **the commandment for the Levites, and the ones who sang, and the gatekeepers**
UST {God} had commanded {the people to bring} these to the Levites, the singers, and the gatekeepers
(מִצְוַת הַלְוִיִּם וְהַמְשֹׁרְרִים וְהַשֹּׁעֲרִים)

Here Nehemiah leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This phrase means "which the law had commanded them to contribute to support the Levites, the singers, and the temple gatekeepers." You could say that explicitly if it would be helpful to your readers.

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **and the offerings of the priests**
UST the offerings for the priests
(וּתְרוּמַת הַכֹּהֲנִים)

Here, **offerings of the priests** refers to offerings that people brought for the priests, not offerings made by the priests. This may have included the tithe, or one tenth of what they received, that the Levites contributed to the priests, as described in 10:38. Alternate translation: [and the contributions to support the priests]

Support Reference: Possession

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
offerings	the grain offerings
the frankincense	and the incense
and the tithes of	and the tithes of
the grain	grain
the wine	and wine
and the oil	and olive oil
the Levites	to the Levites
and the gatekeepers	and the gatekeepers
and the offerings of	the offerings for

ULT	UST
the priests	the priests

Nehemiah 13:6

ULT	UST
And during all this I was not in Jerusalem. For I had gone to the king in year 32 of Artaxerxes, the king of Babylon. And at an end of days I requested leave from the king.	*During that time I was not in Jerusalem, because in the thirty-second year that Artaxerxes was the king of Babylonia, I had gone back {to report to the king what I had been doing}. After I had been there a while, I asked the king to allow me to return {to Jerusalem}.*

ULT **And during all this**
UST During that time
(וּבְכָל־זֹ֣ה)

This expression indicates that the sentence it introduces describes something that was happening at the same time as the events the book has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a phrase such as “while all of this was happening” to indicate this.

Support Reference: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

ULT **For**
UST because
(כִּ֤י)

This word indicates that the clause it introduces explains the reason for what the previous clause described. That is, Nehemiah is about to give the reason why he was not in Jerusalem while Eliashib was allowing Tobiah to move into the temple. Alternate translation: [because]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **I had gone to the king in year 32 of Artaxerxes, the king of Babylon**
UST in the thirty-second year that Artaxerxes was the king of Babylonia, I had gone back {to report to the king what I had been doing}
(בִּשְׁנַת֩ שְׁלֹשִׁ֨ים וּשְׁתַּ֜יִם לְאַרְתַּחְשַׁסְתְּא֣ מֶלֶךְ־בָּבֶ֗ל בָּאתִי֙ אֶל־הַמֶּ֔לֶךְ)

Here Nehemiah is providing background information to explain why he was not in Jerusalem. As he indicates in 5:14, he was governor of Judah for twelve years, from the twentieth to the thirty-second year of the reign of King Artaxerxes. As this verse indicates, he then returned to the royal court. Alternate translation: [I had returned to serve King Artaxerxes in his court in the thirty-second year of his reign]

Support Reference: Background Information

ULT in year 32 of Artaxerxes
UST in the thirty-second year that Artaxerxes
(בִּשְׁנַת֙ שְׁלֹשִׁ֣ים וּשְׁתַּ֔יִם לְאַרְתַּחְשַׁסְתְּ֖א)

This expression refers to the number of years that Artaxerxes had been reigning as king. Alternate translation: [in year 32 of the reign of Artaxerxes as king]

Support Reference: Ordinal Numbers

ULT the king of Babylon
UST was the king of Babylonia
(מֶ֣לֶךְ־בָּבֶ֑ל)

Artaxerxes was the king of the Persian Empire, but since the Persians had conquered the Babylonians, he also had the right to use the title "king of Babylon." The fact that Nehemiah describes him by this title may actually indicate that the royal court was located in the city of Babylon at this time and that he returned to that city to resume his duties in the court. Alternate translation: [the king of Persia, whose court was then in Babylon]

Support Reference: Background Information

ULT And at an end of days
UST After I had been there a while
(וּלְקֵ֣ץ יָמִ֔ים)

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: [after some time]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT I requested leave from the king
UST I asked the king to allow me to return {to Jerusalem}
(נִשְׁאַ֖לְתִּי מִן־הַמֶּ֥לֶךְ)

The implication, as shown explicitly in the next verse, is that Nehemiah requested time off from his responsibilities in the court so that he could travel back to Judah and see how the people there were doing, and that the king gave him permission to do this. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [I asked the king if I could take some time off and travel back to Judah to help the people there, and he gave me permission to do that]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
in Jerusalem	in Jerusalem
the king	the king
in year	in the … year
of Artaxerxes	that Artaxerxes
the king of	was the king of
Babylon	Babylonia
days	a while
the king	the king

Nehemiah 13:7

ULT	UST
And I came to Jerusalem. And I noticed the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah by making for him a chamber in the courts of the house of God.	*When I arrived in Jerusalem, I discovered the evil thing that Eliashib had done for Tobiah by allowing him to use this room in the temple area.*

ULT And I came to Jerusalem
UST When I arrived in Jerusalem
(וָאָבוֹא לִירוּשָׁלִָם)

In this context, the conjunction **And** at the beginning of this phrase indicates that this event took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a phrase such as “and so.”

Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT And I noticed
UST I discovered
(וָאָבִינָה)

In this context, the conjunction **And** at the beginning of this phrase indicates that this event took place after the event in the previous sentence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a phrase such as “when I got there, I discovered”

Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah by making for him a chamber in the courts of the house of God
UST the evil thing that Eliashib had done for Tobiah by allowing him to use this room in the temple area
(בָּרָעָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֶלְיָשִׁיבׇ לְטֹובִיָּה לַעֲשׂוֹת לוֹ נִשְׁכָּה בְּחַצְרֵי בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים)

While in the book of Nehemiah the word **evil** often means things like “sad” or “harmful,” in this context, the word does describe something that is morally bad and destructive. Eliashib had not done this wrong thing to Tobiah, but on his behalf. Alternate translation: [about the wrong thing that Eliashib had done by allowing Tobiah to move into a storeroom within the temple courts]

ULT the house of God
UST temple
(בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים)

Nehemiah speaks of the temple as the **house of God** as if it were God's dwelling place.
Alternate translation: [the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
to Jerusalem	in Jerusalem
the evil	the evil thing
in the courts of	in the … area
the house of God	temple

Nehemiah 13:8

ULT	UST
And it was extremely evil to me, and I cast out all the things of the house of Tobiah from the storeroom to the outside.	*That grieved me very much. I threw everything that belonged to Tobiah out of that room.*

ULT **And it was extremely evil to me**
UST That grieved me very much
(וַיֵּרַע לִי מְאֹד)

This expression describes Nehemiah's perspective on the action. It does not mean that Eliashib did a wrong thing to Nehemiah directly. Alternate translation: [I recognized how very wrong this was]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **and I cast out all the things of the house of Tobiah from the storeroom to the outside**
UST I threw everything that belonged to Tobiah out of that room
(וָאַשְׁלִיכָה אֶת־כָּל־כְּלֵי בֵית־טוֹבִיָּה הַחוּץ מִן־הַלִּשְׁכָּה)

Here, the term **house** represents all the possessions of Tobiah. It does not mean a literal house that Tobiah owned, because the context shows that he was staying in a room within the temple. Rather, **house** is a metaphor for "property," that is, the things a person owns and would keep in a house. Alternate translation: [I threw everything that Tobiah was keeping in that storeroom right out of the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And it was … evil	That grieved
and I cast out	I threw
the house of	belonged to … that

Nehemiah 13:9

ULT	UST
And I spoke, and they purified the chambers. And I returned to there the vessels of the house of God, with the offering and the incense.	*Then I commanded {the priests to perform a ritual to cleanse} that room and make it pure again. I also {ordered} the equipment for the temple and the grain offerings and incense {to be} put back in that room {where they belonged}.*

ULT **And I spoke**
UST Then I commanded
(וָאֹמְרָה)

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as “then.”

Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT **And I spoke, and they purified the chambers**
UST Then I commanded {the priests to perform a ritual to cleanse} that room and make it pure again
(וָאֹמְרָה וַיִּטְהֲרוּ הַלְּשָׁכוֹת)

The implication is that Nehemiah spoke to the priests since they would have been the ones to conduct a ceremony like the one the story describes in 12:30 to show that the people wanted the rooms in the temple to be ceremonially clean in the hopes that they would once more be acceptable to God. Alternate translation: [I told the priests to conduct a ceremony to purify the rooms in the temple]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the vessels of the house of God, with the offering and the incense**
UST the equipment for the temple and the grain offerings and incense
(כְּלֵי בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה וְהַלְּבוֹנָה)

See how you translated these expressions in 13:5. Alternate translation: [the equipment for the temple, the offerings that the people brought, and the sacred incense]

ULT **the house of God**
UST the temple
(בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים)

Nehemiah speaks of the temple as the **house of God** as if it were God's dwelling place.

Alternate translation: [the temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and they purified	the priests to perform a ritual to cleanse … and make … pure again
the house of God	the temple
the offering	the grain offerings
and the incense	and incense

Nehemiah 13:10

ULT	UST
And I knew that the portions of the Levites had not been given, and the Levites and the ones who sang, who did the work, had fled, a man to his field.	*I also learned that the singers and the other Levites who were responsible for the {temple} services had left Jerusalem. They had returned to their own fields because the people had stopped giving them {10 percent of their} harvests, {since Tobiah had occupied the storeroom}.*

ULT **And I knew**
UST I also learned
(וָאֵדָעָה)

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as **then**. As with "understood" in 13:7, **knew** here means **came to know** or **discovered** or **realized**. Alternate translation: [Then I discovered that]

Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT **the portions of the Levites had not been given**
UST the people had stopped giving them {10 percent of their} harvets, {since Tobiah had occupied the storeroom}
(מָנָיוֹת הַלְוִיִּם לֹא נִתָּנָה)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [no one had been giving the Levites the support that the law commanded the Israelites to provide for them]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

> ULT **the portions of the Levites had not been given**
> UST the people had stopped giving them {10 percent of their} harvests, {since Tobiah had occupied the storeroom}
> (מָנָ֣וֹת הַלְוִיִּ֔ם לֹ֥א נִתָּנָ֖ה)

The implication is that no one was giving the Levites their support because there was no longer any place to store the grain, oil, and other supplies in the temple, from where they could be distributed to them. This was because Tobiah had taken over the large storeroom. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [no one had been giving the Levites the support that the law commanded the Israelites to provide for them because there was no place to store the contributions now that Tobiah had taken over the storeroom]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **the portions of the Levites**
> UST them {10 percent of their} harvests
> (מָנָ֣וֹת הַלְוִיִּ֔ם)

As in 12:44 and 12:47, the abstract noun **portion** refers to the part of each crop that the law commanded the Israelites to give towards the work of the temple to support the Levites. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a different phrase. Alternate translation: [the support that the law commanded the Israelites to provide for the Levites]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

> ULT **and … had fled, a man to his field**
> UST had left Jerusalem. They had returned to their own fields because
> (וַיִּבְרְח֥וּ אִישׁ־לְשָׂדֵ֖הוּ)

The implication is that the Levites had had to return to farming their own land because they no longer received from the people the support they needed to be able to serve in the temple. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [all of the Levites had left the temple and returned to farming their own land because they had all stopped receiving the support that enabled them to serve in the temple]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **and … had fled**
UST had left Jerusalem. They had returned … because
(וַיִּבְרְחָ֗וּ)

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the results of what the previous sentence described. Alternate translation: [as a result]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **a man to his field**
UST to their own fields
(אִ֤ישׁ־לְשָׂדֵהוּ)

In this context, **a man** means **each one of them** or **every one of them**. Alternate translation: [all of the Levites had returned to farming their own land] or [each of the Levites had returned to farming his own land]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the Levites and the ones who sang, who did the work**
UST the singers and the other Levites who were responsible for the {temple} services
(הַלְוִיִּם֙ וְהַמְשֹׁרְרִ֔ים עֹשֵׂ֖י הַמְּלָאכָֽה)

Here the book repeats some background information to remind readers who the Levites and the singers were. Alternate translation: [the Levites and the singers, who were responsible for the worship in the temple]

Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

ULT **who did the work**
UST who were responsible for the {temple} services
(עֹשֵׂ֖י הַמְּלָאכָֽה)

The work is an abbreviated way of saying “the work of the house of our God” as in 10:33 or “the work of the house of God” as in 11:12, that is, the work of the temple, meaning specifically everything required to maintain the worship there. Alternate translation: [who were responsible for the worship in the temple]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And I knew	I also learned
the Levites	them
the Levites	and the other Levites

ULT	UST
the work	for the {temple} services

Nehemiah 13:11

ULT	UST
And I contended with the prefects, and I said, "Why is the house of God forsaken?" And I gathered them and caused them to stand at their stations.	*So I rebuked the city officials. I told them, "You have neglected {the work of} the temple!" Then I brought {the Levites and the singers} back to the temple and told them to do their work {again}.*

ULT And I contended
UST So I rebuked
(וָאָרִיבָה)

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a phrase such as "and after that"

Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT And I contended with the prefects
UST So I rebuked the city officials
(וָאָרִיבָה אֶת־הַסְּגָנִים)

As in 5:7, **contended** is a technical term that describes a public accusation that requires the defendants to answer for themselves in the presence of their fellow citizens. Alternate translation: [Then I called the city officials to account publicly for what they had allowed]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT the prefects
UST the city officials
(הַסְּגָנִים)

See how you translated this term in 2:16. Alternate translation: [the city officials]

ULT and I said
UST I told them
(וָאֹמְרָה)

The implication in context is that what Nehemiah said was an accusation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a phrase that indicates this. Alternate translation: [I demanded to know]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Why is the house of God forsaken**
UST You have neglected {the work of} the temple
(מַדּוּעַ נֶעֱזַב בֵּית־הָאֱלֹהִים)

Nehemiah uses the question form to challenge or even ridicule the officials who have failed in the basic responsibility of making sure that worship continues in the temple. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: [Because of you, the temple has been abandoned]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **And I gathered them and caused them to stand at their stations**
UST Then I brought {the Levites and the singers} back to the temple and told them to do their work {again}
(וָאֲקַבְּצֵם וָאַעֲמִדֵם עַל־עָמְדָם)

Here, **them** refers not to the city officials but to the Levites and singers who had gone back to their farms. Alternate translation: [I brought the Levites and the singers back to the temple and I had them start doing their work again]

ULT **And I gathered them**
UST Then I brought {the Levites and the singers} back to the temple
(וָאֲקַבְּצֵם)

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as “then”

Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the prefects	the city officials
the house of God	You have neglected {the work of} the temple
is … forsaken	You have neglected {the work of} the temple
And I gathered them	Then I brought {the Levites and the singers} back to the temple

Nehemiah 13:12

ULT	UST
And all Judah brought the tithe of the grain, and the wine, and the oil to the treasuries.	*Then all {the people of} Judah started bringing their tithes of grain, wine, and olive oil to the {temple} storerooms {once again}.*

ULT **And all**
UST Then all
(וְכָל)

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as “then”

Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT **And all Judah**
UST Then all {the people of} Judah
(וְכָל־יְהוּדָה)

All is a figurative exaggeration that means that people from throughout the province of Judah did this generally. Alternate translation: [the people of Judah]

Support Reference: Hyperbole

ULT **And all Judah**
UST Then all {the people of} Judah
(וְכָל־יְהוּדָה)

Here Nehemiah refers to all of the Israelites living in the province of Judah as if they were a single person, Judah, the ancestor of the tribe by that name that lived in the territory that was now this province. Alternate translation: [the people of Judah]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **to the treasuries**
UST to the {temple} storerooms
(לָאוֹצָרוֹת)

This means the storerooms in the temple.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Judah	{the people of} Judah
the tithe of	their tithes of
the grain	grain
and the wine	wine
and the oil	and olive oil

Nehemiah 13:13

ULT	UST
And I appointed treasurers over the treasuries: Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah from the Levites; and at their hand was Hanan, the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah. For they were considered faithful, and it was for them to apportion to their brothers.	*I appointed some {men} to be in charge of the storerooms. They were Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah the Levite. I also appointed Hanan the son of Zaccur and grandson of Mattaniah to assist them. I appointed these {men} because {everyone} knew that they were trustworthy and would distribute {the offerings fairly} to their associates.*

ULT And I appointed treasurers
UST I appointed some {men} … I also appointed … I appointed these {men}
(וְאוֹצָרָה)

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as "then."

Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT And I appointed treasurers over the treasuries
UST I appointed some {men} to be in charge of the storerooms … I also appointed … I appointed these {men}
(וְאוֹצָרָה עַל־אוֹצָרוֹת)

Treasurers means officials who would be responsible for the storerooms in the temple. Alternate translation: [I appointed these men to be responsible for the temple storerooms]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah from the Levites
UST They were Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah the Levite
(שֶׁלֶמְיָה הַכֹּהֵן וְצָדוֹק הַסּוֹפֵר וּפְדָיָה מִן־הַלְוִיִּם)

Shelemiah, Zadok, and Pedaiah are the names of men. As in 8:1, where the word refers to Ezra, **scribe** means a teacher who has carefully studied the Law of Moses. **From the Levites** means that Pedaiah was one of the Levites. Alternate translation: [Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah the Levite]

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and at their hand was**
UST to assist them
(וְעַל־יָדָם)

At their hand is a figurative way of saying **assisting them**. Alternate translation: [I appointed to be their assistant]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Hanan, the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah**
UST Hanan the son of Zaccur and grandson of Mattaniah
(חָנָן בֶּן־זַכּוּר בֶּן־מַתַּנְיָה)

Hanan is the name of a man, Zaccur is the name of his father, and Mattaniah is the name of his grandfather.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **For**
UST because
(כִּי)

In this context, the conjunction **For** indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the reason for what the previous sentence described. Alternate translation: [I appointed them because]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **they were considered faithful**
UST {everyone} knew that they were trustworthy
(נֶאֱמָנִים נֶחְשָׁבוּ)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form, and you could say who did the action. Alternate translation: [Everyone recognized that they were honest men]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **and it was for them to apportion to their brothers**
UST and would distribute {the offerings fairly} to their associates
(וְעֲלֵיהֶם לַחֲלֹק לַאֲחֵיהֶם)

In this context, **brother** seems to be a figurative way of saying **fellow priests and Levites**, although it is possible that some of the biological brothers of the men listed were included in this group. **Apportion** means **give the portions**, meaning the support as described in 13:10. Alternate translation: [their responsibility was to make sure that their fellow priests and Levites received the support that the law commanded the Israelites to provide]

Support Reference: Metaphor

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And I appointed treasurers	I appointed some {men} … I also appointed … I appointed these {men}
the priest	the priest
and Zadok	Zadok
the scribe	the scribe
the Levites	the Levite
faithful	they were trustworthy

Nehemiah 13:14

ULT	UST
Remember me, my God, concerning this, and do not wipe out my faithful kindness that I have done for the house of my God and for its service watches.	*"My God, please bless me for this. Yes, bless me for the good things that I have done for your temple and for the temple services!"*

> ULT **Remember me, my God, concerning this**
> UST My God, please bless me for this
> (זָכְרָה־לִּי אֱלֹהַי עַל־זֹאת)

In this context, **remember** means to think about someone and consider what action you can take on their behalf. Nehemiah is not suggesting that God has forgotten about him. Alternate translation: [please bless me, my God, for doing this]

Support Reference: Idiom

> ULT **Remember me, my God, concerning this**
> UST My God, please bless me for this
> (זָכְרָה־לִּי אֱלֹהַי עַל־זֹאת)

As in 4:4, here Nehemiah stops addressing the audience of his story and speaks directly to God. You could indicate this by putting this verse in quotation marks. Review the note at 4:4 about asides like this if that would be helpful.

Support Reference: Aside

> ULT **and do not wipe out**
> UST Yes, bless me for
> (וְאַל־תֶּמַח)

Nehemiah speaks of his good deeds as if they were something written that could be erased. Alternate translation: [do not overlook]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **my faithful kindness**
UST the good things
(חַסְדַּי)

The abstract noun **faithful kindness** here is the same as the term "covenant faithfulness" that Nehemiah applies to God in 1:5, 9:17, 9:32, and 13:22. It refers to a person consistently and dependably fulfilling the obligations they have accepted. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this word with a phrase that would bring out this meaning. Alternate translation: [the way that I have consistently provided for]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **for the house of my God**
UST for your temple
(בְּבֵית אֱלֹהַי)

Nehemiah speaks of the temple as the **house of God** as if it were God's dwelling place. Alternate translation: [your temple]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and for its service watches**
UST and for the temple services
(וּבְמִשְׁמָרָיו)

As in 12:9 and 12:24, the phrase **service watch** refers to the Levite singers. It means either an individual choir or a time on duty for the singers. Alternate translation: [and for the Levite singers]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
my God	My God
do … wipe out	Yes, bless me for
my faithful kindness	the good things
for the house of	for your temple
my God	for your temple
and for its service watches	and for the temple services

Nehemiah 13:15

ULT	UST
In those days I saw in Judah ones treading winepresses on the sabbath, and ones bringing in grain-heaps, and ones loading onto donkeys, yes, even wine, grapes, and figs, and all kinds of loads, and ones bringing to Jerusalem on the day of the sabbath. And I protested on the day of their selling provisions.	*During that time, I saw {some people} in Judea {who were working} on the Sabbath day. Some were pressing grapes to make wine. Others were taking their grain and loading it on donkeys. Others were also loading {bags of} wine, baskets of grapes, figs, and many other things onto donkeys and bringing them into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. I warned them not to sell {food to the people of Judea} on {Sabbath} days.*

ULT **In those days**
UST During that time
(בַּיָּמִים הָהֵמָּה)

This phrase indicates that this event took place at the same time as the event the story has just related. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a phrase such as “around that same time.”

ULT **I saw in Judah ones treading winepresses**
UST I saw {some people} in Judea {who were working} … Some were pressing grapes to make wine. Others were … Others were
(רָאִיתִי בִיהוּדָה ׀ דֹּרְכִים־גִּתּוֹת)

Alternate translation: [I saw that some of the people of Judah were treading winepresses]

ULT **ones treading winepresses**
UST pressing grapes to make wine
(דֹּרְכִים־גִּתּוֹת)

The word **winepresses** represents the grapes that were in the winepresses. The people were treading on the grapes to press the juice out of them so that they could make wine. Alternate translation: [treading on grapes in winepresses]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **on the sabbath**
UST on the Sabbath day
(בַּשַּׁבָּֽת)

The implication is that the people of Judah should not have been doing such work on the Sabbath because God had commanded them to set apart that day, the seventh day of the week, as a special day for rest and worship. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [on the Sabbath, when they should not have been doing any work]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **on the sabbath**
UST on the Sabbath day
(בַּשַּׁבָּֽת)

This is the name of a religious observance. It occurs repeatedly in this part of the story, through 13:22. It will be helpful to your readers if you translate it consistently.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and ones bringing in grain-heaps, and ones loading onto donkeys, yes, even wine, grapes, and figs, and all kinds of loads, and ones bringing to Jerusalem on the day of the sabbath**
UST taking their grain and loading it on donkeys … also loading {bags of} wine, baskets of grapes, figs, and many other things onto donkeys and bringing them into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day
(וּמְבִיאִ֣ים הָעֲרֵמ֗וֹת וְעֹמְסִים֙ עַל־הַחֲמֹרִ֔ים וְאַף־יַ֖יִן עֲנָבִ֣ים וּתְאֵנִ֑ים וְכָל־מַשָּׂ֣א וּמְבִיאִ֗ים יְרוּשָׁלַ֙͏ִם֙ בְּי֣וֹם הַשַּׁבָּ֔ת)

These **ones** are not three different groups, but various people of Judah who were collectively doing all these things. The implication is that they were bringing these goods to Jerusalem to sell them even on the Sabbath. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. “Others had loaded their wares, such as sheaves of grain, wine, grapes, figs, and other goods, onto donkeys, and they were bringing these goods into Jerusalem to sell on the Sabbath day”

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **And I protested on the day of their selling provisions**
UST I warned them not to sell {food to the people of Judea} on {Sabbath} days
(וָאָעִ֕יד בְּיֹ֖ום מִכְרָ֥ם צָֽיִד)

The word **day** could be intended literally here and it could mean that Nehemiah protested that the Sabbath itself was not a day for selling goods since that was work. Another possibility is that the word **day** does not refer to a specific day, but rather to a more general time when Nehemiah said this. Alternate translation: [I protested that they should not be doing the work of selling on the Sabbath] or [at the time when they were selling these provisions, I protested against that]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
In … days	During … time
in Judah	some people} in Judea {who were working} … Some were … Others were … Others were
winepresses	grapes to make wine
on the sabbath	on the Sabbath day
grain-heaps	their grain
donkeys	donkeys … donkeys
wine	{bags of} wine
grapes	baskets of grapes
and figs	figs
Jerusalem	Jerusalem
on the day of	on the … day
the sabbath	Sabbath
on the day of	on {Sabbath} days

Nehemiah 13:16

ULT	UST
And the Tyrians who dwelt in it were bringing in fish and all kinds of merchandise and were selling them on the sabbath to the sons of Judah, even in Jerusalem.	*I also saw some people from {the city of} Tyre who were living there in {Jerusalem} bringing fish and other things into Jerusalem to sell to the people of Judah on the Sabbath day.*

ULT And the Tyrians who dwelt in it
UST I also saw some people from {the city of} Tyre who were living there in {Jerusalem}
(וְהַצֹּרִים יָשְׁבוּ בָּהּ)

Tyrians were people from the city of Tyre. **It** here refers to the city of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: [Also, some people from the city of Tyre who were living in Jerusalem]

ULT And the Tyrians
UST I also saw some people from {the city of} Tyre
(וְהַצֹּרִים)

Tyrians were people who came from the city of Tyre.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT to the sons of Judah
UST to the people of Judah
(לִבְנֵי יְהוּדָה)

Son of is a figurative expression that indicates that a person shares the qualities of something. In this case, Nehemiah is describing people who share the quality of being residents of the province of Judah. (In context, this does not seem to be limited to actual descendants of Judah, that is, Israelites from that tribe, since the Tyrians seem to have been eager to sell to anyone living in the area.) Alternate translation: [the people of Judah]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **even in Jerusalem**
UST into Jerusalem
(וּבִירוּשָׁלִָם)

The implication is that Jerusalem was the last place where anyone should have broken the Sabbath by doing work and engaging in commerce because it was the place from which God had chosen to start making himself famous throughout the world and the city where God had chosen to put his temple. (The concept is the same here as in 11:1 and 11:18, where Nehemiah calls Jerusalem "the holy city.") If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [even in Jerusalem, the special city that God chose]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And the Tyrians	I also saw some people from {the city of} Tyre
on the sabbath	on the Sabbath day
Judah	Judah
even in Jerusalem	into Jerusalem

Nehemiah 13:17

ULT	UST
And I contended with the nobles of Judah. And I said to them, "What is this evil thing that you are doing, and profaning the day of the sabbath?	*So I rebuked the Jewish leading citizens. I said to them, "This is a very evil thing that you are doing! You are making the Sabbath day into something {God never wanted} it to be.*

ULT **And I contended**
UST So I rebuked
(וָאָרִ֣יבָה)

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that the sentence it introduces explains something that happened as a result of what the previous sentence described. Alternate translation: [So]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **And I contended with the nobles of Judah**
UST So I rebuked the Jewish leading citizens
(וָאָרִ֣יבָה אֵת חֹרֵ֣י יְהוּדָ֑ה)

As in 5:7 and 13:11, **contended** is a technical term that describes a public accusation that requires the defendants to answer for themselves in the presence of their fellow citizens. Alternate translation: [Then I called the leading citizens of Judah to account publicly for what they had allowed]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the nobles of Judah**
UST the Jewish leading citizens
(חֹרֵ֣י יְהוּדָ֑ה)

See how you translated this term in 2:16. Alternate translation: [the leading citizens of Judah]

ULT **And I said to them**
UST I said to them
(וָאֹמְרָה לָהֶם)

The implication in context is that what Nehemiah said was an accusation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a phrase that indicates this. Alternate translation: [I demanded to know]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **What is this evil thing that you are doing, and profaning the day of the sabbath**
UST This is a very evil thing that you are doing! You are making the Sabbath day into something {God never wanted} it to be
(מָה־הַדָּבָר הָרָע הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם עֹשִׂים וּמְחַלְּלִים אֶת־יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת)

Nehemiah is using the question form for emphasis in order to scold the leaders of Judah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate what he says as an exclamation. Alternate translation: [You are doing an evil thing by treating the Sabbath day like any other day]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **and profaning the day of the sabbath**
UST This is a very evil thing that you are doing! You are making the Sabbath day into something {God never wanted} it to be
(וּמְחַלְּלִים אֶת־יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת)

To **profane** something means to treat something that should be holy, set apart for a special purpose, as if it were something ordinary or common, just like anything else. Alternate translation: [treating the Sabbath day like any other day]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the nobles of	leading citizens
Judah	the Jewish
evil	This is a very evil thing that you are doing! You are making the Sabbath day into something {God never wanted} it to be
and profaning	This is a very evil thing that you are doing! You are making the Sabbath day into something {God never wanted} it to be
the day of	

ULT	UST
	This is a very evil thing that you are doing! You are making the Sabbath day into something {God never wanted} it to be
the sabbath	This is a very evil thing that you are doing! You are making the Sabbath day into something {God never wanted} it to be

Nehemiah 13:18

ULT	UST
Did not your fathers do thus, and our God brought all this evil on us and on this city? And you are increasing wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath."	*You know that your ancestors did these same things, and God {punished} our nation {by} bringing great trouble to this city! But {now} you too are breaking {the laws} for the Sabbath day. You are going to cause {God} to be angry with {the nation of} Israel {again}. {He will punish us} even more!"*

ULT **Did not your fathers do thus, and our God brought all this evil on us and on this city**
UST You know that your ancestors did these same things, and God {punished} our nation {by} bringing great trouble to this city! But {now} you too
(הֲלוֹא כֹה עָשׂוּ אֲבֹתֵיכֶם וַיָּבֵא אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָלֵינוּ אֵת כָּל־הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת וְעַל הָעִיר הַזֹּאת)

Nehemiah once again uses a question form for emphasis as he continues to scold the leaders of Judah. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate what he says as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: [You know that your ancestors did the same thing, and that is why our God brought all this trouble on us and on this city]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **your fathers**
UST You know that your ancestors did these same things, and God {punished} our nation {by} bringing great trouble to this city! But {now} you too
(אֲבֹתֵיכֶם)

Fathers here means "ancestors." Alternate translation: [your ancestors]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and our God brought all this evil on us and on this city**
UST You know that your ancestors did these same things, and God {punished} our nation {by} bringing great trouble to this city! But {now} you too
(וַיָּבֵא אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָלֵינוּ אֵת כָּל־הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת וְעַל הָעִיר הַזֹּאת)

As Nehemiah speaks to the leading citizens, he assumes that they will know that he is referring to the way God allowed the Babylonians to conquer Jerusalem, destroy much of the city including the temple, break down the city wall, and take most of the people into exile. As he reports this conversation in the book, he assumes that its audience will know this as well. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [our God allowed the Babylonians to take our people into exile and destroy this city]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **all this evil**
UST You know that your ancestors did these same things, and God {punished} our nation {by} bringing great trouble to this city! But {now} you too
(אֵת כָּל־הָרָעָה הַזֹּאת)

Evil here does not refer to something morally wrong, but to trouble or harm. Alternate translation: [all this trouble]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **And you**
UST You know that your ancestors did these same things, and God {punished} our nation {by} bringing great trouble to this city! But {now} you too
(וְאַתֶּם)

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates a contrast between how the leading citizens should be acting and how they actually are acting. You could make this contrast explicit by using an expression such as, “You should know better”

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **And you are increasing wrath upon Israel**
UST You know that your ancestors did these same things, and God {punished} our nation {by} bringing great trouble to this city! But {now} you too … You are going to cause {God} to be angry with {the nation of} Israel {again}. {He will punish us} even more
(וְאַתֶּם מוֹסִיפִים חָרוֹן עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Nehemiah assumes that the leading citizens will know that he is speaking of God's wrath, that is, God's anger at the people's sin, and the punishment that God may use to penalize and correct the people for what they are doing. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [you are making God even more angry with the people of Israel, and God may punish us even more]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Israel**
UST You are going to cause {God} to be angry with {the nation of} Israel {again}. {He will punish us} even more
(יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here Nehemiah refers to all of the Israelites as if they were a single person, their ancestor, Israel. Alternate translation: [the Israelites] or [the people of Israel]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **by profaning the sabbath**
UST are breaking {the laws} for the Sabbath day
(לְחַלֵּל אֶת־הַשַּׁבָּת)

As in 13:17, to **profane** something means to treat something that should be considered holy, that is, set apart for a special purpose, as if it were ordinary or common. Alternate translation: [by treating the Sabbath day like any other day]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
our God	You know that your ancestors did these same things, and God {punished} our nation {by} bringing great trouble to this city! But {now} you too
evil	You know that your ancestors did these same things, and God {punished} our nation {by} bringing great trouble to this city! But {now} you too
wrath	

ULT	UST
	You are going to cause {God} to be angry with {the nation of} Israel {again}. {He will punish us} even more
Israel	You are going to cause {God} to be angry with {the nation of} Israel {again}. {He will punish us} even more
by profaning	are breaking {the laws}
the sabbath	for the Sabbath day

Nehemiah 13:19

ULT	UST
And it happened that, when the gates of Jerusalem grew dark before the face of the sabbath, I spoke, and the doors were shut, and I said that they should not open them until after the sabbath. And I caused some from my young men to stand at the gates; a load could not enter on the day of the sabbath.	*So I commanded {the gatekeepers} to shut the doors of the gates of the city when it started to get dark on Friday evening. I commanded them not to open the gates until Saturday evening. I also stationed some of my men at the gates {so they would make sure that} no one brought things to sell into {the city in between those times}, on the Sabbath day.*

ULT **And it happened … when the gates of Jerusalem grew dark before the face of the sabbath**

UST So … of the gates of the city when it started to get dark on Friday evening

(וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר צָלְלוּ֩ שַׁעֲרֵי יְרוּשָׁלַ֨͏ִם לִפְנֵי הַשַּׁבָּ֜ת)

Nehemiah uses this phrase to introduce the next event in his story. You do not need to represent it in your translation unless your language has a similar expression that it characteristically uses.

Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT **when the gates of Jerusalem grew dark before the face of the sabbath**

UST of the gates of the city when it started to get dark on Friday evening

(כַּאֲשֶׁר צָלְלוּ֩ שַׁעֲרֵי יְרוּשָׁלַ֨͏ִם לִפְנֵי הַשַּׁבָּ֜ת)

Nehemiah speaks of the gates as if they were changing in hue, but this is a figurative way of saying that the sun was setting and evening was beginning. Alternate translation: [when evening came]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **before the face of the sabbath**

UST on Friday evening

(לִפְנֵי הַשַּׁבָּ֜ת)

As in 13:4, the expression **face**, which often refers to the front of something, has the further figurative significance of "in front of" or "before" a certain time. Alternate translation: [as the Sabbath was beginning]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **that … I spoke, and the doors were shut**
UST I commanded {the gatekeepers} to shut the doors
(וָאֹמְרָה וַיִּסָּגְרוּ הַדְּלָתוֹת)

Here the conjunction **and** indicates that the action described in the second phrase was the result of the action described in the first phrase. Alternate translation: [I gave orders for the doors to be closed and barred]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **and I said that they should not open them until after the sabbath**
UST I commanded them not to open the gates until Saturday evening
(וָאֹמְרָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִפָּתְחוּם עַד אַחַר הַשַּׁבָּת)

They likely refers to the gatekeepers. Alternate translation: [I ordered the gatekeepers not to open them again until after the Sabbath]

ULT **And I caused some from my young men to stand at the gates**
UST I also stationed some of my men at the gates {so they would make sure that}
(וּמִנְּעָרַי הֶעֱמַדְתִּי עַל־הַשְּׁעָרִים)

As in 4:16 and many other places in the book, “young men” refers to the servants who worked for Nehemiah. While they probably were young adult males, the expression is specifically envisioning their role and status. Alternate translation: [I had some of my servants stand at the gates]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **a load could not enter on the day of the sabbath**
UST no one brought things to sell into {the city in between those times}, on the Sabbath day
(לֹא־יָבוֹא מַשָּׂא בְּיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת)

Here Nehemiah speaks of a load of goods as if it were a living thing that could go through the gates and into Jerusalem on its own. Alternate translation: [so that no one would bring in a load on the Sabbath day]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **a load could not enter on the day of the sabbath**
UST no one brought things to sell into {the city in between those times}, on the Sabbath day
(לֹא־יָבֹ֥וא מַשָּׂ֖א בְּי֣וֹם הַשַּׁבָּֽת)

The ultimate purpose was to keep merchants from offering goods for sale on the Sabbath and to keep the people from buying them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [so that on the Sabbath day no one would bring a load of goods into the city for sale]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the gates of	of the gates of
Jerusalem	the city
the sabbath	on Friday evening
the sabbath	Saturday
And … some from my young men	some of my men … so they would make sure that
the gates	the gates
on the day of	{ … in between those times}, on the … day
the sabbath	Sabbath

Nehemiah 13:20

ULT	UST
And the ones who traded and the ones who sold all kinds of goods to sell lodged outside of Jerusalem a time or two.	*One or two times traders and merchants selling all kinds of things camped outside the city on the night {before the Sabbath day}. {They were hoping} to sell {something the next day}.*

ULT **the ones who traded and the ones who sold all kinds of goods to sell**
UST traders and merchants selling all kinds of things … They were hoping} to sell {something … }
(הָרֹכְלִ֔ים וּמֹכְרֵ֖י כָּל־מִמְכָּ֑ר)

These two phrases mean similar things. You do not need to repeat both of them in your translation if that might be confusing for your readers. Alternate translation: [merchants who had goods for sale,] or [some traders and some merchants]

Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **And … lodged outside of Jerusalem**
UST camped outside the city on the night {before the Sabbath day} … the next day
(וַיָּלִ֣ינוּ & מִח֖וּץ לִירוּשָׁלָֽם)

Lodged means "spent the night." The implication is that they wanted to start selling their goods first thing the next morning. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [spent the night outside Jerusalem so they could start selling their goods first thing the next morning]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **a time or two**
UST One or two times
(פַּ֥עַם וּשְׁתָּֽיִם)

Alternate translation: [once or twice]

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
of Jerusalem	the city

Nehemiah 13:21

ULT	UST
And I testified against them, and I said to them, "Why are you lodging in front of the wall? If you repeat, I will stretch out a hand on you!" From that time, they did not come on the sabbath.	*I warned them. I said to them, "It is useless for you to camp here outside the walls on Friday night. If you do this again, I will arrest you by force!" After that, they did not come on Sabbath days.*

ULT And I testified against them
UST I warned them
(וָאָעִידָה בָּהֶם)

As in 9:26, this phrase means, "I warned them that what they were doing was wrong."

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT And I testified
UST I warned
(וָאָעִידָה)

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event took place at the same time as the event the story has just related. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a phrase such as "each time they did this"

Support Reference: Connect — Simultaneous Time Relationship

ULT Why are you lodging in front of the wall
UST It is useless for you to camp here outside the walls on Friday night
(מַדּוּעַ אַתֶּם לָנִים נֶגֶד הַחוֹמָה)

As in 13:17, Nehemiah is using a question form for emphasis as he scolds these merchants. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate what he says as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [I do not allow you to spend the night just outside the city wall]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **Why are you lodging in front of the wall**
UST It is useless for you to camp here outside the walls on Friday night
(מַדּוּעַ אַתֶּם לָנִים נֶגֶד הַחוֹמָה)

The implication, as in 13:20, is that the traders want to begin selling first thing the next morning. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [I do not allow you to spend the night just outside the city wall so you could start selling your goods as soon as the Sabbath day begins]

ULT **If you repeat**
UST If you do this again
(אִם־תִּשְׁנֹוּ)

This is an idiom that means "if you do this again."

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **I will stretch out a hand on you**
UST I will arrest you by force
(יָד אֶשְׁלַח בָּכֶם)

This is an idiom that means "I will use force against you." Alternate translation: [I will forcibly drive you away from the city]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **I will stretch out a hand**
UST I will arrest … by force
(יָד אֶשְׁלַח)

Here, **hand** represents power and action. Alternate translation: [forcibly drive away]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **From that time, they did not come on the sabbath**
UST After that, they did not come on Sabbath days
(מִן־הָעֵת הַהִיא לֹא־בָאוּ בַּשַּׁבָּת)

The expression in the first phrase indicates that the event it introduces took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a phrase such as "after that." Alternate translation: [After that, the merchants no longer came to the city on the Sabbath]

Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And I testified	I warned
time	After that
on the sabbath	on Sabbath days

Nehemiah 13:22

ULT	UST
And I said to the Levites that they should purify themselves and come keep the gates to consecrate the day of the sabbath. Remember me concerning this also, my God, and have pity on me according to the greatness of your covenant faithfulness.	*I also commanded the Levites to {perform a ritual to} purify themselves and then {take up stations} to guard the city gates. I wanted them to ensure that Sabbath days were kept holy {by not allowing merchants to enter the city on that holy day}. "My God, please bless me for doing this too! And be kind to me, because you faithfully love us so abundantly."*

ULT And I said to the Levites that they should purify themselves
UST I also commanded the Levites to {perform a ritual to} purify themselves
(וְאֹמְרָה לַלְוִיִּם אֲשֶׁר יִהְיוּ מְטַהֲרִים)

As in 12:30 and 13:9, **purify** means to perform a ceremony to make a person or a place ceremonially clean, to express the hope that it will be acceptable to God and useful for his purposes. Alternate translation: [I told the Levites to hold a ceremony to make themselves clean and acceptable to God]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT and come keep the gates to consecrate the day of the sabbath
UST and then {take up stations} to guard the city gates. I wanted them to ensure that Sabbath days were kept holy {by not allowing merchants to enter the city on that holy day}
(וּבָאִים שֹׁמְרִים הַשְּׁעָרִים לְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת־יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת)

As in 3:1 and 12:47, **consecrate** means to set something apart for a special purpose. Nehemiah was telling the Levites that they should guard the gates in order to prevent people from bringing goods for sale into the city on the Sabbath day. That way, they would ensure that the Sabbath continued to be a day that was set apart for the special purpose of rest and worship, and it would not be treated like an ordinary day. Alternate translation: [and I told them that they should then guard the gates of the city so that no one would bring in goods to sell on the Sabbath as if it were an ordinary day]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Remember me concerning this also, my God**
UST My God, please bless me for doing this too
(גַּם־זֹאת זָכְרָה־לִּי אֱלֹהָי)

In this context, **remember** means to think about someone and consider what action you can take on their behalf. Nehemiah is not suggesting that God has forgotten about him. Alternate translation: [Please bless me, O God, for doing this as well]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Remember me concerning this also, my God**
UST My God, please bless me for doing this too
(גַּם־זֹאת זָכְרָה־לִּי אֱלֹהָי)

As in 4:4, Nehemiah stops addressing the audience of his story and speaks directly to God. You could indicate this by putting this verse in quotation marks. Review the note at 4:4 about asides like this if that would be helpful.

Support Reference: Aside

ULT **and have pity on me according to the greatness of your covenant faithfulness**
UST And be kind to me, because you faithfully love us so abundantly
(וְחוּסָה עָלַי כְּרֹב חַסְדֶּךָ)

The abstract noun **greatness** expresses the vast extent to which God possesses the quality of **covenant faithfulness**. As in 1:5, God having this quality means that he is inwardly disposed to keep all of his promises, and so he always does that faithfully. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the idea behind this abstract noun with an adjective such as "great." Alternate translation: [and have mercy on me, because your faithfulness to those who belong to you is so great]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
to the Levites	the Levites
purify themselves	to {perform a ritual to} purify themselves
the gates	the city gates
to consecrate	I wanted them to ensure that … were kept holy {by not allowing merchants to enter the city on that … }
the day of	days … day
the sabbath	Sabbath … holy
my God	My God

ULT	UST
your covenant faithfulness	you faithfully love us

Nehemiah 13:23

ULT	UST
In those days I also saw Jews who had given a dwelling to Ashdodite, Ammonite, and Moabite women.	*During that time, I also learned that many of the Jewish men had married women from {the city of} Ashdod, and from the Ammonites and Moabites.*

ULT **In those days**
UST During that time
(בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם)

This phrase indicates that this event took place at the same time as the event the story has just related. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship in this case by using a phrase such as “around that same time”

ULT **In those days**
UST During that time
(בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם)

The term **days** is used here to refer a particular period of time. Alternate translation: [around that same time]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **who had given a dwelling to**
UST had married
(הֹשִׁיבוּ)

This is an expression that refers to marriage. Alternate translation: [who had married]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Ashdodite, Ammonite, and Moabite**
UST from {the city of} Ashdod, and from the Ammonites and Moabites
(אשדודיות עמוניות מוֹאָבִיּוֹת)

These are the names of three people groups.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
In … days	During … time
Jews	many of the Jewish men

ULT	UST
Ashdodite	from {the city of} Ashdod
Ammonite	and from the Ammonites
and Moabite	and Moabites

Nehemiah 13:24

ULT	UST
And their sons, half were speaking Ashdodite, and none of them were knowing to speak Hebrew, but according to the tongue of people group by people group.	*So half of their children spoke a foreign language, and they did not know how to speak Hebrew. They spoke whatever language {their} foreign {parent spoke}.*

ULT **And their sons**
UST So … their children
(וּבְנֵיהֶם)

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this sentence will provide further information about the situation the book is describing here. You could use a phrase such as **and as for** to show that this is further background information.

Support Reference: Background Information

ULT **And their sons, half were speaking Ashdodite, and none of them were knowing to speak Hebrew**
UST So half of their children spoke a foreign language, and they did not know how to speak Hebrew
(וּבְנֵיהֶם חֲצִי מְדַבֵּר אַשְׁדּוֹדִית וְאֵינָם מַכִּירִים לְדַבֵּר יְהוּדִית)

This could mean one of two things. It seems most likely that the expression means that: (1) these children spoke a mixed language, using Ashdodite expressions half the time and Hebrew expressions the other half of the time, so that none of them knew how to speak Hebrew fluently. The expression could also mean that (2) half of the children who were born to Hebrew fathers and foreign mothers spoke a foreign language. However, if half spoke Ashdodite, and none spoke Hebrew, this leaves open the question of what language the other half of the children spoke. Alternate translation: (1) [their children spoke a mixed dialect, using Philistine expressions half the time, so that none of them could speak Hebrew fluently] or (2) [half of their children spoke the language of the Philistines, and none of their children knew how to speak Hebrew]

ULT **half**
UST half of
(חֲצִי)

Half means one part out of two equal parts.

Support Reference: Fractions

ULT **and none of them were knowing to speak Hebrew, but according to the tongue of people group by people group**
UST and they did not know how to speak Hebrew. They spoke whatever language {their} foreign {parent spoke}
(וְאֵינָם מַכִּירִים לְדַבֵּר יְהוּדִית וְכִלְשׁוֹן עַם וָעָם)

Here Nehemiah leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. This sentence seems to mean "none of them could speak Hebrew fluently, but instead they mixed it with the language of whatever people group their mothers belonged to." You could say that explicitly if it would be helpful to your readers.

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **but according to the tongue of**
UST They spoke whatever language {their} foreign {parent spoke}
(וְכִלְשׁוֹן)

Here, **tongue** means the language spoken by a person or a group of people. Alternate translation: [language]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **people group by people group**
UST They spoke whatever language {their} foreign {parent spoke}
(עַם וָעָם)

This is an idiom that means "of each people group"

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
were knowing	know how
Ashdodite	a foreign language
were knowing	know how
Hebrew	Hebrew

ULT	UST
but according to the tongue of	They spoke whatever language {their} foreign {parent spoke}

Nehemiah 13:25

ULT	UST
And I contended with them, and cursed them, and struck some of their men, and pulled out their hair. And I caused them to swear an oath by God: "If you give your daughters to their sons, or if you lift from their daughters for your sons, or for yourselves!	*So I rebuked those men. I {asked God} to curse them. I struck some of them {with my fists}. I pulled out their hair. Then I forced them to make a solemn promise, knowing that God was listening. I made them promise that they would {never} again allow their daughters to marry foreign men. I also made them promise that they and their sons would not marry foreign women.*

ULT **And I contended with them**
UST So I rebuked those men
(וָאָרִיב עִמָּם)

As in 5:7, 13:11, and 13:17, **contended** is a technical term that describes a public accusation that requires the defendants to answer for themselves in the presence of their fellow citizens. Alternate translation: [then I called these men to account publicly for what they had done]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **and cursed them**
UST I {asked God} to curse them
(וָאֲקַלְלֵם)

As in 10:29, **curse** means to express the wish that God would punish someone. Alternate translation: [I said I wished that God would punish them]

ULT **and struck some of their men, and pulled out their hair**
UST I struck some of them {with my fists}. I pulled out their hair
(וָאַכֶּה מֵהֶם אֲנָשִׁים וָאֶמְרְטֵם)

By performing these actions, Nehemiah demonstrated to these men symbolically how serious a wrong they had committed. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [I struck some of them and pulled out their hair to show how wrong they were to have married foreign women]

Support Reference: Symbolic Action

ULT **And I caused them to swear an oath by God: "If you give your daughters to their sons, or if you lift from their daughters for your sons, or for yourselves**
UST Then I forced them to make a solemn promise, knowing that God was listening. I made them promise that they would {never} again allow their daughters to marry foreign men. I also made them promise that they and their sons would not marry foreign women
(וָאַשְׁבִּיעֵם בֵּאלֹהִים אִם־תִּתְּנוּ בְנֹתֵיכֶם לִבְנֵיהֶם וְאִם־תִּשְּׂאוּ מִבְּנֹתֵיהֶם לִבְנֵיכֶם וְלָכֶם)

Here Nehemiah is reporting the words of the oath in the second person, because this is his account of how he spoke to the men who had married foreign women. When these men said the actual oath, they would have used the first person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the first person in your translation as well. Alternate translation: [I made them take this oath: 'If we allow our daughters to marry their sons, or if we or our sons marry their daughters, may God punish us severely']

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT **And I caused them to swear an oath by God: "If you give your daughters to their sons, or if you lift from their daughters for your sons, or for yourselves**
UST Then I forced them to make a solemn promise, knowing that God was listening. I made them promise that they would {never} again allow their daughters to marry foreign men. I also made them promise that they and their sons would not marry foreign women
(וָאַשְׁבִּיעֵם בֵּאלֹהִים אִם־תִּתְּנוּ בְנֹתֵיכֶם לִבְנֵיהֶם וְאִם־תִּשְּׂאוּ מִבְּנֹתֵיהֶם לִבְנֵיכֶם וְלָכֶם)

Nehemiah has the men take an oath using a common Hebrew formula that leaves out some of the words that a sentence would ordinarily need in order to be complete. Whenever a person takes an oath using this formula, the implication is, "May God punish me severely if I do this thing." Alternate translation: [If we allow our daughters to marry their sons, or if we or our sons marry their daughters, may God punish us severely!]

Support Reference: Oath Formulas

ULT **you give your daughters to their sons**
UST allow their daughters to marry foreign men
(תִּתְּנוּ בְנֹתֵיכֶם לִבְנֵיהֶם)

This is an idiom that means **allow your daughters to marry their sons** or **give your daughters in marriage to their sons**

Support Reference: Idiom

> ULT **you lift from their daughters**
> UST marry foreign women
> (תִּשְׂאוּ מִבְּנֹתֵיהֶם)

This is an idiom that means “if you take any of their daughters as wives”

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and cursed them	I {asked God} to curse them
And I caused them to swear an oath	Then I forced them to make a solemn promise
by God	knowing that God was listening

Nehemiah 13:26

ULT	UST
Did not Solomon, the king of Israel, sin concerning these things? Yet among many nations there was no king like him: and he was beloved by his God, and God gave him as king over all Israel. The foreign women caused even him to sin.	*{I said to them,} "You know that Solomon, the king of Israel, sinned as a result of {marrying foreign women who worshiped idols}! You know that he was greater than any of the kings of other nations. God loved him, and God set him as the king over all {the people of} Israel. But his foreign wives caused even him to sin!*

ULT **Did not Solomon, the king of Israel, sin concerning these things**
UST I said to them,} "You know that Solomon, the king of Israel, sinned as a result of {marrying foreign women who worshiped idols}
(הֲלוֹא עַל־אֵלֶּה חָטָא־שְׁלֹמֹה מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Here Nehemiah supports his argument by appealing to facts that he assumes these men will know. Alternate translation: [you know that Solomon king of Israel sinned because he married foreign women]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Did not Solomon, the king of Israel, sin concerning these things**
UST I said to them,} "You know that Solomon, the king of Israel, sinned as a result of {marrying foreign women who worshiped idols}
(הֲלוֹא עַל־אֵלֶּה חָטָא־שְׁלֹמֹה מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל)

Nehemiah is using a question form for emphasis as he scolds these men. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate what he says as a statement. Alternate translation: [you know that Solomon king of Israel sinned because he married foreign women]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **Yet among … nations**
UST You know that he was greater than any of the kings of other nations
(וּבַגּוֹיִם)

In this context, the conjunction **Yet** introduces a contrast between what Solomon would have been expected to do and what he actually did. You could begin the sentence with a phrase like "even though" to indicate this contrast.

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **Yet among many nations there was no king like him**
UST You know that he was greater than any of the kings of other nations
(וּבַגּוֹיִם הָרַבִּים לֹא־הָיָה מֶלֶךְ כָּמֹהוּ)

The expression **many nations** in this phrase indicates, "You could look among as many nations as you wanted, but you would still find no king like him." In other words, "There was no other king like him anywhere in the world." If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that as an alternate translation.

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **and he was beloved by his God**
UST God loved him
(וְאָהוּב לֵאלֹהָיו הָיָה)

If it would be helpful in your language, you could say this with an active form. Alternate translation: [God loved him very much]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **and God gave him as king over all Israel**
UST and God set him as the king over all {the people of} Israel
(וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ אֱלֹהִים מֶלֶךְ עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל)

This is an idiom that means, "God made him king over all of Israel"

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **The foreign women caused even him to sin**
UST But his foreign wives caused even him to sin
(גַּם־אוֹתוֹ הֶחֱטִיאוּ הַנָּשִׁים הַנָּכְרִיּוֹת)

The implication is that these were foreign women whom Solomon married. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: [The foreign women he married caused even him to sin]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Solomon	I said to them,} "You know that Solomon, the king of Israel, sinned as a result of {marrying foreign women who worshiped idols}
the king of	I said to them,} "You know that Solomon, the king of Israel, sinned as a result of {marrying foreign women who worshiped idols}

ULT	UST
Israel	I said to them,} “You know that Solomon, the king of Israel, sinned as a result of {marrying foreign women who worshiped idols}
sin	I said to them,} “You know that Solomon, the king of Israel, sinned as a result of {marrying foreign women who worshiped idols}
Yet among … nations	You know that he was greater than any of the kings of other nations
king	You know that he was greater than any of the kings of other nations
and … beloved	God loved him
by his God	God loved him
God	God
as king	as the king
Israel	{the people of} Israel
foreign	his foreign
caused … to sin	caused … to sin

Nehemiah 13:27

ULT	UST
Should we then listen to you, to do all this great evil, to act unfaithfully toward our God and give a dwelling to foreign women?"	*{I am grieved} to hear this about you! You have married foreign wives {who worship idols}. You have committed a great sin against our God!"*

ULT Should we then listen to you, to do all this great evil, to act unfaithfully toward our God and give a dwelling to foreign women

UST {I am grieved} to hear this about you! You have married foreign wives {who worship idols}. You have committed a great sin against our God

(וְלָכֶם הֲנִשְׁמַע לַעֲשׂת אֵת כָּל־הָרָעָה הַגְּדוֹלָה הַזֹּאת לִמְעֹל בֵּאלֹהֵינוּ לְהוֹשִׁיב נָשִׁים נָכְרִיּוֹת)

Nehemiah uses a question form for emphasis once again as he continues to scold these men. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate what he says as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: [We will not accept your excuses and allow you to keep doing this thing that is so wrong]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT Should we then listen to you

UST {I am grieved} to hear this about you

(וְלָכֶם הֲנִשְׁמַע)

As in 9:16 and 9:29, **listen** in this context is an idiom that means not just to hear a statement about a course of action, but to agree to follow it. If your language has a word for "listen" that also means "agree," you could use it here. Alternate translation: [we will not heed your words]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT all this great evil

UST a great sin

(אֵת כָּל־הָרָעָה הַגְּדוֹלָה הַזֹּאת)

Here, the word **all** does not indicate the entirety of something. Instead, it expresses emphasis. Alternate translation: [this thing that is so wrong]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT to act unfaithfully toward our God and give a dwelling to foreign women
UST You have married foreign wives {who worship idols} … against our God
(לִמְעֹל בֵּאלֹהֵינוּ לְהוֹשִׁיב נָשִׁים נָכְרִיּוֹת)

Here acting unfaithfully means violating the Law of Moses. Nehemiah assumes that these men will know that the law forbade the Israelites to marry outside their people group. (In fact, the law does so using language very much like the oath that Nehemiah made these men swear, for example, "Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons," Deuteronomy 7:3.) If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this explicitly. Alternate translation: [By marrying foreign women, you are breaking the law that God gave us]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT and give a dwelling to
UST You have married
(לְהוֹשִׁיב)

As in 13:23, this is an expression that refers to marriage. Alternate translation: [marrying]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
evil	a great sin
to act unfaithfully	against
toward our God	our God
foreign	foreign … who worship idols

Nehemiah 13:28

ULT	UST
And one from the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite. And I caused him to flee from beside me.	*A man who was a son of Joiada and a grandson of Eliashib the Supreme Priest had married the daughter of {our enemy} Sanballat the Horonite. So I forced this man to leave {Jerusalem}.*

ULT **And one from the sons of**
UST who was a son of
(וּמִבְּנֵי)

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this sentence will provide background information that is necessary for understanding the next event the book will describe. You could express the same meaning with a word that indicates this in your language.

Support Reference: Background Information

ULT **And one from the sons of**
UST who was a son of
(וּמִבְּנֵי)

This means **one of the sons of**.

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **Joiada, the son of Eliashib**
UST Joiada and a grandson of Eliashib
(יוֹיָדָע בֶּן־אֶלְיָשִׁיב)

Joiada is the name of a man, and Eliashib is the name of his father.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **Eliashib the high priest**
UST Eliashib the Supreme Priest
(אֶלְיָשִׁיב הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל)

Here Nehemiah repeats some background information to remind readers who Eliashib was. Alternate translation: [Eliashib, who was the high priest]

Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

ULT **was son-in-law**
UST A man … had married the daughter of
(חָתָן)

Alternate translation: [had married the daughter of]

ULT **to Sanballat the Horonite**
UST {our enemy} Sanballat the Horonite
(לְסַנְבַלַּט הַחֹרֹנִי)

Sanballat is the name of a man, and Horonite is the name of his people group. See how you translated these words in 2:10.

Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **And I caused him to flee**
UST So I forced this man to leave
(וָאַבְרִיחֵהוּ)

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that the sentence it introduces explains the results of what the previous sentence described. Alternate translation: [as a result] or [because he had done this]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **And I caused him to flee from beside me**
UST So I forced this man to leave {Jerusalem}
(וָאַבְרִיחֵהוּ מֵעָלָי)

Him means this son of Joiada. Nehemiah means not just that he made this man leave his personal presence, but that he forced him to at least leave Jerusalem, and perhaps to stay out of the entire province of Judah. Nehemiah is using the space around himself to represent all Jerusalem and Judah. Alternate translation: [I forced him to leave Jerusalem] or [I forced him to leave the province of Judah]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **And I caused him to flee from beside me**
UST So I forced this man to leave {Jerusalem}
(וָאַבְרִיחֵהוּ מֵעָלָי)

The implication is that this son of Joiada was serving as a priest himself (as his lineage entitled him to do), and so he was a high-profile case of flaunting the command in the law against marrying foreign women. Nehemiah needed to make an example of him. A further consideration may have been that Sanballat was an enemy to Nehemiah and the Jews, and this man was one of the people who was sending letters to Sanballat with information about Nehemiah, as 6:17 indicates. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express one of these possibilities explicitly. Alternate translation: [I forced him to leave Jerusalem because as a priest, he was setting a bad public example by being married to a foreign woman] or [I forced him to leave Jerusalem because he was helping our enemy Sanballat]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
the high priest	the Supreme Priest

Nehemiah 13:29

ULT	UST
Remember them, my God, on account of the defiling of the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.	*"My God, these {men} have brought shame to the priesthood. {They have broken} the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites. Punish them as they deserve!"*

ULT Remember them, my God, on account of the defiling of the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites

UST My God, these {men} have brought shame to the priesthood. {They have broken} the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites. Punish them as they deserve

(זָכְרָה לָהֶם אֱלֹהַי עַל גְּאֲלֵי הַכְּהֻנָּה וּבְרִית הַכְּהֻנָּה וְהַלְוִיִּם)

As in 13:22, Nehemiah stops addressing the audience of his story and speaks directly to God. You could indicate this by putting this verse in quotation marks. Review the note at 4:4 about asides like this if that would be helpful.

Support Reference: Aside

ULT Remember them

UST Punish them as they deserve

(זָכְרָה לָהֶם)

Them likely means this son of Joiada, who had married a foreign woman, and Joiada himself, who had arranged with Sanballat for his son to marry Sanballat's daughter. As often in this book, **remember** means to think about someone and consider what action you should take in their regard. Nehemiah is not suggesting that God has forgotten about Joiada and his son. Alternate translation: [treat Joiada and his son the way they deserve for what they have done]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **on account of the defiling of the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites**
UST these {men} have brought shame to the priesthood. {They have broken} the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites
(עַל גְּאֲלֵי הַכְּהֻנָּה וּבְרִית הַכְּהֻנָּה וְהַלְוִיִּם)

Nehemiah speaks here of Joiada and his son causing the priesthood to be dishonored and breaking the covenant as if these actions had made the priesthood and God's covenant with the Israelites ceremonially unclean. Alternate translation: [they have dishonored the priesthood and broken the covenant you made with the priests and Levites]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites**
UST {They have broken} the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites
(וּבְרִית הַכְּהֻנָּה וְהַלְוִיִּם)

This means the covenant that established the descendants of Aaron as priests and the Levites as their helpers, in other words, the covenant that God made with Israel through Moses. Alternate translation: [the covenant you made with the Israelites]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
my God	My God
the defiling of	these {men} have brought shame to
the priesthood	the priesthood
and the covenant of	{They have broken} the covenant of
the priesthood	the priesthood
and the Levites	and of the Levites

Nehemiah 13:30

ULT	UST
And I purified them from everything foreign. And I caused the service watches to stand: for the priests and for the Levites, a man in his work;	*I took away everything from {the priests} that came from other nations and religions. I also established regulations for the priests and for the Levites {so they would know} what work each of them was supposed to do.*

ULT **And I purified them**
UST I took away … from {the priests}
(וְטִהַרְתִּים)

In this context, the conjunction **And** indicates that this event it introduces took place after the event the story has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this relationship by using a word such as **then**

Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT **And I purified them from everything foreign**
UST I took away everything from {the priests} that came from other nations and religions
(וְטִהַרְתִּים מִכָּל־נֵכָר)

Them means the priests and Levites whom Nehemiah has just mentioned. He probably says **purified** in a figurative sense. He did not hold a ceremony of purification, since the priests and Levites themselves would have done that. Rather, he means that he made sure that none of the other priests or Levites were married to foreign women, and that in this way he ensured that the priesthood was no longer unclean, as described in 13:29. Alternate translation: [I made sure that none of the priests or Levites were married to foreign women.]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **And I caused the service watches to stand: for the priests and for the Levites**
UST I also established regulations for the priests and for the Levites {so they would know}
(וַאֲעַמִּידָה מִשְׁמָרוֹת לַכֹּהֲנִים וְלַלְוִיִּם)

Generally in this book, the phrase **service watch** refers to the Levite singers. It means either an individual choir or a time on duty for the singers. But since Nehemiah also speaks of the priests here, in this context the phrase seems to mean more generally the time on duty for both the priests and the Levites. Alternate translation: [I made sure that the priests and Levites all came on duty in the temple when they were supposed to]

ULT **And I caused … to stand**
UST I also established
(וָאַעֲמִידָה)

Nehemiah is speaking of these temple arrangements figuratively, as in 5:13, as if they were a living thing that could stand, that is, stay in place or be established rather than go away. Alternate translation: [I made sure that]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **a man in his work**
UST what work each of them was supposed to do
(אִישׁ בִּמְלַאכְתּוֹ)

In this context, **a man** means **each one of them**. Alternate translation: [and that each one fulfilled his assigned responsibilities]

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
And I purified them	I took away … from {the priests}
the service watches	regulations … so they would know
for the priests	for the priests
and for the Levites	and for the Levites
in his work	what work … was supposed to do

Nehemiah 13:31

ULT	UST
and for the offering of pieces of wood at the appointed times; and for the firstfruits. Remember me, my God, for good.	*{I} also {arranged} for the people to bring their offerings of wood at the set times {to burn on the altar}, and to bring the first part of what they harvested {of each crop during the year}. "My God, please consider that I {have done all these things}, and bless me {for doing them}."*

ULT **and for the offering of pieces of wood at the appointed times; and for the firstfruits**
UST I} also {arranged} for the people to bring their offerings of wood at the set times {to burn on the altar}, and to bring the first part of what they harvested {of each crop during the year}
(וּלְקָרְבַּן הָעֵצִים בְּעִתִּים מְזֻמָּנוֹת וְלַבִּכּוּרִים)

This verse continues the sentence that begins in the previous verse, so here Nehemiah is describing two further things that he **caused to stand** or made sure happened. He is referring to the promises that the people made in their covenant to bring these contributions to the temple to support the priests and Levites. See how you translated these terms in 10:34 and 10:35. Alternate translation: [I also made sure that the people brought their offerings of wood and of the first crops that grow in their fields at the times when they had promised to bring them]

ULT **Remember me, my God, for good**
UST My God, please consider that I {have done all these things}, and bless me {for doing them}
(זָכְרָה־לִּי אֱלֹהַי לְטוֹבָה)

As in 4:4, here Nehemiah stops addressing the readers of his story and speaks directly to God. You could indicate this by putting this verse in quotation marks. Review the note at 4:4 about asides like this if that would be helpful.

Support Reference: Aside

ULT **Remember me, my God, for good**
UST My God, please consider that I {have done all these things}, and bless me {for doing them}
(זָכְרָה־לִּי אֱלֹהַי לְטוֹבָה)

To remember someone **for good** is an idiom that means to reward someone with good things for the good that they have done.

Support Reference: Idiom

UNFOLDINGWORD® TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
and for the offering of	{I} also {arranged} for the people to bring their offerings
appointed	set
and for the firstfruits	and to bring the first part of what they harvested {of each crop during the year}
my God	My God
for good	and bless me {for doing them}

unfoldingWord® Translation Academy - Nehemiah

v91

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**.

Nehemiah References:

1:2; 1:3; 1:3; 1:7; 2:17; 2:17; 2:20; 3:5; 4:4; 4:4; 4:8; 5:1; 5:5; 5:6; 5:9; 5:18; 7:6; 8:8; 8:10; 8:12; 8:17; 9:5; 9:9; 9:17; 9:17; 9:17; 9:28; 9:32; 9:35; 9:36; 9:37; 10:32; 10:34; 10:37; 11:6; 11:14; 11:20; 11:23; 12:27; 12:43; 12:43; 12:44; 12:45; 12:47; 13:10; 13:14; 13:22

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.

Nehemiah References:

1:3; 2:3; 2:7; 2:13; 2:17; 4:2; 4:6; 4:7; 4:15; 5:8; 5:8; 5:8; 5:16; 5:18; 6:1; 6:6; 6:6; 6:7; 6:8; 6:9; 6:10; 6:15; 6:16; 7:1; 7:1; 7:3; 7:4; 7:5; 7:5; 8:10; 8:10; 8:11; 8:12; 8:13; 8:15; 9:1; 9:25; 10:29; 10:34; 10:36; 12:22; 12:23; 12:43; 12:44; 13:1; 13:1; 13:4; 13:10; 13:13; 13:26

Aside

Description

An aside is a figure of speech in which someone who is speaking to a person or group pauses to speak confidentially to himself or someone else about those to whom he had been speaking. The speaker does this to indicate in a strong way his thoughts or feelings about that person or group.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Many languages do not use asides, and readers could be confused by them. They may wonder why the speaker suddenly starts talking to himself or someone else about the people he is speaking with.

Examples From the Bible

> All the men of your covenant are sending you away as far as the border.
> The men of your peace are deceiving you and are prevailing against you.
> They of your bread will set a trap under you.
> **There is no understanding in him.** (Obadiah 1:7 ULT)

In the first three lines, Yahweh is telling the people of Edom what will happen to them because they did not help the people of Judah. In the fourth line, Yahweh says something about Edom to himself.

> And I purified them from everything foreign. And I caused the service
> watches to stand: for the priests and for the Levites, a man in his work;
> and for the offering of pieces of wood at the appointed times; and for the
> firstfruits. **Remember me, my God, for good.** (Nehemiah 13:30-31 ULT)

Nehemiah is speaking to the readers of his account and describing some of the many things he did to restore true worship in Judah after the people returned from exile. But he suddenly turns

aside and addresses God, asking God to bless him for what he, Nehemiah, has done for those people.

Translation Strategies

(1) If an aside would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. But if this way of speaking would be confusing, let the speaker continue speaking to the people who are listening to him, but make clear that he is now expressing his thoughts and feelings about them.
(2) If a person speaks a prayer to God as an aside, you can put the prayer in quotation marks to indicate that.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1)

> All the men of your covenant are sending you away as far as the border. The men of your peace are deceiving you and are prevailing against you. They of your bread will set a trap under you. **There is no understanding in him.** (Obadiah 1:7 ULT)

All the men of your covenant are sending you away as far as the border. The men of your peace are deceiving you and are prevailing against you. They of your bread will set a trap under you. **You do not understand any of this.**

(2)

> And I purified them from everything foreign. And I caused the service watches to stand: for the priests and for the Levites, a man in his work; 31 and for the offering of pieces of wood at the appointed times; and for the firstfruits. **Remember me, my God, for good.** (Nehemiah 13:30-31 ULT)

And I cleansed them from everything foreign, and I made assignments for the priests and for the Levites, a man to his own work. And the wood offering at the stated time, and the firstfruits. **“Remember me, my God, for good.”**

Nehemiah References:

4:4; 5:19; 6:9; 9:5; 13:14; 13:22; 13:29; 13:31

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.

Nehemiah References:

1:1; 1:2; 1:2; 1:3; 1:7; 1:8; 1:9; 1:10; 1:11; 2:intro; 2:1; 2:1; 2:2; 2:2; 2:3; 2:4; 2:6; 2:6; 2:8; 2:9; 2:9; 2:10; 2:10; 2:11; 2:12; 2:12; 2:15; 2:15; 2:15; 2:16; 2:16; 2:16; 2:17; 2:17; 2:18; 2:19; 2:19; 2:20; 3:intro; 3:1; 3:1; 3:1; 3:3; 3:5; 3:17; 3:32; 4:4; 4:6; 4:12; 4:12; 4:14; 4:15; 4:15; 4:16; 4:16; 4:18; 4:20; 4:21; 4:22; 5:2; 5:3; 5:5; 5:5; 5:5; 5:7; 5:8; 5:8; 5:8; 5:8; 5:10; 5:12; 5:12; 5:14; 5:15; 5:16; 5:17; 6:2; 6:4; 6:5; 6:6; 6:6; 6:7; 6:9; 6:9; 6:9; 6:10; 6:11; 6:12; 6:13; 6:16; 6:17; 6:17; 6:18; 6:18; 7:3; 7:3; 7:5; 7:73; 8:1; 8:1; 8:1; 8:1; 8:2; 8:2; 8:4; 8:4; 8:6; 8:7; 8:9; 8:9; 8:10; 8:10; 8:10; 8:12; 8:12; 8:12; 8:13; 8:14; 8:16; 8:16; 8:17; 8:18; 8:18; 9:1; 9:2; 9:4; 9:4; 9:6; 9:7; 9:7; 9:7; 9:9; 9:9; 9:10; 9:11; 9:12; 9:14; 9:15; 9:15; 9:15; 9:17; 9:17; 9:17; 9:17; 9:18; 9:21; 9:23; 9:24; 9:32; 9:35; 9:37; 9:38; 10:1; 10:9; 10:28; 10:28; 10:30; 10:31; 10:31; 10:36; 10:38; 10:38; 10:38; 11:4; 11:5; 11:7; 11:10; 11:12; 11:13; 11:13; 11:14; 11:14; 11:15; 11:17; 11:17; 11:19; 11:24; 11:25; 11:30; 11:36; 12:1; 12:1; 12:1; 12:9; 12:10; 12:22; 12:24; 12:26; 12:27; 12:28; 12:29; 12:30; 12:31; 12:34; 12:36; 12:37; 12:37; 12:38; 12:40; 12:44; 12:44; 12:46; 12:47; 12:47; 13:2; 13:2; 13:5; 13:6; 13:9; 13:10; 13:10; 13:11; 13:15; 13:15; 13:16; 13:17; 13:18; 13:18; 13:19; 13:20; 13:22; 13:22; 13:26; 13:26; 13:27; 13:28; 13:29

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."

Nehemiah References:

1:11; 11:4; 11:11; 11:23; 12:40; 12:45; 12:46; 12:47; 13:4; 13:6; 13:6; 13:24; 13:28

Biblical Distance

Description

The following terms are the most common measures for distance or length that were originally used in the Bible. Most of these are based on the sizes of the hand and forearm.

- The **handbreadth** was the width of the palm of a man's hand.
- The **span** or handspan was the width of a man's hand with the fingers spread out.
- The **cubit** was the length of a man's forearm, from the elbow to the tip of the longest finger.
- The **"long" cubit** is used only in Ezekiel 40-48. It is the length of a normal cubit plus a span.
- The **stadium** (plural, **stadia**) referred to a certain footrace that was about 185 meters in length. Some older English versions translated this word as "furlong," which referred to the average length of a plowed field.

The metric values in the table below are close but not exactly equal to the biblical measures. The biblical measures probably differed in exact length from time to time and place to place. The equivalents below are an attempt to give an average measurement.

Original Measure	Metric Measure
handbreadth	8 centimeters
span	23 centimeters
cubit	46 centimeters
"long" cubit	54 centimeters
stadia	185 meters

Translation Principles

1. 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.
2. Using modern measures can help readers understand the text more easily.
3. Whatever measure you use, it would be good, if possible, to tell about the other kind of measure in the text or a footnote.

4. If you do not use the Biblical measures, try not to give the readers the idea that the measurements are exact. For example, if you translate one cubit as ".46 meters" or even as "46 centimeters," readers might think that the measurement is exact. It would be better to say "half a meter," "45 centimeters," or "50 centimeters."
5. Sometimes it can be helpful to use the word "about" to show that a measurement is not exact. For example, Luke 24:13 says that Emmaus was 60 stadia from Jerusalem. This can be translated as "about ten kilometers" from Jerusalem.
6. When God tells people how long something should be, and when people make things according to those lengths, do not use "about" in the translation. Otherwise it will give the impression that God did not care exactly how long something should be.

Translation Strategies

(1) Use the measurements from the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See **Copy or Borrow Words** 🔗.)
(2) Use the metric measurements given in the UST. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.
(3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.
(4) Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note.
(5) Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a note.

Translation Strategies Applied

The strategies are all applied to Exodus 25:10 below.

> They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be two and a half cubits; its width will be one cubit and a half; and its height will be one cubit and a half. (Exodus 25:10 ULT)

(1) Use the measurements given in the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See **Copy or Borrow Words** 🔗.)

> > "They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **two and a half kubits**; its width will be **one kubit and a half**; and its height will be **one kubit and a half**."

(2) Use the metric measurements given in the UST. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

> > "They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**."

(3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement. For example, if you measure things using the standard meter length, you could translate it as below.

> > "They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**."

(4) Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note. The following shows both measurements in the text.

> > "They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **two and a half cubits (one meter)**; its width will be **one cubit and a half (two thirds of a meter)**; and its height will be **one cubit and a half (two thirds of a meter)**."

(5) Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a note. The following shows the ULT measurements in notes.

> > "They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; [1] its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; [2] and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**."

The footnotes would look like:

> > "They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; [1] its width will be **two thirds of**

> **a meter**; [2] and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**."

The footnotes would look like:

> [1] two and a half cubits
> [2] one cubit and a half

Nehemiah References:

3:13

Biblical Money

Description

In early Old Testament times, people weighed their metals, such as silver and gold, and would pay a certain weight of that metal in order to buy things. Later, people started to make coins that each contained a standard amount of a certain metal. The daric is one such coin. In New Testament times, people used silver and copper coins.

The two tables below show some of the most well-known units of money found in the Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT). The table for Old Testament units shows what kind of metal was used and how much it weighed. The table for New Testament units shows what kind of metal was used and how much it was worth in terms of a day's wage.

Unit in OT	Metal	Weight
daric	gold coin	8.4 grams
shekel	various metals	11 grams
talent	various metals	33 kilograms

Unit in NT	Metal	Day's Wage
denarius/denarii	silver coin	1 day
drachma	silver coin	1 day
mite	copper coin	1/64 day
shekel	silver coin	4 days
talent	silver	6,000 days

Translation Principle

Do not use modern money values since these change from year to year. Using them will cause the Bible translation to become outdated and inaccurate.

Translation Strategies

The value of most money in the Old Testament was based on its weight. So when translating these weights in the Old Testament, see **Biblical Weight**. The strategies below are for translating the value of money in the New Testament.

(1) Use the Bible term and spell it in a way that is similar to the way it sounds. (See **Copy or Borrow Words**.)
(2) Describe the value of the money in terms of what kind of metal it was made of and how many coins were used.
(3) Describe the value of the money in terms of what people in Bible times could earn in one day of work.
(4) Use the biblical term and give the equivalent amount in the text or a footnote.
(5) Use the biblical term and explain it in a footnote.

Translation Strategies Applied

The translations strategies are all applied to Luke 7:41 below.

> The one owed 500 denarii, and the other, 50. (Luke 7:41b ULT)

1. Use the Bible term and spell it in a way that is similar to the way it sounds. (See **Copy or Borrow Words**.)

> > “The one owed **500 denali**, and the other, **50**.”

1. Describe the value of the money in terms of what kind of metal it was made of and how many pieces or coins were used.

> > "The one owed **500 silver coins**, and the other, **50**."

(3) Describe the value of the money in terms of what people in Bible times could earn in one day of work.

> > "The one owed **500 days' wages**, and the other, **50**."

(4) Use the Bible term and give the equivalent amount in the text or a footnote.

> > "The one owed **500 denarii** 1, and the other owed **50 denarii**. 2"

The footnotes would look like:

> > [1] 500 days' wages [2] 50 days' wages

(5) Use the Bible term and explain it in a footnote.

> “The one owed **500 denarii**,1 and the other, **50**.”
> (Luke 7:41 ULT)

> [1] A denarius was the amount of silver that people could earn in one day of work.

Nehemiah References:

5:15; 7:70; 7:71; 7:71; 7:72; 10:32

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.

Nehemiah References:

3:5; 6:1; 6:8; 9:28; 11:3; 11:31; 11:36; 12:30; 13:18; 13:26

Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

Logical Relationships

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

Goal (or Purpose) Relationship

Description

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

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

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

Examples From OBS and the Bible

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Translation Strategies

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

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

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

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

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

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

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

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

> "… if you want **to enter into life**, keep the commandments." (Matthew 19:17bULT)
>
> > "… keep the commandments if you want **to enter into life**." or: "… keep the commandments **so that you can enter into life**."

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

(1) and (2)

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

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

Nehemiah References:

6:13; 6:13; 6:13

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.

Nehemiah References:

2:8; 2:12; 2:15; 5:5; 5:12; 5:15; 5:18; 6:7; 6:13; 6:16; 6:18; 7:5; 8:5; 8:9; 8:9; 8:10; 8:11; 8:12; 8:12; 8:13; 9:10; 9:12; 9:15; 9:15; 9:19; 9:20; 9:21; 9:28; 9:30; 9:31; 9:32; 9:33; 9:38; 10:8; 10:31; 11:30; 12:29; 12:44; 12:45; 13:2; 13:5; 13:6; 13:10; 13:13; 13:17; 13:19; 13:28

Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Time Relationships

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

Sequential Clause

Description

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

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

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

Examples From OBS and the Bible

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Translation Strategies

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

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

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

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

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

> For **before** the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate (Isaiah 7:16 ULT)
>
> > For the time will come when the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, **but even before that time**, the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate.

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

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

For more about sequences of events, see Sequence of Events.

Nehemiah References:

7:73; 12:27; 12:31; 12:40; 13:3; 13:7; 13:7; 13:9; 13:10; 13:11; 13:11; 13:12; 13:13; 13:21; 13:30

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.

Nehemiah References:

4:23; 5:1; 6:10; 6:17; 9:4; 12:38; 12:43; 12:44; 13:6; 13:21

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.

Nehemiah References:

5:5; 6:7

Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Description

In some languages, phrases that modify a noun can be used with the noun for two different purposes. They can either (1) distinguish the noun from other similar items, or (2) they can give more information about the noun. That information could be new to the reader, or a reminder about something the reader might already know. Other languages use modifying phrases with a noun only for distinguishing the noun from other similar things. When people who speak these languages hear a modifying phrase along with a noun, they assume that its function is to distinguish one item from another similar item.

When the phrase that modifies a noun is a relative clause (a phrase that starts with a word such as “who” or“which”), some languages use a comma to mark the difference between (1) making a distinction between similar items and (2) giving more information about an item. Without the comma, the sentence below communicates that the added phrase is making a distinction:

- Mary gave some of the food to **her sister who was very thankful**.
    - If her sister was usually thankful, the phrase “who was thankful” could distinguish this sister of Mary’s from another sister who was not usually thankful.

With the comma, the phrase is giving more information:

- Mary gave some of the food to **her sister, who was very thankful**.
    - This same phrase can be used to give us more information about Mary’s sister. It tells us about how Mary’s sister responded when Mary gave her the food. In this case it does not distinguish one sister from another sister.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Many source languages of the Bible use phrases that modify a noun both for distinguishing the noun from another similar item and also for giving more information about the noun. You (the translator) must be careful to understand which meaning the author intended in each case.
- Some languages use phrases that modify a noun only for distinguishing the noun from another similar item. When translating a phrase that is used for giving more information, translators who speak these languages will need to separate the phrase from the noun. Otherwise, people who read it or hear it will think that the phrase is meant to distinguish the noun from other similar items.

Examples From the Bible

Examples of words and phrases that are used to distinguish one item from other possible items:

(These usually do not cause any problem in translation.)

> The curtain is to separate **the holy place** from **the most holy place**. (Exodus 26:33b ULT)

The words “holy” and “most holy” distinguish two different places from each other and from any other place.

> A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to **the woman who bore him**. (Proverbs 17:25 ULT)

The phrase “who bore him” distinguishes which woman the son is bitterness to. He is not bitterness to all women, but to his mother.

Examples of words and phrases that are used to give added information or a reminder about an item:

(These are a translation issue for languages that do not use these.)

> … for **your righteous judgments** are good. (Psalm 119:39b ULT)

The word “righteous” simply reminds us that God’s judgments are righteous. It does not distinguish his righteous judgments from his unrighteous judgments, because all of his judgments are righteous.

> You must surely open your hand to your brother, **to your needy and to your poor** in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 ULT)

The phrases “to your needy and to your poor” give further information about “your brother.” They do not refer to a separate group of people.

> How can Sarah, **who is 90 years old**, bear a son? (Genesis 17:17b ULT)

The phrase “who is 90 years old” is a reminder of Sarah’s age. It tells why Abraham was asking the question. He did not expect that a woman who was that old could bear a child. He was not distinguishing one woman named Sarah from another woman named Sarah who was a different age.

> I will wipe away mankind **whom I have created** from the surface of the earth. (Genesis 6:7 ULT)

The phrase “whom I have created” is a reminder of the relationship between God and mankind. It is the reason God had the right to wipe away mankind. There is not another mankind that God did not create.

> I hate those who serve **worthless** idols (Psalm 31:6 ULT)

By saying “worthless idols,” David was commenting about all idols and giving his reason for hating those who serve them. He was not distinguishing worthless idols from valuable idols.

Translation Strategies

If readers would understand the purpose of a phrase with a noun, then consider keeping the phrase and the noun together. For languages that use words or phrases with a noun only to distinguish one item from another, here are some strategies for translating phrases that are used to inform or remind.

(1) Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose. (2) Use one of your language’s ways for expressing that this is just added information. It may be by adding a small word, or by changing the way the voice sounds. Sometimes changes in the voice can be shown with punctuation marks, such as parentheses or commas.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose.

> I hate those who serve **worthless** idols (Psalm 31:6 ULT)

> > **Becauseidols are worthless**, I hate those who serve them.
>
> … for your **righteous** judgments are good. (Psalm 119:39b ULT)
>
> > … for your judgments are good **because they are righteous**.
>
> Can Sarah, **who is 90 years old**, bear a son? (Genesis 17:17b ULT)
>
> > Can Sarah bear a son **even whenshe is 90 years old**?
>
> > You must surely open your hand to your brother, **to your needy and to your poor** in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 ULT)

> > You must surely open your hand to any of **your needy and poor brothers** in your land.

(2) Use one of your language's ways for expressing that this is just added information.

> You are my Son, **whom I love**. I am pleased with you. (Luke 3:22 ULT)
>
> > You are my Son. **I love you** and I am pleased with you.

> > **Receiving my love**, you are my Son. I am pleased with you.

> You must surely open your hand to your brother, **to your needy and to your poor** in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 ULT)

> > You must surely open your hand to your brother **who is needy and poor** in your land.

Nehemiah References:

8:9; 8:13; 10:38; 11:1; 11:18; 11:22; 11:35; 12:7; 12:24; 12:26; 12:36; 12:36; 13:4; 13:10; 13:28

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

Nehemiah References:

2:2

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!"

Nehemiah References:

1:3; 1:5; 1:7; 1:10; 2:10; 2:20; 4:14; 4:17; 4:19; 5:1; 5:2; 5:6; 5:8; 5:9; 5:13; 5:13; 5:15; 7:4; 7:6; 7:61; 8:8; 8:9; 8:9; 8:10; 8:10; 8:12; 9:5; 9:10; 9:13; 9:14; 9:17; 9:22; 9:24; 9:26; 9:28; 9:31; 9:32; 9:34; 9:35; 9:36; 10:29; 10:29; 10:36; 12:27; 13:20

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.

Nehemiah References:

3:1; 3:4; 3:5; 3:18; 3:25; 3:25; 3:26; 4:23; 5:18; 5:18; 7:70; 7:71; 8:13; 8:16; 8:16; 8:16; 10:31; 10:34; 10:37; 10:39; 10:39; 11:1; 11:7; 11:8; 11:12; 11:13; 11:19; 11:31; 11:36; 12:8; 12:10; 12:12; 12:12; 12:12; 12:22; 12:22; 12:22; 12:23; 12:24; 12:26; 12:28; 12:31; 12:37; 12:38; 12:38; 12:45; 12:46; 13:5; 13:10; 13:24

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!"

Nehemiah References:

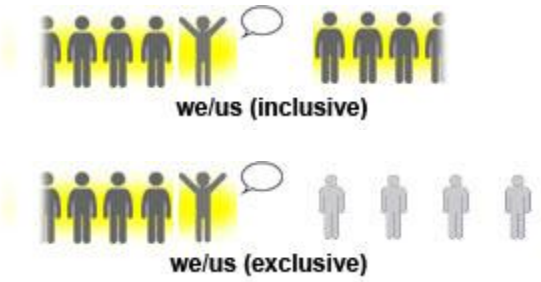
1:5; 1:11

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.

Nehemiah References:

10:30

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.

Nehemiah References:

1:5; 1:6; 1:9; 1:10; 1:11; 1:11; 1:11; 2:3; 2:5; 2:5; 2:7; 2:8; 12:27; 13:25

Forms of You

Singular, Dual, and Plural

Some languages have more than one word for "you" based on how many people the word "you" refers to. The **singular** form refers to one person, and the **plural** form refers to more than one person. Some languages also have a **dual** form which refers to two people, and some languages have other forms that refer to three or four people.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_younum.

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker uses a singular form of "you" even though he is speaking to a crowd. For help with translating these, we suggest you read:

- Singular Pronouns that Refer to Groups

Formal and Informal

Some languages have more than one form of "you" based on the relationship between the speaker and the person he or she is talking to. People use the **formal** form of "you" when speaking to someone who is older, or has higher authority, or is someone they do not know very well. People use the **informal** form when speaking to someone who is not older, or does not have higher authority, or is a family member or close friend.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_youform.

For help with translating these, we suggest you read:

- Forms of "You" — Formal or Informal

Masculine and Feminine

Some languages have a **masculine** form and a **feminine** form of the word for "you." People use the **masculine** form when speaking to a man or boy and the **feminine** form when speaking to a woman or girl.

English does not make any of the above distinctions, so they are absent in the ULT. Please be aware of this and use the appropriate forms of “you” if your language does make any of these distinctions.

Nehemiah References:

1:5; 1:8; 1:9; 2:17

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.

Nehemiah References:

1:8

Fractions

Description

A fraction is a number that represents part of a whole. When an item is divided into several equal parts, a fraction refers to one or more of those parts.

For the drink offering, you must offer **a third** of a hin of wine. (Numbers 15:7a ULT)

A hin is a container of a set size which is used for measuring wine and other liquids. The people were to think about dividing a hin container into three equal parts, filling up only one of those parts and offering that amount.

> … **a third** of the ships were destroyed. (Revelation 8:9b ULT)

There were many ships. If all those ships were divided into three equal groups of ships, one group of ships was destroyed.

Most fractions in English simply have the letters “th” added to the end of the number, such as fourth, sixth, ninth, tenth.

| Number of parts the whole is divided into | Fraction | | -------- | -------- | | four | fourth | | ten | tenth | | one hundred | one hundredth | | one thousand | one thousandth |

Some fractions in English do not follow that pattern.

| Number of parts the whole is divided into | Fraction | | -------- | -------- | | two | half | | three | third | | five | fifth |

Reason This is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not use fractions. They may simply talk about parts or groups, but they do not use fractions to tell how big a part is or how many parts are included in a group.

Examples From the Bible

> Now to the **half-tribe** of Manasseh, Moses had given a possession in Bashan, but to the other **half**, Joshua gave a possession among their brothers across the Jordan on the west. (Joshua 22:7 ULT)

The tribe of Manasseh divided into two groups. The phrase “the half-tribe of Manasseh” refers one of those groups. The phrase “the other half” refers to the other group.

> So the four angels who had been prepared for that hour, that day, that month, and that year, were released so that they would kill **a third** of mankind. (Revelation 9:15 ULT)

If all the people in the world were to be divided into three equal groups, then the number of people in one group would be killed.

> You must also prepare **a fourth** of a hin of wine as the drink offering. (Numbers 15:5 ULT)

They were to imagine dividing a hin of wine into four equal parts and prepare the amount equal to one of them.

Translation Strategies

If a fraction in your language would give the right meaning, consider using it. If not, you could consider these strategies.

(1) Tell the number of parts or groups that the item would be divided into, and then tell the number of parts or groups that is being referred to.
(2) For measurements such as for weight and length, use a unit that your people might know or the unit in the UST.
(3) For measurements, use ones that are used in your language. In order to do that you would

need to know how your measurements relates to the metric system and figure out each measurement.

Examples of These Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Tell the number of parts or groups that the item would be divided into, and then tell the number of parts or groups that is being referred to.

> **A third** of the ocean became red like blood (Revelation 8:8 ULT)
>
> > It was like they **divided** the ocean **into three parts**, and **one part** of the ocean became blood.
>
> Then you must offer with the bull a grain offering of **three-tenths** of an ephah of fine flour mixed with **half a hin** of oil. (Numbers 15:9 ULT)
>
> > … then you must **divide** an ephah of fine flour **into ten parts** and **divide** a hin of oil **into two parts**. Then mix **three of those parts** of the flour with **one of the parts** of oil. Then you must offer that grain offering along with the bull.

(2) For measurements, use the measurements that are given in the UST. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

> … **two-thirds of a shekel** … (1 Samuel 13:21b ULT)
>
> … **eight grams** of silver … (1 Samuel 13:21b UST)
>
> … **three-tenths of an ephah** of fine flour mixed with **half a hin** of oil. (Numbers 15:9b ULT)

> … **six and one-half liters** of finely ground flour mixed with **two liters** of olive oil. (Numbers 15:9b UST)

(3) For measurements, use ones that are used in your language. In order to do that you would need to know how your measurements relates to the metric system and figure out each measurement.

> … **three-tenths of an ephah** of fine flour mixed with **half a hin** of oil. (Numbers 15:9b ULT)
>
> > **six quarts** of fine flour mixed with **two quarts** of oil.

Nehemiah References:

3:9; 4:6; 4:16; 4:21; 5:11; 10:32; 10:37; 10:38; 13:5; 13:24

Hebrew Months

Description

The Hebrew calendar used in the Bible has twelve months. Unlike the western calendar, its first month begins in the spring of the northern hemisphere. Sometimes a month is called by its name (Aviv, Ziv, Sivan), and sometimes it is called by its order in the Hebrew calendar year (first month, second month, third month).

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Readers may be surprised to read of months that they have never heard of, and they may wonder how those months correspond to the months that they use.
- Readers may not realize that phrases such as “the first month” or “the second month” refer to the first or second month of the Hebrew calendar, not some other calendar.
- Readers may not know when the first month of the Hebrew calendar begins.
- The Bible may tell about something happening in a certain month, but readers will not be able to fully understand what is said about it if they do not know what season of the year that was.

List of Hebrew Months

This is a list of the Hebrew months with information about them that may be helpful in the translation.

Aviv — (This month was called **Nisan** after the Babylonian exile.) This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. It marks when God brought the people of Israel out of Egypt. It is at the beginning of the spring season when the late rains come and people begin to harvest their crops. It is during the last part of March and the first part of April on western calendars. The Passover celebration started on Aviv 10; the Festival of Unleavened Bread was right after that, and the Festival of Harvest was a few weeks after that.

Ziv — This is the second month of the Hebrew calendar. This is during the harvest season. It is during the last part of April and the first part of May on Western calendars.

Sivan — This is the third month of the Hebrew calendar. It is at the end of the harvest season and the beginning of the dry season. It is during the last part of May and the first part of June on Western calendars. The Feast of Weeks is celebrated on Sivan 6.

Tammuz — This is the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the dry season. It is during the last part of June and the first part of July on Western calendars.

Ab — This is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the dry season. It is during the last part of July and the first part of August on Western calendars.

Elul — This is the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is at the end of the dry season and the beginning of the rainy season. It is during the last part of August and the first part of September on Western calendars.

Ethanim — This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. This is during the early rain season which would soften the land for sowing. It is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars. The Feast of Ingathering and the Day of Atonement are celebrated in this month.

Bul — This is the eighth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the rainy season when people plough their fields and sow seed. It is during the last part of October and the first part of November on Western calendars.

Kislev — This is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar. This is at the end of the sowing season and the beginning of the cold season. It is during the last part of November and the first part of December on Western calendars.

Tebeth — This is the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the cold season when there may be rain and snow. It is during the last part of December and the first part of January on Western calendars.

Shebat — This is the eleventh month of the Hebrew calendar. This is the coldest month of the year, and it has heavy rainfall. It is during the last part of January and the first part of February on Western calendars.

Adar — This is the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. This is during the cold season. It is during the last part of February and the first part of March on western calendars. The feast called Purim is celebrated in Adar.

Examples From the Bible

> Today you are going out, in **the month of Aviv**. (Exodus 13:4 ULT)

> You must eat unleavened bread from evening of the fourteenth day **in the first month of the year**, until evening of the twenty-first day of the month. (Exodus 12:18 ULT)

Translation Strategies

You may need to make some information about the months explicit. (See Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information.)

(1) Tell the number of the Hebrew month.
(2) Use the names for months that people know.
(3) State clearly what season the month occurred in.
(4) Refer to the time in terms of the season rather than in terms of the Hebrew name of the month. (If possible, use a footnote to show the Hebrew month and day.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

The examples below use these two verses.

> At that time, you will appear before me in **the month of Aviv**, which is fixed for this purpose. It was in this month that you came out from Egypt. (Exodus 23:15b ULT)

> It will always be a statute for you that in **the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month,** you must humble yourselves and do no work. (Leviticus 16:29a ULT)

(1) Tell the number of the Hebrew month.

> At that time, you will appear before me in **the first month of the year**, which is fixed for this purpose. It was in this month that you came out from Egypt.

(2) Use the months that people know.

> At that time, you will appear before me in **the month of March**, which is fixed for this purpose. It was in this month that you came out from Egypt.

> It will always be a statute for you that **on the day I choose in late September** you must humble yourselves and do no work.

(3) State clearly what season the month occurs in.

> > It will always be a statute for you that **in the autumn, on the tenth day of the seventh month,** you must humble yourselves and do no work.

(4) Refer to the time in terms of the season rather than in terms of the month.

> > It will always be a statute for you that in **the day I choose in early autumn**[1] you must humble yourselves and do no work.

The footnote would look like:

> > [1] The Hebrew says, “the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month.”

Nehemiah References:

1:1; 2:1; 6:15; 8:2; 9:1

How to Translate Names

Description

The Bible contains the names of many people, groups of people, and places. Some of these names may sound strange and be hard to say. Sometimes readers may not know what a name refers to, and sometimes they may need to understand what a name means. This page will help you see how you can translate these names and how you can help people understand what they need to know about them.

Meaning of names

Most names in the Bible have meaning. Most of the time, names in the Bible are used simply to identify the people and places they refer to, but sometimes the meaning of a name is especially important.

> For this **Melchizedek**, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, was the one who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him. (Hebrews 7:1 ULT)

Here the writer uses the name “Melchizedek” primarily to refer to a man who had that name, and the title “king of Salem” tells us that he ruled over a certain city.

> His name first indeed means “king of righteousness,” and then also “king of Salem,” that is, “king of peace.” (Hebrews 7:2b ULT)

Here the writer explains the meanings of Melchizedek’s name and title because those things tell us more about the person. Other times, the writer does not explain the meaning of a name because he expects the reader to already know the meaning. If the meaning of the name is important to understand the passage, you can include the meaning in the text or in a footnote.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Readers may not know some of the names in the Bible. They may not know whether a name refers to a person or place or something else.
- Readers may need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand the passage.
- Some names may have different sounds or combinations of sounds that are not used in your language or are unpleasant to say in your language. For strategies to address this problem, see **Borrow Words**.
- Some people and places in the Bible have two names. Readers may not realize that two names refer to the same person or place.

Examples From the Bible

> Then you crossed over the **Jordan** and came to **Jericho**, and the men of Jericho, and the **Amorites** … fought against you, but I gave them into your hand. (Joshua 24:11 ULT)

Readers might not know that "Jordan" is the name of a river, "Jericho" is the name of a city, and "Amorites" is the name of a group of people.

> She said, "Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?" Therefore, the well was called **Beer Lahai Roi**. (Genesis 16:13b-14a ULT)

Readers may not understand the second sentence if they do not know that "Beer Lahai Roi" means "Well of the Living One who sees me."

> And she called his name **Moses** and she said, "For out of the water I drew him." (Exodus 2:10b ULT)

Readers may not understand why she said this if they do not know that the name Moses sounds like the Hebrew words "pull out."

> **Saul** was in agreement with his execution. (Acts 8:1a ULT)
>
> But when the apostles, Barnabas and **Paul**, heard of it, they tore their clothing. (Acts 14:14a ULT)

Readers may not know that the names Saul and Paul refer to the same person.

Translation Strategies

(1) If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.
(2) If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.
(3) Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name instead of copying the name.
(4) If a person or place has two different names, use one name most of the time and the other name only when the text tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why the person or place was given that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently.
(5) Or if a person or place has two different names, then use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.

> Then you crossed over the **Jordan** and came to **Jericho**, and the men of Jericho, and the **Amorites** … fought against you, but I gave them into your hand. (Joshua 24:11 ULT)

> > You went over the **Jordan River** and came to the **city of Jericho**. The men of Jericho fought against you, along with **the tribe of the Amorites.**
>
> At that hour, certain Pharisees approached, saying to him, “Leave and go away from here, because **Herod** wants to kill you.” (Luke 13:31 ULT)
>
> > At that hour, certain Pharisees approached, saying to him, “Go and leave here, because **King Herod** wants to kill you.”

(2) If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.

> And she called his name **Moses** and she said, “For out of the water I drew him.” (Exodus 2:10b ULT)
>
> > She called his name **Moses (which sounds like ‘drawn out’),** and she said, “For out of the water I drew him.”

(3) Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name instead of copying the name.

> She said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore, the well was called **Beer Lahai Roi**. (Genesis 16:13b-14a ULT)
>
> > She said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore, the well was called **Well of the Living One who sees me**.

(4) If a person or place has two different names, use one name most of the time and the other name only when the text tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why the person or place was given that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently. For example, Paul is called “Saul” before Acts 13 and “Paul” after Acts 13. You could translate his name as “Paul” all of the time, except in Acts 13:9 where it talks about him having both names.

> … a young man named **Saul**. (Acts 7:58b ULT)
>
> > … a young man named **Paul** 1

The footnote would look like:

> > [1] Most versions say “Saul” here, but most of the time in the Bible he is called “Paul.”

Then later in the story, you could translate this way:

> But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit; (Acts 13:9)
>
> > But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit;

(5) Or if a person or place has two names, use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name. For example, you could write “Saul” where the source text has “Saul” and “Paul” where the source text has “Paul.”

> a young man named **Saul** (Acts 7:58 ULT)
>
> > a young man named **Saul**

The footnote would look like:

> > [1] This is the same man who is called Paul beginning in Acts 13.

Then later in the story, you could translate this way:

> But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit; (Acts 13:9)
>
> > But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit;

Then after the story has explained the name change, you could translate this way.

> It came about in Iconium that **Paul** and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue (Acts 14:1 ULT)
>
> > It came about in Iconium that **Paul**[1] and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue

The footnote would look like:

> > [1] This is the same man who was called Saul before Acts 13.

Nehemiah References:

front:intro; 1:1; 1:1; 1:2; 1:2; 1:5; 1:11; 2:7; 2:8; 2:9; 2:10; 2:10; 2:13; 2:13; 2:13; 2:14; 2:14; 2:15; 2:19; 2:19; 2:19; 3:1; 3:1; 3:1; 3:2; 3:2; 3:3; 3:3; 3:4; 3:4; 3:4; 3:5; 3:6; 3:6; 3:6; 3:7; 3:7; 3:7; 3:8; 3:8; 3:8; 3:9; 3:10; 3:10; 3:11; 3:11; 3:11; 3:12; 3:12; 3:13; 3:13; 3:13; 3:13; 3:14; 3:14; 3:14; 3:15; 3:15; 3:15; 3:15; 3:16; 3:16; 3:17; 3:17; 3:17; 3:17; 3:18; 3:18; 3:19; 3:19;

3:20; 3:21; 3:23; 3:23; 3:24; 3:24; 3:25; 3:25; 3:26; 3:26; 3:27; 3:28; 3:29; 3:29; 3:29; 3:30; 3:30; 3:30; 3:31; 3:31; 3:32; 4:1; 4:3; 4:7; 4:7; 6:1; 6:1; 6:2; 6:6; 6:10; 6:14; 6:17; 6:18; 6:18; 6:18; 7:2; 7:2; 7:7; 7:8; 7:9; 7:10; 7:11; 7:12; 7:13; 7:14; 7:15; 7:16; 7:17; 7:18; 7:19; 7:20; 7:21; 7:22; 7:23; 7:24; 7:25; 7:26; 7:27; 7:28; 7:29; 7:30; 7:31; 7:32; 7:33; 7:34; 7:35; 7:36; 7:37; 7:38; 7:39; 7:40; 7:41; 7:42; 7:43; 7:44; 7:45; 7:46; 7:57; 7:61; 7:62; 7:63; 7:63; 8:1; 8:3; 8:4; 8:4; 8:7; 8:16; 8:16; 8:17; 9:4; 9:5; 9:7; 9:7; 9:8; 9:9; 9:13; 9:14; 9:22; 9:22; 10:1; 10:2; 10:3; 10:4; 10:5; 10:6; 10:7; 10:8; 10:9; 10:9; 10:9; 10:10; 10:11; 10:12; 10:13; 10:14; 10:15; 10:16; 10:17; 10:18; 10:19; 10:20; 10:21; 10:22; 10:23; 10:24; 10:25; 10:26; 10:27; 11:4; 11:5; 11:7; 11:8; 11:9; 11:9; 11:10; 11:10; 11:11; 11:12; 11:13; 11:14; 11:15; 11:16; 11:17; 11:17; 11:17; 11:19; 11:21; 11:22; 11:24; 11:24; 11:25; 11:26; 11:27; 11:28; 11:29; 11:30; 11:31; 11:32; 11:33; 11:34; 11:35; 12:1; 12:1; 12:2; 12:3; 12:4; 12:5; 12:6; 12:7; 12:8; 12:9; 12:11; 12:12; 12:13; 12:14; 12:15; 12:16; 12:17; 12:18; 12:19; 12:20; 12:21; 12:22; 12:23; 12:24; 12:24; 12:25; 12:26; 12:28; 12:29; 12:29; 12:31; 12:32; 12:33; 12:34; 12:35; 12:36; 12:37; 12:37; 12:38; 12:38; 12:39; 12:39; 12:39; 12:39; 12:41; 12:42; 12:42; 12:46; 12:47; 13:1; 13:2; 13:4; 13:13; 13:13; 13:15; 13:16; 13:23; 13:28; 13:28

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.

Nehemiah References:

1:9; 2:3; 2:12; 4:3; 4:12; 4:17; 8:1; 8:9; 8:11; 9:23; 13:12

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**

Nehemiah References:

1:4; 1:6; 1:8; 1:11; 1:11; 2:1; 2:2; 2:3; 2:5; 2:5; 2:6; 2:10; 2:10; 2:18; 2:18; 2:20; 3:1; 3:2; 3:28; 4:2; 4:4; 4:12; 4:14; 4:14; 4:15; 4:16; 4:16; 4:18; 4:19; 4:22; 4:23; 4:23; 5:5; 5:7; 5:7; 5:9; 5:9; 5:11; 5:11; 5:13; 5:14; 5:18; 5:19; 5:19; 6:2; 6:14; 6:17; 6:18; 6:19; 7:2; 7:3; 7:4; 7:6; 7:61; 7:61; 8:1; 8:2; 8:6; 8:14; 8:16; 8:17; 8:18; 9:2; 9:4; 9:5; 9:6; 9:8; 9:9; 9:13; 9:16; 9:29; 9:29; 9:30; 9:34; 9:36; 9:38; 10:28; 10:29; 10:32; 10:34; 10:35; 11:2; 11:3; 11:20; 11:23; 12:1; 12:7; 12:12; 12:22; 12:23; 12:23; 12:26; 12:26; 12:31; 12:31; 12:46; 12:46; 12:47; 12:47; 13:1; 13:1; 13:1; 13:3; 13:3; 13:4; 13:6; 13:8; 13:10; 13:11; 13:14; 13:15; 13:17; 13:18; 13:19; 13:21; 13:21; 13:21; 13:22; 13:23; 13:23; 13:24; 13:25; 13:25; 13:25; 13:26; 13:26; 13:27; 13:27; 13:27; 13:28; 13:29; 13:30; 13:31

Introduction of a New Event

Description

When people tell a story, they tell about an event or a series of events. Often they put certain information at the beginning of the story, such as who the story is about, when it happened, and where it happened. This information that the writer gives before the events of the story begin is called the setting of the story. Some new events in a story also have a setting because they might involve new people, new times, and new places. In some languages, people also tell if they saw the event or heard about it from someone else.

When your people tell about events, what information do they give at the beginning? Is there a certain order that they put it in? In your translation, you will need to follow the way your language introduces new information at the beginning of a story or a new event rather than the way the source language did that. In this way your translation will sound natural and communicate clearly in your language.

Examples From the Bible

> **In the days of Herod**, king of Judea, **there was a certain priest named Zechariah**, from the division of Abijah. And **his wife was** from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. (Luke 1:5 ULT)

The verses above introduce a story about Zechariah. The first bolded phrase tells when it happened, and the next two bolded phrases introduce the main people. The next two verses go on to explain that Zechariah and Elizabeth were old and did not have any children. All of this is the setting. Then the phrase “And it happened that” in Luke 1:8 helps to introduce the first event in this story:

> **And it happened that** in his performing as priest before God, in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood, he came up by lot to enter into the temple of the Lord to burn incense. (Luke 1:8-9 ULT)

> **The birth of Jesus Christ happened in the following way.** His mother, Mary, was engaged to marry Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 1:18 ULT)

The bolded sentence above makes it explicit that a story about Jesus is being introduced. The story will tell about how the birth of Jesus happened.

> **Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king**, behold, learned men from the east arrived in Jerusalem. (Matthew 2:1 ULT)

The bolded phrase above shows that the events concerning the learned men happened **after** Jesus was born.

> **Now in those days** John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea. (Matthew 3:1-22 ULT)

The bolded phrase above shows that John the Baptist came preaching around the time of the previous events. It is probably very general and refers to when Jesus lived in Nazareth.

> **Then** Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River to John, to be baptized by him. (Matthew 3:13 ULT)

The word “then” shows that Jesus came to the Jordan River some time after the events in the previous verses.

> Now there was **a man from thePharisees whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader**. This man came to Jesus at night. (John 3:1-2a ULT)

The author first introduced the new person and then told about what he did and when he did it. In some languages, it might be more natural to tell about the time first.

> 6 Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. 7 Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood. (Genesis 7:6-7 ULT)

Verse 6 is a statement of the events that happen in the rest of chapter 7. Chapter 6 already told about how God told Noah that there would be a flood, and how Noah prepared for it. Chapter 7 verse 6 introduces the part of the story that tells about Noah and his family and the animals going into the ship, the rain starting, and the rain flooding the earth. Some languages might need to make it clear that this verse simply introduces the event, or move this verse after verse 7. Verse 6 is not one of the events of the story. The people went into the ship before the flood came.

Translation Strategies

If the information given at the beginning of a new event is clear and natural to your readers, consider translating it as it is in the ULT or UST. If not, consider one of these strategies:

(1) Put the information that introduces the event in the order that your people put it.
(2) If readers would expect certain information but it is not in the Bible, consider using an indefinite word or phrase to fill in that information, such as: "another time" or "someone."
(3) If the introduction is a summary of the whole event, use your language's way of showing that it is a summary.
(4) If it would be strange in the target language to give a summary of the event at the beginning, indicate that the event would actually happen later in the story.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Put the information that introduces the event in the order that your people put it.

> Now there was **a man from thePharisees whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader**. This man came to Jesus at night. (John 3:1-2a ULT)

> There was a **man whose name was Nicodemus. He was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish Council**. One night he came to Jesus.

> One night **a man named Nicodemus, who was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish Council**, came to Jesus.

As he passed by, **he saw Levi the son of Alpheus, sitting** at the tax collector's tent, and he said to him … (Mark 2:14a ULT)

> As he passed by, **Levi the son of Alpheus was sitting** at the tax collector's tent. Jesus saw him and and said to him …

> As he passed by, **there was a man sitting** at the tax collector's tent. His name was Levi, and he was the son of Alpheus. Jesus saw him and said to him …

> As he passed by, **there was a tax collector** sitting at the tax collector's tent. His name was Levi, and he was the son of Alpheus. Jesus saw him and said to him …

(2) If readers would expect certain information, but it is not in the Bible, consider using an indefinite word or phrase such as "another time," or "someone."

> Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. (Genesis 7:6 ULT) — If people expect to be told something about when the new event happened, the phrase "after that" can help them see that it happened after the events already mentioned.
>
> > **After that**, when Noah was 600 years old, the flood came upon the earth.

> **Again he began** to teach beside the sea. (Mark 4:1a ULT) — In chapter 3 Jesus was teaching at someone's house. Readers may need to be told that this new event happened at another time, or that Jesus actually went to the sea.
>
> > **Another time** Jesus began to teach people again beside the sea.

> > Jesus went to the sea and **began to teach people again** there.

(3) If the introduction is a summary of the whole event, use your language's way of showing that it is a summary.

> Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. (Genesis 7:6 ULT)
>
> > **Now this is what happened when** Noah was 600 years old and the flood came upon the earth.

> > **This part tells about what happened when** the flood came upon the earth. It happened when Noah was 600 years old.

(4) If it would be strange in the target language to give a summary of the event at the beginning, show that the event will actually happen later in the story.

> Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood. (Genesis 7:6-7 ULT)
>
> > **Now this is what happened when** Noah was 600 years old. Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives went into the ark together because **God had said that the waters of the flood would come**.

Nehemiah References:

1:1; 1:4; 2:1; 4:1; 4:7; 4:15; 6:1; 6:16; 7:1; 13:19

Introduction of New and Old Participants

Description

The first time that people or things are mentioned in a story, they are **new participants**. After that, whenever they are mentioned, they are **old participants**.

> Now **there was a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus** … **This man** came to Jesus at night … Jesus replied and said to **him** … (John 3:1, 2a, 3a)

The first bolded phrase introduces Nicodemus as a new participant. After being introduced, he is then referred to as “This man” and “him” when he has become an old participant.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In order to make your translation clear and natural, it is necessary to refer to the participants in such a way that people will know if they are new participants or participants that they have already read about. Different languages have different ways of doing this. You must follow the way that your language does this, not the way that the source language does this.

Examples From the Bible

New Participants

Often the most important new participant is introduced with a phrase that says that he existed, such as “There was a man,” as in the example below. The phrase “There was” tells us that this man existed. The word “a” in “a man” tells us that the author is speaking about him for the first time. The rest of the sentence tells where this man was from, who is family was, and what his name was.

> **Now there was a man** from Zorah, of the families of the Danites, and his name was Manoah. (Judges 13:2a ULT)

A new participant who is not the most important participant is often introduced in relation to the more important person who was already introduced. In the example below, Manoah's wife is simply referred to as "his wife." This phrase shows her relationship to him.

> Now there was one man from Zorah, of the families of the Danites, and his name was Manoah. **His wife** was barren and she had never given birth. (Judges 13:2 ULT)

Sometimes a new participant is introduced simply by name because the author assumes that the readers know who the person is. In the first verse of 1 Kings, the author assumes that his readers know who King David is, so there is no need to explain who he is.

> Now King David was old, he had advanced in the days, and they covered him with the garments, but it was not warm enough for him. (1 Kings 1:1 ULT)

Old Participants

A person who has already been brought into the story can be referred to with a pronoun after that. In the example below, Manoah is referred to with the pronoun "his," and his wife is referred to with the pronoun "she."

> **His wife** was barren and **she** had never given birth. (Judges 13:2 ULT)

Old participants can also be referred to in other ways, depending on what is happening in the story. In the example below, the story is about bearing a son, and Manoah's wife is referred to by the noun phrase "the wife."

> The angel of Yahweh appeared to **the wife** and he said to her … (Judges 13:3a ULT)

If the old participant has not been mentioned for a while, or if there could be confusion between participants, the author may use the participant's name again. In the example below, Manoah is referred to by his name, which the author has not used since verse 2.

> Then **Manoah** prayed to Yahweh. (Judges 13:8a ULT)

Some languages place an affix on the verb that tells something about the subject. In some of those languages, people do not always use noun phrases or pronouns for old participants when they are the subject of the sentence. The marker on the verb gives enough information for the listener to understand who the subject is. (See Verbs.)

Translation Strategies

(1) If the participant is new, use one of your language's ways of introducing new participants.
(2) If it is not clear to whom a pronoun refers, use a noun phrase or name.
(3) If an old participant is referred to by name or a noun phrase, and people wonder if this is another new participant, try using a pronoun instead. If a pronoun is not needed because people would understand it clearly from the context, then leave out the pronoun.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the participant is new, use one of your language's ways of introducing new participants.

> Then Joseph, who was called Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated as Son of Encouragement), a Levite from Cyprus by birth … (Acts 4:36-37 ULT) — Starting the sentence with Joseph's name when he has not been introduced yet might be confusing in some languages.
>
> > There was a man from Cyprus who was a Levite. His name was Joseph, and he was given the name Barnabas by the apostles (that is, being interpreted, Son of Encouragement). There was a Levite from Cyprus whose name was Joseph. The apostles gave

> > him the name Barnabas, which means Son of encouragement.

(2) If it is not clear who a pronoun refers to, use a noun phrase or name.

> And it happened that when he was praying in a certain place, when he stopped, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples.” (Luke 11:1 ULT) — Since this is the first verse in a chapter, readers might wonder who “he” refers to.
>
> > It happened when **Jesus** finished praying in a certain place, that one of his disciples said, “Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples.”

(3) If an old participant is referred to by name or a noun phrase, and people wonder if this is another new participant, try using a pronoun instead. If a pronoun is not needed because people would understand it clearly from the context, then leave out the pronoun.

> Joseph’s master took Joseph and put him in prison, in the place where all the king’s prisoners were put, and Joseph stayed there. (Genesis 39:20) — Since Joseph is the main person in the story, some languages might prefer the pronoun.
>
> > Joseph’s master took **him** and put **him** in prison, in the place where all the king’s prisoners were put, and **he** stayed there in the prison.

Nehemiah References:

8:1; 8:9

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."

Nehemiah References:

9:20; 10:39

Merism

Definition

Merism is a figure of speech in which a person refers to something by speaking of two extreme parts of it. By referring to the extreme parts, the speaker intends to include also everything in between those parts.

> "I am **the alpha and the omega**," says the Lord God, "the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." (Revelation 1:8 ULT)
>
> I am **the alpha and the omega**, **the first and the last**, **the beginning and the end**. (Revelation 22:13, ULT)

Alpha and omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. This is a merism that includes everything from the beginning to the end. It means eternal.

> … I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth** …, (Matthew 11:25b ULT)

Heaven and earth is a merism that includes everything that exists.

Reason This is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not use merism. The readers of those languages may think that the phrase only applies to the items mentioned. They may not realize that it refers to those two things and everything in between.

Examples From the Bible

> **From the rising of the sun to its setting**, Yahweh's name should be praised. (Psalm 113:3 ULT)

This bolded phrase is a merism because it speaks of the east and the west and everywhere in between. It means “everywhere.”

> He will bless those who honor him, both **young and old**. (Psalm 115:13)

The bolded phrase is merism because it speaks of old people and young people and everyone in between. It means “everyone.”

Translation Strategies

If the merism would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

(1) Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.
(2) Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.

> I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth**. (Matthew 11:25b ULT)
>
> > I praise you, Father, Lord of **everything**.

> **From the rising of the sun to its setting**, Yahweh’s name should be praised. (Psalm 113:3 ULT)
>
> > **In all places**, people should praise Yahweh’s name.

(2) Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.

> I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth**. (Matthew 11:25b ULT)
>
> > I praise you, Father, Lord of **everything, including both what is in heaven and what is on earth**.

> He will bless those who honor him, both **young and old**. (Psalm 115:13 ULT)
>
> > He will bless **all those** who honor him, regardless of whether they are **young or old**.

Nehemiah References:

1:6; 4:9; 4:21; 8:3; 8:15; 8:17; 8:18; 9:9; 9:32

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**.

Nehemiah References:

1:6; 1:8; 1:9; 1:10; 1:11; 2:1; 2:1; 2:3; 2:8; 2:12; 2:18; 2:18; 2:20; 3:1; 3:8; 3:18; 3:20; 3:31; 4:1; 4:2; 4:2; 4:5; 4:5; 4:5; 4:6; 4:7; 4:9; 4:11; 4:14; 4:16; 4:21; 5:1; 5:5; 5:6; 5:7; 5:7; 5:8; 5:8; 5:10; 5:14; 5:15; 5:15; 5:16; 5:18; 6:8; 6:9; 6:9; 6:10; 6:16; 6:16; 6:19; 7:5; 7:8; 7:9; 7:10; 7:11; 7:12; 7:13; 7:14; 7:15; 7:16; 7:17; 7:18; 7:19; 7:20; 7:21; 7:22; 7:23; 7:24; 7:25; 7:39; 7:40; 7:41; 7:42; 7:43; 7:44; 7:45; 7:46; 7:47; 7:48; 7:49; 7:50; 7:51; 7:52; 7:53; 7:54; 7:55; 7:56; 7:57; 7:57; 7:58; 7:59; 7:61; 7:62; 7:63; 7:63; 7:65; 7:70; 7:71; 8:10; 8:13; 8:14; 8:14; 8:16; 8:17; 8:17; 9:1; 9:2; 9:2; 9:2; 9:5; 9:6; 9:6; 9:8; 9:8; 9:8; 9:8; 9:9; 9:11; 9:14; 9:14; 9:16;

9:16; 9:17; 9:17; 9:17; 9:17; 9:22; 9:23; 9:24; 9:25; 9:26; 9:27; 9:27; 9:28; 9:28; 9:29; 9:29; 9:30; 9:30; 9:32; 9:32; 9:34; 9:35; 9:35; 9:36; 10:9; 10:10; 10:14; 10:28; 10:29; 10:29; 10:29; 10:29; 10:29; 10:32; 10:33; 10:33; 10:34; 10:35; 10:36; 10:37; 10:38; 10:38; 10:39; 10:39; 11:3; 11:3; 11:4; 11:4; 11:4; 11:5; 11:6; 11:7; 11:8; 11:11; 11:12; 11:13; 11:13; 11:14; 11:16; 11:16; 11:17; 11:17; 11:19; 11:21; 11:22; 11:22; 11:24; 11:25; 11:25; 11:25; 11:30; 11:31; 11:31; 12:7; 12:7; 12:8; 12:8; 12:9; 12:12; 12:22; 12:23; 12:23; 12:23; 12:24; 12:24; 12:28; 12:28; 12:35; 12:36; 12:37; 12:44; 12:44; 12:46; 13:2; 13:4; 13:4; 13:7; 13:8; 13:9; 13:13; 13:13; 13:14; 13:14; 13:16; 13:18; 13:19; 13:19; 13:21; 13:29; 13:30

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** 🔗.

Nehemiah References:

1:1; 1:3; 1:4; 1:4; 1:6; 1:6; 1:6; 1:6; 1:9; 1:9; 1:11; 1:11; 2:3; 2:8; 2:13; 3:5; 3:25; 4:8; 4:10; 4:15; 4:23; 5:4; 5:10; 5:11; 5:13; 5:17; 6:13; 7:3; 7:6; 7:39; 8:1; 8:2; 8:3; 8:4; 8:10; 9:5; 9:10; 9:11; 9:24; 9:25; 9:29; 9:29; 9:29; 9:30; 9:30; 9:32; 9:35; 10:29; 10:31; 10:33; 10:35; 10:37; 11:9; 11:17; 11:17; 11:20; 11:24; 12:8; 12:8; 12:36; 13:1; 13:2; 13:15; 13:24

Numbers

Description

There are many numbers in the Bible. They can be written as words (“five”) or as numerals (“5”). Some numbers are very large, such as “two hundred” (200), “twenty-two thousand” (22,000), or “one hundred million” (100,000,000). Some languages do not have words for all of these numbers. Translators need to decide how to translate numbers and whether to write them as words or numerals.

Some numbers are exact and others are rounded.

> Abram was **86** years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:16 ULT)

Eighty-six (86) is an exact number.

> That day about **3,000** of the people died. (Exodus 32:28b ULT)

Here the number three thousand (3,000) is a round number. It may have been a little more than that or a little less than that. The word “about” shows that it is not an exact number.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not have words for some of these numbers.

Translation Principles

- Exact numbers should be translated as closely and specifically as they can be.
- Rounded numbers can be translated more generally.

Examples From the Bible

> When Jared had lived **162** years, he became the father of Enoch. After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived **800** years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. Jared lived **962** years, and then he died. (Genesis 5:18-20 ULT)

The numbers 162, 800, and 962 are exact numbers and should be translated with something as close to those numbers as possible.

> Our sister, may you be the mother of **thousands of ten thousands.** (Genesis 24:60b ULT)

This is a rounded number. It does not say exactly how many descendants she should have, but it was a huge number of them.

Translation Strategies

(1) Write numbers using numerals.
(2) Write numbers using your language's words or the Gateway Language words for those numbers.
(3) Write numbers using words, and put the numerals in parentheses after them.
(4) Combine words for large numbers.
(5) Use a very general expression for very large rounded numbers and write the numeral in parentheses afterward.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

We will use the following verse in our examples:

> Now, see, at great effort I have prepared for Yahweh's house **100,000** talents of gold, **1,000,000** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities. (1 Chronicles 22:14a ULT)

(1) Write numbers using numerals.

> I have prepared for Yahweh's house **100,000** talents of gold, **1,000,000** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(2) Write numbers using your language's words or the Gateway Language words for those numbers.

> I have prepared for Yahweh's house **one hundred thousand** talents of gold, **one million** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(3) Write numbers using words, and put the numerals in parenthesis after them.

> I have prepared for Yahweh's house one **hundred thousand (100,000)** talents of gold, **one million (1,000,000)** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(4) Combine words for large numbers.

> > I have prepared for Yahweh's house **one hundred thousand** talents of gold, **a thousand thousand** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(5) Use a very general expression for very large rounded numbers and write the numeral in parentheses afterward.

> I have prepared for Yahweh's house **a great amount of gold (100,000 talents)**, **ten times that amount of silver (1,000,000 talents)**, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

Consistency

Be consistent in your translations. Decide how the numbers will be translated, using numbers or numerals. There are different ways of being consistent.

- Use words to represent numbers all of the time. (You might have very long words.)
- Use numerals to represent numbers all of the time.
- Use words to represent the numbers that your language has words for and use numerals for the numbers that your language does not have words for.
- Use words for low numbers and numerals for high numbers.
- Use words for numbers that require few words and numerals for numbers that require more than a few words.
- Use words to represent numbers, and write the numerals in parentheses after them.

Consistency in the ULT and UST

The *unfoldingWord® Literal Text* (ULT) and the *unfoldingWord® Simplified Text* (UST) use words for the numbers one through ten and use numerals for all numbers above ten.

> When Adam had lived **130** years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and he called his name Seth. After Adam became the father of Seth, he lived **800** years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. Adam lived **930** years, and then he died. (Genesis 5:3-5 ULT)

Nehemiah References:

5:14; 5:15; 6:15; 11:6; 11:8; 11:12; 11:13; 11:14; 11:18; 11:19

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!

Nehemiah References:

13:25

Order of Events

Description

In the Bible, events are not always told in the order in which they occurred. Sometimes the author wanted to discuss something that happened at an earlier time than the event that he just talked about. This can be confusing to the reader.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Readers might think that the events happened in the order that they are told. It is important to help them understand the correct order of events.

Examples From the Bible

> He even added this to them all: he locked John up in prison. Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)

This could sound like John baptized Jesus after John was locked up in prison, but John baptized Jesus before John was locked up in prison.

> Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of Yahweh followed after them. But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

This could sound like Joshua gave the order not to shout after the army had already started their march, but he had given that order before they started marching.

> Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

This sounds like a person must first open the scroll and then break its seals, but the seals that lock the scroll must be broken before the scroll can be unrolled.

Translation Strategies

(1) If your language uses phrases or time words to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using one of them.
(2) If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that. (See the section on "Aspect" of **Verbs**.)
(3) If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occurred, consider reordering the events so they they are in that order. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6). (See **Verse Bridges**.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If your language uses phrases, time words or tenses to show that an event happened before the one just mentioned, consider using one of them.

> 20 he even added this to them all: he locked John up in prison. Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)
>
> > 20 But then Herod … had John locked up in prison.
> > 21 **Before John was put in prison,** while all the people were being baptized by John, Jesus also was baptized.
>
> Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

> > Who is worthy to open the scroll **after** breaking its seals?

(2) If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that.

> Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)
>
> > 8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets 10 But Joshua **had commanded** the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout."

(3) If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occur, consider reordering the events. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6).

> 8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

> > 8,10 Joshua commanded the people, saying, “Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout.” Then just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets…
>
> Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)
>
> > Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_events.

Nehemiah References:

2:9; 5:7; 5:8; 8:6

Ordinal Numbers

Description

Ordinal numbers are used in the Bible mainly to tell the position of something in a list.

> And God has indeed appointed some in the church, **first** apostles, **second** prophets, **third** teachers, then miracles. (1 Corinthians 12:28a ULT)

This is a list of workers that God gave to the church in their order.

Ordinal Numbers in English

Most ordinal numbers in English simply have "-th" added to the end.

Numeral	Number	Ordinal Number
4	four	fourth
10	ten	tenth
100	one hundred	one hundredth
1,000	one thousand	one thousandth

Some ordinal numbers in English do not follow that pattern.

Numeral	Number	Ordinal Number
1	one	first
2	two	second
3	three	third
5	five	fifth
12	twelve	twelfth

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not have special numbers for showing the order of items in a list. There are different ways to deal with this.

Examples From the Bible

> The **first** lot went to Jehoiarib, the **second** to Jedaiah, the **third** to Harim, the **fourth** to Seorim … the **twenty-third** to Delaiah, and the **twenty-fourth** to Maaziah. (1 Chronicles 24:7-18 ULT)

The people cast lots and one went to each of these people in the order given.

> You must place in it four rows of precious stones. The **first** row must have a ruby, a topaz, and a garnet. The **second** row must have an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. The **third** row must have a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst. The **fourth** row must have a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper. They must be mounted in gold settings. (Exodus 28:17-20 ULT)

This describes four rows of stones. The first row is probably the top row, and the fourth row is probably the bottom row.

Translation Strategies

If your language has ordinal numbers and using them would give the right meaning, consider using them. If not, here are some strategies to consider:

(1) Use “one” with the first item and “another” or “the next” with the rest.
(2) Tell the total number of items and then list them or the things associated with them.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Tell the total number of items, and use “one” with the first item and “another” or “the next” with the rest.

> The first lot went to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah, the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim … the twenty-third to Delaiah, and the twenty-fourth to Maaziah. (1 Chronicles 24:7-18 ULT)
>
> > There were **24** lots. **One lot** went to Jehoiarib, **another** to Jedaiah, **another** to Harim … **another** to Delaiah, **and the last** went to Maaziah.
> >
> > There were **24** lots. **One lot** went to Jehoiarib, **the next** to Jedaiah, **the next** to Harim … **the next** to Delaiah, **and the last** went to Maaziah.

> A river went out of Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became **four** rivers. The name of **the first** is Pishon. It is the one which flows throughout the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. The gold of that land is good. There is also bdellium and the onyx stone there. The name of **the second** river is Gihon. This one flows throughout the whole land of Cush. The name of **the third** river is Tigris, which flows east of Asshur. **The fourth** river is the Euphrates. (Genesis 2:10-14 ULT)
>
> > A river went out of Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became **four** rivers. The name of **one** is Pishon. It is the one which flows throughout the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. The gold of that land is good. There is also bdellium and the onyx stone there. The name of **the next** river is Gihon. This one flows throughout the whole land of

> > Cush. The name of **the next** river is Tigris, which flows east of Asshur. The **last** river is the Euphrates.

(2) Tell the total number of items and then list them or the things associated with them.

> The **first** lot went to Jehoiarib, the **second** to Jedaiah, the **third** to Harim, the **fourth** to Seorim … the **twenty-third** to Delaiah, and the **twenty-fourth** to Maaziah. (1 Chronicles 24:7-18 ULT)
>
> > They cast **24** lots. The lots went to Jerhoiarib, Jedaiah, Harim, Seorim … Delaiah, and Maaziah.

Nehemiah References:

2:1; 3:11; 3:19; 3:20; 3:21; 3:24; 3:27; 3:30; 3:30; 5:14; 6:5; 6:15; 7:73; 8:13; 8:14; 8:18; 9:1; 10:31; 11:17; 13:6

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.

Nehemiah References:

1:2; 1:3; 1:5; 1:5; 1:6; 1:7; 1:9; 1:9; 1:10; 1:11; 2:6; 2:19; 2:20; 4:1; 4:5; 4:11; 5:8; 5:13; 6:10; 6:16; 7:61; 8:15; 8:17; 9:16; 9:22; 9:24; 9:31; 9:32; 9:34; 9:37; 10:30

Personification

Description

Personification is a figure of speech in which someone speaks of something as if it could do things that animals or people can do. People often do this because it makes it easier to talk about things that we cannot see:

Such as wisdom:

> Does not Wisdom call out? (Proverbs 8:1a ULT)

Or sin:

> Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT)

People also use personification because it is sometimes easier to talk about people's relationships with non-human things such as wealth as if they were relationships between people.

> You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24b ULT)

In each case, the purpose of the personification is to highlight a certain characteristic of the non-human thing. As in metaphor, the reader needs to think of the way that the thing is like a certain kind of person.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Some languages do not use personification.
- Some languages use personification only in certain situations.

Examples From the Bible

> You cannot **serve** God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24b ULT)

Jesus speaks of wealth as if it were a master whom people might serve. Loving money and basing one's decisions on it is like serving it as a slave would serve his master.

> Does not Wisdom **call** out? Does not Understanding **raise her voice**? (Proverbs 8:1 ULT)

The author speaks of wisdom and understanding as if they were woman who calls out to teach people. This means that they are not something hidden, but something obvious that people should pay attention to.

Translation Strategies

If the personification would be understood clearly, consider using it. If it would not be understood, here are some other ways for translating it.

(1) Add words or phrases to make the human (or animal) characteristic clear.
(2) In addition to Strategy (1), use words such as "like" or "as" to show that the sentence is not to be understood literally.
(3) Find a way to translate it without the personification.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add words or phrases to make the human (or animal) characteristic clear.

> **Sin crouches** at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT) — God speaks of sin as if it were a wild animal that is waiting for the chance to attack. This shows how dangerous sin is. An additional phrase can be added to make this danger clear.

> > **Sin** is at your door, **waiting to attack you.**

(2) In addition to Strategy (1), use words such as “like” or “as” to show that the sentence is not to be understood literally.

> Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT) — This can be translated with the word “as.”

> > Sin is crouching at the door, **just as a wild animal does as it waits to attack a person.**.

(3) Find a way to translate it without the personification.

> Even the **winds and the sea obey him**. (Matthew 8:27b ULT) — The men speak of the “wind and the sea” as if they are able to hear and obey Jesus, just as people can. This could also be translated without the idea of obedience by speaking of Jesus controlling them.
>
> > He even **controls the winds and the sea**.

NOTE: We have broadened our definition of "personification" to include "zoomorphism" (speaking of other things as if they had animal characteristics) and "anthropomorphism" (speaking of non-human things as if they had human characteristics) because the translation strategies for them are the same.

Nehemiah References:

1:9; 2:2; 4:2; 4:7; 5:7; 5:13; 6:17; 7:6; 7:34; 7:35; 7:36; 7:37; 7:38; 9:8; 9:32; 9:33; 10:32; 11:3; 11:23; 12:43; 13:12; 13:18; 13:19; 13:30

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**.

Nehemiah References:

13:5

Rhetorical Question

A rhetorical question is a question that a speaker asks when he is more interested in expressing his attitude about something than in getting information about it. Speakers use rhetorical questions to express deep emotion or to encourage hearers to think deeply about something. The Bible contains many rhetorical questions, often to express surprise, to rebuke or scold the hearer, or to teach. Speakers of some languages use rhetorical questions for other purposes as well.

Description

A rhetorical question is a question that strongly expresses the speaker's attitude toward something. Often the speaker is not looking for information at all. Or, if he is asking for information, it is not usually the information that the question appears to ask for. The speaker is more interested in expressing his attitude than in getting information.

> But those who stood by said, "**Are you insulting the high priest of God?**"(Acts 23:4 ULT)

The people who asked Paul this question were not asking if he was insulting God's high priest. Rather, they used this question to accuse Paul of insulting the high priest.

The Bible contains many rhetorical questions. These rhetorical questions might be used for the purposes: of expressing attitudes or feelings, rebuking people, teaching something by reminding people of something they know and encouraging them to apply it to something new, or introducing something they want to talk about.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Some languages do not use rhetorical questions; for them a question is always a request for information.
- Some languages use rhetorical questions, but for purposes that are different or more limited than in the Bible.
- Because of these differences between languages, some readers might misunderstand the purpose of a rhetorical question in the Bible.

Examples From the Bible

> Do you not still rule the kingdom of Israel? (1 Kings 21:7b ULT)

Jezebel used the question above **to remind** King Ahab of something he already knew: he still ruled the kingdom of Israel. The rhetorical question made her point more strongly than if she had merely stated it, because it forced Ahab to admit the point himself. She did this in order **to rebuke** him for being unwilling to take over a poor man's property. She was implying that, since he was the king of Israel, he had the power to take the man's property.

> **Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils?** Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number! (Jeremiah 2:32 ULT)

God used the question above **to remind** his people of something they already knew: a young woman would never forget her jewelry or a bride forget her veils. He then **rebuked** his people for forgetting him who is so much greater than those things.

> But you, why do you judge your brother? And you also, why do you despise your brother? (Romans 14:10 ULT)

Paul used these rhetorical questions **to rebuke** the Romans for doing what they should not do.

> Why did I not die when I came out from the womb? (Job 3:11a ULT)

Job used the question above **to show deep emotion**. This rhetorical question expresses how sad he was that he did not die as soon as he was born. He wished that he had not lived.

> And how has this happened to me that the mother of my Lord would come to me? (Luke 1:43 ULT)

Elizabeth used the question above **to show how surprised and happy she was** that the mother of her Lord came to her.

> Or what man is there among you, of whom his son will ask for a loaf of bread, but he will give him a stone? (Matthew 7:9 ULT)

Jesus used the question above **to remind** the people of something they already knew: a good father would never give his son something bad to eat. By introducing this point, Jesus could go on **to teach them** about God with his next rhetorical question:

> Therefore, if you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him? (Matthew 7:11 ULT)

Jesus used this question **to teach** the people in an emphatic way that God gives good things to those who ask him.

> **What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to?** It is like a mustard seed that a man took and threw into his garden … (Luke 13:18b-19a ULT)

Jesus used the question above **to introduce what he was going to talk about**. He was about to compare the kingdom of God to something. In this case, he compared the kingdom of God to a mustard seed.

Translation Strategies

In order to translate a rhetorical question accurately, first be sure that the question you are translating truly is a rhetorical question and is not an information question. Ask yourself, "Does the person asking the question already know the answer to the question?" If so, it is a rhetorical question. Or, if no one answers the question, did the person who asked it expect to receive an answer? If not, it is a rhetorical question.

When you are sure that the question is rhetorical, then be sure that you understand the purpose for the rhetorical question. Is it to encourage or rebuke or shame the hearer? Is it to bring up a new topic? Is it to express surprise or other emotion? Is it to do something else?

When you know the purpose of the rhetorical question, then think of the most natural way to express that purpose in the target language. It might be as a question, or a statement, or an exclamation.

If using the rhetorical question would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider doing so. If not, here are other options:

(1) Add the answer after the question.
(2) Change the rhetorical question to a statement or exclamation.
(3) Change the rhetorical question to a statement, and then follow it with a short question.
(4) Change the form of the question so that it communicates in your language what the original speaker communicated in his.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add the answer after the question.

> **Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils?** Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number! (Jeremiah 2:32 ULT)
>
> > Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils? **Of course not!** Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!

> Or what man is there among you, of whom his son will ask for a loaf of bread, but he will give him a stone? (Matthew 7:9 ULT)

> > Or what man is there among you, of whom his son will ask for a loaf of bread, but he will give him a stone? **None of you would do that!**

(2) Change the rhetorical question to a statement or exclamation.

> **What is the kingdom of God like, and what can I compare it to?** It is like a mustard seed. (Luke 13:18-19a ULT)
>
> > **This is what the kingdom of God is like.** It is like a mustard seed …

> **Are you insulting the high priest of God?** (Acts 23:4b ULT) (Acts 23:4 ULT)
>
> > **You should not insult God's high priest!**

> **Why did I not die when I came out from the womb?** (Job 3:11a ULT)
>
> > **I wish I had died when I came out from the womb!**

> **And how has this happened to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?** (Luke 1:43 ULT)
>
> > **How wonderful it is that the mother of my Lord has come to me!**

(3) Change the rhetorical question to a statement, and then follow it with a short question.

> **Do you not still rule** the kingdom of Israel? (1 Kings 21:7b ULT)
>
> > You still rule the kingdom of Israel, **do you not?**

(4) Change the form of the question so that it communicates in your language what the orignal speaker communicated in his.

> Or what man is there among you, of whom his son will ask for a loaf of bread, but he will give him a stone? (Matthew 7:9 ULT)
>
> > If your son asks you for a loaf of bread, **would you give him a stone**?

> **Will a virgin forget her jewelry, a bride her veils**? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number! (Jeremiah 2:32 ULT)

> **What virgin would forget her jewelry, and what bride would forget her veils**? Yet my people have forgotten me for days without number!

> But you, **why do you judge your brother**? And you also, **why do you despise your brother**? (Romans 14:10 ULT)
>
> > Do you think it is good to judge your brother? Do you think it is good to despise your brother?

Nehemiah References:

2:3; 2:19; 4:intro; 4:2; 5:9; 6:3; 6:11; 6:11; 13:11; 13:17; 13:18; 13:21; 13:26; 13:27

Simile

Description

A simile is a comparison of two things that are not normally thought to be similar. The simile focuses on a particular trait the two items have in common, and it includes the words “like,” “as,” or “than.”

> When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were troubled and discouraged, **like sheep not having a shepherd**. (Matthew 9:36)

Jesus compared the crowds of people to sheep without a shepherd. Sheep grow frightened when they do not have a good shepherd to lead them in safe places. The crowds were like that because they did not have good religious leaders.

> See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**, so be as wise **as the serpents** and harmless **as the doves**. (Matthew 10:16 ULT)

Jesus compared his disciples to sheep and their enemies to wolves. Wolves attack sheep; Jesus’ enemies would attack his disciples.

> For the word of God is living and active and sharper **than any two-edged sword**. (Hebrews 4:12a ULT)

God’s word is compared to a two-edged sword. A two-edged sword is a weapon that can easily cut through a person’s flesh. God’s word is very effective in showing what is in a person’s heart and thoughts.

Purposes of Simile

- A simile can teach about something that is unknown by showing how it is similar to something that is known.
- A simile can emphasize a particular trait, sometimes in a way that gets people's attention.
- Similes help form a picture in the mind or help the reader experience what he is reading about more fully.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- People may not know how the two items are similar.
- People may not be familiar with both of the items being compared.

Examples From the Bible

> Suffer hardship with me, **as a good soldier** of Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 2:3 ULT)

In this simile, Paul compares suffering with what soldiers endure, and he encourages Timothy to follow their example.

> Just as the lightning flashing from a place under the sky shines to another place under the sky, so will the Son of Man be. (Luke 17:24b ULT)

This verse does not tell how the Son of Man will be like the lightning. But in context we can understand from the verses before it that just as lighting flashes suddenly and everyone can see it, the Son of Man will come suddenly and everyone will be able to see him. No one will have to be told about it.

Translation Strategies

If people would understand the correct meaning of a simile, consider using it. If they would not, here are some strategies you can use:

(1) If people do not know how the two items are alike, tell how they are alike. However, do not do this if the meaning was not clear to the original audience.

(2) If people are not familiar with the item that something is compared to, use an item from your own culture. Be sure that it is one that could have been used in the cultures of the Bible. If you use this strategy, you may want to put the original item in a footnote.
(3) Simply describe the item without comparing it to another.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If people do not know how the two items are alike, tell how they are alike. However, do not do this if the meaning was not clear to the original audience.

> See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves.** (Matthew 10:16a ULT) — This compares the danger that Jesus' disciples would be in with the danger that sheep are in when they are surrounded by wolves.
>
> > See, I send **you out among wicked people** and you will be in danger from them **as sheep are in danger when they are among wolves**.
>
> For the word of God is living and active and sharper **than any two-edged sword**. (Hebrews 4:12a ULT)
>
> > For the word of God is living and active and **more powerful than a very sharp two-edged sword**.

(2) If people are not familiar with the item that something is compared to, use an item from your own culture. Be sure that it is one that could have been used in the cultures of the Bible. If you use this strategy, you may want to put the original item in a footnote.

> See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**, (Matthew 10:16a ULT) — If people do not know what sheep and wolves are, or that wolves kill and eat sheep, you could use some other animal that kills another.
>
> > See, I send you out **as chickens in the midst of wild dogs**.
>
> How often did I long to gather your children together, just **as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings**, but you were not willing! (Matthew 23:37b ULT)
>
> > How often I wanted to gather your children together, **as a mother closely watches over her infants**, but you refused!
>
> If you have faith **as a grain of mustard** … (Matthew 17:20)
>
> > If you have faith even as small **as a tiny seed**,

(3) Simply describe the item without comparing it to another.

> See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**. (Matthew 10:16a ULT)
>
> > See, I send you out among **people who will want to harm you**.

> How often did I long to gather your children together, just **as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings**, but you were not willing! (Matthew 23:37b ULT)
>
> > How often I wanted to **protect you**, but you refused!

Nehemiah References:

9:11; 9:23

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.

Nehemiah References:

1:4; 1:4; 3:1; 5:13; 6:10; 8:5; 8:6; 9:1; 9:3; 9:5; 9:15; 12:27; 12:31; 13:25

Synecdoche

Description

Synecdoche is a figure of speech in which a speaker uses a part of something to refer to the whole thing, or uses the whole to refer to a part.

> **My soul** magnifies the Lord. (Luke 1:46b ULT)

Mary was was very happy about what the Lord was doing, so she said “my soul,” which means the inner, emotional part of herself, to refer to her whole self.

> So **the Pharisees** said to him, “Look, why are they doing that which is not lawful?” (Mark 2:24a ULT)

The Pharisees who were standing there did not all say the same words at the same time. Instead, it is more likely that one man representing the group said those words.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Some readers may not recognize the synecdoche and thus misunderstand the words as a literal statement.
- Some readers may realize that they are not to understand the words literally, but they may not know what the meaning is.

Example From the Bible

> Then I looked on all the deeds that **my hands** had accomplished.
> (Ecclesiastes 2:11a ULT)

“My hands” is a synecdoche for the whole person because clearly the arms and the rest of the body and the mind were also involved in the person’s accomplishments. The hands are chosen

to represent the person because they are the parts of the body most directly involved in the work.

Translation Strategies

If the synecdoche would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

(1) State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

> "**My soul** magnifies the Lord." (Luke 1:46b ULT)
>
> > "**I** magnify the Lord."
>
> So **the Pharisees** said to him … (Mark 2:24a ULT)
>
> > **Arepresentative of the Pharisees** said to him …
>
> Then I looked on all the deeds that **my hands** had accomplished. (Ecclesiastes 2:11a ULT)
>
> > I looked on all the deeds that **I** had accomplished

Nehemiah References:

2:2; 2:3; 2:5; 2:5; 2:6; 2:13; 2:15; 2:15; 2:15; 2:16; 3:28; 3:32; 4:2; 4:12; 4:13; 4:14; 4:14; 4:14; 4:16; 4:19; 4:21; 5:2; 5:14; 5:15; 5:16; 5:17; 6:1; 6:1; 6:1; 6:3; 6:16; 7:1; 8:3; 8:5; 8:6; 8:15; 9:1; 9:15; 9:36; 10:39; 11:1; 11:17; 13:4; 13:5; 13:28

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**

Nehemiah References:

1:1; 2:15; 3:1; 3:1; 3:5; 3:7; 3:8; 3:26; 4:13; 4:16; 4:20; 4:23; 5:3; 5:4; 5:7; 5:17; 5:18; 7:1; 7:1; 7:5; 7:5; 7:44; 7:46; 7:57; 7:65; 7:65; 7:65; 7:67; 7:70; 7:70; 7:70; 7:70; 7:73; 8:1; 8:1; 8:3; 8:8; 8:9; 8:14; 9:3; 9:3; 9:4; 9:6; 9:11; 9:11; 9:15; 9:18; 9:20; 9:25; 9:25; 9:26; 9:27; 10:1; 10:28; 10:28; 10:28; 10:33; 10:33; 10:33; 10:33; 10:34; 10:37; 10:37; 10:38; 11:1; 11:3; 11:3; 11:9; 11:19; 11:21; 11:21; 12:25; 12:27; 12:27; 13:5; 13:12; 13:13; 13:17; 13:18

When Masculine Words Include Women

In the Bible, sometimes the words “men,” “brothers,” and “sons” refer only to men. At other times, those words include both men and women. In those places where the writer meant both men and women, you (the translator) need to translate it in a way that does not limit the meaning to men.

Description

In some languages a word that normally refers to men can also be used in a more general way to refer to both men and women. For example, the Bible sometimes says “brothers” when it refers to both brothers and sisters.

Also in some languages, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can be used in a more general way for any person if it is not important whether the person is a man or a woman. In the example below, the pronoun is “his,” but it is not limited to males.

> A wise son makes **his** father rejoice
> but a foolish son brings grief to **his** mother. (Proverbs 10:1 ULT)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- In some cultures words like “man,” “brother,” and “son” can only be used to refer to men. If those words are used in a translation in a more general way, people will think that what is being said does not apply to women.
- In some cultures, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can only refer to men. If a masculine pronoun is used, people will think that what is said does not apply to women.

Translation Principles

When a statement applies to both men and women, translate it in such a way that people will be able to understand that it applies to both.

Examples From the Bible

> Now we want you to know, **brothers**, the grace of God that has been given to the churches of Macedonia. (2 Corinthians 8:1 ULT)

This verse is addressing the believers in Corinth, not only men, but **men and women**.

> Then said Jesus to his disciples, “If anyone wants to follow me, **he** must deny **himself**, take up **his** cross, and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24 ULT)

Jesus was not speaking only of men, but of **men and women**.

Caution: Sometimes masculine words are used specifically to refer to men. Do not use words that would lead people to think that they include women. The words below are specifically about men.

> Moses said, ‘If **someone** dies, not having children, **hisbrother** must marry **his** wife and have children for **hisbrother**.’ (Matthew 22:24 ULT)

Translation Strategies

If people would understand that that masculine words like “man,” “brother,” and “he” can include women, then consider using them. Otherwise, here are some ways for translating those words when they include women.

(1) Use a noun that can be used for both men and women.
(2) Use a word that refers to men and a word that refers to women.
(3) Use pronouns that can be used for both men and women.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use nouns that can be used for both men and women.

> The wise **man** dies just like the fool dies. (Ecclesiastes 2:16b ULT)
>
> > "The wise **person** dies just like the fool dies."
> > "Wise **people** die just like fools die."

(2) Use a word that refers to men and a word that refers to women.

> For we do not want you to be uninformed, **brothers**, about the troubles that happened to us in Asia. (2 Corinthians 1:8) — Paul was writing this letter to both men and women.
>
> > "For we do not want you to be uninformed, **brothers and sisters**, about the troubles that happened to us in Asia."

(3) Use pronouns that can be used for both men and women.

> "If anyone wants to follow me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." (Matthew 16:24 ULT)

English speakers can change the masculine singular pronouns, "he," "himself," and "his" to plural pronouns that do not mark gender, "they," "themselves," and "their" in order to show that it applies to all people, not just men.

> > “If **people** want to follow me, **they** must deny **themselves**, take up **their** cross, and follow me.”

Nehemiah References:

1:2; 1:6; 1:6; 2:10; 2:12; 3:2; 5:13; 9:23; 9:24

unfoldingWord® Translation Words - Nehemiah

v91

Aaron

Definition:

Aaron was Moses' older brother. God chose Aaron to be the first high priest for the people of Israel.

- Aaron helped Moses speak to Pharaoh about letting the Israelites go free.
- While the Israelites were traveling through the desert, Aaron sinned by making an idol for the people to worship.
- God also appointed Aaron and his descendants to be the priest priests for the people of Israel.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: priest, Moses, Israel)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 23:14
- Acts 7:38-40
- Exodus 28:1-3
- Luke 1:5
- Numbers 16:45

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 9:15 God warned Moses and **Aaron** that Pharaoh would be stubborn.
- 10:5 Pharaoh called Moses and **Aaron** and told them that if they stopped the plague, the Israelites could leave Egypt.
- 13:9 God chose Moses' brother, **Aaron**, and Aaron's descendants to be his priests.
- 13:11 So they (the Israelites) brought gold to **Aaron** and asked him to form it into an idol for them!
- 14:7 They (the Israelites) became angry with Moses and **Aaron** and said, "Oh, why did you bring us to this horrible place?"

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0175, G00020

Nehemiah References:

10:38; 12:47

Abijah

Definition:

Abijah was a king of Judah who reigned from 915 to 913 B.C. He was a son of King Rehoboam. There were also several other men named Abijah in the Old Testament:

- Samuel's sons Abijah and Joel were leaders over the people of Israel at Beersheba. Because Abijah and his brother were dishonest and greedy, the people asked Samuel to appoint a king to rule them instead.
- Abijah was one of the temple priests during the time of King David.
- Abijah was one of King Jeroboam's sons.
- Abijah was also a chief priest who returned with Zerubbabel to Jerusalem from the Babylonian captivity.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 15:3
- 1 Samuel 8:1-3
- 2 Chronicles 13:2
- 2 Chronicles 13:19
- Luke 1:5

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0029, G00070

Nehemiah References:

10:7; 12:4; 12:17

Abraham, Abram

Definition:

Abram was a Chaldean man from the city of Ur who was chosen by God to be the forefather of the Israelites. God changed his name to "Abraham."

- The name "Abram" means "exalted father."
- "Abraham" means "father of many."
- God promised Abraham that he would have many descendants, who would become a great nation.
- Abraham believed God and obeyed him. God led Abraham to move from Chaldea to the land of Canaan.
- Abraham and his wife Sarah, when they were very old and living in the land of Canaan, had a son, Isaac.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Canaan, Chaldea, Sarah, Isaac)

Bible References:

- Galatians 3:8
- Genesis 11:29-30
- Genesis 21:4
- Genesis 22:2
- James 2:23
- Matthew 1:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 4:6 When **Abram** arrived in Canaan, God said, "Look all around you. I will give to you and your descendants all the land that you can see as an inheritance."
- 5:4 Then God changed **Abram**'s name to **Abraham**, which means "father of many."
- 5:5 About a year later, when **Abraham** was 100 years old and Sarah was 90, Sarah gave birth to Abraham's son.
- 5:6 When Isaac was a young man, God tested **Abraham's** faith by saying, "Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a sacrifice to me."

- 6:1 When **Abraham** was very old and his son, Isaac, had grown to be a man, **Abraham** sent one of his servants back to the land where his relatives lived to find a wife for his son, Isaac.
- 6:4 After a long time, **Abraham** died and all of the promises that God had made to him in the covenant were passed on to Isaac.
- 21:2 God promised **Abraham** that through him all people groups of the world would receive a blessing.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0087, H0085, G00110

Nehemiah References:

9:7

Adonijah

Definition:

Adonijah was the fourth son of King David.

- Adonijah tried to take over as king of Israel after the deaths of his brothers Absalom and Amnon.
- God, however, had promised that David's son Solomon would be king, so Adonijah's plot was overthrown and Solomon was made king.
- When Adonijah tried a second time to make himself king, Solomon put him to death.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: David, Solomon)

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0138

Nehemiah References:

10:16

adversary, enemy

Definition:

An “adversary” is a person (or group of people) who is opposed to someone else. The term “enemy” has a similar meaning.

- Your adversary can be a person who tries to oppose or harm another person.
- When two nations fight, each can be called an “adversary” of the other.
- In the Bible, the devil is referred to as an “adversary” and an “enemy.”
- The term “adversary” may be translated as “opponent” or “enemy,” but it suggests a stronger form of opposition.

(See also: Satan)

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 5:14
- Isaiah 9:11
- Job 6:23
- Lamentations 4:12
- Luke 12:59
- Matthew 13:25

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0341, H6146, H6887, H6862, H6965, H7790, H7854, H8130, H8324, G04760, G04800, G21890, G21900, G52270

Nehemiah References:

4:11; 4:15; 5:9; 6:1; 6:16; 9:27; 9:28

advice, advise, advisor, counsel, counselor, counsels

Definition:

The terms “counsel” and “advice” have the same meaning and refer to helping someone decide wisely about what to do in a certain situation. A wise “counselor” or “advisor” is someone who gives advice or counsel that will help a person make right choices.

- Kings often have official advisors or counselors to help them decide important matters that affect the people they are ruling.
- Sometimes the advice or counsel that is given is not good. Evil advisors may urge a king to take action or make a decree that will harm him or his people.
- Depending on the context, “advice” or “counsel” could also be translated as “help in deciding” or “warnings” or “exhortations” or “guidance.”
- The action, to “counsel” could be translated as to “advise” or to “make suggestions” or to “exhort.”
- Note that “counsel” is a different word than “council,” which refers to a group of people.

(See also: exhort, Holy Spirit, wise)

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1697, H1847, H1875, H1884, H1907, H3272, H3289, H3982, H4156, H4431, H5475, H5779, H6440, H6963, H6098, H7592, H8458, G10110, G10120, G11060, G48230, G48250

Nehemiah References:

4:15

afflict, affliction, distress

Definition:

The term “afflict” means to cause someone distress or suffering. An “affliction” is the disease, emotional grief, or other disaster that results from this.

- Sometimes God afflicted his people with sickness or other hardships with the intention for them to repent of their sins and turn back to him.
- God caused afflictions or plagues to come on the people of Egypt because their king refused to obey God.
- To “be afflicted with” means to suffer from some kind of distress, such as a disease, persecution, or emotional grief.
- In some Old Testament contexts, the idea of “afflicting oneself” or “afflicting one’s soul” means to abstain from eating food.

Translation Suggestions:

- To “afflict” someone could be translated as “cause someone to experience troubles” or “cause someone to suffer” or “cause suffering to come.”
- A phrase like “afflict someone with leprosy” could be translated as “cause someone to be sick with leprosy.”
- When a disease or disaster is sent to “afflict” people or animals, this could be translated as “cause suffering to.”
- Depending on the context, the term “affliction” could be translated as “calamity” or “sickness” or “suffering” or “great distress.”
- The phrase “afflicted with” could also be translated as “suffering from” or “sick with.”

(See also: **leprosy**, **plague**, **suffer**)

Bible References:

- **2 Thessalonians 1:6**
- **Amos 5:12**
- **Colossians 1:24**
- **Exodus 22:22-24**
- **Genesis 12:17-20**
- **Genesis 15:12-13**

- Genesis 29:32

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H3013, H3905, H3906, H6031, H6039, H6040, H6041, H6862, H6869, H6887, H7451, H7489, G23460, G23470, G38040

Nehemiah References:

9:9

age, era, time

Definition:

Used in this sense the term “age” refers to a time period.

- Other words used to express an extended period of time include “era” and “season.”
- Jesus refers to “this age” as the present time when evil, sin, and disobedience toward God fill the earth.
- There will be a future age when righteousness will reign in a new heaven and a new earth.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “age” could be translated as “era” or “time period” or “time.”
- The phrase “this present evil age” means “during this time right now when people are very evil.”
- The phrase “end of the age” (used in Jesus’ words in Matthew 28:20) means “end of this period of history” or “end of this present age” and refers to the end of this present age at Jesus’ second coming.

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2165, H6256, H6471, G21190, G21210, G22350, G25400, G35680, G41830, G42180, G44550, G51190, G55500, G55510, G56100

Nehemiah References:

12:46; 13:21

Ai

Definition:

In Old Testament times, Ai was the name of a Canaanite town located just south of Bethel and about 8 km northwest of Jericho.

- After defeating Jericho, Joshua led the Israelites in an attack of Ai. But they were easily defeated because God was not pleased with them.
- An Israelite named Achan had stolen plunder from Jericho, and God ordered that he and his family be killed. Then God helped the Israelites defeat the people of Ai.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Bethel, Jericho)

Bible References:

- Ezra 2:27-30
- Genesis 12:8-9
- Genesis 13:3-4
- Joshua 7:3
- Joshua 8:12

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5857

Nehemiah References:

7:32

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

Nehemiah References:

9:2; 13:26; 13:27

altar

Definition:

An altar was a raised structure on which the Israelites burned animals and grains as offerings to God.

- During Bible times, simple altars were often made by forming a mound of packed-down dirt or by carefully placing large stones to form a stable pile.
- Some special box-shaped altars were made of wood overlaid with metals such as gold, brass, or bronze.
- Other people groups living near the Israelites also built altars to offer sacrifices to their gods.

(See also: altar of incense, false god, grain offering, sacrifice)

Bible References:

- Genesis 8:20
- Genesis 22:9
- James 2:21
- Luke 11:49-51
- Matthew 5:23
- Matthew 23:19

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 3:14 After Noah got off the boat, he built an **altar** and sacrificed some of each kind of animal which could be used for a sacrifice.
- 5:8 When they reached the place of sacrifice, Abraham tied up his son Isaac and laid him on an **altar**.
- 13:9 A priest would kill the animal and burn it on the **altar**.
- 16:6 He (Gideon) built a new altar dedicated to God near where the **altar** to the idol used to be and made a sacrifice to God on it.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0741, H2025, H4056, H4196, G10410, G23790

Nehemiah References:

10:34

amen, truly

Definition:

The term “amen” is a word used to emphasize or call attention to what a person has said. It is often used at the end of a prayer. Sometimes it is translated as “truly.”

- When used at the end of a prayer, “amen” communicates agreement with the prayer or expresses a desire that the prayer be fulfilled.
- In his teaching, Jesus used “amen” to emphasize the truth of what he said. He often followed that by “and I say to you” to introduce another teaching that related to the previous teaching.
- When Jesus uses “amen” this way, some English versions (and the ULT) translate this as “verily” or “truly.”
- Another word meaning “truly” is sometimes translated as “surely” or “certainly” and is also used to emphasize what the speaker is saying.

Translation Suggestions:

- Consider whether the target language has a special word or phrase that is used to emphasize something that has been said.
- When used at the end of a prayer or to confirm something, “amen” could be translated as “let it be so” or “may this happen” or “that is true.”
- When Jesus says, “truly I tell you,” this could also be translated as “Yes, I tell you sincerely” or “That is true, and I also tell you.”
- The phrase “truly, truly I tell you” could be translated as “I tell you this very sincerely” or “I tell you this very earnestly” or “what I am telling you is true.”

(See also: **fulfill**, **true**)

Bible References:

- **Deuteronomy 27:15**
- **John 5:19**
- **Jude 1:24-25**
- **Matthew 26:33-35**
- **Philemon 1:23-25**
- **Revelation 22:20-21**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0543, G02810

Nehemiah References:

5:13; 8:6

Ammon, Ammonite

Definition:

The “people of Ammon” or the “Ammonites” were a people group that lived on the east side of the Jordan River across from the Israelites.

- The book of Genesis reports that the Ammonite nation was descended from Ben-ammi, who was the son of Lot by his younger daughter.
- The term “Ammonitess” refers specifically to a female Ammonite. This could also be translated as “Ammonite woman.”
- At one point, the Ammonites hired a prophet named Balaam to curse Israel, but God did not allow him to do it.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: curse, Jordan River, Lot)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 19:1-3
- Ezekiel 25:2
- Genesis 19:38
- Joshua 12:1-2
- Judges 11:27
- Zephaniah 2:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5983, H5984, H5985

Nehemiah References:

2:10; 2:19; 4:3; 4:7; 13:1; 13:23

Amorite

Definition:

The Amorites were a powerful group of people who inhabited the land of Canaan and lived on both sides of the Jordan River.

- Their name means “high one,” which may refer to the mountainous regions where they lived or to the fact that they were known to be very tall.
- The book of Genesis reports that the Amorites were descended from Canaan, the grandson of Noah.
- The city of Ai was inhabited by Amorites.
- God refers to the “sin of the Amorites,” which included their worship of false gods and the sinful practices associated.
- Joshua led the Israelites in destroying the Amorites, as God had commanded them to do.

Bible References:

- Amos 2:9
- Ezekiel 16:3
- Genesis 10:16
- Genesis 15:14-16
- Joshua 9:10

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 15:7 Sometime later, the kings of another people group in Canaan, the **Amorites**, heard that the Gibeonites had made a peace treaty with the Israelites, so they combined their armies into one large army and attacked Gibeon.
- 15:8 In the early morning they surprised the **Amorite** armies and attacked them.
- 15:9 God fought for Israel that day. He caused the **Amorites** to be confused and he sent large hailstones that killed many of the **Amorites**.
- 15:10 God also caused the sun to stay in one place in the sky so that Israel would have enough time to completely defeat the **Amorites**.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0567

Nehemiah References:

9:8

appoint, appointed

Definition:

The terms “appoint” and “appointed” refer to choosing someone to fulfill a specific task or role.

- To “be appointed” can also refer to being “chosen” to receive something, as in “appointed to eternal life.” That people were “appointed to eternal life” means they were chosen to receive eternal life.
- The phrase “appointed time” refers to God’s “chosen time” or “planned time” for something to happen.
- The word “appoint” may also mean to “command” or “assign” someone to do something.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “appoint” could include “choose” or “assign” or “formally choose” or “designate.”
- The term “appointed” could be translated as “assigned” or “planned” or “specifically chose.”
- The phrase “be appointed” could also be translated as “be chosen.”

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 8:11
- Acts 3:20
- Acts 6:2
- Acts 13:48
- Genesis 41:33-34
- Numbers 3:9-10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0561, H0977, H2163, H2296, H2706, H2708, H2710, H3198, H3245, H3259, H3677, H3983, H4150, H4151, H4152, H4483, H4487, H4662, H5324, H5344, H5414, H5567, H5975, H6310, H6485, H6565, H6635, H6680, H6923, H6942, H6966, H7760, H7896, G03220, G06060, G12990, G13030, G19350, G25250, G27490, G42870, G42960, G43840, G49290, G50210, G50870

Nehemiah References:

5:14; 6:7; 7:1; 10:34; 12:44; 13:13; 13:31

Arabia, Arabian

Definition:

Arabia is the largest peninsula in the world, covering nearly 3,000,000 square kilometers. It is located southeast of Israel, and is bordered by the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea, and the Persian Gulf.

- The term "Arabian" is used to refer to someone who lives in Arabia or to something that is connected with Arabia.
- The earliest people to live in Arabia were grandchildren of Shem. Other early inhabitants of Arabia included Abraham's son Ishmael and his descendants, as well as descendants of Esau.
- The desert region where the Israelites wandered for 40 years was located in Arabia.
- After becoming a believer in Jesus, the apostle Paul spent a few years in the desert of Arabia.
- In his letter to the Christians in Galatia, Paul mentioned that Mt. Sinai was located in Arabia.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Esau, Galatia, Ishmael, Shem, Sinai)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 10:14-15
- Acts 2:11
- Galatians 1:15-17
- Galatians 4:24-25
- Jeremiah 25:24-26
- Nehemiah 2:19-20

Word Data:

- Strong's: H6152, H6153, H6163, G06880, G06900

Nehemiah References:

2:19; 4:7; 6:1

armor, armory

Definition:

The term “armor” refers to the equipment a soldier uses to fight in a battle and protect himself from enemy attacks. It is also used in a figurative way to refer to spiritual armor.

- Parts of a soldier’s armor include a helmet, a shield, a breastplate, leg coverings, and a sword.
- Using the term figuratively, the apostle Paul compares physical armor to spiritual armor that God gives the believer to help him fight spiritual battles.
- The spiritual armor God gives his people to fight against sin and Satan includes truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, and the Holy Spirit.
- This could be translated with a term that means “soldier gear” or “protective battle clothing” or “protective covering” or “weapons.”

(See also: faith, Holy Spirit, peace, save, spirit)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 31:9-10
- 2 Samuel 20:8
- Ephesians 6:11
- Jeremiah 51:3-4
- Luke 11:22
- Nehemiah 4:15-16

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2290, H2488, H3627, H4055, H5402, G36960, G38330

Nehemiah References:

3:19

Artaxerxes

Definition:

Artaxerxes was a king who reigned over the Persian empire from about 464 to 424 BC.

- During Artaxerxes' reign, the Israelites from Judah were in exile in Babylon, which was under the control of Persia at that time.
- Artaxerxes allowed Ezra the priest and other Jewish leaders to leave Babylon and go back to Jerusalem to teach the Israelites the Law of God.
- Later during this time, Artaxerxes also allowed his cupbearer Nehemiah to return to Jerusalem to lead the Jews in rebuilding the walls surrounding the city.
- Because Babylon was under the rule of Persia, Artaxerxes was sometimes called the "king of Babylon."
- Note that Artaxerxes is not the same person as Xerxes (Ahasuerus).

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: **Ahasuerus**, Babylon, cupbearer, Ezra, Nehemiah, Persia)

Bible References:

- **Ezra 4:7-8**
- **Ezra 7:1-5**
- Nehemiah 2:1
- Nehemiah 13:6-7

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0783

Nehemiah References:

2:1; 5:14; 13:6

Asaph

Definition:

Asaph was a Levite priest and gifted musician who composed the music for the psalms of King David. He also wrote his own psalms.

- Asaph was appointed by King David to be one of three musicians who were responsible for providing songs for worship in the temple. Some of these songs were also prophecies.
- Asaph trained his sons and they carried on this responsibility, playing musical instruments and prophesying in the temple.
- Some of the musical instruments included the lute, harp, trumpet, and cymbals.
- Psalms 50 and 73-83 are said to be from Asaph. It may be that some of these psalms were written by his family members.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: descendant, harp, lute, prophet, psalm, trumpet)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 6:39-43
- 2 Chronicles 35:15
- Nehemiah 2:8
- Psalm 50:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0623

Nehemiah References:

2:8; 7:44; 11:17; 11:22; 12:35; 12:46

Ashdod, Azotus

Definition:

Ashdod was one of the five most important cities of the Philistines. It was located in southwestern Canaan near the Mediterranean Sea, halfway between the cities of Gaza and Joppa.

- The temple of the Philistine's false god Dagon was located in Ashdod.
- God severely punished the people of Ashdod when the Philistines stole the ark of the covenant and put it in the pagan temple at Ashdod.
- The Greek name for this city was Azotus. It was one of the cities where the evangelist Philip preached the gospel.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **Ekron**, **Gath**, **Gaza**, **Joppa**, **Philip**, **Philistines**)

Bible References:

- **1 Samuel 5:1-3**
- **Acts 8:40**
- **Amos 1:8**
- **Joshua 15:45-47**
- **Zechariah 9:6**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0795, G01080

Nehemiah References:

4:7; 13:23; 13:24

assembly, assemble, congregation, meeting, gather, community

Definition:

The term “assembly” usually refers to a group of people who come together for some reason, often to discuss problems, give advice, or make decisions. An assembly can be a group that is organized in an official and somewhat permanent way, or it can be a group of people who come together temporarily for a specific purpose or occasion.

Old Testament

- In the Old Testament there was a special kind of assembly called a “sacred assembly” in which the people of Israel would gather to worship Yahweh.
- Sometimes the term “assembly” referred to the Israelites in general, as a group.

New Testament

- In the New Testament, an assembly of 70 Jewish leaders in major cities such as Jerusalem would meet to judge legal matters and to settle disputes between people. This assembly was known as the “Sanhedrin” or the “Council.”

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, “assembly” could also be translated as “special gathering” or “congregation” or “council” or “army” or “large group.”
- When the term “assembly” refers generally to the Israelites as a whole, it could also be translated as “community” or “people of Israel.”
- The phrase, “all the assembly” could be translated as “all the people” or “the whole group of Israelites” or “everyone.” (See: hyperbole)
- A large gathering of enemy soldiers was sometimes also referred to as an “assembly.” This could be translated as “army.”

(See also: council)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 8:14
- Acts 7:38
- Ezra 10:12-13

- **Hebrews 12:22-24**
- **Leviticus 4:20-21**
- Nehemiah 8:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0622, H1481, H2199, H3259, H4150, H4186, H4744, H5475, H5712, H6116, H6908, H6950, H6951, H6952, G15770, G38310, G48630, G48640, G48710, G49050

Nehemiah References:

1:9; 4:20; 5:7; 5:13; 5:16; 7:5; 7:66; 8:1; 8:2; 8:13; 8:17; 8:18; 9:1; 12:28; 12:44; 13:1; 13:11

Assyria, Assyrian, Assyrian Empire

Definition:

Assyria was a powerful nation during the time the Israelites were living in the land of Canaan.

The Assyrian Empire was a group of nations ruled by an Assyrian king.

- The nation of Assyria was located in a region that is now the northern part of Iraq.
- The Assyrians fought against Israel at different times in their history.
- In the year 722 BC, the Assyrians completely conquered the kingdom of Israel and forced many of the Israelites to move to Assyria.
- The remaining Israelites intermarried with foreigners that the Assyrians had brought into Israel from Samaria. The descendants of those people who intermarried were later called the Samaritans.

(See also: Samaria)

Bible References:

- Genesis 10:11
- Genesis 25:17-18
- Isaiah 7:16-17
- Jeremiah 50:17
- Micah 7:11-13

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 20:2 So God punished both kingdoms by allowing their enemies to destroy them. The kingdom of Israel was destroyed by the **Assyrian Empire**, a powerful, cruel nation. The **Assyrians** killed many people in the kingdom of Israel, took away everything of value, and burned much of the country.
- 20:3 The **Assyrians** gathered all the leaders, the rich people, and the people with skills and took them to **Assyria**.
- 20:4 Then the **Assyrians** brought foreigners to live in the land where the kingdom of Israel had been.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0804, H1121

Nehemiah References:

9:32

authority

Definition:

The term “authority” usually refers to a position of influence, responsibility, or rule over another person.

- Kings and other governing rulers have authority over the people they are ruling.
- The word “authorities” can refer to people, governments, or organizations that have authority over others.
- The word “authorities” can also refer to spirit beings who have power over people who have not submitted themselves to God’s authority.
- Masters have authority over their servants or slaves. Parents have authority over their children.
- Governments have the authority or right to make laws that govern their citizens.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “authority” can also be translated as “control” or “right” or “qualifications.”
- Sometimes “authority” is used with the meaning of “power.”
- When “authorities” is used to refer to people or organizations who rule people, it could also be translated as “leaders” or “rulers” or “powers.”
- The phrase “by his own authority” could also be translated as “with his own right to lead” or “based on his own qualifications.”
- The expression, “under authority” could be translated as “responsible to obey” or “having to obey others’ commands.”

(See also: dominion, king, ruler, power)

Bible References:

- Colossians 2:10
- Esther 9:29
- Genesis 41:35
- Jonah 3:6-7
- Luke 12:5
- Luke 20:1-2
- Mark 1:22

- Matthew 8:9
- Matthew 28:19
- Titus 3:1

Word Data:

- Strong's: H8633, G08310, G14130, G18490, G18500, G20030, G27150, G52470

Nehemiah References:

3:7

Azariah

Definition:

Azariah was the name of several men in the Old Testament.

- One Azariah is best known by his Babylonian name, Abednego. He was one of many Israelites from Judah who were captured by Nebuchadnezzar's army and taken to live in Babylon. Azariah and his fellow Israelites Hananiah and Mishael refused to worship the Babylonian king, so he had them thrown into a blazing furnace as punishment. But God protected them and they were not harmed at all.
- Uzziah king of Judah was also known as "Azariah."
- Another Azariah was an Old Testament high priest.
- In the time of the prophet Jeremiah, a man named Azariah wrongly urged the Israelites to disobey God by leaving their homeland.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Babylon, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, Jeremiah, Uzziah)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 2:38
- 1 Kings 4:2
- 2 Chronicles 15:1
- Daniel 1:6-7
- Jeremiah 43:2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5838

Nehemiah References:

3:23; 3:24; 7:7; 8:7; 10:2; 12:33

Babylon, Babylonia, Babylonian

Definition:

The city of Babylon was the capital of the ancient region of Babylonia, which was also part of the Babylonian Empire.

- Babylon was located along the Euphrates River, in the same region where the Tower of Babel had been built hundreds of years before.
- Sometimes the word "Babylon" refers to the entire Babylonian Empire. For example, the "king of Babylon" ruled the entire empire, not just the city.
- The Babylonians were a powerful people group who attacked the kingdom of Judah and kept the people in exile in Babylonia for 70 years.
- Part of this region was called "Chaldea" and the people living there were the "Chaldeans." As a result, the term "Chaldea" was often used to refer to Babylonia. (See: synecdoche)

(See also: **Babel**, Chaldea, **Judah**, Nebuchadnezzar)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 9:1**
- **2 Kings 17:24-26**
- **Acts 7:43**
- **Daniel 1:2**
- **Ezekiel 12:13**
- **Matthew 1:11**
- **Matthew 1:17**

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **20:6** About 100 years after the Assyrians destroyed the kingdom of Israel, God sent Nebuchadnezzar, king of the **Babylonians**, to attack the kingdom of Judah. **Babylon** was a powerful empire.
- **20:7** But after a few years, the king of Judah rebelled against **Babylon**. So, the **Babylonians** came back and attacked the kingdom of Judah. They captured the city of Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple, and took away all the treasures of the city and the Temple.
- **20:9** Nebuchadnezzar and his army took almost all of the people of the kingdom of Judah to **Babylon**, leaving only the poorest people behind to plant the fields.

- 20:11 About seventy years later, Cyrus, the king of the Persians, defeated **Babylon**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3778, H3779, H8152, H0894, H0895, H0896, G08970

Nehemiah References:

7:6; 13:6

Balaam

Definition:

Balaam was a pagan prophet whom King Balak hired to curse Israel while they were camped at the Jordan River in northern Moab, preparing to enter the land of Canaan.

- Balaam was from the city of Pethor, which was located in the region around the Euphrates River, about 400 miles away from the land of Moab.
- The Midianite king, Balak, was afraid of the strength and numbers of the Israelites, so he hired Balaam to curse them.
- As Balaam was traveling toward Israel, an angel of God stood in his path so that Balaam's donkey stopped. God also gave the donkey the ability to speak to Balaam.
- God did not allow Balaam to curse the Israelites and commanded him to bless them instead.
- Later however, Balaam still brought evil on the Israelites when he influenced them to worship the false god Baal-peor.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: bless, Canaan, curse, donkey, Euphrates River, **Jordan River**, **Midian**, Moab, **Peor**)

Bible References:

- **2 Peter 2:16**
- **Deuteronomy 23:3-4**
- **Joshua 13:22-23**
- **Numbers 22:5**
- **Revelation 2:14**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1109, G09030

Nehemiah References:

13:2

Baruch

Definition:

Baruch is the name of several men in the Old Testament.

- One Baruch (son of Zabbai) worked with Nehemiah to repair the walls of Jerusalem.
- Also during the time of Nehemiah, another Baruch (son of Kol-Hozeh) was one of the leaders who settled in Jerusalem after its walls were restored.
- A different Baruch (son of Neriah) was an assistant to the prophet Jeremiah, who helped him with various practical tasks such as writing down the messages God gave to Jeremiah and then reading them to the people.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **disciple**, Jeremiah, Jerusalem, Nehemiah, prophet)

Bible References:

- **Jeremiah 32:12**
- **Jeremiah 36:4**
- **Jeremiah 43:1-3**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1263

Nehemiah References:

3:20; 10:6; 11:5

Bashan

Definition:

Bashan was a region of land east of the Sea of Galilee. It covered an area that is now part of Syria and the Golan Heights.

- An Old Testament city of refuge called "Golan" was located in the region of Bashan.
- Bashan was a very fertile region known for its oak trees and pasturing animals.
- Genesis 14 records that Bashan was the site of a war between several kings and their nations.
- During Israel's wanderings in the desert after their escape from Egypt, they took possession of part of the region of Bashan.
- Years later, King Solomon obtained supplies from that region.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Egypt, oak, Sea of Galilee, Syria)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 4:13
- Amos 4:1
- Jeremiah 22:20-21
- Joshua 9:10

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1316

Nehemiah References:

9:22

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

Nehemiah References:

9:37

bear, bears, bore, borne, bearer, bearing, carry

Definition:

Used in this sense, the term “bear” means to carry something.

- To “bear a burden” means to carry something heavy.
- The term “burden bearers” refers to men who carry heavy things and could be translated as “burden carriers” or “carriers.”
- The term “armor bearer” could be translated as “armor carrier.”
- The phrase “bearer of news” could be translated as “carrier of news.”
- Depending on context, this term could be translated as “carry” or “bring.”

(See also: strength)

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5375

Nehemiah References:

4:10; 4:17

Beersheba

Definition:

In Old Testament times, Beersheba was a city located about 45 miles southwest of Jerusalem in a desert area that is now called the Negev.

- The desert surrounding Beersheba was the wilderness area where Hagar and Ishmael wandered after Abraham sent them away from his tents.
- The name of this city means “well of the oath.” It was given this name when Abraham swore an oath to not punish King Abimelech’s men for seizing control of one of Abraham’s wells.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Abimelech, Abraham, Hagar, Ishmael, Jerusalem, oath)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 3:20
- 2 Samuel 17:11
- Genesis 21:14
- Genesis 21:31
- Genesis 46:1
- Nehemiah 11:30

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0884

Nehemiah References:

11:27; 11:30

beloved

Definition:

The term “beloved” is an expression of affection that describes someone who is loved and dear to someone else.

- The term “beloved” literally means “loved (one)” or “(who is) loved.”
- God refers to Jesus as his “beloved Son.”
- In their letters to Christian churches, the apostles frequently address their fellow believers as “beloved.”

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated as “loved” or “loved one” or “well-loved,” or “very dear.”
- In the context of talking about a close friend, this could be translated as “my dear friend” or “my close friend.” In English it is natural to say “my dear friend, Paul” or “Paul, who is my dear friend.” Other languages may find it more natural to order this in a different way.
- Note that the word “beloved” comes from the word for God’s love, which is unconditional, unselfish, and sacrificial.

(See also: love)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 4:14
- 1 John 3:2
- 1 John 4:7
- Mark 1:11
- Mark 12:6
- Revelation 20:9
- Romans 16:8
- Song of Songs 1:14

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0157, H1730, H2532, H3033, H3039, H4261, G00250, G00270, G52070

Nehemiah References:

13:26

Benjamin, Benjaminite

Definition:

Benjamin was Jacob's twelfth son. He was Rachel's second son. His descendants became one of the tribes of Israel.

- The tribe descended from him was known as the "tribe of Benjamin" or "Benjamin" or the "Benjaminites."
- In Hebrew, the name Benjamin means "son of my right hand."
- The tribe of Benjamin settled just northwest of the Dead Sea, north of Jerusalem.
- King Saul was from the tribe of Benjamin.
- The apostle Paul was from the tribe of Benjamin.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **twelve tribes of Israel**, **Jacob**, **Rachel**)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 2:1-2**
- **1 Kings 2:8**
- **Acts 13:21-22**
- **Genesis 35:18**
- **Genesis 42:4**
- **Genesis 42:35-36**
- **Philippians 3:4-5**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1144, G09580

Nehemiah References:

11:4; 11:7; 11:31; 11:36; 12:34

Bethel

Definition:

Bethel was a city located just north of Jerusalem in the land of Canaan. It was formerly called "Luz." "Bethel" means "house of God."

- After receiving God's promises for the first time, Abram (Abraham) built an altar to God near Bethel. The actual name of the city was not yet Bethel at that time, but it was usually referred to as "Bethel," which was better known.
- When fleeing from his brother Esau, Jacob stayed overnight near this city and slept outdoors on the ground there. While he was sleeping, he had a dream showing angels going up and down a ladder to heaven. After that, he set up a monument there and named the place "Bethel."
- This city did not have the name "Bethel" until after Jacob named it that. To make this clear, some translations may translate it as "Luz (later called Bethel)" in the passages about Abraham, as well as when Jacob first arrives there (before he changed the name).
- When Israel separated from Judah, Jereboam I set up a golden calf in Bethel so that the people in the northern kingdom would worship there rather than go to the temple in Jerusalem.
- Bethel then became a center of idol worship, and the prophets Amos and Hosea strongly criticise the place for that. Hosea refers to it by the derogatory name, "Beth Aven," which means, "house of evil."

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Abraham, altar, Jacob, Jerusalem)

Bible References:

- Genesis 12:8-9
- Genesis 35:1
- Judges 1:23
- 1 Kings 12:29-33
- Hosea 10:15

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1008

Nehemiah References:

7:32; 11:31

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

Nehemiah References:

7:26

blasphemy, blaspheme, blasphemous

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “blasphemy” refers to speaking in a way that shows a deep disrespect for God or people. To “blaspheme” someone is to speak against that person so that others think something false or bad about him.

- Most often, to blaspheme God means to slander or insult him by saying things that are not true about him or by behaving in an immoral way that dishonors him.
- It is blasphemy for a human being to claim to be God or to claim that there is a God other than the one true God.
- Some English versions translate this term as “slander” when it refers to blaspheming people.

Translation Suggestions:

- To “blaspheme” can be translated as to “say evil things against” or to “dishonor God” or to “slander.”
- Ways to translate “blasphemy” could include “speaking wrongly about others” or “slander” or “spreading false rumors.”

(See also: **dishonor**, **slander**)

Bible References:

- **1 Timothy 1:12-14**
- **Acts 6:11**
- **Acts 26:9-11**
- **James 2:5-7**
- **John 10:32-33**
- **Luke 12:10**
- **Mark 14:64**
- **Matthew 12:31**
- **Matthew 26:65**
- **Psalms 74:10**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1288, H1442, H2778, H5006, H5007, H5344, G09870, G09880, G09890

Nehemiah References:

9:18; 9:26

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

Nehemiah References:

8:6; 9:intro; 9:5; 11:2; 13:2

blot out, wipe out

Definition:

The terms “blot out” and “wipe out” are expressions that mean to completely remove or destroy something or someone.

- These expressions can be used in a positive sense, as when God “blots out” sins by forgiving them and choosing not to remember them.
- It is also often used in a negative sense, as when God “blots out” or “wipes out” a people group, destroying them because of their sin.
- The Bible talks about a person’s name being “blotted out” or “wiped out” of God’s Book of Life, which means that the person will not receive eternal life.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, these expressions could be translated as “get rid of” or “remove” or “completely destroy” or “completely remove.”
- When referring to blotting someone’s name out of the Book of Life, this could be translated as “removed from” or “erased.”

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 29:20
- Exodus 32:30-32
- Genesis 7:23
- Psalm 51:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4229, H8045, G18130

Nehemiah References:

4:5; 13:14

bow and arrow, a bow

Definition:

This is a type of weapon that consists of shooting arrows from a stringed bow. In Bible times it was used for fighting against enemies and for killing animals for food.

- The bow is made out of wood, bone, metal, or other hard material, such as a deer's antler. It has a curved shape and is strung tightly with a string, cord, or vine. When not in use the bow string would not be attached to both ends of the bow so that the bow was not under the pressure of being bent all the time. When preparing to fight a warrior would bend the bow and attach the string to both ends.
- An arrow is a thin shaft with a sharp, pointed head on one end. In ancient times, the arrows could be made of a variety of materials such as wood, bone, stone, or metal.
- Bows and arrows are commonly used by hunters and warriors.
- The term "arrow" is also sometimes used figuratively in the Bible to refer to enemy attacks or divine judgment.

Bible References:

- Genesis 21:16
- Habakkuk 3:9-10
- Job 29:20-22
- Lamentations 2:4
- Psalms 58:6-8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2671, H7198, G51150

Nehemiah References:

4:13; 4:16

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

Nehemiah References:

8:6

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

Nehemiah References:

5:14; 5:15; 5:18; 9:15; 10:33; 13:2

breastplate, breastpiece

Definition:

The term “breastplate” refers to a piece of armor covering the front of the chest to protect a soldier during battle. The term “breastpiece” refers to a special piece of clothing that the Israelite high priest wore over the front part of his chest.

- A “breastplate” used by a soldier could be made of wood, metal, or animal skin. It was made to prevent arrows, spears, or swords from piercing the chest of the soldier.
- The “breastpiece” worn by the Israelite high priest was made of cloth and had valuable gems attached to it. The priest wore this when he was performing his duties of service to God in the temple.
- Other ways to translate the term “breastplate” could include “metal protective chest covering” or “armor piece protecting the chest.”
- The term “breastpiece” could be translated with a word that means “priestly clothing covering the chest” or “priestly garment piece” or “front piece of priest’s clothing.”

(See also: armor, high priest, pierce, priest, temple, warrior)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:8
- Exodus 39:14-16
- Isaiah 59:17
- Revelation 9:7-9

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2833, H8302, G23820

Nehemiah References:

4:16

burnt offering, offering by fire

Definition:

A “burnt offering” was a type of sacrifice to God that was burnt up by fire on an altar. It was offered to make atonement for the sins of the people. This was also called an “offering by fire.”

- Animals used for this offering were usually sheep or goats, but oxen and birds were also used.
- Except for the skin, the entire animal was burned up in this offering. The skin or hide was given to the priest.
- God commanded the Jewish people to offer burnt offerings two times every day.

(See also: altar, atonement, ox, priest, sacrifice)

Bible References:

- Exodus 40:5-7
- Genesis 8:20
- Genesis 22:1-3
- Leviticus 3:5
- Mark 12:33

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0801, H5930, H7133, H8548, G36460

Nehemiah References:

10:33

call, called

Definition:

The term “call,” in this sense, means to summon a person or being.

- Often in the Bible, “call” has a meaning of “summon” or “command to come” or “request to come.”
- Depending on context the phrase “call upon” can be translated as “summon” or “request help from” or “request to come.”
- God calls people to come to him and be his people. This is their “calling.”
- When God “calls” people, it means that God has appointed or chosen people to be his children, to be his servants and proclaimers of his message of salvation through Jesus.
- The expression, “I have called you by name” means that God has specifically chosen that person.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “call” could be translated by a word that means “summon,” which includes the idea of being intentional or purposeful in calling.
- When the Bible says that God has “called” us to be his servants, this could be translated as “specially chose us” or “appointed us” to be his servants.
- The expression “your calling” could be translated as “your purpose” or “God’s purpose for you” or “God’s special work for you.”
- When God says, “I have called you by name,” this could be translated as “I know you and have chosen you.”
- To “call on the name of the Lord” could be translated as “seek the Lord and depend on him” or “trust in the Lord and obey him.”
- To “call for” something could be translated by “demand” or “ask for” or “command.”

(See also: call to speak loudly, call name)

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7121, G25640, G28210, G43410, G47790, G54550

Nehemiah References:

5:12

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

Nehemiah References:

7:63

call, called, call out, called out

Definition:

The terms “call” and “call out,” in this sense, mean to speak loudly.

- To “call out” to someone means to shout, to announce, or to proclaim. It can also mean to ask someone for help, especially God.
- In some contexts the terms “call” and “call out” mean to loudly ask for help.

Translation Suggestions:

- The expression “call out to you” could be translated as “ask you for help” or “pray to you urgently.”
- To “call out” could be translated as “say loudly” or “shout” or “say with a loud voice.” Make sure the translation of this does not sound like the person is angry.

(See also: pray, cry, call to summon, call name)

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0559, H2199, H4744, H6817, H7121, H7123, H7769, H7773, G01540, G03630, G14580, G15280, G19410, G19510, G20280, G20460, G25640, G28210, G28220, G28400, G29190, G30040, G31060, G33330, G33430, G36030, G36860, G36870, G43160, G43410, G43770, G47790, G48670, G54550, G55370, G55810

Nehemiah References:

6:7

camel

Definition:

A camel is a large, four legged animal with one or two humps on its back. (See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

- In Bible times, the camel was the largest animal found in Israel and the surrounding regions.
- The camel was used mainly for carrying people and burdens.
- Some people groups also used camels for food but not the Israelites because God said that camels were unclean and were not to be eaten.
- Camels were valuable because they could move swiftly in the sand and could live without food and water for several weeks at a time.

(See also: burden, clean)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 5:21
- 2 Chronicles 9:1-2
- Exodus 9:1-4
- Mark 10:25
- Matthew 3:4
- Matthew 19:23-24

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1581, G25740

Nehemiah References:

7:69

Canaan, Canaanite

Definition:

Canaan was the son of Ham, who was one of Noah's sons. The Canaanites were the descendants of Canaan.

- The term "Canaan" or the "land of Canaan" also referred to an area of land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. It extended south to the border of Egypt and north to the border of Syria.
- This land was inhabited by the Canaanites, as well as several other people groups.
- God promised to give the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants, the Israelites.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Ham, Promised Land)

Bible References:

- Acts 13:19-20
- Exodus 3:7-8
- Genesis 9:18
- Genesis 10:19-20
- Genesis 13:7
- Genesis 47:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 4:5 He (Abram) took his wife, Sarai, together with all his servants and everything he owned and went to the land God showed him, the land of **Canaan**.
- 4:6 When Abram arrived in **Canaan** God said, "Look all around you. I will give to you and your descendants all the land that you can see as an inheritance."
- 4:9 "I give the land of **Canaan** to your descendants."
- 5:3 "I will give you and your descendants the land of **Canaan** as their possession and I will be their God forever."
- 7:8 After twenty years away from his home in **Canaan**, Jacob returned there with his family, his servants, and all his herds of animals.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3667, H3669, G54780

Nehemiah References:

9:8; 9:24

captive, captivate, captivity, catch

Definition:

The terms “captive” and “captivity” refer to people who have been captured and forced to live somewhere they do not want to live, such as in a foreign country.

- The Israelites from the kingdom of Judah were held captive in the kingdom of Babylonia for 70 years.
- Captives are often required to work for the people or nation that captured them.
- Daniel and Nehemiah were Israelite captives who worked for the Babylonian king.
- The expression to “take captive” is another way of talking about capturing someone.
- The expression, “carry you away captive” could also be translated as “force you to live as captives” or “take you away to another country as prisoners.”
- In a figurative sense, the apostle Paul tells Christians to “take captive” every thought and make it obedient to Christ.
- He also talks about how a person can be “taken captive” by sin, which means he is “controlled by” sin.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, to be “held captive” could also be translated by, “not allowed to be free” or “kept in prison” or “forced to live in a foreign country.”
- The expression, “led captive” or “taken captive” could be translated as “captured” or “imprisoned” or “forced to go to a foreign land.”
- The term “captives” could also be translated as “people who were captured” or “enslaved people.”
- Depending on the context, “captivity” could also be translated as “imprisonment” or “exile” or “forced stay in a foreign country.”

(See also: Babylon, exile, **prison**, seize)

Bible References:

- **2 Corinthians 10:5**
- **Isaiah 20:4**
- **Jeremiah 43:3**
- **Luke 4:18**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1123, H1473, H1540, H1546, H1547, H7617, H7622, H7628, H7633, H7686, G01610, G01620, G01630, G01640, G22210

Nehemiah References:

1:2; 1:3; 4:4; 7:6; 8:17

cast out, driving out, throw out

Definition:

To “cast out” or “drive out” someone or something means to force that person or thing to go away.

- The term “cast” means the same thing as “throw.” To cast a net means to throw the net into the water.
- In a figurative sense, “cast out” or “cast away” someone can mean to reject that person and send him away.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this could include, “force out” or “send away” or “get rid of.”
- To “cast out demons” could be translated as “cause the demons to leave” or “drive the evil spirits out” or “expel the demons” or “command the demon to come out.”
- To “cast out” someone from a synagog or church could be translated as “banish them” or “put them out.”

(See also: **demon**, **demon-possessed**, lots)

Bible References:

- **Acts 7:17-19**
- **Mark 3:13-16**
- **Mark 9:29**
- **Matthew 7:21-23**
- **Matthew 9:32-34**
- **Matthew 12:24**
- **Matthew 17:19-21**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1272, H1644, H1920, H3423, H7971, H7993, G15440

Nehemiah References:

13:8

Chaldea, Chaldean

Definition:

Chaldea was a region in the southern part of Mesopotamia or Babylonia. The people who lived in this region were called Chaldeans.

- The city of Ur, where Abraham was from, was located in Chaldea. It is often referred to as "Ur of the Chaldeans."
- King Nebuchadnezzar was one of several Chaldeans who became kings over Babylonia.
- After many years, around 600 BC, the term "Chaldean" came to mean "Babylonian."
- In the book of Daniel, the term "Chaldean" also refers to a special class of men who were highly educated and studied the stars.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Abraham, Babylon, Shinar, Ur)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:4-5
- Ezekiel 1:1
- Genesis 11:27-28
- Genesis 11:31-32
- Genesis 15:6-8
- Isaiah 13:19

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3679, H3778, H3779, G54660

Nehemiah References:

9:7

chief, leader

Definition:

The term “chief” refers to the most powerful or most important leader of a particular group.

- Examples of this include, “chief musician,” “chief priest,” and “chief tax collector.” and “chief ruler.”
- It can also be used for the head of a specific family, as in Genesis 36 where certain men are named as “chiefs” of their family clans. In this context, the term “chief” could also be translated as “leader” or “head father.”
- When used to describe a noun, this term could be translated as “leading” or “ruling,” as in “leading musician” or “ruling priest.”

(See also: head, chief priests, priest, tax collector)

Bible References:

- Daniel 1:11-13
- Ezekiel 26:15-16
- Luke 19:2
- Psalm 4:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0047, H0441, H5057, H5387, H5632, H6496, H7218, H7225, H7227, H7229, H7262, H8269, H8334, G07490, G07500, G07540, G44100, G44130, G55060

Nehemiah References:

9:38; 11:1; 11:11

chosen, choose, chosen people, Chosen One, elect

Definition:

The term “the elect” literally means “chosen ones” or “chosen people” and refers to those whom God has appointed or selected to be his people. “Chosen One” or “Chosen One of God” is a title that refers to Jesus, who is the chosen Messiah.

- The term “choose” means to select something or someone or to decide something. It is often used to refer to God appointing people to belong to him and to serve him.
- To be “chosen” means to be “selected” or “appointed” to be or do something.
- God chose people to be holy, to be set apart by him for the purpose of bearing good spiritual fruit. That is why they are called “the chosen (ones)” or “the elect.”
- The term “chosen one” is sometimes used in the Bible to refer to certain people such as Moses and King David whom God had appointed as leaders over his people. It is also used to refer to the nation of Israel as God’s chosen people.
- The phrase “the elect” is an older term that literally means “the chosen ones” or “the chosen people.” This phrase in the original language is plural when referring to believers in Christ.
- In older English Bible versions, the term “elect” is used in both the Old and New Testaments to translate the word for “chosen one(s).” More modern versions use “elect” only in the New Testament, to refer to people who have been saved by God through faith in Jesus. Elsewhere in the Bible text, they translate this word more literally as “chosen ones.”

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate “elect” with a word or phrase that means “chosen ones” or “chosen people.” This could also be translated as “people whom God chose” or “the ones God appointed to be his people.”
- The phrase “who were chosen” could also be translated as “who were appointed” or “who were selected” or “whom God chose.”
- “I chose you” could be translated as “I appointed you” or “I selected you.”
- In reference to Jesus, “Chosen One” could also be translated as “God’s chosen One” or “God’s specially appointed Messiah” or “the One God appointed (to save people).”

(See also: appoint, Christ)

Bible References:

- 2 John 1:1

- **Colossians 3:12**
- **Ephesians 1:3-4**
- **Isaiah 65:22-23**
- **Luke 18:7**
- **Matthew 24:19-22**
- **Romans 8:33**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0970, H0972, H0977, H1262, H1305, H4005, H6901, G01380, G01400, G15860, G15880, G15890, G19510, G37240, G44000, G44010, G47580, G48990, G55000

Nehemiah References:

1:9

cistern, well

Definition:

The terms “well” and “cistern” refer to two different kinds of sources for water in Bible times.

- A well is a deep hole dug into the ground so that underground water can flow into it.
- A cistern is a deep hole dug into rock that was used as a holding tank for collecting rain water.
- Cisterns were usually dug into rock and sealed with plaster to keep the water in. A “broken cistern” happened when the plaster became cracked so that the water leaked out.
- Cisterns were often located in the courtyard area of people’s homes to catch the rainwater that would run off the roof.
- Wells were often located where they could be accessed by several families or a whole community.
- Because water was very important for both people and livestock, the right to use a well was often a cause of strife and conflict.
- Both wells and cisterns were usually covered with a large stone to prevent anything falling in it. Often there was a rope with a bucket or pot attached to it to bring the water up to the surface.
- Sometimes a dry cistern was used as a place to imprison someone, such as happened to Joseph and Jeremiah.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “well” could include “deep water hole” or “deep hole for spring water” or “deep hole for drawing water.”
- The term “cistern” could be translated as “stone water pit” or “deep and narrow pit for water” or “underground tank for holding water.”
- These terms are similar in meaning. The main difference is that a well continually receives water from underground springs, whereas a cistern is a holding tank for water that usually comes from rain.

(See also: Jeremiah, **prison** 🔗, **strife** 🔗)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 11:17** 🔗
- **2 Samuel 17:17-18** 🔗
- **Genesis 16:14** 🔗

- Luke 14:4-6
- Numbers 20:17

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0875, H0883, H0953, H1360, H4599, H4726, H4841, G40770, G54210

Nehemiah References:

9:25

city of David

Definition:

The term “city of David” is another name for both Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

- Jerusalem is where David lived while he ruled Israel.
- Bethlehem is where David was born.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: David, Bethlehem, Jerusalem)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 8:1-2
- 2 Samuel 5:6-7
- Isaiah 22:8-9
- Luke 2:4
- Nehemiah 3:14-15

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1732, H5892, G11380, G41720

Nehemiah References:

3:15; 12:37

column, pillar

Definition:

The term “pillar” usually refers to a large vertical structure that is used to hold up a roof or other part of a building. Another word for “pillar” is “column.”

- In Bible times, pillars used as support in buildings were normally carved from a single piece of stone.
- When Samson in the Old Testament was captured by the Philistines, he destroyed their pagan temple by pushing the supporting pillars and causing the temple to collapse.
- The word “pillar” sometimes refers to a large stone or boulder that is set up as a memorial to mark a grave or to mark the place where an important event happened.
- It can also refer to an idol that was made to worship a false god. It is another name for a “carved image” and could be translated as “statue.”
- The term “pillar” is used to refer to something that is shaped like a pillar, such as the “pillar of fire” that led the Israelites at night through the desert or the “pillar of salt” that Lot’s wife became after she looked back at the city.
- As a structure supporting a building, the term “pillar” or “column” could be translated as “upright stone support beam” or “supporting stone structure.”
- Other uses of “pillar” could be translated as “statue” or “pile” or “mound” or “monument” or “tall mass,” depending on the context.

(See also: foundation, false god, image)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 18:4
- Exodus 13:21
- Exodus 33:9
- Genesis 31:45
- Proverbs 9:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0352, H0547, H2106, H2553, H3730, H4552, H4676, H4678, H4690, H5324, H5333, H5982, H8490, G47690

Nehemiah References:

9:12; 9:19

compassion, compassionate

Definition:

The term “compassion” refers to a feeling of concern for people, especially for those who are suffering. A “compassionate” person cares about other people and helps them.

- The word “compassion” refers to caring about people in need, as well as taking action to help them.
- The Bible says that God is compassionate, that is, he is full of love and mercy.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways of translating “compassion” could include, “deep caring” or “pity” or “helpful mercy.”
- The term “compassionate” could also be translated as “caring and helpful” or “deeply loving and merciful.”

Bible References:

- Daniel 1:8-10
- Hosea 13:14
- James 5:9-11
- Jonah 4:1-3
- Mark 1:41
- Romans 9:14-16

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2550, H7349, H7355, H7356, G16530, G33560, G36270, G46970, G48340, G48350

Nehemiah References:

9:17

confess, confession

Definition:

To confess means to admit or assert that something is true. A “confession” is a statement or admission that something is true.

- The term “confess” can refer to boldly stating the truth about God. It can also refer to admitting that we have sinned.
- The Bible says that if people confess their sins to God, he will forgive them.
- James the apostle wrote in his letter that when believers confess their sins to each other, this brings spiritual healing.
- The apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians that someday everyone will confess or declare that Jesus is Lord.
- Paul also said that if people confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead, they will be saved.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “confess” could include, “admit” or “testify” or “declare” or “acknowledge” or “affirm.”
- Different ways to translate “confession” could be, “declaration” or “testimony” or “statement about what we believe” or “admitting sin.”

(See also: **faith**, testimony)

Bible References:

- **1 John 1:8-10**
- **2 John 1:7-8**
- **James 5:16**
- **Leviticus 5:5-6**
- **Matthew 3:4-6**
- Nehemiah 1:6-7
- **Philippians 2:9-11**
- **Psalms 38:17-18**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3034, H8426, G18430, G36700, G36710

Nehemiah References:

1:6; 9:intro; 9:2; 9:3

consecrate, consecrated, consecration

Definition:

To consecrate means to dedicate something or someone to serve God. The person or object that is consecrated is considered holy and set apart for God.

- The meaning of this term is similar to “sanctify” or to “make holy,” but with the added meaning of formally setting apart someone for service to God.
- Things that were consecrated to God included animals to be sacrificed, the altar of burnt offering, and the tabernacle.
- People who were consecrated to God included the priests, the people of Israel, and the oldest male child.
- Sometimes the word “consecrate” has a meaning that is similar to “purify,” especially when it pertains to preparing people or things for God’s service so that they will be cleansed and acceptable to him.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “consecrate” could include, “set apart for God’s service” or “purify for service to God.”
- Also consider how the terms “holy” and “sanctify” are translated.

(See also: holy, pure, sanctify)

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 4:3-5
- 2 Chronicles 13:8-9
- Ezekiel 44:19

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2763, H3027, H4390, H4394, H5144, H5145, H6942, H6944, G14570, G50480

Nehemiah References:

3:1; 12:47; 13:22

consume, devour

Definition:

The term “consume” literally means to use up something. It has several figurative meanings.

- In the Bible, the word “consume” often refers to destroying things or people.
- A fire is said to consume things, which means it destroys them by burning them up.
- God is described as a “consuming fire,” which is a description of his anger against sin. His anger results in terrible punishment for sinners who do not repent.
- To consume food means to eat or drink something.
- The phrase, “consume the land” could be translated as “destroy the land.”

Translation Suggestions

- In the context of consuming the land or people, this term could be translated as “destroy.”
- When fire is referred to, “consume” could be translated as “burn up.”
- The burning bush that Moses saw “was not consumed” which could be translated as “did not get burned up” or “did not burn up.”
- When referring to eating, “consume” could be translated as “eat” or “devour.”
- If someone’s strength is “consumed,” it means his strength is “used up” or “gone.”
- The expression, “God is a consuming fire” could be translated as “God is like a fire that burns things up” or “God is angry against sin and will destroy sinners like a fire.”

(See also: devour, wrath)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 18:38-40
- Deuteronomy 7:16
- Jeremiah 3:23-25
- Job 7:9
- Numbers 11:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0398, H0402, H1086, H1104, H1197, H2628, H3615, H3617, H3857, H4529, H5595, H8046, H8552, G03550, G26180, G26540, G27190, G53150

Nehemiah References:

2:3; 2:13

contempt, contemptible, not worth listening to

Definition:

The term “contempt” refers to a deep disrespect and dishonor that is shown toward something or someone. Something that is greatly dishonorable is called “contemptible.”

- A person or behavior that shows open disrespect for God is also called “contemptible” and could be translated as “greatly disrespectful” or “completely dishonorable” or “deserving scorn.”
- To “hold in contempt” means to regard someone as having less value or to judge someone as less worthy than oneself.
- The following expressions have a similar meaning: “have contempt for” or “show contempt for” or “be in contempt of” or “treat with contempt.” These all mean to “strongly disrespect” or “strongly dishonor” something or someone by what is said and done.
- When King David sinned by committing adultery and murder, God said that David had “shown contempt for” God. It means he had greatly disrespected and dishonored God by doing that.

(See also: **dishonor**)

Bible References:

- **Daniel 12:1-2**
- **Proverbs 15:5-6**
- **Psalms 31:18**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0936, H0937, H0959, H0963, H1860, H7043, H7589, H5006, G18480

Nehemiah References:

4:4

corrupt, corrupted, corruption, incorruptibility, depraved

Definition:

The terms “corrupt” and “corruption” refer to a state of affairs in which people have become ruined, immoral, or dishonest.

- The term “corrupt” literally means to be “bent” or “broken” morally.
- A person who is corrupt has turned away from truth and is doing things that are dishonest or immoral.
- To corrupt someone means to influence that person to do dishonest and immoral things.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term to “corrupt” could be translated as to “influence to do evil” or to “cause to be immoral.”
- A corrupt person could be described as a person “who has become immoral” or “who practices evil.”
- This term could also be translated as “bad” or “immoral” or “evil.”
- The term “corruption” could be translated as “the practice of evil” or “evil” or “immorality.”

(See also: evil)

Bible References:

- Ezekiel 20:42-44
- Galatians 6:6-8
- Genesis 6:12
- Matthew 12:33-35
- Psalm 14:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2610, H3891, H4889, H7843, H7844, G08610, G13110, G27040, G53510, G53560

Nehemiah References:

1:7

court, courtyard

Definition:

The terms “court” and “courtyard” refer to an enclosed area that is open to the sky and surrounded by walls.

- The tabernacle was surrounded by one courtyard which was enclosed by walls made of thick, cloth curtains.
- The temple complex had three inner courtyards: one for the priests, one for Jewish men, and one for Jewish women.
- These inner courtyards were surrounded by a low stone wall that separated them from an outer courtyard where Gentiles were permitted to worship.
- The king’s court can refer to the physical location where legal and political matters were handled. It can also refer to the people who supported the king and carried out his decrees.
- The courtyard of a house was an open area in the middle of the house.

Translation Suggestions:

- The terms “court” and “courtyard” could be translated as “enclosed space” or “walled-in land” or “walled-in space” or “tabernacle grounds” or “temple grounds” or “temple enclosure” depending on the context.
- If it would be natural in your language the term used for a king’s court could also be used to refer to Yahweh’s court.

(See also: Gentile,tabernacle, temple)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 20:4-5
- Exodus 27:9
- Jeremiah 19:14-15
- Luke 22:55
- Matthew 26:69-70
- Numbers 3:26
- Psalms 65:4

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1004, H1508, H2691, H5835, H7339, H8651, G08330, G42590

Nehemiah References:

3:25; 8:16; 13:7

covenant

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “covenant” refers to a formal, binding agreement between two parties that one or both parties must fulfill.

- This agreement can be between individuals, between groups of people, or between God and people.
- When people make a covenant with each other, they promise that they will do something, and they must do it.
- Examples of human covenants include marriage covenants, business agreements, and treaties between countries.
- Throughout the Bible, God made several different covenants with his people.
- In some of the covenants, God promised to fulfill his part without conditions. For example, when God established his covenant with mankind promising to never destroy the earth again with a worldwide flood, this promise had no conditions for people to fulfill.
- In other covenants, God promised to fulfill his part only if the people obeyed him and fulfilled their part of the covenant.

The term “new covenant” refers to the commitment or agreement God made with his people through the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus.

- God’s “new covenant” was explained in the part of the Bible called the “New Testament.”
- This new covenant is in contrast to the “old” or “former” covenant that God had made with the Israelites in Old Testament times.
- The new covenant is better than the old one because it is based on the sacrifice of Jesus, which completely atoned for people’s sins forever. The sacrifices made under the old covenant did not do this.
- God writes the new covenant on the hearts those who become believers in Jesus. This causes them to want to obey God and to begin to live holy lives.
- The new covenant will be completely fulfilled in the end times when God establishes his reign on earth. Everything will once again be very good, as it was when God first created the world.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate this term could include, “binding agreement” or “formal commitment” or “pledge” or “contract.”

- Some languages may have different words for covenant depending on whether one party or both parties have made a promise they must keep. If the covenant is one-sided, it could be translated as “promise” or “pledge.”
- Make sure the translation of this term does not sound like people proposed the covenant. In all cases of covenants between God and people, it was God who initiated the covenant.
- The term “new covenant” could be translated as “new formal agreement” or “new pact” or “new contract.”
- The word “new” in these expressions has the meaning of “fresh” or “new kind of” or “another.”

(See also: covenant, promise)

Bible References:

- Genesis 9:12
- Genesis 17:7
- Genesis 31:44
- Exodus 34:10-11
- Joshua 24:24-26
- 2 Samuel 23:5
- 2 Kings 18:11-12
- Mark 14:24
- Luke 1:73
- Luke 22:20
- Acts 7:8
- 1 Corinthians 11:25-26
- 2 Corinthians 3:6
- Galatians 3:17-18
- Hebrews 12:24

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 4:9 Then God made a **covenant** with Abram. A **covenant** is an agreement between two parties.
- 5:4 "I will make Ishmael a great nation, too, but my **covenant** will be with Isaac."
- 6:4 After a long time, Abraham died and all of the promises that God had made to him in the **covenant** were passed on to Isaac.
- 7:10 "The **covenant** promises God had promised to Abraham and then to Isaac now passed on to Jacob."
- 13:2 God said to Moses and the people of Israel, "If you will obey my voice and keep my **covenant**, you will be my prized possession, a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."
- 13:4 Then God gave them the **covenant** and said, "I am Yahweh, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship other gods."
- 15:13 Then Joshua reminded the people of their obligation to obey the **covenant** that God had made with the Israelites at Sinai.
- 21:5 Through the prophet Jeremiah, God promised that he would make a **New Covenant**, but not like the covenant God made with Israel at Sinai. In the **New Covenant**, God would write his law on the people's hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would forgive their sins. The Messiah would start the **New Covenant**.
- 21:14 Through the Messiah's death and resurrection, God would accomplish his plan to save sinners and start the **New Covenant**.
- 38:5 Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the **New Covenant** that is poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Do this to remember me every time you drink it."
- 48:11 But God has now made a **New Covenant** that is available to everyone. Because of this **New Covenant**, anyone from any people group can become part of God's people by believing in Jesus.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1285, H2319, H3772, G08020, G12420, G49340

Nehemiah References:

1:5; 9:8; 9:32; 9:38; 13:29

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

Nehemiah References:

1:5; 9:17; 9:32; 13:22

cow, bull, calf, cattle, heifer, ox

Definition:

The terms “cow,” “bull,” “heifer,” “ox,” and “cattle” all refer to a kind of large, four-legged bovine animal that eats grass.

- The female of this kind of animal is called a “cow,” the male is a “bull,” and their offspring is a “calf.”
- In the Bible, cattle were among the “clean” animals that the people could eat and use for sacrifice. They were primarily raised for their meat and milk.

A “heifer” is an adult female cow that has not yet given birth to a calf.

An “ox” is a type of cattle that is specifically trained to do agricultural work. The plural of this term is “oxen.” Usually oxen are male and have been castrated.

- Throughout the Bible, oxen were depicted as animals tied together by a yoke to pull a cart or a plow.
- Having oxen work together under a yoke was such a common occurrence in the Bible that the phrase to “be under a yoke” became a metaphor for hard work and labor.
- A bull is also a male type of cattle, but it has not been castrated and has not been trained as a work animal.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: yoke)

Bible References:

- Genesis 15:9-11
- Exodus 24:5-6
- Numbers 19:1-2
- Deuteronomy 21:3-4
- 1 Samuel 1:24-25
- 1 Samuel 15:3
- 1 Samuel 16:2-3
- 1 Kings 1:9

- **2 Chronicles 11:15**
- **2 Chronicles 15:10-11**
- **Matthew 22:4**
- **Luke 13:15**
- **Luke 14:5**
- **Hebrews 9:13**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0047, H0441, H0504, H0929, H1165, H1241, H4399, H4735, H4806, H5695, H5697, H6499, H6510, H6629, H7214, H7716, H7794, H7921, H8377, H8450, G10160, G11510, G23530, G29340, G34470, G34480, G41650, G50220

Nehemiah References:

5:18; 9:18

cry, cry out, outcry

Definition:

The terms “cry” or “cry out” usually mean to say something loudly or urgently. Someone can “cry out” in pain, distress, anger, or fear, often with the intent of asking for help.

- The phrase “cry out” can mean to shout or to call out with the intent of asking for help.
- The terms “cry” or “cry out” can also mean to pray.
- This term could also be translated as “exclaim loudly” or “urgently ask for help,” depending on the context.
- An expression such as, “I cry out to you” could be translated as “I call to you for help” or “I urgently ask you for help.”

(See also: call speak loudly, plead, pray)

Bible References:

- Job 27:9
- Mark 5:5-6
- Mark 6:48-50
- Psalm 22:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1058, H2199, H2201, H6030, H6463, H6670, H6682, H6817, H6818, H6873, H6963, H7121, H7123, H7321, H7440, H7442, H7723, H7737, H7768, H7771, H7775, H8663, G03100, G03490, G08630, G09940, G09950, G19160, G20190, G27990, G28050, G28960, G29050, G29060, G29290, G43770, G54550

Nehemiah References:

5:1; 5:6; 9:4; 9:9; 9:27; 9:28

cupbearer

Definition:

In Old Testament times, a “cupbearer” was a king’s servant who was given the task of bringing the king his cup of wine, usually tasting the wine first to make sure it had not been poisoned.

- In English, the term cupbearer literally means “cup bringer” or “someone who brings the cup.”
- A cupbearer was known for being very trustworthy and loyal to his king.
- Because of his trusted position, a cupbearer would often have influence in the decisions the ruler made.
- Nehemiah was the cupbearer for King Artaxerxes of Persia during the time when some of the Israelites were in captivity in Babylon.

(See also: Artaxerxes, Babylon, captive, Persia, Pharaoh)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 10:3-5
- Nehemiah 1:11

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H8248

Nehemiah References:

1:11

curse, cursed, cursing

Definition:

The term “curse” means to cause negative things to happen to the person or thing that is being cursed.

- A curse can be a statement that harm will happen to someone or something.
- To curse someone can also be an expression of desire that bad things will happen to them.
- It can also refer to the punishment or other negative things that someone causes to happen to someone.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated as “cause bad things to happen to” or “declare that something bad will happen to” or “swear to cause evil things to happen to.”
- In the context of God sending curses on his disobedient people, it could be translated as “punish by allowing bad things to happen.”
- The term “cursed” when used to describe people could be translated as “(this person) will experience much trouble.”
- The phrase “cursed be” could be translated as “May (this person) experience great difficulties.”
- The phrase, “Cursed is the ground” could be translated as “The soil will not be very fertile.”
- However, if the target language has the phrase “cursed be” and it has the same meaning, then it is good to keep the same phrase.

(See also: bless)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 14:24-26
- 2 Peter 2:12-14
- Galatians 3:10
- Galatians 3:14
- Genesis 3:14
- Genesis 3:17
- James 3:10

- Numbers 22:6
- Psalms 109:28

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 2:9 God said to the snake, “You are **cursed**!”
- 2:11 “Now the ground is **cursed**, and you will need to work hard to grow food.”
- 4:4 “I will bless those who bless you and **curse** those who **curse** you.”
- 39:7 Then Peter vowed, saying, “May God **curse** me if I know this man!”
- 50:16 Because Adam and Eve disobeyed God and brought sin into this world, God **cursed** it and decided to destroy it.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0422, H0423, H0779, H1288, H2763, H2764, H3994, H5344, H6895, H7043, H7045, H7621, H8381, G03310, G03320, G06850, G19440, G25510, G26520, G26530, G26710, G26720, G60350

Nehemiah References:

10:29; 13:2; 13:25

Daniel

Definition:

Daniel was an Israelite prophet who as a young man was taken captive by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar around 600 BC.

- This was during the time that many other Israelites from Judah were held captive in Babylon for 70 years.
- Daniel was given the Babylonian name Belteshazzar.
- Daniel was an honorable and righteous young man who obeyed God.
- God enabled Daniel to interpret several dreams or visions for the Babylonian kings.
- Because of this ability and because of his honorable character, Daniel was given a high leadership position in the Babylonian empire.
- Many years later, Daniels enemies tricked the Babylonian king Darius into making a law forbidding the worship of anyone except the king. Daniel continued to pray to God, so he was arrested and thrown into a den of lions. But God rescued him and he was not harmed at all.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar)

Bible References:

- Daniel 1:6-7
- Daniel 5:29
- Daniel 7:28
- Ezekiel 14:12-14
- Matthew 24:15

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1840, H1841, G11580

Nehemiah References:

10:6

Darius

Definition:

Darius was the name of several kings of Persia. It is possible that “Darius” was a title rather than a name.

- “Darius the Mede” was the king who was tricked into having the prophet Daniel thrown into a lion’s den as punishment for worshiping God.
- “Darius the Persian” helped facilitate the reconstruction of the temple in Jerusalem during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Persia, Babylon, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah)

Bible References:

- Ezra 4:4-6
- Haggai 1:1
- Nehemiah 12:22
- Zechariah 1:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1867, H1868

Nehemiah References:

12:22

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

Nehemiah References:

3:16; 12:24; 12:36; 12:45; 12:46

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

Nehemiah References:

1:4; 1:6; 2:11; 4:2; 4:9; 4:16; 4:22; 5:14; 5:18; 6:15; 6:17; 8:2; 8:3; 8:13; 8:17; 8:18; 9:1; 9:3; 9:10; 9:12; 9:19; 9:32; 10:31; 11:23; 12:7; 12:12; 12:22; 12:23; 12:26; 12:43; 12:44; 12:46; 12:47; 13:1; 13:6; 13:15; 13:17; 13:19; 13:22; 13:23

declare, proclaim, announce

Definition:

The terms “declare” and “declaration” refer to making a formal or public statement, often to emphasize something. Other terms with similar meaning include “proclaim,” “proclamation,” “announce,” and “announcement.”

- A “declaration” not only emphasizes the importance of what is being proclaimed, but it also calls attention to the one making the declaration.
- For example, in the Old Testament, a message from God is often preceded by “the declaration of Yahweh” or “this is what Yahweh declares.” This expression emphasizes that it is Yahweh himself who is saying this. The fact that the message comes from Yahweh shows how important that message is.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “declare” could also be translated as “proclaim” or “publicly state” or “strongly say” or “emphatically state.”
- The term “declaration” could also be translated as “statement” or “proclamation.”
- The phrase “this is Yahweh’s declaration” could be translated as “this is what Yahweh declares” or “this is what Yahweh says.”

(See also: **preach**, **decree**)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 16:24**
- **1 Corinthians 15:31-32**
- **1 Samuel 24:17-18**
- **Amos 2:16**
- **Ezekiel 5:11-12**
- **Matthew 7:21-23**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0262, H0559, H0816, H0874, H1696, H3045, H4853, H5002, H5042, H5046, H5608, H6567, H7121, H7561, H7878, H8085, G03120, G05180, G06690, G12290, G13440, G15550, G17180, G18340, G20970, G25110, G26050, G26070, G31400, G36700, G37240, G38220, G38700, G39550, G42960

Nehemiah References:

2:18

dedicate, dedication, established, devoted

Definition:

To dedicate is to set apart or commit something for a special purpose or function.

- David dedicated his gold and silver to the Lord.
- Often the word “dedication” refers to a formal event or ceremony to set apart something for a special purpose.
- The dedication of the altar included offering a sacrifice to God.
- Nehemiah led the Israelites in a dedication of Jerusalem’s repaired walls with a renewed promise to serve only Yahweh and to take care of his city. This event included giving thanks to God with musical instruments and singing.
- The term “dedicate” could also be translated as “specially assign a special purpose” or “commit something to be used for a specific use” or “commit someone to do a special task.”
- The terms “devote” and “devoted” often refer to something that is completely destroyed as a way of dedicating it to Yahweh.

(See also: commit)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 15:11-12
- 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
- 1 Kings 7:51
- 1 Timothy 4:5
- 2 Chronicles 2:4-5
- John 17:18-19
- Luke 2:22-24

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2596, H2597, H2598, H2764, H4394, H6942, H6944, G14560, G14570

Nehemiah References:

12:27

defile, defiled, desecrate

Definition:

The terms “defile” and “be defiled” refer to becoming polluted or dirty. Something can be defiled in a physical, moral, or ritual sense.

- God warned the Israelites to not defile themselves by eating or touching things that he had declared as “unclean” and “unholy.”
- Certain things such as dead bodies and contagious diseases were declared by God to be unclean and would defile a person if they touched them.
- God commanded the Israelites to avoid sexual sins. These would defile them and make them unacceptable to God.
- There were also certain kinds of bodily processes that defiled a person temporarily until he could become ritually pure again.
- In the New Testament, Jesus taught that sinful thoughts and actions are what truly defile a person.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “defile” can also be translated as “cause to be unclean” or “cause to be unrighteous” or “cause to be ritually unacceptable.”
- To “be defiled” could be translated as “become unclean” or “be caused to be morally unacceptable (to God)” or “become ritually unacceptable.”

(See also: profane, clean)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 23:8
- Exodus 20:24-26
- Genesis 34:27
- Genesis 49:4
- Isaiah 43:27-28
- Leviticus 11:43-45
- Mark 7:14-16
- Matthew 15:10

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1351, H1352, H1602, H2490, H2491, H2610, H2930, H2931, G28390, G28400, G33920, G34350

Nehemiah References:

13:29

delight

Definition:

The term “delight” means great pleasure or great joy.

- To “delight in” something means to “to take pleasure in” or “take joy in” or “be happy about” it. If a person “delights in” something, it means that he enjoys it very much.
- When something is very agreeable or pleasing it is called “delightful.”
- The expression “my delight is in the law of Yahweh” could be translated as “the law of Yahweh gives me great joy” or “I love to obey the laws of Yahweh” or “I am happy when I obey Yahweh’s commands.”
- The phrases “take no delight in” and “have no delight in” could be translated as “not at all pleased by” or “not happy about.”
- The phrase “delight himself in” means “he enjoys doing” something or “he is very happy about” something or someone.
- The term “delights” refers to things that a person enjoys. This could be translated as “pleasures” or “things that give joy.”
- An expression such as “I delight to do your will” could also be translated as “I enjoy doing your will” or “I am very happy when I obey you.”

Bible References:

- Proverbs 8:30
- Psalm 1:2
- Psalms 119:69-70
- Song of Songs 1:3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1523, H2530, H2531, H2532, H2654, H2655, H2656, H2836, H4574, H5276, H5727, H5730, H6026, H6027, H7306, H7381, H7521, H7522, H8057, H8173, H8191, H8588, H8597

Nehemiah References:

1:11

deliver, deliverer, deliverance, delivered

Definition:

To “deliver” someone means to rescue that person. The term “deliverer” refers to someone who rescues or frees people from slavery, oppression, or other dangers. The term “deliverance” refers to what happens when someone rescues or frees people from slavery, oppression, or other dangers.

- In the Old Testament, God appointed deliverers to protect the Israelites by leading them in battle against other people groups who came to attack them.
- These deliverers were also called “judges” and the Old Testament book of Judges records the time in history when these judges were governing Israel.
- God is also called a “deliverer.” Throughout the history of Israel, he delivered or rescued his people from their enemies.

Translation Suggestions:

- In the context of helping people escape from their enemies, the term “deliver” can be translated as “rescue” or “liberate” or “save.”
- When the term “deliverer” refers to the judges who led Israel, it could also be translated as “judge” or “leader.”

(See also: judge, save)

Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 1:10
- Acts 7:35
- Galatians 1:4
- Judges 10:12

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 16:3 Then God provided a **deliverer** who rescued them from their enemies and brought peace to the land.
- 16:16 They (Israel) finally asked God for help again, and God sent them another **deliverer**.

- 16:17 Over many years, God sent many **deliverers** who saved the Israelites from their enemies.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1350, H2020, H2502, H3205, H3444, H3467, H4042, H4422, H4672, H5337, H5414, H5462, H6299, H6403, H6413, H6475, H6561, H7725, H7804, H8199, G03250, G05250, G06290, G10800, G13250, G15600, G16590, G18070, G19290, G26730, G30860, G38600, G45060, G49910, G50880, G54830

Nehemiah References:

9:28

desecrate, desecrated

Definition:

The term “desecrate” means to damage or contaminate a sacred place or object in such a way that it is unacceptable for use in worship.

- Often desecrating something involves showing great disrespect for it.
- For example, pagan kings desecrated special dishes from God’s temple by using them for parties at their palace.
- Bones from dead people were used by enemies to desecrate the altar in God’s temple.
- This term could be translated as “cause to be unholy” or “dishonor by making impure” or “disrespectfully profane” or “cause to be impure.”

(See also: altar, defile, dishonor, profane, pure, temple, holy)

Bible References:

- Acts 24:4-6
- Isaiah 30:22
- Psalms 74:7-8
- Psalms 89:39

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2490, H2610, H2930, G09530

Nehemiah References:

7:64

desert, wilderness

Definition:

A desert, or wilderness, is a dry, barren place where very few plants and trees can grow.

- A desert is a land area with a dry climate and few plants or animals.
- Because of the harsh conditions, very few people can live in the desert, so it is also referred to as “wilderness.”
- “Wilderness” conveys the meaning of being remote, desolate and isolated from people.
- This word can also be translated as “deserted place” or “remote place” or “uninhabited place.”

Bible References:

- Acts 13:16-18
- Acts 21:38
- Exodus 4:27-28
- Genesis 37:21-22
- John 3:14
- Luke 1:80
- Luke 9:12-14
- Mark 1:3
- Matthew 4:1
- Matthew 11:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0776, H2723, H3293, H3452, H4057, H6160, H6723, H6728, H6921, H8047, H8414, G20470, G20480

Nehemiah References:

9:19; 9:21

desolate, desolated, desolation, deserted, desolator

Definition:

The terms “desolate” and “desolation,” when used to refer to a place or location, refer to the state or condition of being ruined and left fully or partially uninhabited. The term “desolate,” when referring to a person or group of people, describes a state or condition of ruin, loneliness, and grief.

- If a field where crops are growing is made desolate, it means that something has destroyed the crops, such as insects or an invading army.
- A “desolate region” refers to an area of land that is partially deserted or abandoned and therefore has few people living there.
- If a city is “made desolate” it means that its buildings and goods have been destroyed or stolen, and its people have been killed or captured. The city becomes “empty” and “ruined.” This is similar to the meaning of “devastate” or “devastated,” but with more emphasis on the emptiness.
- A “desolate land” or “wilderness” was often where outcasts (such as lepers) and dangerous animals lived.
- Depending on the context, this term, when referring to a city or region, could be translated as “ruined” or “destroyed” or “laid waste” or “abandoned” or “deserted.”
- Depending on the context, this term, when referring to a person or people group, could be translated as “lonely and outcast” or “deserted.”
- A “desolator” is one who causes desolation.

(See also: desert, **devastate**, **ruin**, **waste**)

Bible References:

- **2 Kings 22:19**
- **Acts 1:20**
- **Daniel 9:17-19**
- **Lamentations 3:11**
- **Luke 11:17**
- **Matthew 12:25**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0490, H0816, H0910, H1565, H2717, H2720, H2721, H2723, H3173, H3341, H3456, H3582, H4875, H4923, H5352, H5800, H7582, H7701, H7722, H8047, H8074, H8076, H8077, G20480, G20490, G20500, G34430

Nehemiah References:

2:3; 2:17

destroy, destruction, annihilate

Definition:

The term “destroy” means to completely make an end to something, so that it no longer exists.

- The term “destroyer” means “a person who destroys.”
- This term is often used in the Old Testament as a general reference to anyone who destroys other people, such as an invading army.
- When God sent the angel to kill all the firstborn males in Egypt, that angel was referred to as “the destroyer of the firstborn.” This could be translated as “the one (or angel) who killed the firstborn males.”
- In the book of Revelation about the end times, Satan or some other evil spirit is called “the Destroyer.” He is the “one who destroys” because his purpose is to destroy and ruin everything God created.

(See also: angel, Egypt, firstborn, Passover)

Bible References:

- Exodus 12:23
- Hebrews 11:28
- Jeremiah 6:26
- Judges 16:24

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0006, H0007, H0622, H0398, H1104, H1197, H1820, H1826, H1942, H2000, H2015, H2026, H2040, H2254, H2255, H2717, H2718, H2763, H2764, H3238, H3341, H3381, H3423, H3582, H3615, H3617, H3772, H3807, H4191, H4229, H4591, H4658, H4889, H5218, H5221, H5307, H5362, H5420, H5422, H5428, H5595, H5642, H6365, H6789, H6979, H7665, H7667, H7703, H7722, H7760, H7843, H7921, H8045, H8074, H8077, H8316, H8552, G03550, G03960, G06220, G08530, G13110, G18420, G20490, G25060, G25070, G26470, G26730, G27040, G30890, G36450, G41990, G53510, G53560

Nehemiah References:

9:31

disperse, dispersion, scatter, distributed

Definition:

The terms “disperse” and “dispersion” refer to the scattering of people or things into many different directions.

- In the Old Testament, God talks about “dispersing” people, causing them to have to separate and live in different places apart from each other. He did this to punish them for their sin. Perhaps being dispersed would help them repent and start worshiping God again.
- The term “dispersion” is used in the New Testament to refer to Christians who had to leave their homes and move to many different locations to escape persecution.
- The phrase “the dispersion” could be translated as “believers in many different places” or “the people who moved away to live in different nations.”
- The term “disperse” could be translated as “send away into many different places” or “scatter abroad” or “cause to move away to live in different countries.”

(See also: believe, persecute, captive, exile)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 1:1
- Ezekiel 12:15
- Ezekiel 30:23
- Psalms 18:14

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2219, H5310, H6327, H6340, H6504, H8600, G12870, G12900, G46500

Nehemiah References:

1:8

donkey, mule

Definition:

A donkey is a four-legged work animal, similar to a horse, but smaller and with longer ears.

- A mule is the sterile offspring of a male donkey and a female horse.
- Mules are very strong animals and so they are valuable work animals.
- Both donkeys and mules are used for carrying burdens and people when traveling.
- In Bible times, kings would ride a donkey in times of peace, rather than a horse, which was used for times of war.
- Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a young donkey a week before he was crucified there.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 1:32-34
- 1 Samuel 9:4
- 2 Kings 4:21-22
- Deuteronomy 5:12-14
- Luke 13:15
- Matthew 21:2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0860, H2543, H3222, H5895, H6167, H6501, H6505, H6506, G36780, G36880, G52680

Nehemiah References:

7:68; 7:69; 13:15

dung, manure

Definition:

The term “dung” refers to human or animal solid waste, and is also called feces or excrement.

When used as fertilizer for enriching the soil, it is called “manure.”

- These terms can also be used figuratively to refer to something that is worthless or not important.
- Dried animal dung is often used for fuel.
- The expression “like dung on the ground” could be translated as “be scattered like worthless dung over the land.”
- The “Dung Gate” in the South Wall of Jerusalem was probably the gate where garbage and trash were taken out of the city.

(See also: gate)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 14:10
- 2 Kings 6:25
- Isaiah 25:10
- Jeremiah 8:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0830, H1119, H1557, H1561, H1686, H1828, H6569, H6675, G28740

Nehemiah References:

2:13; 3:13; 3:14; 12:31

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

Nehemiah References:

5:14; 9:6; 9:8; 9:10; 9:15; 9:22; 9:23; 9:24; 9:30; 9:35; 9:36; 10:28; 10:30; 10:31

Egypt, Egyptian

Definition:

Egypt is a country in the northeast part of Africa, to the southwest of the land of Canaan. An Egyptian is a person who is from the country of Egypt.

- In ancient times, Egypt was a powerful and wealthy country.
- Ancient Egypt was divided into two parts, Lower Egypt (northern part where the Nile River flowed downward into the sea) and Upper Egypt (southern part). In the Old Testament, these parts are referred to as “Egypt” and “Pathros” in the original language text.
- Several times when there was little food in Canaan, Israel’s patriarchs traveled to Egypt to buy food for their families.
- For several hundred years, the Israelites were slaves in Egypt.
- Joseph and Mary went down to Egypt with the young child Jesus, to escape from Herod the Great.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **Herod the Great**, **Joseph (NT)**, **Nile River**, **patriarchs**)

Bible References:

- **1 Samuel 4:7-9**
- **Acts 7:10**
- **Exodus 3:7**
- **Genesis 41:29**
- **Genesis 41:57**
- **Matthew 2:15**

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **8:4** The slave traders took Joseph to **Egypt**. **Egypt** was a large, powerful country located along the Nile River.
- **8:8** Pharaoh was so impressed with Joseph that he appointed him to be the second most powerful man in all of **Egypt**!
- **8:11** So Jacob sent his older sons to __Egypt __ to buy food.

- 8:14 Even though Jacob was an old man, he moved to **Egypt** with all of his family, and they all lived there.
- 9:1 After Joseph died, all of his relatives stayed in **Egypt**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4713, H4714, G01240, G01250

Nehemiah References:

9:9; 9:18

Elam, Elamites

Definition:

Elam was a son of Shem and a grandson of Noah.

- The descendants of Elam were called “Elamites,” and they lived in a region that was also called “Elam.”
- The region of Elam was located southeast of the Tigris River in what is now western Iran.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Noah, Shem)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 1:17-19
- Acts 2:9
- Ezra 8:4-7
- Isaiah 22:6

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5867, H5962, G16390

Nehemiah References:

7:12; 7:34; 10:14; 12:42

Eleazar

Definition:

Eleazar was the name of several men in the Bible.

1. Eleazar was the third son of Moses' brother Aaron. After Aaron died, Eleazar became the high priest in Israel.
2. Eleazar was also the name of one of David's "mighty men."
3. Another Eleazar was one of Jesus' ancestors.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Aaron, high priest, David, mighty)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 24:3
- Judges 20:27-28
- Numbers 26:1-2
- Numbers 34:16-18

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0499, G16480

Nehemiah References:

12:42

Eliakim

Definition:

Eliakim was the name of two men in the Old Testament.

- One man named Eliakim was the manager of the palace under King Hezekiah.
- Another man named Eliakim was a son of King Josiah. He was made king of Judah by the Egyptian pharaoh Necho.
- Necho changed Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Hezekiah, **Jehoiakim**, **Josiah**, Pharaoh)

Bible References:

- **2 Kings 18:18**
- **2 Kings 18:26**
- **2 Kings 18:37**
- **2 Kings 23:34-35**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0471, G16620

Nehemiah References:

12:41

enslave, slave, bondservant, bondage, bound, bond, bonds, young man, young men, young woman, young women

Short Title: enslave, slave, bondservant, bondage, bond

Definition:

To "enslave" someone means to force that person to serve a master or a ruling country. To be "enslaved" or "in bondage" means to be under the control of something or someone. A "slave" refers to a person who works for (or obeys) another person, either by choice or by force. A slave was under the direction of their master. In the Bible, "servant" and "slave" are mostly interchangeable terms.

- A person who is enslaved or in bondage must serve others without payment; he is not free to do what he wants. Another word for "bondage" is "slavery."
- The New Testament speaks of human beings as "enslaved" to sin until Jesus frees them from its control and power. When a person receives new life in Christ, he stops being a slave to sin and becomes a slave to righteousness.
- In the Bible the words "young man" or "young woman" often mean "servant" or "slave." This meaning will be discerned from context. One indicator of this situation is if the possessive is used, eg. "her young women" which could be translated as "her servants" or "her slaves."

Translation Suggestions:

- The term "enslave" could be translated as "cause to not be free" or "force to serve" or "put under the control of."
- The phrase "enslaved to" or "in bondage to" could be translated as "forced to be a slave of" or "forced to serve" or "put under the control of."
- A slave was a kind of servant who was the property of the person he worked for. The person who bought a slave was called his "owner" or "master." Some masters treated their slaves cruelly. Other masters treated their slaves well, like a valued member of the household. The term "slavery" means the state of being a slave.
- A person could be a slave temporarily, for instance while working to repay a debt to his owner.

(See also: free, righteous, servant)

Bible References:

- Galatians 4:3

- Galatians 4:24-25
- Genesis 15:13
- Jeremiah 30:8

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 8:4 The **slave** traders sold Joseph as a **slave** to a wealthy government official.
- 9:13 "I (God) will send you (Moses) to Pharaoh so that you can bring the Israelites out of their **slavery** in Egypt."
- 29:3 "Since the **servant** could not pay the debt, the king said, 'Sell this man and his family as **slaves** to make payment on his debt.'"

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3533, H5647, G13980, G14020, G26150

Nehemiah References:

5:5; 5:18

Ephraim, Ephraimite

Definition:

Ephraim was the younger son of Joseph. His descendants, the Ephraimites, formed one of the tribes of Israel.

- The name Ephraim sounds like the Hebrew word meaning “to make fruitful.”
- The tribe of Ephraim was one of the ten tribes located in the northern part of Israel.
- Sometimes the name Ephraim is used in the Bible to refer to the whole northern kingdom of Israel (similar to how the name Judah is sometimes used to refer to the whole southern kingdom of Israel).

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **Joseph**, **Manasseh**, **kingdom of Israel**, **twelve tribes of Israel**)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 6:66-69**
- **2 Chronicles 13:4-5**
- **Ezekiel 37:16**
- **Genesis 41:52**
- **Genesis 48:1-2**
- **John 11:54**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0669, H0673, G21870

Nehemiah References:

8:16; 12:39

eternity, everlasting, eternal, forever

Definition:

The terms “everlasting” and “eternal” have very similar meanings and refer to something that will always exist or that lasts forever.

- The term “eternity” refers to a state of being that has no beginning or end. It can also refer to life that never ends.
- After this present life on earth, humans will spend eternity either in heaven with God or in hell apart from God.
- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” are used in the New Testament to refer to living forever with God in heaven.

The term “forever” refers to never-ending time.

- The phrase “forever and ever” has the idea of time that never ends and expresses what eternity or eternal life is like. It emphasizes that something will always happen or exist. It refers to time that never ends.
- God said that David’s throne would last “forever.” This is referred to the fact that David’s descendant Jesus will reign as king forever.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “eternal” or “everlasting” could include “unending” or “never stopping” or “always continuing.”
- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” could also be translated as “life that never ends” or “life that continues without stopping” or “the raising up of our bodies to live forever.”
- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “eternity” could include “existing outside of time” or “unending life” or “life in heaven.”
- Also consider how this word is translated in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See: How to Translate Unknowns)
- “Forever” could also be translated by “always” or “never ending.”

- The phrase “will last forever” could also be translated as “always exist” or “will never stop” or “will always continue.”
- The emphatic phrase “forever and ever” could also be translated as “for always and always” or “not ever ending” or “which never, ever ends.”
- David’s throne lasting forever could be translated as “David’s descendant will reign forever” or “a descendant of David will always be reigning.”

(See also: David, reign, life)

Bible References:

- Genesis 17:8
- Genesis 48:4
- Exodus 15:17
- 2 Samuel 3:28-30
- 1 Kings 2:32-33
- Job 4:20-21
- Psalms 21:4
- Isaiah 9:6-7
- Isaiah 40:27-28
- Daniel 7:18
- Luke 18:18
- Acts 13:46
- Romans 5:21
- Hebrews 6:19-20
- Hebrews 10:11-14
- 1 John 1:2
- 1 John 5:12
- Revelation 1:4-6
- Revelation 22:3-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 27:1 One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit **eternal life**?”
- 28:1 One day, a rich young ruler came up to Jesus and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to have **eternal life**?” Jesus said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only One who is good, and that is God. But if you want to have **eternal life**, obey God’s laws.”
- 28:10 Jesus answered, “Everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or property for my name’s sake, will receive 100 times more and will also receive **eternal life**.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3117, H4481, H5331, H5703, H5705, H5769, H5865, H5957, H6924, G01260, G01650, G01660, G13360

Nehemiah References:

2:3; 9:5; 13:1

Euphrates River, the River

Definition:

The Euphrates is the name of one of the four rivers that flowed through the Garden of Eden. It is the river that is most often mentioned in the Bible.

- The modern day river named Euphrates is located in the Middle East and is the longest and most important river in Asia.
- Together with the Tigris River, the Euphrates borders a region of land known as Mesopotamia.
- The ancient city of Ur where Abraham came from was at the mouth of the Euphrates River.
- This river was one of the boundaries of the land that God promised to give to Abraham (Genesis 15:18).
- Sometimes the Euphrates is simply called “the River.”

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 5:7-9
- 2 Chronicles 9:25-26
- Exodus 23:30-33
- Genesis 2:13-14
- Isaiah 7:20

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5104, H6578, G21660

Nehemiah References:

2:7; 2:9; 3:7

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

Nehemiah References:

1:3; 2:10; 2:17; 6:2; 6:13; 9:28; 9:33; 9:35; 13:7; 13:8; 13:17; 13:18; 13:27

ewe, ram, sheep, sheepfold, sheepshearer, sheepskin

Definition:

A “sheep” is a medium-sized animal with four legs that has wool all over its body. A male sheep is called a “ram.” A female sheep is called a “ewe.” The plural of “sheep” is also “sheep.”

- A baby sheep is called a “lamb.”
- The Israelites often used sheep for sacrifices, especially male sheep and young sheep.
- People eat meat from sheep and use their wool to make clothing and other things.
- Sheep are very trusting, weak, and timid. They are easily influenced to wander away. They need a shepherd to lead them, protect them, and provide them with food, water, and shelter.
- In the Bible, people are compared to sheep who have God as their shepherd.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: Israel, **lamb**, sacrifice, **shepherd**)

Bible References:

- **Acts 8:32**
- **Genesis 30:32**
- **John 2:14**
- **Luke 15:5**
- **Mark 6:34**
- **Matthew 9:36**
- **Matthew 10:6**
- **Matthew 12:12**
- **Matthew 25:33**

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **9:12** One day while Moses was taking care of his **sheep**, he saw a bush that was on fire.

- 17:2 David was a shepherd from the town of Bethlehem. At different times while he was watching his father's **sheep**, David had killed both a lion and a bear that had attacked the **sheep**.
- 30:3 To Jesus, these people were like **sheep** without a shepherd.
- 38:8 Jesus said, "All of you will all abandon me tonight. It is written, 'I will strike the shepherd and all the **sheep** will be scattered.'"

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0352, H1494, H1798, H2169, H3104, H3532, H3535, H3733, H3775, H5739, H5763, H6260, H6629, H6792, H7353, H7462, H7716, G41650, G42620, G42630

Nehemiah References:

3:1; 3:32; 5:18; 12:39

exalt, exalted, exaltation

Definition:

To exalt is to highly praise and honor someone. It can also mean to put someone in a high position.

- In the Bible, the term “exalt” is most often used for exalting God.
- When a person exalts himself, it means he is thinking about himself in a proud or arrogant way.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “exalt” could include “highly praise” or “honor greatly” or “extol” or “speak highly of.”
- In some contexts it could be translated by a word or phrase that means “put in a higher position” or “give more honor to” or “talk about proudly.”
- “Do not exalt yourself” could also be translated as “Do not think of yourself too highly” or “Do not brag about yourself.”
- “Those that exalt themselves” could also be translated as “Those who think proudly about themselves” or “Those who boast about themselves.”

(See also: praise, worship, glory, boast, proud)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 5:5-7
- 2 Samuel 22:47
- Acts 5:31
- Philippians 2:9-11
- Psalms 18:46

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1361, H4984, H5375, H5549, H5927, H7311, H7426, H7682, G18690, G52290, G52510, G53110, G53120

Nehemiah References:

9:5

exile, exiled

Definition:

The term “exile” refers to people being forced to live somewhere away from their home country.

- People are usually sent into exile for punishment or for political reasons.
- A conquered people may be taken into exile to the country of the conquering army, in order to work for them.
- The “Babylonian exile” (or “the exile”) is a period in Bible history when many Jewish citizens of the region of Judah were taken from their homes and forced to live in Babylon. It lasted 70 years.
- The phrase “the exiles” refers to people who are living in exile, away from their home country.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term to “exile” could also be translated as to “send away” or to “force out” or to “banish.”
- The term “the exile” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “the sent away time” or “the time of banishment” or “the time of forced absence” or “banishment.”
- Ways to translate “the exiles” could include “the exiled people” or “the people who were banished” or “the people exiled to Babylon.”

(See also: Babylon, Judah)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 24:14
- Daniel 2:25-26
- Ezekiel 1:1-3
- Isaiah 20:4
- Jeremiah 29:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1123, H1473, H1540, H1541, H1546, H1547, H3212, H3318, H5080, H6808, H7617, H7622, H8689, G39270

Nehemiah References:

7:6

Ezra

Definition:

Ezra was an Israelite priest and expert in Jewish law who recorded the history of the Israelites' return to Jerusalem from Babylon where Israel had been held captive for 70 years.

- Ezra recorded this part of Israel's history in the biblical book of Ezra. He may also have written the book of Nehemiah, since these two books had originally been one single book.
- When Ezra returned to Jerusalem he re-established the Law, since the Israelites had stopped obeying the Sabbath laws and had intermarried with women who practiced pagan religions.
- Ezra also helped rebuild the temple, which had been destroyed by the Babylonians when they captured Jerusalem.
- There are two other men named Ezra mentioned in the Old Testament.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Babylon, exile, Jerusalem, law, Nehemiah, temple)

Bible References:

- Ezra 7:6
- Nehemiah 8:1-3
- Nehemiah 12:1

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0250, H5830, H5831

Nehemiah References:

8:1; 8:2; 8:4; 8:5; 8:6; 8:9; 8:13; 12:1; 12:13; 12:26; 12:33; 12:36

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

Nehemiah References:

7:2; 9:8; 9:33; 9:38; 13:13; 13:14

faithless, unfaithful, unfaithfulness

Definition:

The term “faithless” means to not have faith or to not believe.

- This word is used to describe people who do not believe in God. Their lack of belief is seen by the immoral way they act.
- The prophet Jeremiah accused Israel of being faithless and disobedient to God.
- They worshiped idols and followed other ungodly customs of people groups who did not worship or obey God.

The term “unfaithful” describes people who do not do what God has commanded them to do.

The condition or practice of being unfaithful is “unfaithfulness.”

- The people of Israel were called “unfaithful” when they began to worship idols and when they disobeyed God in other ways.
- In marriage, someone who commits adultery is “unfaithful” to his or her spouse.
- God used the term “unfaithfulness” to describe Israel’s disobedient behavior. They were not obeying God or honoring him.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, the term “faithless” could be translated as “unfaithful” or “unbelieving” or “disobedient to God” or “not believing.”
- The term “faithlessness” could be translated as “unbelief” or “unfaithfulness” or “rebellion against God.”
- The phrase “the unfaithful” could be translated as “people who are not faithful (to God)” or “unfaithful people” or “those who disobey God” or “people who rebel against God.”
- In some languages, the term “unfaithful” is related to the word for “unbelief.”

(See also: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **believe**, faithful, **disobey**, **adultery**)

Bible References:

- **Ezekiel 43:6-8**
- **Ezra 9:1-2**
- **Jeremiah 2:19**

- **Proverbs 2:22**
- **Revelation 21:7-8**

Word Data:

- Strong's: G05710

Nehemiah References:

1:8; 13:27

family, household

Definition:

The term “family” refers to a group of people who are related by blood and usually includes a father, mother, and their children. In the Bible, this term sometimes includes other close relatives such as grandparents, grandchildren, uncles and aunts.

- In biblical times, usually the oldest man was the major authority of a family.
- Family could also include servants, concubines, and even foreigners.
- Some languages may have a broader word such as “clan” or “household” that would fit better in contexts where more than just parents and children are being referred to.
- The New Testament often uses terms related to the concept of “family” to refer to the Church, meaning people who believe in Jesus.

(See also: **clan**, **ancestor**, house)

Bible References:

- **1 Kings 8:1-2**
- **1 Samuel 18:18**
- **Exodus 1:21**
- **Joshua 2:12-13**
- **Luke 2:4**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0001, H0251, H0272, H0504, H1004, H1121, H2233, H2859, H2945, H3187, H4138, H4940, H5387, H5712, G10850, G36140, G36240, G39650

Nehemiah References:

1:6; 4:13

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

Nehemiah References:

5:3

fast, fasting

Definition:

The term to “fast” means to stop eating food for a period of time, such as for a day or more. Sometimes it also includes not drinking.

- Fasting can help people to focus on God and pray without being distracted by preparing food and eating.
- Jesus condemned the Jewish religious leaders for fasting for the wrong reasons. They fasted so that others would think they were righteous.
- Sometimes people fast because they are very sad or grieved about something.
- The verb to “fast” can also be translated as to “refrain from eating” or to “not eat.”
- The noun “fast” could be translated as “time of not eating” or “time of abstaining from food.”

(See also: **Jewish leaders**)

Bible References:

- **1 Kings 21:8-10**
- **2 Chronicles 20:3**
- **Acts 13:1-3**
- **Jonah 3:4-5**
- **Luke 5:34**
- **Mark 2:19**
- **Matthew 6:18**
- **Matthew 9:15**

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:1** Immediately after Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit led him out into the wilderness, where he **fasted** for forty days and forty nights.
- **34:8** “‘For example, I **fast** two times every week and I give you ten percent of all the money and goods that I receive.’”

- 46:10 One day, while the Christians at Antioch were **fasting** and praying, the Holy Spirit said to them, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul to do the work I have called them to do.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2908, H5144, H6684, H6685, G35210, G35220

Nehemiah References:

1:4; 9:1

fear, afraid, frighten

Definition:

The terms “fear” often refers to the unpleasant emotion a person feels when experiencing a potential threat to their safety or well-being. In the Bible, however, the term “fear” can also mean an attitude of worship, respect, awe, or obedience toward another person, usually someone powerful such as God or a king.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “fear” can be translated in various ways. Some possibilities include: “be afraid;” “deeply respect,” or “deep respect;” “revere,” or “reverence;” or perhaps “be in awe of.”
- The sentence “The fear of God fell on all of them” might be translated in various ways. Some possibilities include: “Suddenly they all felt a deep awe and respect for God;” or “Immediately, they all felt very amazed and revered God deeply;” or “Right then, they all felt very afraid of God (because of his great power).”
- The phrase “fear Yahweh” could be translated as “reverence Yahweh” or “deeply respect Yahweh.”
- The phrase “fear not” could also be translated as “do not be afraid” or “stop being afraid.”

(See also: awe, Yahweh, Lord, marvel, power)

Bible References:

- 1 John 4:18
- Acts 2:43
- Acts 19:15-17
- Genesis 50:21
- Isaiah 11:3-5
- Job 6:14
- Jonah 1:9
- Luke 12:5
- Matthew 10:28
- Proverbs 10:24-25

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0367, H0926, H1204, H1481, H1672, H1674, H1763, H2119, H2296, H2727, H2729, H2730, H2731, H2844, H2849, H2865, H3016, H3025, H3068, H3372, H3373, H3374, H4032, H4034, H4035, H4116, H4172, H6206, H6342, H6343, H6345, H6427, H7264, H7267, H7297, H7374, H7461, H7493, H8175, G08700, G11670, G11680, G11690, G16300, G17190, G21240, G21250, G29620, G53980, G53990, G54000, G54010

Nehemiah References:

1:5; 1:11; 2:2; 4:14; 5:9; 5:15; 6:9; 6:13; 6:14; 6:16; 6:19; 7:2; 9:32

feast, feasting

Definition:

The term “feast” is a very general term that refers to an event where people gather to celebrate something by eating a large meal together. In biblical times, a feast sometimes lasted for several days or more.

- Often there are special kinds of food that are eaten at a certain feast.
- The religious festivals that God commanded the Jews to celebrate usually included having a feast together. For this reason the festivals are often called “feasts.”
- In biblical times, kings and other rich and powerful people often gave feasts to entertain their family or friends.
- In the story about the lost son, the father had a special feast prepared to celebrate the return of his son.
- The term to “feast” could also be translated as to “eat lavishly” or to “celebrate by eating lots of food” or to “eat a special, large meal.”
- Depending on the context, “feast” could be translated as “celebrating together with a large meal” or “a meal with a lot of food” or “a celebration meal.”

(See also: **festival**, **banquet**)

Bible References:

- **2 Peter 2:12-14**
- **Genesis 26:30**
- **Genesis 29:22**
- **Genesis 40:20**
- **Jude 1:12-13**
- **Luke 2:43**
- **Luke 14:7-9**
- **Matthew 22:1**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0398, H2077, H2282, H3899, H3900, H4150, H4797, H4960, H7646, H8057, H8354, G00260, G10620, G11730, G18590, G21650, G49100

Nehemiah References:

8:14; 8:18

fig

Definition:

A fig is a small, soft, sweet fruit that grows on trees. When ripe, this fruit can be a variety of colors, including brown, yellow, or purple.

- Fig trees can grow 6 meters in height and their large leaves provide pleasant shade. The fruit is about 3-5 centimeters long.
- Adam and Eve used the leaves from fig trees to make clothing for themselves after they had sinned.
- Figs can be eaten raw, cooked, or dried. People also chop them into small pieces and press them into cakes to eat later.
- In Bible times, figs were important as a source of food and income.
- The presence of fruitful fig trees is frequently mentioned in the Bible as a sign of prosperity.
- Several times Jesus used fig trees as an illustration to teach his disciples spiritual truths.

Bible References:

- Habakkuk 3:17
- James 3:12
- Luke 13:7
- Mark 11:14
- Matthew 7:17
- Matthew 21:18

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1061, H1690, H6291, H8384, G36530, G48080, G48100

Nehemiah References:

13:15

firstborn

Definition:

The term “firstborn” refers to an offspring of people or animals that is born first, before the other offspring are born.

- In the Bible, “firstborn” usually refers to the first male offspring that is born.
- In Bible times, the firstborn son was given a place of prominence and twice as much of his family inheritance as the other sons.
- Often it was the firstborn male of an animal that was sacrificed to God.
- This concept can also be used figuratively. For example, the nation of Israel is called God’s firstborn son because God gave it special privileges over other nations.
- Jesus, the Son of God is called God’s firstborn because of his importance and authority over everyone else.

Translation Suggestions:

- When “first-born” occurs in the text alone, it could also be translated as “firstborn male” or “firstborn son,” since that is what is implied. (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)
- Other ways to translate this term could include “the son who was born first” or “the eldest son” or “the number one son.”
- When used figuratively to refer to Jesus, this could be translated with a word or phrase that means “the son who has authority over everything” or “the Son who is first in honor.”
- Caution: Make sure the translation of this term in reference to Jesus does not imply that he was created.

(See also: inherit, sacrifice, son)

Bible References:

- Colossians 1:15
- Genesis 4:3-5
- Genesis 29:26-27
- Genesis 43:33
- Luke 2:6-7
- Revelation 1:5

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1060, H1062, H1067, H1069, G44160, G52070

Nehemiah References:

10:36

firstfruit, firstfruits

Definition:

The term “firstfruits” refers to a portion of the first crop of fruits and vegetables that was reaped during each harvest season.

- The Israelites offered these first fruits to God as a sacrificial offering.
- This term is also used figuratively in the Bible to refer to a firstborn son as being the first fruits of the family. That is, because he was the first son to be born into that family, he was the one who carried on the family name and honor.
- Because Jesus rose from the dead, he is called the “firstfruits” of all believers in him, believers who have died but who will some day come back to life.
- Believers in Jesus are also called the “firstfruits” of all creation, indicating the special privilege and position of those whom Jesus redeemed and called to be his people.

Translation Suggestions:

- The literal use of this term could be translated as “first portion (of crops)” or “first part of the harvest.”
- If possible, the figurative uses should be translated literally, to allow for different meanings in different contexts. This will also show the correlation between the literal meaning and the figurative uses.

(See also: firstborn)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 31:4-5
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13
- Exodus 23:16-17
- James 1:18
- Jeremiah 2:3
- Psalms 105:36

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1061, H6529, H7225, G05360

Nehemiah References:

10:35; 12:44; 13:31

flock, herd

Definition:

In the Bible, “flock” refers to a group of sheep or goats and “herd” refers to a group of cattle or pigs.

- Different languages may have different ways of naming groups of animals or birds.

Translation Suggestions

- Consider what terms are used in your language to refer to different groups of animals, and use the appropriate term for each kind of animal.
- If your language uses the same word to refer to both groups of sheep and cattle, then you may need to say “groups of sheep” where the Bible says only “flocks,” and “groups of cattle” where the Bible says only “herds.” Alternatively, if the Biblical context does not demand differentiation (if the text simply says “flocks and herds,” meaning all their domesticated animals) you may just use the one word once.

(See also: goat, cow, pig, sheep)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 10:28-29
- 2 Chronicles 17:11
- Deuteronomy 14:22-23
- Luke 2:8-9
- Matthew 8:30
- Matthew 26:31

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0951, H1241, H2835, H4029, H4735, H4830, H5349, H5739, H6251, H6629, H7399, H7462, G00340, G41670, G41680

Nehemiah References:

10:36

forgive, forgiven, forgiveness, pardon, pardoned

Definition:

To forgive someone means to not hold a grudge against that person even though they did something hurtful. “Forgiveness” is the act of forgiving someone.

- Forgiving someone often means not punishing that person for something he has done wrong.
- This term can be used figuratively to mean “cancel,” as in the expression “forgive a debt.”
- When people confess their sins, God forgives them based on Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross.
- Jesus taught his disciples to forgive others as he has forgiven them.

The term “pardon” means to forgive and not punish someone for his sin.

- This word has the same meaning as “forgive” but may also include the meaning of a formal decision to not punish someone who is guilty.
- In a court of law, a judge can pardon a person found guilty of a crime.
- Even though we are guilty of sin, Jesus Christ pardoned us from being punished in hell, based on his sacrificial death on the cross.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “forgive” could be translated as “pardon” or “cancel” or “release” or “not hold against” (someone).
- The term “forgiveness” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “practice of not resenting” or “declaring (someone) as not guilty” or “the act of pardoning.”
- If the language has a word for a formal decision to forgive, that word could be used to translate “pardon.”

(See also: **guilt**)

Bible References:

- **Genesis 50:17**
- **Numbers 14:17-19**
- **Deuteronomy 29:20-21**
- **Joshua 24:19-20**

- 2 Kings 5:17-19
- Psalms 25:11
- Psalms 25:17-19
- Isaiah 55:6-7
- Isaiah 40:2
- Luke 5:21
- Acts 8:22
- Ephesians 4:31-32
- Colossians 3:12-14
- 1 John 2:12

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 7:10 But Esau had already **forgiven** Jacob, and they were happy to see each other again.
- 13:15 Then Moses climbed the mountain again and prayed that God would **forgive** the people. God listened to Moses and **forgave** them.
- 17:13 David repented of his sin and God **forgave** him.
- 21:5 In the New Covenant, God would write his law on the people's hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would **forgive** their sins.
- 29:1 One day Peter asked Jesus, "Master, how many times should I **forgive** my brother when he sins against me?"
- 29:8 I **forgave** your debt because you begged me.
- 38:5 Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the **forgiveness** of sins."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5546, H5547, H3722, H5375, H5545, H5547, H7521, G85900, G86300, G54830

Nehemiah References:

9:17

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

Nehemiah References:

5:10; 9:17; 9:19; 9:31; 13:11

fountain, source, spring

Definition:

The terms “fountain” and “spring” usually refer to a large amount of water that flows out naturally from the ground.

- These words are also used figuratively in the Bible to refer to blessings flowing from God or to refer to something that cleanses and purifies.
- In modern times, a fountain is often a manmade object that has water flowing out of it, such as a drinking fountain. Make sure that the translation of this term refers to a natural source of flowing water.
- Compare the translation of this term with how the term “flood” is translated.

(See also: flood)

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 2:17
- Genesis 7:11
- Genesis 8:2
- Genesis 24:13
- Genesis 24:42
- James 3:11

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0953, H1530, H1543, H3222, H4002, H4161, H4456, H4599, H4726, H5033, H5869, H5927, H6524, H6779, H8444, H8666, G02420, G40770

Nehemiah References:

2:13; 2:14; 3:15; 12:37

frankincense

Definition:

Frankincense is a fragrant spice made from tree resin. It is used to make perfumes and incense.

- In Bible times, frankincense was an important spice used to prepare dead bodies for burial.
- This spice is also valuable for its healing and calming qualities.
- When learned men came from an eastern country to visit baby Jesus in Bethlehem, frankincense was one of the three gifts they brought him.

(See also: Bethlehem, learned men)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 9:28-29
- Exodus 30:34-36
- Matthew 2:11-12
- Numbers 5:15

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3828, G30300

Nehemiah References:

13:5

fruit, fruitful, unfruitful

Definition:

The term “fruit” refers to the part of a plant that can be eaten. Something that is “fruitful” produces a lot of fruit. Something that is “unfruitful” does not produce fruit.

- In general, the expression “fruit of” refers to anything that comes from or that is produced by something else. For example, the phrase “the fruit of every tree” refers to the fruit that comes from these trees.
- The expression “fruit of the land” refers generally to everything that the land produces for people to eat. This includes not only fruits such as grapes or dates, but also vegetables, nuts, and grains.

Translation Suggestions:

- When the term “fruit” refers to what a specific plant produces, the specific term for the fruit of that plant can be used, otherwise, use a general word for the edible things that plants produce, if possible. In many languages it may be more natural to use the plural “fruits” whenever it refers to more than one fruit.
- When used literally, the term “fruitful” could be translated as “producing much fruit.”
- The expression “fruit of the land” could also be translated as “food that the land produces” or “food crops that are growing in that region.”
- When used literally, the expression “will be more fruitful” could also be translated as “will produce more fruit.”

(See also: descendant, grain, grape, Holy Spirit, vine, womb)

Bible References:

- Genesis 1:11
- Matthew 7:17

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0004, H1061, H1063, H1069, H2233, H2981, H3581, H3759, H3899, H3978, H4022, H5108, H6509, H6529, H7019, H8393, H8570, G10810, G25900, G25920, G25930, G37030, G50520, G53520

Nehemiah References:

9:36; 10:35; 10:37

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

Nehemiah References:

1:3; 2:3; 2:8; 2:13; 2:14; 2:15; 2:17; 3:1; 3:3; 3:6; 3:13; 3:14; 3:15; 3:26; 3:28; 3:29; 3:31; 3:32; 6:1; 7:1; 7:3; 7:45; 7:73; 8:1; 8:3; 8:16; 10:28; 10:39; 11:19; 12:25; 12:30; 12:31; 12:37; 12:39; 12:45; 12:47; 13:5; 13:19; 13:22

Gibeon, Gibeonite

Definition:

Gibeon was a city that was located about 13 kilometers northwest of Jerusalem. The people living in Gibeon were the Gibeonites.

- When the Gibeonites heard about how the Israelites had destroyed the cities of Jericho and Ai, they were afraid.
- So the Gibeonites came to the leaders of Israel at Gilgal and pretended to be people from a far-away country.
- The Israelite leaders were deceived and made an agreement with the Gibeonites that they would protect them and not destroy them.

(See also: Gilgal, Jericho, Jerusalem)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 8:29
- 1 Kings 3:4-5
- 2 Samuel 2:12-13
- Joshua 9:3-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 15:6 But one of the Canaanite people groups, called the **Gibeonites**, lied to Joshua and said they were from a place far from Canaan.
- 15:7 Sometime later, the kings of another people group in Canaan, the Amorites, heard that the **Gibeonites** had made a peace treaty with the Israelites, so they combined their armies into one large army and attacked **Gibeon**.
- 15:8 So Joshua gathered the Israelite army and they marched all night to reach the **Gibeonites**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1391, H1393

Nehemiah References:

3:7; 7:25

Gilead, Gileadite

Definition:

Gilead was the name of a mountainous region east of the Jordan river where the Israelite tribes of Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh lived.

- This region was also referred to as the "hill country of Gilead" or "Mount Gilead."
- "Gilead" was also the name of several men in the Old Testament. One of these men was the grandson of Manasseh. Another Gilead was the father of Jephthah.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **Gad**, **Jephthah**, **Manasseh**, **Reuben**, **twelve tribes of Israel**)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 2:22**
- **1 Samuel 11:1**
- **Amos 1:3**
- **Deuteronomy 2:36-37**
- **Genesis 31:21**
- **Genesis 37:25-26**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1568, H1569

Nehemiah References:

7:63

Gilgal

Definition:

Gilgal was a town north of Jericho and was the first place that the Israelites camped after crossing the Jordan River to enter Canaan. The word "gilgal" means "circle of stones."

- At Gilgal, Joshua set up twelve stones taken from the dry river bed of the Jordan River that they had just crossed over.
- Gilgal was one of the three places where Samuel judged the people and it was where he made Saul king.
- Gilgal was the city that Elijah and Elisha were leaving as they crossed the Jordan when Elijah was taken up to heaven.
- The prophets Amos and Hosea condemn Gilgal along with Bethel ("Beth-aven") as a place where people sacrificed to idols.
- There were also several other places called "Gilgal" in the Old Testament.
- In the Old Testament, this name almost always occurs as "the gilgal." This may indicate that it was more of a description of a certain kind of place rather than a name.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: **Elijah**, **Elisha**, Jericho, **Jordan River**), Bethel

Bible References:

- **1 Samuel 7:15-17**
- **2 Kings 2:1-2**
- **Hosea 4:15**
- **Judges 2:1**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1537

Nehemiah References:

12:29

gird, girded, wrapped around, tied up, belt, tuck in belt, put belt around

Definition:

The term “gird” means to fasten something around something else. It often refers to using a belt or sash around the waist to keep a robe or tunic in place.

- The common biblical phrase, “gird up the loins” refers to tucking the bottom of a garment into a belt to allow a person to move more freely, usually to do work.
- This phrase can also mean “get ready to work” or to be prepared to do something difficult.
- The expression “gird up the loins” could be translated using an expression in the target language that has the same meaning. Or it could be translated figuratively as “prepare yourself for action” or “get yourself ready.”
- The term “girded with” could be translated as “encircled by” or “wrapped with” or “belted with.”

(See also: loins)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 1:13
- Job 38:3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0640, H0247, H2290, H2296, H8151, G03280, G12410, G40240

Nehemiah References:

4:18

Girgashites

Definition:

The Girgashites were a people group living near the Sea of Galilee in the land of Canaan.

- They were descendants of Ham's son Canaan and so were one of the many people groups who were also known as "Canaanites."
- God promised the Israelites that he would help them defeat the Girgashites and other Canaanite people groups.
- Like all the Canaanite peoples, the Girgashites worshiped false gods and did immoral things as part of that worship.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Canaan, Ham, Noah)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 1:14
- Deuteronomy 7:1
- Genesis 10:16
- Joshua 3:9-11
- Joshua 24:11-12

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1622

Nehemiah References:

9:8

glory, glorious, glorify

Definition:

The term “glory” is a general term for a family of concepts including value, worth, importance, honor, splendor, or majesty. The term “glorify” means to ascribe glory to someone or something, or to show or tell how glorious something or someone is.

- In the Bible, the term “glory” is especially used to describe God, who is more valuable, more worthy, more important, more honorable, more splendid, and more majestic than anyone or anything in the universe. Everything about his character reveals his glory.
- People can glorify God by telling about the wonderful things he has done. They can also glorify God by living in accordance with God’s character, because doing so shows to others his value, worth, importance, honor, splendor, and majesty.
- The expression to “glory in” means to boast about or take pride in something.

Old Testament

- The specific phrase “the glory of Yahweh” in the Old Testament usually refers to some perceptible manifestation of Yahweh’s presence in a particular location.

New Testament

- God the Father will glorify God the Son by revealing to all people the full extent of how glorious Jesus is.
- Everyone who believes in Christ will be glorified with him. This use of the term “glorify” carries a unique meaning. It means that when people who believe in Christ are raised to life, they will be changed physically to be like Jesus as he appeared after his resurrection.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “glory” could include “splendor” or “majesty” or “awesome greatness” or “extreme value.”
- The term “glorious” could be translated as “full of glory” or “extremely valuable” or “brightly shining” or “awesomely majestic.”
- The expression “give glory to God” could be translated as “honor God’s greatness” or “praise God because of his splendor” or “tell others how great God is.”
- The expression “glory in” could also be translated as “praise” or “take pride in” or “boast about” or “take pleasure in.”
- “Glorify” could also be translated as “give glory to” or “bring glory to” or “cause to appear great.”

- The phrase “glorify God” could also be translated as “praise God” or “talk about God’s greatness” or “show how great God is” or “honor God (by obeying him).”
- The term “be glorified” could also be translated as “be shown to be very great” or “be praised” or “be exalted.”

(See also: **honor**, **majesty**, exalt, **obey**, praise)

Bible References:

- **Exodus 24:17**
- **Numbers 14:9-10**
- **Isaiah 35:2**
- **Luke 18:43**
- **Luke 2:9**
- **John 12:28**
- **Acts 3:13-14**
- **Acts 7:1-3**
- **Romans 8:17**
- **1 Corinthians 6:19-20**
- **Philippians 2:14-16**
- **Philippians 4:19**
- **Colossians 3:1-4**
- **1 Thessalonians 2:5**
- **James 2:1-4**
- **1 Peter 4:15-16**
- **Revelation 15:4**

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **23:7** Suddenly, the skies were filled with angels praising God, saying, “**Glory** to God in heaven and peace on earth to the people he favors!”
- **25:6** Then Satan showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and all their **glory** and said, “I will give you all this if you bow down and worship me.”
- **37:1** When Jesus heard this news, he said, “This sickness will not end in death, but it is for the **glory** of God.”

- 37:8 Jesus responded, “Did I not tell you that you would see God’s **glory** if you believe in me?”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0117, H0142, H0155, H0215, H1342, H1921, H1926, H1935, H1984, H3367, H3513, H3519, H3520, H6286, H6643, H7623, H8597, G13910, G13920, G17400, G17410, G27440, G48880

Nehemiah References:

9:5

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

Nehemiah References:

1:4; 1:5; 2:4; 2:8; 2:12; 2:18; 2:20; 4:4; 4:9; 4:15; 4:20; 5:5; 5:9; 5:13; 5:15; 5:19; 6:12; 6:14; 6:16; 7:2; 7:5; 8:6; 8:9; 9:3; 9:4; 9:5; 9:7; 9:17; 9:18; 9:31; 9:32; 10:29; 10:32; 10:33; 10:34; 10:36; 10:37; 10:38; 10:39; 12:43; 12:45; 12:46; 13:1; 13:2; 13:4; 13:14; 13:18; 13:22; 13:25; 13:26; 13:27; 13:29; 13:31

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

Nehemiah References:

front:intro; 12:intro

gold, golden

Definition:

Gold is a yellow, high quality metal that was used for making jewelry and religious objects. It was the most valuable metal in ancient times.

- In Bible times, many different kinds of objects were made out of solid gold or were covered with a thin layer of gold.
- These objects included earrings and other jewelry, and idols, altars, and other objects used in the tabernacle or temple, such as the ark of the covenant.
- In Old Testament times, gold was used as a means of exchange in buying and selling. It was weighed on a scale to determine its value.
- Later on, gold and other metals such as silver were used to make coins to use in buying and selling
- When referring to something that is not solid gold, but only has a thin covering of gold, the term “golden” or “gold-covered” or “gold-overlaid” could also be used.
- Sometimes an object is described as “gold-colored,” which means it has the yellow color of gold, but may not actually be made of gold.

(See also: altar, ark of the covenant, false god, silver, tabernacle, temple)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 1:7
- 1 Timothy 2:8-10
- 2 Chronicles 1:15
- Acts 3:6
- Daniel 2:32

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1220, H1722, H2091, H2742, H3800, H5458, H6884, H6885, G55520, G55530, G55540, G55570

Nehemiah References:

7:70; 7:71; 7:72

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

Nehemiah References:

2:5; 2:6; 2:7; 2:8; 2:10; 2:18; 5:9; 5:19; 6:19; 9:13; 9:20; 9:25; 9:35; 9:36; 13:31

govern, governor, proconsul, Tirshatha

Definition:

A “governor” is a person who rules over a large area of land (such as a territory, region, or province) within a nation or empire.

- In the Old Testament, the term “Tirshatha” is a more specific title for a governor who ruled over a Persian province.
- In the New Testament, the term “proconsul” is a more specific title for a governor who ruled over a Roman province.
- In Bible times, governors were appointed by a king or emperor and were under his authority.
- A “government” consists of all the rulers who govern a certain country or empire. These rulers make laws that guide the behavior of their citizens so that there is peace, safety, and prosperity for all the people of that nation.

Translation Suggestions:

- The word “governor” can also be translated as “ruler” or “overseer” or “regional leader” or “one who rules over a small territory.”
- Depending on the context, the term “govern” could also be translated as “rule over” or “lead” or “manage” or “supervise.”
- The term “governor” should be translated differently than the terms for “king” or “emperor”, since a governor was a less powerful ruler who was under their authority.
- The term “proconsul” could also be translated as “Roman governor” or “Roman provincial ruler.”

(See also: authority, king, power, province, Rome, ruler)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:9-10
- Acts 23:22
- Acts 26:30
- Mark 13:9-10
- Matthew 10:18
- Matthew 27:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0324, H1777, H2280, H4951, H5148, H5460, H6346, H6347, H6486, H7989, H8269, H8660, G04450, G04460, G07460, G14810, G22320, G22330, G22300, G42320

Nehemiah References:

2:7; 2:9; 3:7; 5:14; 5:15; 5:18; 7:65; 7:70; 8:9; 10:1; 12:26

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

Nehemiah References:

9:17; 9:31

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

Nehemiah References:

5:2; 5:3; 5:10; 5:11; 10:31; 10:39; 13:5; 13:12; 13:15

grape, grapevine

Definition:

A grape is a small, round, smooth-skinned berry fruit that grows in clusters on vines. The juice of grapes is used in making wine.

- There are different colors of grapes, such as light green, purple, or red.
- Individual grapes can be around one to three centimeters in size.
- People grow grapes in gardens called vineyards. These normally consist of long rows of vines.
- Grapes were a very important food during Bible times and having vineyards was a sign of wealth.
- In order to keep grapes from rotting, people would often dry them. Dried grapes are called “raisins” and they were used to make raisin cakes.
- Jesus told a parable about a grape vineyard to teach his disciples about God’s kingdom.

(See also: vine, vineyard, wine)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 23:24
- Hosea 9:10
- Job 15:33
- Luke 6:43-44
- Matthew 7:15-17
- Matthew 21:33

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0811, H0891, H1154, H1155, H1210, H3196, H5955, H6025, H6528, G02880, G47180

Nehemiah References:

13:15

grave, gravedigger, tomb, burial place

Definition:

The terms “tomb” and “grave” refer to a place where people put the body of a person who has died. A “burial place” is a more general term that also refers to this.

- The Jews sometimes used natural caves as tombs, and sometimes they dug caves into rock in the side of a hill.
- In New Testament times, it was common to roll a large, heavy stone in front of the opening of a tomb in order to close it.
- If the target language the word for a tomb can only refer to a hole in which the body is placed below the ground, other ways to translate this could include “cave” or “hole in the side of a hill.”
- The phrase “the grave” is often used generally and figuratively to refer to the condition of being dead or a place where the souls of dead people are.

(See also: **bury**, **death**)

Bible References:

- **Acts 2:29-31**
- **Genesis 23:6**
- **Genesis 50:5**
- **John 19:41**
- **Luke 23:53**
- **Mark 5:1-2**
- **Matthew 27:53**
- **Romans 3:13**

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **32:4** The man lived among the **tombs** in the area.
- **37:6** Jesus asked them, “Where have you put Lazarus?” They told him, “In the **tomb**. Come and see.”
- **37:7** The **tomb** was a cave with a stone rolled in front of its opening.

- 40:9 Then Joseph and Nicodemus, two Jewish leaders who believed Jesus was the Messiah, asked Pilate for Jesus' body. They wrapped his body in cloth and placed it in a **tomb** cut out of rock. Then they rolled a large stone in front the **tomb** to block the opening.
- 41:4 He (the angel) rolled away the stone that was covering the entrance to the **tomb** and sat on it. The soldiers guarding the **tomb** were terrified and fell to the ground like dead men.
- 41:5 When the women arrived at the **tomb**, the angel told them, "Do not be afraid. Jesus is not here. He has risen from the dead, just like he said he would! Look in the **tomb** and see." The women looked into the **tomb** and saw where Jesus' body had been laid. His body was not there!

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1430, H6900, H6913, H7585, H7845, G34180, G34190, G50280

Nehemiah References:

2:3; 2:5; 3:16

Hananiah

Definition:

Hananiah was the name of several different men in the Old Testament.

- One Hananiah was an Israelite captive in Babylon whose name was changed to "Shadrach."
- He was given a position as a royal servant due to his excellent character and abilities.
- Once, Hananiah (Shadrach) and two other Israelite young men were thrown into a fire in a furnace because they refused to worship the Babylonian king. God showed his power by protecting them from being harmed.
- Another man named Hananiah was listed as a descendant of King Solomon.
- A different Hananiah was a false prophet during the time of the prophet Jeremiah.
- One man named Hananiah was a priest who helped lead a celebration during the time of Nehemiah.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Azariah, Babylon, Daniel, **false prophet**, Jeremiah, Mishael)

Bible References:

- **Daniel 1:6-7**
- **Daniel 2:17-18**
- **Jeremiah 28:1**
- **Jeremiah 28:5-7**
- **Jeremiah 28:15-17**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2608

Nehemiah References:

3:8; 3:30; 7:2; 10:23; 12:12; 12:41

harp, harpist

Definition:

A harp is a stringed musical instrument, that usually consists of a large open frame with vertical strings.

- In Bible times, fir wood was used to make harps and other musical instruments.
- Harps were often held in the hands and played while walking.
- In many places in the Bible, harps are mentioned as instruments that were used to praise and worship God.
- David wrote several psalms which were set to harp music.
- He also played a harp for King Saul, to soothe the king's troubled spirit.

(See also: David, fir, psalm, Saul (OT))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 15:16-18
- Amos 5:23-24
- Daniel 3:5
- Psalm 33:1-3
- Revelation 5:8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3658, H5035, H5059, H7030, G27880, G27890, G27900

Nehemiah References:

12:27

heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly

Definition:

The term that is translated as “heaven” usually refers to where God lives. The same word can also mean “sky,” depending on the context.

- The term “heavens” refers to everything we see above the earth, including the sun, moon, and stars. It also includes the heavenly bodies, such as far-off planets, that we cannot directly see from the earth.
- The term “sky” refers to the blue expanse above the earth that has clouds and the air we breathe. Often the sun and moon are also said to be “up in the sky.”
- In some contexts in the Bible, the word “heaven” could refer to either the sky or the place where God lives.

Translation Suggestions:

- For “kingdom of heaven” in the book of Matthew, it is best to keep the word “heaven” since this is distinctive to Matthew’s gospel.
- The terms “heavens” or “heavenly bodies” could also be translated as “sun, moon, and stars” or “all the stars in the universe.”
- The phrase, “stars of heaven” could be translated as “stars in the sky” or “stars in the galaxy” or “stars in the universe.”

(See also: **kingdom of God**)

Bible References:

- **1 Kings 8:22-24**
- **1 Thessalonians 1:8-10**
- **1 Thessalonians 4:17**
- **Deuteronomy 9:1**
- **Ephesians 6:9**
- **Genesis 1:1**
- **Genesis 7:11**
- **John 3:12**
- **John 3:27**
- **Matthew 5:18**

- Matthew 5:46-48

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 4:2 They even began building a tall tower to reach **heaven**.
- 14:11 He (God) gave them bread from **heaven**, called “manna.”
- 23:7 Suddenly, the skies were filled with angels praising God, saying, “Glory to God in **heaven** and peace on earth to the people he favors!”
- 29:9 Then Jesus said, “This is what my **heavenly** Father will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”
- 37:9 Then Jesus looked up to **heaven** and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me.”
- 42:11 Then Jesus went up to **heaven**, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1534, H6160, H6183, H7834, H8064, H8065, G09320, G20320, G33210, G37700, G37710, G37720

Nehemiah References:

1:4; 1:5; 1:9; 2:4; 2:20; 9:6; 9:13; 9:15; 9:23; 9:27; 9:28

Hebrew

Definition:

The term “Hebrew” refers in a very general sense to the people group descended from Abraham through the line of Isaac and Jacob.

- The specific word “Hebrew” can refer either to a individual person in the people group or to the language spoken by that people group.
- The vast majority of the Old Testament was written in the language called “Hebrew.” However, in most cases in the New Testament, the specific term “Hebrew” probably refers to the Aramaic language rather than the Hebrew language.
- In different places in the Bible, the Hebrews were also called “Israelites” or “Jews.” When translating, it is best to keep all three terms distinct in the text, as long as it is clear that these terms refer to the same people group.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Israel, Jew, **Jewish leaders**)

Bible References:

- **Acts 26:12-14**
- **Genesis 39:13-15**
- **Genesis 40:15**
- **Genesis 41:12-13**
- **John 5:1-4**
- **John 19:13**
- **Jonah 1:8-10**
- **Philippians 3:5**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5680, G14440, G14450, G14460, G14470

Nehemiah References:

13:24

Hebron, Kiriath Arba

Definition:

Hebron was a city located in the high, rocky hills about 20 miles south of Jerusalem.

- The city was built around 2000 BC during the time of Abram. It was mentioned many times in the historical accounts given in the Old Testament.
- Hebron had a very important role in King David's life. Several of his sons, including Absalom, were born there.
- The city was destroyed around AD 70 by the Romans.
- The city of Hebron was formerly called Kiriath Arba (see Joshua 14:15 and Joshua 15:54).
- The city of Hebron, formerly called Kiriath Arba, was probably founded by Arba, the father of Anak and may have been originally named Kiriath Arba to honor Arba because Joshua 14:15 records that Arba "was a great man among the Anakites."
- The name "Hebron" is an English transliteration of the Hebrew word for Hebron.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **Anak**, **Absalom**)

Bible References:

- **2 Samuel 2:10-11**
- **Genesis 13:18**
- **Genesis 23:1-2**
- **Genesis 35:27**
- **Genesis 37:12-14**
- **Judges 1:10**
- **Numbers 13:22**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2275, H2276

Nehemiah References:

11:25

Heshbon

Definition:

In Bible times, Heshbon was a major city of Moab. It was the capital city of king Sihon before the Israelites conquered it and began living in it.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Moab, Sihon)

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2809

Nehemiah References:

9:22

Hezekiah

Definition:

Hezekiah was the 13th king over the kingdom of Judah. He was a king who trusted and obeyed God.

- Unlike his father Ahaz, who had been an evil king, King Hezekiah was a good king who destroyed all the places of idol worship in Judah.
- One time when Hezekiah became very sick and almost died, he earnestly prayed that God would spare his life. God healed him and allowed him to live 15 more years.
- As a sign to Hezekiah that this would happen, God performed a miracle and caused the sun to move backwards in the sky.
- God also answered Hezekiah's prayer to save his people from King Sennacherib of Assyria, who was attacking them.

(See also: **Ahaz**, Assyria, false god, Judah, **Sennacherib**)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 3:13-14**
- **2 Kings 16:19-20**
- **Hosea 1:1**
- **Matthew 1:9-11**
- **Proverbs 25:1-3**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2396, H3169, G14780

Nehemiah References:

7:21; 10:17

high priest, chief priest

Definition:

The term “high priest” refers to a special priest who was appointed to serve for one year as the leader of all of the other Israelite priests. In New Testament times, some other priests were also considered very important Jewish religious leaders, with authority over other priests and the people. These were the chief priests.

- The high priest had special responsibilities. He was the only one who was permitted to go into the most holy part of the tabernacle or the temple to offer a special sacrifice once per year.
- The Israelites had many priests, but only one high priest at a time.
- After high priests retired, they still kept the title, along with some of the responsibilities of the office. For example, Annas was still referred to as high priest during the priesthood of Caiaphas and others.
- The chief priests were responsible for everything needed for the worship services at the temple. They were also in charge of the money that was given to the temple.
- The chief priests were higher in rank and power than the ordinary priests. Only the high priest had more authority.
- The chief priests were some of Jesus’ main enemies and they strongly influenced the Roman leaders to arrest and kill him.

Translation Suggestions:

- “High priest” could be translated as “supreme priest” or “highest ranking priest.”
- The term “chief priests” could be translated as “head priests” or “leading priests” or “ruling priests.”

(See also: **Annas**, **Caiaphas**, priest, temple)

Bible References:

- **Acts 5:27**
- **Acts 7:1**
- **Acts 9:1**
- **Exodus 30:10**
- **Hebrews 6:19-20**

- Leviticus 16:32
- Luke 3:2
- Mark 2:25-26
- Matthew 26:3-5
- Matthew 26:51-54

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 13:8 No one could enter the room behind the curtain except the **high priest**, because God lived there.
- 21:7 The Messiah who would come would be the perfect **high priest** who would offer himself as a perfect sacrifice to God.
- 38:3 The Jewish leaders, led by the **high priest**, paid Judas thirty silver coins to betray Jesus.
- 39:1 The soldiers led Jesus to the house of the **high priest** in order for the **high priest** to question him.
- 39:3 Finally, the **high priest** looked directly at Jesus and said, “Tell us, are you the Messiah, the Son of the living God?”
- 44:7 The next day, the Jewish leaders brought Peter and John to the **high priest** and the other religious leaders.
- 45:2 So the religious leaders arrested Stephen and brought him to the **high priest** and the other leaders of the Jews, where more false witnesses lied about Stephen.
- 46:1 The **high priest** gave Saul permission to go to the city of Damascus to arrest Christians there and bring them back to Jerusalem.
- 48:6 Jesus is the Great **High Priest**. Unlike other priests, he offered himself as the only sacrifice that could to take away the sin of all the people in the world. Jesus was the perfect **high priest** because he took the punishment for every sin that anyone has ever committed.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7218, H1419, H3548, G07480, G07490

Nehemiah References:

3:1; 3:20; 13:28

Hilkiah

Definition:

Hilkiah was the high priest during the reign of King Josiah.

- When the temple was being repaired, Hilkiah the high priest found the Book of the Law and ordered that it be brought to King Josiah.
- After the Book of the Law was read to him, Josiah was grieved and caused the people of Judah to worship Yahweh again and obey his laws.
- Another man named Hilkiah was the son of Eliakim and worked in the palace during the time of King Hezekiah.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Eliakim, Hezekiah, high priest, **Josiah**, **Judah**, law, **worship**, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- **2 Kings 18:18**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2518

Nehemiah References:

8:4; 11:11; 12:7; 12:21

Hittite

Definition:

The Hittites were descendants of Ham through his son Canaan. They became a large empire located in what is now Turkey and northern Palestine.

- Abraham bought a piece of property from Ephron the Hittite so that he could bury his deceased wife Sarah in a cave there. Eventually Abraham and several of his descendants were also buried in that cave.
- Esau's parents were grieved when he married two Hittite women.
- One of David's mighty men was named Uriah the Hittite.
- Some of the foreign women that Solomon married were Hittites. These foreign women turned Solomon's heart away from God because of the false gods they worshiped.
- The Hittites were often a threat to the Israelites, both physically and spiritually.

(See also: descendant, Esau, foreigner, Ham, mighty, Solomon, Uriah)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 9:20-21
- Exodus 3:7-8
- Genesis 23:11
- Genesis 25:10
- Joshua 1:4-5
- Nehemiah 9:8
- Numbers 13:27-29

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2850

Nehemiah References:

9:8

holy city

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “holy city” refers to the city of Jerusalem.

- This term is used to refer to the ancient city of Jerusalem as well as the new, heavenly Jerusalem where God will live and reign among his people.
- This term can be translated by combining the terms for “holy” and “city” that have been used in the rest of the translation.

(See also: heaven, holy, Jerusalem)

Bible References:

- Matthew 4:5-6
- Matthew 27:51-53
- Revelation 21:1-2
- Revelation 21:9-10
- Revelation 22:18-19

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5892, H6944, G00400, G41720

Nehemiah References:

11:1; 11:18

Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit

Definition:

These terms all refer to the Holy Spirit, who is God. The one true God exists eternally as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit is also referred to as “the Spirit” and “Spirit of Yahweh” and “Spirit of truth.”
- Because the Holy Spirit is God, he is absolutely holy, infinitely pure, and morally perfect in all his nature and in everything he does.
- Along with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit was active in creating the world.
- When God’s Son, Jesus, returned to heaven, God sent the Holy Spirit to his people to lead them, teach them, comfort them, and enable them to do God’s will.
- The Holy Spirit guided Jesus and he guides those who believe in Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could simply be translated with the words used to translate “holy” and “spirit.”
- Ways to translate this term could also include “Pure Spirit” or “Spirit who is Holy” or “God the Spirit.”

(See also: holy, spirit, God, Lord, God the Father, Son of God, gift)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 10:10
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8
- Acts 8:17
- Galatians 5:25
- Genesis 1:1-2
- Isaiah 63:10
- Job 33:4
- Matthew 12:31
- Matthew 28:18-19
- Psalms 51:10-11

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 1:1 But **God's Spirit** was there over the water.
- 24:8 When Jesus came up out of the water after being baptized, **the Spirit of God** appeared in the form of a dove and came down and rested on him.
- 26:1 After overcoming Satan's temptations, Jesus returned in the power of **the Holy Spirit** to the region of Galilee where he lived.
- 26:3 Jesus read, "God has given me **his Spirit** so that I can proclaim good news to the poor, freedom to captives, recovery of sight for the blind, and release to the oppressed."
- 42:10 "So go, make disciples of all people groups by baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and **the Holy Spirit** and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."
- 43:3 They were all filled with the **Holy Spirit** and they began to speak in other languages.
- 43:8 "And Jesus has sent the **Holy Spirit** just as he promised he would do. The **Holy Spirit** is causing the things that you are are now seeing and hearing."
- 43:11 Peter answered them, "Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that God will forgive your sins. Then he will also give you the gift of the **Holy Spirit**."
- 45:1 He (Stephen) had a good reputation and was full of the **Holy Spirit** and of wisdom.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3068, H6944, H7307, G00400, G41510

Nehemiah References:

9:20; 9:30

holy, holiness, unholy, sacred

Definition:

The terms “holy” and “holiness” refer to the character of God that is totally set apart and separated from everything that is sinful and imperfect.

- Only God is absolutely holy. He makes people and things holy.
- A person who is holy belongs to God and has been set apart for the purpose of serving God and bringing him glory.
- An object that God has declared to be holy is one that he has set apart for his glory and use, such as an altar that is for the purpose of offering sacrifices to him.
- People cannot approach him unless he allows them to, because he is holy and they are merely human beings, sinful and imperfect.
- In the Old Testament, God set apart the priests as holy for special service to him. They had to be ceremonially cleansed from sin in order to approach God.
- God also set apart as holy certain places and things that belonged to him or in which he revealed himself, such as his temple.

Literally, the term “unholy” means “not holy.” It describes someone or something that does not honor God.

- This word is used to describe someone who dishonors God by rebelling against him.
- A thing that is called “unholy” could be described as being common, profane or unclean. It does not belong to God.

The term “sacred” describes something that relates to worshiping God or to the pagan worship of false gods.

- In the Old Testament, the term “sacred” was often said to describe the stone pillars and other objects used in the worship of false gods. This could also be translated as “religious.”
- “Sacred songs” and “sacred music” refer to music that was sung or played for God’s glory. This could be translated as “music for worshiping Yahweh” or “songs that praise God.”
- The phrase “sacred duties” referred to the “religious duties” or “rituals” that a priest performed to lead people in worshiping God. It could also refer to the rituals performed by a pagan priest to worship a false god

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “holy” might include “set apart for God” or “belonging to God” or “completely pure” or “perfectly sinless” or “separated from sin.”
- To “make holy” is often translated as “sanctify” in English. It could also be translated as “set apart (someone) for God’s glory.”
- Ways to translate “unholy” could include “not holy” or “not belonging to God” or “not honoring to God” or “not godly.”
- In some contexts, “unholy” could be translated as “unclean.”

(See also: Holy Spirit, consecrate, sanctify, set apart)

Bible References:

- Genesis 28:22
- 2 Kings 3:2
- Lamentations 4:1
- Ezekiel 20:18-20
- Matthew 7:6
- Mark 8:38
- Acts 7:33
- Acts 11:8
- Romans 1:2
- 2 Corinthians 12:3-5
- Colossians 1:22
- 1 Thessalonians 3:13
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7
- 2 Timothy 3:15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 1:16 He (God) blessed the seventh day and made it **holy**, because on this day he rested from his work.
- 9:12 “You are standing on **holy** ground.”

- 13:2 “If you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my prized possession, a kingdom of priests, and a **holy** nation.”
- 13:5 “Always be sure to keep the Sabbath day **holy**.”
- 22:5 “So the baby will be **holy**, the Son of God.”
- 50:2 As we wait for Jesus to return, God wants us to live in a way that is **holy** and that honors him.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0430, H2455, H2623, H4676, H4720, H6918, H6922, H6942, H6944, H6948, G00370, G00380, G00400, G00400, G00410, G00420, G04620, G18590, G21500, G24120, G24130, G28390, G37410, G37420

Nehemiah References:

3:intro; 7:65; 8:9; 8:10; 8:11; 9:14; 10:31; 10:33; 11:1; 11:18

horn, horned, shofar

Definition:

Horns are permanent, hard, pointed growths on the heads of many types of animals, including cattle, sheep, goats, and deer.

- The horn of a ram (male sheep) was made into a musical instrument called a "ram's horn" or "shofar," which was blown for special events such as religious festivals or to call men for battle.
- This term should be translated with a word that is different from the word that refers to a trumpet, which is usually made of metal.
- God told the Israelites to make a horn-shaped projection on each of the four corners of the incense and brazen altars. Although these projections were called "horns," they were not actually animal horns.
- The term "horn" was sometimes used to refer to a "flask" that was shaped like a horn and was used for holding water or oil. A flask of oil was used for anointing a king, as Samuel did with David.

(See also: authority, cow, deer, goat, power, royal, sheep, trumpet)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 15:27-28
- 1 Kings 1:39
- 2 Samuel 22:3
- Jeremiah 17:1
- Psalms 22:21

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3104, H7160, H7161, H7162, H7782, G27680

Nehemiah References:

4:18; 4:20

horse, warhorse, horseback, stallion, steed, mare

Definition:

A horse is a large, four-legged animal that in Bible times was mostly used for war and for transporting people. A stallion is a male horse and a mare is a female horse. “Steed” is a poetic word referring to a horse that is powerful or fast.

- Some horses were used to pull carts or chariots, while others were used to carry individual riders.
- In the Bible, horses were considered to be valuable possessions and a measure of wealth, mainly because of their use in war. For example, part of King Solomon’s great wealth was the thousands of horses and chariots that he had.
- Animals that are similar to the horse are the donkey and the mule.
- Horses often wear a bit and bridle on their heads so they can be guided.

(See also: chariot, donkey, Solomon)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:4
- 2 Kings 2:11
- Exodus 14:23-25
- Ezekiel 23:5-7
- Zechariah 6:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0047, H5483, H5484, H6571, H7409, G24620

Nehemiah References:

3:28; 7:68

horseman

Definition:

In Bible times, the term “horsemen” referred to men who rode horses into battle.

- Warriors who rode in horse-pulled chariots may also have been called “horsemen,” though this term usually refers to men who were actually riding on horses.
- Yahweh commanded the Israelites not to have many horsemen because having a strong army would cause them to trust their own strength rather than Yahweh in battle.
- This term could also be translated as “horse riders” or “men on horses.”

(See also: chariot, horse)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 1:5
- Daniel 11:40-41
- Exodus 14:23-25
- Genesis 50:7-9

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6571, H7395, G24600

Nehemiah References:

2:9

Hoshea

Definition:

Hoshea was the name of a king of Israel and several other men in the Old Testament.

- Hoshea son of Elah was a king of Israel for nine years during part of the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.
- Joshua son of Nun was formerly named Hoshea. Moses changed Hoshea's name to Joshua before sending him and eleven other men to spy out the land of the Canaanites.
- After Moses died, Joshua led the people of Israel to take possession of the land of Canaan.
- A different man named Hoshea was a son of Azaziah and was one of the leaders of the Ephraimites.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Ahaz, Canaan, Ephraim, Hezekiah, Joshua, Moses)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 27:20
- 2 Kings 15:30
- 2 Kings 17:3
- 2 Kings 18:1
- 2 Kings 18:9

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1954

Nehemiah References:

10:23

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

Nehemiah References:

2:8; 3:10; 3:16; 3:20; 3:21; 3:23; 3:24; 3:28; 3:29; 3:31; 4:14; 5:3; 5:11; 5:13; 6:10; 7:3; 7:4; 7:39; 9:25; 10:38; 13:8

house of David

Definition:

The expression “house of David” refers to the family or descendants of King David.

- This could also be translated as “descendants of David” or “family of David” or “King David’s clan.”
- Because Jesus was descended from David, he was part of the “house of David.”
- Sometimes “house of David” or “household of David” refers to the people in David’s family who were still living.
- Other times this term is more general and refers to all his descendants, including those who had already died.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: David, descendant, house, Jesus, king)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 10:19
- 2 Samuel 3:6
- Luke 1:69-71
- Psalms 122:5
- Zechariah 12:7

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1004, H1732, G11380, G36240

Nehemiah References:

12:37

house of God, your house, his house, Yahweh's house, a house for my name, the house for my name, the house, a house, a house of Yahweh

Short Title: house of God, Yahweh's house, house of Yahweh

Definition:

In the Bible, the phrases "house of God" (God's house) and "house of Yahweh (Yahweh's house)" refer to a place where God is worshiped.

- This term is also used more specifically to refer to the tabernacle or the temple.
- The terms "house of God" and "house of Yahweh" refer to the tabernacle or temple. These expressions can also refer generally to a central place where Yahweh was worshipped.
- The Bible often uses the phrases "your house" and "his house" to refer to the temple of Yahweh.
- The phrases "the house for my name," "a house for my name," and "a house of Yahweh" all refer to the temple of Yahweh.
- In some contexts, such as in 1 Chronicles 17:25 and 29:16, the phrase "a house" refers to the temple of Yahweh.
- In some contexts, such as in 1 Kings 8:44 and 2 Chronicles 6:4, the phrase "the house" refers to the temple of Yahweh.

Translation Suggestions:

- When referring to a place of worship, this term could be translated as "a house for worshiping God" or "a place for worshiping God."
- If it is referring to the temple or tabernacle, this could be translated as "the temple (or tabernacle) where God is worshiped" (or "where God is present" or "where God meets with his people").
- The word "house" may be important to use in the translation in order to communicate that God "dwells" there, that is, his spirit is in that place to meet with his people and to be worshiped by them.
- The phrase "house of Yahweh" could be translated as "Yahweh's temple" or "place where Yahweh is worshiped" or "place where Yahweh meets with his people" or "where Yahweh dwells." The phrase "house of God" could be translated in a similar way.

(See also: people of God, tabernacle, temple)

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 3:14-15
- 2 Chronicles 23:8-9
- Ezra 5:13
- Genesis 28:17
- Judges 18:30-31
- Mark 2:26
- Matthew 12:4

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0426, H0430, H1004, H1005, H3068, G23160, G36240

Nehemiah References:

6:10; 8:16; 10:35; 11:11; 11:16; 11:22; 12:40; 13:7; 13:9; 13:11

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:

Nehemiah References:

4:16; 7:61; 10:34

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

Nehemiah References:

2:3

image, carved image, cast metal image, figure, carved figure, statue

Definition:

These terms are all used to refer to idols that have been made for worshiping a false god. In the context of worshiping idols, the term "image" is a shortened form of "carved image."

- A "carved image" or "carved figure" is a wooden object that has been made to look like an animal, person, or thing.
- A "cast metal figure" is an object or statue created by melting metal and pouring it into a mold that is in the shape of an object, animal, or person.
- These wooden and metal objects were used in the worship of false gods.
- The term "image" when referring to an idol could either refer to a wooden or metal idol.

Translation Suggestions:

- When referring to an idol, the term "image" could also be translated as "statue" or "engraved idol" or "carved religious object."
- It may be more clear in some languages to always use a descriptive word with this term, such as "carved image" or "cast metal figure," even in places where only the term "image" or "figure" is in the original text.
- Make sure it is clear that this term is different than the term used to refer to being in the image of God.

(See also: false god, God, false god, image of God)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 14:9-10
- Acts 7:43
- Isaiah 21:8-9
- Matthew 22:21
- Romans 1:23

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0457, H1544, H2553, H4541, H4676, H4853, H4906, H5257, H5262, H5566, H6091, H6456, H6459, H6754, H6755, H6816, H8403, H8544, H8655, G15040, G51790

Nehemiah References:

9:18

incense

Definition:

The term “incense” refers to a mixture of fragrant spices that is burned to produce smoke that has a pleasant smell.

- God told the Israelites to burn incense as an offering to him.
- The incense had to be made by mixing equal amounts of five specific spices exactly as God directed. This was a sacred incense, so they were not allowed to use it for any other purpose.
- The “altar of incense” was a special altar that was only used for burning incense.
- The incense was offered at least four times a day, at each hour of prayer. It was also offered every time a burnt offering was made.
- The burning of incense represents prayer and worship rising up to God from his people.
- Other ways to translate “incense” could include “fragrant spices” or “good-smelling plants.”

(See also: altar of incense, burnt offering, frankincense)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 3:1-3
- 2 Chronicles 13:10-11
- 2 Kings 14:4
- Exodus 25:3-7
- Luke 1:10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2553, H3828, H4196, H4289, H5208, H6988, H6999, H7002, H7004, H7381, G23680, G23690, G23700, G23790, G30310

Nehemiah References:

13:9

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

Nehemiah References:

11:20

iniquity

Definition:

The term “iniquity” is a word that is very similar in meaning to the term “sin,” but may more specifically refer to conscious acts of wrongdoing or great wickedness.

- The word “iniquity” literally means a twisting or distorting (of the law). It refers to major injustice.
- Iniquity could be described as deliberate, harmful actions against other people.
- Other definitions of iniquity include “perversity” and “depravity,” which are both words that describe conditions of terrible sin.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “iniquity” could be translated as “wickedness” or “perverse actions” or “harmful acts.”
- Often, “iniquity” occurs in the same text as the word “sin” and “transgression” so it is important to have different ways of translating these terms.

(See also: sin, **transgress**, **trespass**)

Bible References:

- **Daniel 9:13**
- **Exodus 34:5-7**
- **Genesis 15:14-16**
- **Genesis 44:16**
- **Habakkuk 2:12**
- **Matthew 13:41**
- **Matthew 23:27-28**
- **Micah 3:10**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0205, H1942, H5753, H5758, H5766, H5771, H5932, H5999, H7562, G00920, G00930, G04580, G38920, G41890

Nehemiah References:

4:5; 9:2

interpret, interpretation, interpreter

Definition:

The terms “interpret” and “interpretation” refer to understanding and explaining the meaning of something that is not clear.

- Often in the Bible these terms are used in connection with explaining the meaning of dreams or visions.
- When the king of Babylon had some confusing dreams, God helped Daniel to interpret them and to explain their meanings.
- The “interpretation” of the dream is the “explanation” of the meaning of the dream.
- In the Old Testament, God sometimes used dreams to reveal to people what would happen in the future. So the interpretations of those dreams were prophecies.
- The term “interpret” can also refer to figuring out the meaning of other things, such as figuring out what the weather will be like based on how cold or hot it is, how windy it is, and what the sky looks like.
- Ways to translate the term “interpret” could include, “figure out the meaning of” or “explain” or “give the meaning of.”
- The term “interpretation” could also be translated as “explanation” or “meaning.”

(See also: Babylon, Daniel, dream, prophet, vision)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 12:10
- Daniel 4:4-6
- Genesis 40:4-5
- Judges 7:15-16
- Luke 12:56

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0995, H3887, H6591, H6622, H6623, H7667, H7760, H7922, G12520, G13280, G13290, G13810, G19550, G20580, G31770, G47930

Nehemiah References:

8:8

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

Nehemiah References:

front:intro; 1:6; 2:10; 7:7; 7:61; 7:73; 8:1; 8:14; 8:17; 9:1; 9:2; 10:33; 10:39; 11:3; 11:20; 12:47; 13:2; 13:3; 13:18; 13:26

Jebus, Jebusite

Definition:

The Jebusites were a people group living in the land of Canaan. They were descended from Ham's son Canaan.

- The Jebusites lived in the city of Jebus, and its name was later changed to Jerusalem when King David conquered it.
- Melchizedek, the king of Salem, was probably of Jebusite origin.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Canaan, Ham, Jerusalem, Melchizedek)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 1:14
- 1 Kings 9:20-21
- Exodus 3:7-8
- Genesis 10:16
- Joshua 3:9-11
- Judges 1:20-21

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2982, H2983

Nehemiah References:

9:8

Jeremiah

Definition:

Jeremiah was a prophet of God in the kingdom of Judah. The Old Testament book of Jeremiah contains his prophecies.

- Like most of the prophets, Jeremiah often had to warn the people of Israel that God was going to punish them for their sins.
- Jeremiah prophesied that the Babylonians would capture Jerusalem, making some of the people of Judah angry. So they put him in a deep, dry well and left him there to die. But the king of Judah ordered his servants to rescue Jeremiah from the well.
- Jeremiah wrote that he wished his eyes could be a "fountain of tears," to express his deep sadness over the rebellion and sufferings of his people.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Babylon, **Judah**, prophet, rebel, **suffer**, well)

Bible References:

- **2 Chronicles 35:25**
- **Jeremiah 1:2**
- **Jeremiah 11:1**
- **Matthew 2:18**
- **Matthew 16:13-16**
- **Matthew 27:10**

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **19:17** Once, the prophet **Jeremiah** was put into a dry well and left there to die. He sank down into the mud that was in the bottom of the well, but then the king had mercy on him and ordered his servants to pull **Jeremiah** out of the well before he died.
- **21:5** Through the prophet **Jeremiah**, God promised that he would make a New Covenant, but not like the covenant God made with Israel at Sinai.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3414, G24080

Nehemiah References:

10:2; 12:1; 12:12; 12:34

Jericho

Definition:

Jericho was a powerful city in the land of Canaan. It was located just west of the Jordan River and just north of the Salt Sea.

- As all Canaanites did, the people of Jericho worshiped false gods.
- Jericho was the first city in the land of Canaan that God told the Israelites to conquer.
- When Joshua led the Israelites against Jericho, God did a great miracle to help them defeat the city.

(See also: Canaan, Jordan River, Joshua, miracle, Salt Sea)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 6:78
- Joshua 2:1-3
- Joshua 7:2-3
- Luke 18:35
- Mark 10:46-48
- Matthew 20:29-31
- Numbers 22:1

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 15:1 Joshua sent two spies to the Canaanite city of **Jericho**.
- 15:3 After the people crossed the Jordan River, God told Joshua how to attack the powerful city of **Jericho**.
- 15:5 Then the walls around **Jericho** fell down! The Israelites destroyed everything in the city as God had commanded.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3405, G24100

Nehemiah References:

3:2; 7:36

Jerusalem

Definition:

Jerusalem was originally an ancient Canaanite city that later became the most important city in Israel. It is located about 34 kilometers west of the Salt Sea and just north of Bethlehem. It is still the capital city of Israel today.

- The name "Jerusalem" is first mentioned in the book of Joshua. Other Old Testament names for this city include "Salem" "city of Jebus," and "Zion." Both "Jerusalem" and "Salem," have the root meaning of "peace."
- Jerusalem was originally a Jebusite fortress called "Zion" which King David captured and made into his capital city.
- It was in Jerusalem that David's son Solomon built the first temple in Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah, which was the mountain where Abraham had offered his son Isaac to God. The temple was rebuilt there after it was destroyed by the Babylonians.
- Because the temple was in Jerusalem, the major Jewish festivals were celebrated there.
- People normally referred to going "up" to Jerusalem since it is located in the mountains.

(See also: Babylon, **Christ**, David, Jebusites, **Jesus**, Solomon, temple, **Zion**)

Bible References:

- **Galatians 4:26-27**
- **John 2:13**
- **Luke 4:9-11**
- **Luke 13:5**
- **Mark 3:7-8**
- **Mark 3:20-22**
- **Matthew 3:6**
- **Matthew 4:23-25**
- **Matthew 20:17**

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:5** David conquered **Jerusalem** and made it his capital city.

- 18:2 In **Jerusalem**, Solomon built the Temple for which his father David had planned and gathered materials.
- 20:7 They (Babylonians) captured the city of **Jerusalem**, destroyed the Temple, and took away all the treasures of the city and the Temple.
- 20:12 So, after seventy years in exile, a small group of Jews returned to the city of **Jerusalem** in Judah.
- 38:1 About three years after Jesus first began preaching and teaching publicly, Jesus told his disciples that he wanted to celebrate this Passover with them in **Jerusalem**, and that he would be killed there.
- 38:2 After Jesus and the disciples arrived in **Jerusalem**, Judas went to the Jewish leaders and offered to betray Jesus to them in exchange for money.
- 42:8 "It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to receive forgiveness for their sins. They will do this starting in **Jerusalem**, and then go to all people groups everywhere."
- 42:11 Forty days after Jesus rose from the dead, he told his disciples, "Stay in **Jerusalem** until you receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3389, H3390, G24140, G24150, G24190

Nehemiah References:

1:2; 1:3; 2:11; 2:12; 2:13; 2:17; 2:20; 3:8; 3:9; 3:12; 4:7; 4:8; 4:22; 6:7; 7:2; 7:3; 7:6; 8:15; 11:1; 11:2; 11:3; 11:4; 11:6; 11:22; 12:27; 12:28; 12:29; 12:43; 13:6; 13:7; 13:15; 13:16; 13:19; 13:20

Jew, Jewish

Definition:

Jews are people who are descendants of Abraham's grandson Jacob. The word "Jew" comes from the word "Judah."

- People began to call the Israelites "Jews" after they returned to Judah from their exile in Babylon.
- Jesus the Messiah was Jewish. However, the Jewish religious leaders rejected Jesus and demanded that he be killed.

(See also: Abraham, Jacob, Israel, Babylon, Jewish leaders)

Bible References:

- Acts 2:5
- Acts 10:28
- Acts 14:5-7
- Colossians 3:11
- John 2:14
- Matthew 28:15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 20:11 The Israelites were now called **Jews** and most of them had lived their whole lives in Babylon.
- 20:12 So, after seventy years in exile, a small group of **Jews** returned to the city of Jerusalem in Judah.
- 37:10 Many of the **Jews** believed in Jesus because of this miracle.
- 37:11 But the religious leaders of the **Jews** were jealous, so they gathered together to plan how they could kill Jesus and Lazarus.
- 40:2 Pilate commanded that they write, "King of the **Jews**" on a sign and put it on the cross above Jesus' head.
- 46:6 Right away, Saul began preaching to the **Jews** in Damascus, saying, "Jesus is the Son of God!"

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3054, H3061, H3062, H3064, H3066, G24500, G24510, G24520, G24530, G24540

Nehemiah References:

1:2; 2:16; 4:1; 4:2; 4:12; 5:1; 5:8; 5:17; 6:6; 13:23

Joab

Definition:

Joab was an important military leader for King David throughout David's entire reign.

- Before David became king, Joab had already been one of his loyal followers.
- Later, during David's reign as king over Israel, Joab became the commander of King David's army.
- Joab was also King David's nephew, since his mother was one of David's sisters.
- When David's son Absalom betrayed him by trying to take over his kingship, Joab killed Absalom in order to protect the king.
- Joab was a very aggressive fighter and killed many people who were enemies of Israel.

(See also: **Absalom**, David)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 2:16-17**
- **1 Kings 1:7**
- **1 Samuel 26:6-8**
- **2 Samuel 2:18**
- Nehemiah 7:11

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3097

Nehemiah References:

7:11

Joel

Definition:

Joel was a prophet who probably lived during the reign of King Joash of Judah. There were also several other men in the Old Testament named Joel.

- The book of Joel is one of twelve short prophetic books in the last section of the Old Testament.
- The only personal information we have about the prophet Joel is that his father's name was Pethuel.
- In his sermon at Pentecost, the apostle Peter quoted from the book of Joel.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **Joash**, **Judah**, **Pentecost**)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 6:33-35**
- **1 Samuel 8:1-3**
- **Acts 2:16**
- **Ezra 10:43**
- **Joel 1:2**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3100, G24930

Nehemiah References:

11:9

Jonathan

Definition:

Jonathan was the name of at least ten men in the Old Testament. The name means “Yahweh has given.”

- David’s best friend, Jonathan, is the most well-known Jonathan in the Bible with this name. This Jonathan was King Saul’s oldest son.
- Other Jonathans mentioned in the Old Testament include a descendant of Moses; a nephew of King David; several priests, including a son of Abiathar; and an Old Testament scribe in whose house the prophet Jeremiah was imprisoned.

(See also: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Abiathar, David, Moses, Jeremiah, priest, Saul (OT), scribe)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 1:41-42
- 1 Samuel 14:1
- 1 Samuel 20:2
- 2 Samuel 1:3-5

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3083, H3129

Nehemiah References:

12:11; 12:14; 12:35

Joshua

Definition:

There were several Israelite men named Joshua in the Bible. The most well-known is Joshua son of Nun who was Moses' helper and who later became an important leader of God's people.

- Joshua was one of the twelve spies whom Moses sent to explore the Promised Land.
- Along with Caleb, Joshua urged the Israelite people to obey God's command to enter the Promised Land and defeat the Canaanites.
- Many years later, after Moses died, God appointed Joshua to lead the people of Israel into the Promised Land.
- In the first and most famous battle against the Canaanites, Joshua led the Israelites to defeat the city of Jericho.
- The Old Testament book of Joshua tells how Joshua led the Israelites in taking control of the Promised Land and how he assigned each tribe of Israel a part of the land to live on.
- Joshua son of Jehozadak is mentioned in the books of Haggai and Zechariah; he was a high priest who helped rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
- There are several other men named Joshua mentioned in the genealogies and elsewhere in the Bible.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Canaan, Haggai, Jericho, Moses, Promised Land, Zechariah (OT))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 7:25-27
- Deuteronomy 3:21
- Exodus 17:10
- Joshua 1:3
- Numbers 27:19

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 14:4 When the Israelites reached the edge of Canaan, Moses chose twelve men, one from each tribe of Israel. He gave the men instructions to go and spy on the land to see what it was like.

- 14:6 Immediately Caleb and **Joshua**, the other two spies, said, “It is true that the people of Canaan are tall and strong, but we can certainly defeat them!”
- 14:8 “Except for **Joshua** and Caleb, everyone who is twenty years old or older will die there and never enter the Promised Land.”
- 14:14 Moses was now very old, so God chose **Joshua** to help him lead the people.
- 14:15 **Joshua** was a good leader because he trusted and obeyed God.
- 15:3 After the people crossed the Jordan River, God told **Joshua** how to attack the powerful city of Jericho.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3091, G24240

Nehemiah References:

8:17

joy, joyful, rejoice, glad

Definition:

joy

The term “joy” refers to a feeling of delight or deep satisfaction. The related term “joyful” describes a person who feels very glad and is full of deep happiness.

- A person feels joy when he has a deep sense that what he is experiencing is very good.
- God is the one who gives true joy to people.
- Having joy does not depend on pleasant circumstances. God can give people joy even when very difficult things are happening in their lives.
- Sometimes places are described as joyful, such as houses or cities. This means that the people who live there are joyful.

rejoice

The term “rejoice” means to be full of joy and gladness.

- This term often refers to being very happy about the good things that God has done.
- It could be translated as “be very happy” or “be very glad” or “be full of joy.”
- When Mary said “my soul rejoices in God my Savior,” she meant “God my Savior has made me very happy” or “I feel so joyful because of what God my Savior has done for me.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “joy” could also be translated as “gladness” or “delight” or “great happiness.”
- The phrase, “be joyful” could be translated as “rejoice” or “be very glad” or it could be translated “be very happy in God’s goodness.”
- A person who is joyful could be described as “very happy” or “delighted” or “deeply glad.”
- A phrase such as “make a joyful shout” could be translated as “shout in a way that shows you are very happy.”
- A “joyful city” or “joyful house” could be translated as “city where joyful people live” or “house full of joyful people” or “city whose people are very happy.” (See: metonymy)

Bible References:

- Nehemiah 8:10

- Psalm 48:2
- Isaiah 56:6-7
- Jeremiah 15:15-16
- Matthew 2:9-10
- Luke 15:7
- Luke 19:37-38
- John 3:29
- Acts 16:32-34
- Romans 5:1-2
- Romans 15:30-32
- Galatians 5:23
- Philippians 4:10-13
- 1 Thessalonians 1:6-7
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16
- Philemon 1:4-7
- James 1:2
- 3 John 1:1-4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 33:7 “The rocky ground is a person who hears God’s word and accepts it with **joy**.”
- 34:4 “The kingdom of God is also like hidden treasure that someone hid in a field… Another man found the treasure and then buried it again. He was so filled with **joy**, that he went and sold everything he had and used the money to buy that field.”
- 41:7 The women were full of fear and great **joy**. They ran to tell the disciples the good news.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1523, H1524, H1525, H2302, H2304, H2305, H2654, H2898, H4885, H5937, H5947, H5965, H5970, H6342, H6670, H7440, H7442, H7444, H7445, H7797, H7832, H8055, H8056, H8057, H8342, H8643, G00200, G00210, G21650, G21670, G27440, G46400, G47960, G49130, G54630, G54790

Nehemiah References:

8:10; 8:12; 8:17; 12:27; 12:43; 12:44

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

Nehemiah References:

11:4; 11:9; 11:25; 11:36; 12:8

Judea, Judah

Definition:

The term “Judea” refers to an area of land in ancient Israel. It is sometimes used in a narrow sense and other times in a broad sense.

- Sometimes “Judea” is used in a narrow sense to refer only to the province located in the southern part of ancient Israel just west of the Dead Sea. Some translations call this province “Judah.”
- Other times “Judea” has a broad sense and refers to all the provinces of ancient Israel, including Galilee, Samaria, Perea, Idumea and Judea (Judah).
- If translators want to make the distinction clear, the broad sense of Judea could be translated as “Judea Country” and the narrow sense could be translated as “Judea Province,” or “Judah Province” since this is the part of ancient Israel where the tribe of Judah had originally lived.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Galilee, Edom, Judah, Judah, Samaria)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:14
- Acts 2:9
- Acts 9:32
- Acts 12:19
- John 3:22-24
- Luke 1:5
- Luke 4:44
- Luke 5:17
- Mark 10:1-4
- Matthew 2:1
- Matthew 2:5
- Matthew 2:22-23
- Matthew 3:1-3

- **Matthew 19:1**

Word Data:

- Strong's: G24530

Nehemiah References:

1:2; 2:5; 2:7; 4:10; 4:16; 5:14; 6:7; 6:17; 6:18; 7:6; 11:3; 11:20; 11:24; 12:31; 12:32; 12:44; 13:12; 13:15; 13:16; 13:17

judge, judgment

Definition:

The terms “judge” and “judgment” often refer to making a decision about whether or not something is good, wise, or right. However, these terms can also refer to actions performed by a person as the result of a decision, usually in the context of deciding that something is bad, wrong, or evil.

- The terms “judge” and “judgment” can also mean “to cause harm to” (usually because God has decided a person or nation’s actions are wicked).
- The “judgment of God” often refers to his decision to condemn something or someone as sinful.
- God’s judgment usually includes punishing people for their sin.
- The term “judge” can also mean “condemn.” God instructs his people not to judge each other in this way.
- Another meaning is “arbitrate between” or “judge between,” as in deciding which person is right in a dispute between them.
- In some contexts, God’s “judgments” are what he has decided is right and just. They are similar to his decrees, laws, or precepts.
- “Judgment” can refer to wise decision-making ability. A person who lacks “judgment” does not have the wisdom to make wise decisions.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate to “judge” could include to “decide” or to “condemn” or to “punish” or to “decree.”
- The term “judgment” could be translated as “punishment” or “decision” or “verdict” or “decree” or “condemnation.”
- In some contexts, the phrase “in the judgment” could also be translated as “on judgment day” or “during the time when God judges people.”

(See also: **decree**, **judge**, **judgment day**, just, law, law)

Bible References:

- **1 John 4:17**
- **1 Kings 3:9**
- **Acts 10:42-43**

- Isaiah 3:14
- James 2:4
- Luke 6:37
- Micah 3:9-11
- Psalm 54:1

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 19:16 The prophets warned the people that if they did not stop doing evil and start obeying God, then God would **judge** them as guilty, and he would punish them.
- 21:8 A king is someone who rules over a kingdom and **judges** the people. The Messiah would come would be the perfect king who would sit on the throne of his ancestor David. He would reign over the whole world forever, and who would always **judge** honestly and make the right decisions.
- 39:4 The high priest tore his clothes in anger and shouted to the other religious leaders, "We do not need any more witnesses! You have heard him say that he is the Son of God. What is your **judgment**?"
- 50:14 But God will **judge** everyone who does not believe in Jesus. He will throw them into hell, where they will weep and grind their teeth in anguish forever.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0148, H0430, H1777, H1778, H1779, H1780, H1781, H1782, H2940, H4055, H4941, H6414, H6415, H6416, H6417, H6419, H6485, H8196, H8199, H8201, G01440, G03500, G09680, G11060, G12520, G13410, G13450, G13480, G13490, G29170, G29190, G29200, G29220, G29230, G42320

Nehemiah References:

1:7; 9:13; 9:29; 10:29

just, justice, unjust, injustice, justify, justification

Definition:

"Just" and "justice" refer to treating people fairly according to God's laws. Human laws that reflect God's standard of right behavior toward others are also just.

- To be "just" is to act in a fair and right way toward others. It also implies honesty and integrity to do what is morally right in God's eyes.
- To act "justly" means to treat people in a way that is right, good, and proper according to God's laws.
- To receive "justice" means to be treated fairly under the law, either being protected by the law or being punished for breaking the law.
- Sometimes the term "just" has the broader meaning of "righteous" or "following God's laws."

The terms "unjust" and "unjustly" refer to treating people in an unfair and often harmful manner.

- An "injustice" is something bad that is done to someone that the person did not deserve. It refers to treating people unfairly.
- Injustice also means that some people are treated badly while others are treated well.
- Someone who is acting in an unjust way is being "partial" or "prejudiced" because he is not treating people equally.

The terms "justify" and "justification" refer to causing a guilty person to be righteous. Only God can truly justify people.

- When God justifies people, he forgives their sins and makes it as though they have no sin. He justifies sinners who repent and trust in Jesus to save them from their sins.
- "Justification" refers to what God does when he forgives a person's sins and declares that person to be righteous in his sight.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate "just" could include "morally right" or "fair."
- The term "justice" could be translated as "fair treatment" or "deserved consequences."
- To "act justly" could be translated as "treat fairly" or "behave in a just way."

- In some contexts, “just” could be translated as “righteous” or “upright.”
- Depending on the context, “unjust” could also be translated as “unfair” or “partial” or “unrighteous.”
- The phrase “the unjust” could be translated as “the unjust ones” or “unjust people” or “people who treat others unfairly” or “unrighteous people” or “people who disobey God.”
- The term “unjustly” could be translated as “in an unfair manner” or “wrongly” or “unfairly.”
- Ways to translate “injustice” could include, “wrong treatment” or “unfair treatment” or “acting unfairly.” (See: abstractnouns)
- Other ways to translate “justify” could include “declare (someone) to be righteous” or “cause (someone) to be righteous.”
- The term “justification” could be translated as “being declared righteous” or “becoming righteous” or “causing people to be righteous.”
- The phrase “resulting in justification” could be translated as “so that God justified many people” or “which resulted in God causing people to be righteous.”
- The phrase “for our justification” could be translated as “in order that we could be made righteous by God.”

(See also: forgive, guilt, judge, righteous, righteous)

Bible References:

- Genesis 44:16
- 1 Chronicles 18:14
- Isaiah 4:3-4
- Jeremiah 22:3
- Ezekiel 18:16-17
- Micah 3:8
- Matthew 5:43-45
- Matthew 11:19

- Matthew 23:23-24
- Luke 18:3
- Luke 18:8
- Luke 18:13-14
- Luke 21:20-22
- Luke 23:41
- Acts 13:38-39
- Acts 28:4
- Romans 4:1-3
- Galatians 3:6-9
- Galatians 3:11
- Galatians 5:3-4
- Titus 3:6-7
- Hebrews 6:10
- James 2:24
- Revelation 15:3-4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 17:9 David ruled with **justice** and faithfulness for many years, and God blessed him.
- 18:13 Some of these kings (of Judah) were good men who ruled **justly** and worshiped God.
- 19:16 They (the prophets) all told the people to stop worshiping idols and to start showing **justice** and mercy to others.
- 50:17 Jesus will rule his kingdom with peace and **justice**, and he will be with his people forever.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H2555, H3477, H4941, H5765, H5766, H5767, H6662, H6663, H6664, H6666, H8003, H8264, H8636, G00910, G00930, G00940, G13420, G13440, G13450, G13460, G13470, G17380

Nehemiah References:

9:13

king, kingship

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “king” refers to a man who is the supreme ruler of a particular group of people or a particular region of land (or both).

- In biblical times, a king was usually chosen to rule on the basis of family relation to the previous king(s). When a king died, usually his oldest son became the next king.
- The Bible often refers to God is as a king who rules over the entire universe (in a general sense) and over his people (in a specific sense).
- The New Testament refers to Jesus as a king in various ways, including: “king of the Jews;” “king of Israel;” and “king of kings.”
- Depending on the context, the term “king” might also be translated as “supreme chief” or “sovereign ruler.”
- The phrase “king of kings” might be translated as “king who rules over all other kings” or “supreme ruler who has authority over all other rulers.”

(See also: authority, **Herod Antipas**, kingdom, **kingdom of God**)

Bible References:

- **1 Timothy 6:15-16**
- **2 Kings 5:18**
- **2 Samuel 5:3**
- **Acts 7:9-10**
- **Acts 13:22**
- **John 1:49-51**
- **Luke 1:5**
- **Luke 22:24-25**
- **Matthew 5:35**
- **Matthew 14:9**

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **8:6** One night, the Pharaoh, which is what the Egyptians called their kings, had two dreams that disturbed him greatly.

- 16:1 The Israelites had no **king**, so everyone did what they thought was right for them.
- 16:18 Finally, the people asked God for a **king** like all the other nations had.
- 17:5 Eventually, Saul died in battle, and David became **king** of Israel. He was a good **king**, and the people loved him.
- 21:6 God's prophets also said that the Messiah would be a prophet, a priest, and a **king**.
- 48:14 David was the **king** of Israel, but Jesus is the **king** of the entire universe!

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4427, H4428, H4430, G09350, G09360

Nehemiah References:

1:11; 2:1; 2:2; 2:3; 2:4; 2:5; 2:6; 2:7; 2:8; 2:9; 2:14; 2:18; 2:19; 3:15; 3:25; 5:4; 5:14; 6:6; 6:7; 7:6; 9:22; 9:24; 9:32; 9:34; 9:37; 11:23; 11:24; 13:6; 13:26

kingdom

Definition:

A kingdom is a group of people ruled by a king. It also refers to the realm or political regions over which a king or other ruler has control and authority.

- A kingdom can be of any geographical size. A king might govern a nation or country or only one city.
- The term “kingdom” can also refer to a spiritual reign or authority, as in the term “kingdom of God.”
- God is the ruler of all creation, but the term “kingdom of God” especially refers to his reign and authority over the people who have believed in Jesus and who have submitted to his authority.
- The Bible also talks about Satan having a “kingdom” in which he temporarily rules over many things on this earth. His kingdom is evil and is referred to as “darkness.”

Translation Suggestions:

- When referring to a physical region that is ruled over by a king, the term “kingdom” could be translated as “country (ruled by a king)” or “king’s territory” or “region ruled by a king.”
- In a spiritual sense, “kingdom” could be translated as “ruling” or “reigning” or “controlling” or “governing.”
- One way to translate “kingdom of priests” might be “spiritual priests who are ruled by God.”
- The phrase “kingdom of light” could be translated as “God’s reign that is good like light” or “when God, who is light, rules people” or “the light and goodness of God’s kingdom.” It is best to keep the word “light” in this expression since that is a very important term in the Bible.
- Note that the term “kingdom” is different from an empire, in which an emperor rules over several countries.

(See also: authority, king, **kingdom of God**, **kingdom of Israel**, Judah, **Judah**, priest)

Bible References:

- **1 Thessalonians 2:12**
- **2 Timothy 4:17-18**
- **Colossians 1:13-14**

- John 18:36
- Mark 3:24
- Matthew 4:7-9
- Matthew 13:19
- Matthew 16:28
- Revelation 1:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 13:2 God said to Moses and the people of Israel, “If you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my prized possession, a **kingdom** of priests, and a holy nation.”
- 18:4 God was angry with Solomon and, as a punishment for Solomon’s unfaithfulness, he promised to divide the nation of Israel in two **kingdoms** after Solomon’s death.
- 18:7 Ten of the tribes of the nation of Israel rebelled against Rehoboam. Only two tribes remained faithful to him. These two tribes became the **kingdom** of Judah.
- 18:8 The other ten tribes of the nation of Israel that rebelled against Rehoboam appointed a man named Jeroboam to be their king. They set up their **kingdom** in the northern part of the land and were called the **kingdom** of Israel.
- 21:8 A king is someone who rules over a **kingdom** and judges the people.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4410, H4437, H4438, H4467, H4468, H4474, H4475, G09320

Nehemiah References:

9:22; 9:35

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

Nehemiah References:

2:16; 4:11; 4:15; 6:16; 8:12; 9:10; 9:14; 10:28; 13:10; 13:24

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

Nehemiah References:

2:16; 4:6; 4:11; 4:15; 4:16; 4:17; 4:19; 4:21; 5:13; 5:16; 6:3; 6:9; 6:16; 7:70; 7:71; 10:33; 10:37; 11:12; 11:16; 11:22; 13:10; 13:30

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

Nehemiah References:

8:intro; 8:1; 8:2; 8:3; 8:7; 8:8; 8:9; 8:13; 8:14; 8:18; 9:intro; 9:3; 9:14; 9:26; 9:29; 9:34; 10:28; 10:29; 10:34; 10:36; 12:44; 13:intro; 13:3

law, principle

Definition:

A “law” is a legal rule that is usually written down and enforced by someone in authority. A “principle” is a guideline for decision-making and behavior, and is usually not written down or enforced. However, sometimes the term “law” is used to mean a “principle.”

- A “law” is similar to a “decree,” but the term “law” is generally used to refer to something written rather than spoken.
- Both “law” and “principle” can refer to a general rule or belief that guides a person’s behavior.
- This meaning of “law” is different from its meaning in the term “law of Moses,” where it refers to commands and instructions that God gave the Israelites.
- When a general law is being referred to, “law” could be translated as “principle” or “general rule.”

(See also: law of Moses, **decree**, **command**, declare)

Bible References:

- **Deuteronomy 4:2**
- **Esther 3:8-9**
- **Exodus 12:12-14**
- **Genesis 26:5**
- **John 18:31**
- **Romans 7:1**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1285, H1881, H1882, H2706, H2708, H2710, H4687, H4941, H6310, H7560, H8451, G17850, G35480, G35510, G47470

Nehemiah References:

9:13

Levi, Levite

Definition:

Levi was Jacob's third son. He was Leah's third son. His descendants became one of the tribes of Israel.

- The tribe descended from him was known as the "tribe of Levi" or the "Levites."
- The name Levi is similar to the Hebrew word for "join to."
- Unlike the other tribes, the tribe of Levi did not inherit a unified area of land in Canaan. Instead, they inherited various cities scattered throughout the regions belonging to the other tribes.
- The tribe of Levi was responsible for taking care of the tabernacle (and later, the temple) and conducting religious rituals, including offering sacrifices and prayers for the Israelite people.
- In the Old Testament, it is not always clear whether the term "Levite" refers generally to a descendant of Levi or specifically to a person who served in the temple helping the priests.
- The Old Testament law prescribed that all priests were to be chosen from the tribe of Levi. The Levite priests were set apart and dedicated for the special work of serving God in the temple.
- Two other men named "Levi" were ancestors of Jesus. Their names are listed in the genealogy in the gospel of Luke.
- Jesus' disciple Matthew was also called Levi.

(See also: twelve tribes of Israel, priest, sacrifice, temple, Jacob, Leah, Matthew)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 2:1-2
- 1 Kings 8:3-5
- Acts 4:36-37
- Genesis 29:34
- John 1:19-21
- Luke 10:32

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3878, H3879, H3881, G30170, G30180, G30190, G30200

Nehemiah References:

3:17; 7:1; 7:43; 7:73; 8:7; 8:9; 8:11; 8:13; 9:4; 9:5; 9:38; 10:9; 10:28; 10:34; 10:37; 10:38; 10:39; 11:3; 11:15; 11:16; 11:18; 11:20; 11:22; 11:36; 12:1; 12:8; 12:22; 12:23; 12:24; 12:27; 12:30; 12:44; 12:47; 13:5; 13:10; 13:13; 13:22; 13:29; 13:30

livestock, animals

Definition:

The term “livestock” refers to animals which are raised to provide food and other useful products. Some types of livestock are also trained as work animals.

- Kinds of livestock include sheep, cattle, goats, horses, and donkeys.
- In Biblical times, wealth was partly measured by how much livestock a person had.
- Livestock are used to produce items such as wool, milk, cheese, housing materials, and clothing.
- This term could also be translated as “farm animals.”

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: cow, ox, donkey, goat, horse, sheep)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 3:15-17
- Genesis 30:29
- Joshua 1:14-15
- Nehemiah 9:36-37
- Numbers 3:41

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0929, H4399, H4735

Nehemiah References:

2:12; 2:14; 9:37; 10:36

loins

Definition:

The term “loins” refers to the part of the body of an animal or person that is between the lower ribs and the hip bones, also known as the lower abdomen.

- The expression “gird up the loins” refers to preparing to work hard. It comes from the custom of tucking the bottom of one’s robe into a belt around the waist in order to move with ease.
- The term “loins” is often used in the Bible to refer to the lower back part of an animal that was sacrificed.
- In the Bible, the term “loins” often refers figuratively and euphemistically to a man’s reproductive organs as the source of his descendants. (See: **euphemism**)
- The expression “will come from your loins” could also be translated as “will be your offspring” or “will be born from your seed” or “God will cause to come from you.” (See: **euphemism**)
- When referring to a part of the body, this could also be translated as “abdomen” or “hips” or “waist,” depending on the context.

(See also: **descendant**, gird, **children**)

Bible References:

- **1 Peter 1:13**
- **2 Chronicles 6:9**
- **Deuteronomy 33:11**
- **Genesis 37:34**
- **Job 15:27**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2504, H3409, H3689, H4975, G37510

Nehemiah References:

4:18

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

Nehemiah References:

1:11; 3:5; 4:14; 8:10; 10:29

lots, casting lots

Definition:

In the Bible, a “lot” is a marked object(s) used as a way of making a fair and/or random decision, usually for the purpose of selecting a specific person within a group. “Casting lots” refers to the process of using “lots” to make a fair and/or random decision.

- In modern times, some cultures “draw” or “pull out” lots using a bunch of straws. Someone holds the straws so that no one can see how long they are. Each person pulls out a straw and the one who picks the longest (or shortest) straw is the one who is chosen.
- In biblical times, the objects cast (the “lots”) were probably small marked stones. It is unknown how the “lots” actually indicated a decision, but it probably involved dropping or throwing marked stones on the ground.
- The phrase “casting lots” can be translated as “tossing lots” or “throwing lots” or “rolling lots.” The translation of “cast” should not sound like the lots were being thrown a long distance.
- If a decision is made “by lot,” this could be translated as “by casting lots” or “by throwing lots,” etc.

(See also: Elizabeth, priest, Zechariah (OT), Zechariah (NT))

Bible References:

- Jonah 1:7
- Luke 1:8-10
- Luke 23:34
- Mark 15:22
- Matthew 27:35-37
- Psalms 22:18-19

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1486, H5307, G28190, G29750

Nehemiah References:

10:34; 11:1

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

Nehemiah References:

1:5

man of God

Definition:

The expression “man of God” is a respectful way of referring to a prophet of Yahweh. It is also used to refer to an angel of Yahweh.

- When referring to a prophet, this could also be translated as “man who belongs to God” or “man whom God has chosen” or “man who serves God.”
- When referring to an angel this could also be translated as “messenger of God” or “your angel” or “heavenly being from God who looks like a man.”

(See also: angel, honor, prophet)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 23:12-14
- 1 Kings 12:22
- 1 Samuel 9:9-11

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0376, H0430, G04440, G23160

Nehemiah References:

12:24; 12:36

manna

Definition:

Manna was a white, grain-like food that God provided for the Israelites to eat during the 40 years of living in the wilderness after they left Egypt.

- Manna looked like white flakes which appeared each morning on the ground under the dew. It tasted sweet, like honey.
- The Israelites gathered the manna flakes every day except on the Sabbath.
- On the day before the Sabbath, God told the Israelites to gather twice the amount of manna so they would not have to gather it on their day of rest.
- The word “manna” means “what is it?”
- In the Bible, manna is also referred to as “bread from heaven” and “grain from heaven.”

Translation Suggestions

- Other ways to translate this term could include “thin white flakes of food” or “food from heaven.”
- Also consider how this term is translated in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: bread, desert, grain, heaven, Sabbath)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 8:3
- Exodus 16:27
- Hebrews 9:3-5
- John 6:30-31
- Joshua 5:12

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4478, G31310

Nehemiah References:

9:20

memorial, memorial offering

Definition:

The term “memorial” refers to an action or object that causes someone or something to be remembered.

- This word is also used as an adjective to describe something that is to remind them of something, as in a “memorial offering,” a “memorial portion” of a sacrifice or “memorial stones.”
- In the Old Testament memorial offerings were made so the Israelites would remember what God had done for them.
- God told the Israelite priests to wear special clothing that had memorial stones. These stones had the names of the twelve tribes of Israel engraved on them. These were perhaps to remind them of God’s faithfulness to them.
- In the New Testament, God honored a man named Cornelius because of his charitable deeds for the poor. These deeds were said to be a “memorial” before God.

Translation Suggestions:

- This could also be translated as “lasting reminder.”
- A “memorial stone” could be translated as a “stone to remind them (of something).”

Bible References:

- Acts 10:4
- Exodus 12:12-14
- Isaiah 66:3
- Joshua 4:6-7
- Leviticus 23:23-25

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2142, H2146, G34220

Nehemiah References:

2:20

mercy, merciful

Definition:

The terms “mercy” and “merciful” refer to helping people who are in need, especially when they are in a lowly or humbled condition.

- The term “mercy” can also include the meaning of not punishing people for something they have done wrong.
- A powerful person such as a king is described as “merciful” when he treats people kindly instead of harming them.
- Being merciful also means to forgive someone who has done something wrong against us.
- We show mercy when we help people who are in great need.
- God is merciful to us, and he wants us to be merciful to others.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “mercy” could be translated as “kindness” or “compassion” or “pity.”
- The term “merciful” could be translated as “showing pity” or “being kind to” or “forgiving.”
- To “show mercy to” or “have mercy on” could be translated as “treat kindly” or “be compassionate toward.”

(See also: compassion, forgive)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 1:3-5
- 1 Timothy 1:13
- Daniel 9:17
- Exodus 34:6
- Genesis 19:16
- Hebrews 10:28-29
- James 2:13
- Luke 6:35-36
- Matthew 9:27

- Philippians 2:25-27
- Psalms 41:4-6
- Romans 12:1

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 19:16 They (the prophets) all told the people to stop worshiping idols and to start showing justice and **mercy** to others.
- 19:17 He (Jeremiah) sank down into the mud that was in the bottom of the well, but then the king had **mercy** on him and ordered his servants to pull Jeremiah out of the well before he died.
- 20:12 The Persian Empire was strong but **merciful** to the people it conquered.
- 27:11 Then Jesus asked the law expert, “What do you think? Which one of the three men was a neighbor to the man who was robbed and beaten?” He replied, “The one who was **merciful** to him.”
- 32:11 But Jesus said to him, “No, I want you to go home and tell your friends and family about everything that God has done for you and how he has had **mercy** on you.”
- 34:9 “But the tax collector stood far away from the religious ruler, did not even look up to heaven. Instead, he pounded on his chest and prayed, ‘God, please be **merciful** to me because I am a sinner.’”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2551, H2603, H2604, H2616, H2617, H2623, H3722, H3727, H4627, H4819, H5503, H5504, H5505, H5506, H6014, H7349, H7355, H7356, H7359, G16530, G16550, G16560, G24330, G24360, G36280, G36290, G37410, G46980

Nehemiah References:

1:11; 9:19; 9:27; 9:28; 9:31

messenger

Definition:

The term “messenger” refers to someone who is given a message to tell others.

- In ancient times, a messenger would be sent from the battlefield to tell people back in the city what was happening.
- An angel is a special kind of messenger whom God sends to give people messages. Some translations translate “angel” as “messenger.”
- John the Baptist was called a messenger who came before Jesus to announce the Messiah’s coming and to prepare people to receive him.
- Jesus’ apostles were his messengers to go share with other people the good news about the kingdom of God.

(See also: **angel**, **apostle**, **John (the Baptist)**)

Bible References:

- **1 Kings 19:1-3**
- **1 Samuel 6:21**
- **2 Kings 1:1-2**
- **Luke 7:27**
- **Matthew 11:10**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1319, H4397, H4398, H5046, H5894, H6735, H6737, H7323, H7971, G00320, G06520

Nehemiah References:

6:3

might, mighty, mighty works

Definition:

The terms “mighty” and “might” refer to having great strength or power.

- Often the word “might” is another word for “strength.” When talking about God, it can mean “power.”
- The phrase “mighty men” often refers to men who are courageous and victorious in battle. David’s band of faithful men who helped protect and defend him were often called “mighty men.”
- God is also referred to as the “mighty one.”
- The phrase “mighty works” usually refers to the amazing things God does, especially miracles.
- This term is related to the term “almighty,” which is a common description for God, meaning that he has complete power.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “mighty” could be translated as “powerful” or “amazing” or “very strong.”
- The phrase “his might” could be translated as “his strength” or “his power.”
- In Acts 7, Moses is described as a man who was “mighty in word and deed.” This could be translated as “Moses spoke powerful words from God and did miraculous things” or “Moses spoke God’s word powerfully and did many amazing things.”
- Depending on the context, “mighty works” could be translated as “amazing things that God does” or “miracles” or “God doing things with power.”
- The term “might” could also be translated as “power” or “great strength.”
- Do not confuse this term with the English word that is used to express a possibility, as in “It might rain.”

(See also: **Almighty**, miracle, **power**, **strength**)

Bible References:

- **Acts 7:22**
- **Genesis 6:4**
- **Mark 9:38-39**
- **Matthew 11:23**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0046, H0047, H0117, H0202, H0386, H0410, H0430, H0533, H0650, H1219, H1368, H1369, H1396, H1397, H1419, H2220, H2389, H2428, H3201, H3524, H3581, H3966, H4101, H5794, H5797, H6099, H6105, H6108, H6184, H7227, H7580, H8623, H8624, G14110, G14150, G14980, G24780, G24790, G29000, G29040, G31670, G31730

Nehemiah References:

3:16; 9:11; 9:32; 11:14

miracle, wonder, sign

Definition:

A “miracle” is something amazing that is not possible unless God causes it to happen.

- Examples of miracles that Jesus did include calming a storm and healing a blind man.
- Miracles are sometimes called “wonders” because they cause people to be filled with wonder or amazement.
- The term “wonder” can also refer more generally to amazing displays of God’s power, such as when he created the heavens and the earth.
- Miracles can also be called “signs” because they are used as indicators or evidence that God is the all-powerful one who has complete authority over the universe.
- Some miracles were God’s acts of redemption, such as when he rescued the Israelites from being slaves in Egypt and when he protected Daniel from being hurt by lions.
- Other wonders were God’s acts of judgment, such as when he sent a worldwide flood in Noah’s time and when he brought terrible plagues on the land of Egypt during the time of Moses.
- Many of God’s miracles were the physical healings of sick people or bringing dead people back to life.
- God’s power was shown in Jesus when he healed people, calmed storms, walked on water, and raised people from the dead. These were all miracles.
- God also enabled the prophets and the apostles to perform miracles of healing and other things that were only possible through God’s power.

Translation Suggestions:

- Possible translations of “miracles” or “wonders” could include “impossible things that God does” or “powerful works of God” or “amazing acts of God.”
- The frequent expression “signs and wonders” could be translated as “proofs and miracles” or “miraculous works that prove God’s power” or “amazing miracles that show how great God is.”
- Note that this meaning of a miraculous sign is different from a sign that gives proof or evidence for something. The two can be related.

(See also: power, prophet, apostle, sign)

Bible References:

- 2 Thessalonians 2:8-10
- Acts 4:17

- Acts 4:22
- Daniel 4:1-3
- Deuteronomy 13:1
- Exodus 3:19-22
- John 2:11
- Matthew 13:58

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 16:8 Gideon asked God for two **signs** so he could be sure that God would use him to save Israel.
- 19:14 God did many **miracles** through Elisha.
- 37:10 Many of the Jews believed in Jesus because of this **miracle**.
- 43:6 “Men of Israel, Jesus was a man who did many mighty **signs** and **wonders** by the power of God, as you have seen and already know.”
- 49:2 Jesus did many **miracles** that prove he is God. He walked on water, calmed storms, healed many sick people, drove out demons, raised the dead to life, and turned five loaves of bread and two small fish into enough food for over 5,000 people.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0226, H0852, H2368, H2858, H4150, H4159, H4864, H5251, H5824, H5953, H6381, H6382, H6383, H6395, H6725, H7560, H7583, H8047, H8074, H8539, H8540, G08800, G12130, G12290, G14110, G15690, G17180, G17700, G18390, G22850, G22960, G22970, G31670, G39020, G45910, G45920, G50590

Nehemiah References:

9:10; 9:17

Mishael

Definition:

Mishael is the name of three men in the Old Testament.

- One man named Mishael was a cousin of Aaron. When two of Aaron's sons were killed by God after they offered incense in a away that did not follow what God had told them to do, Mishael and his brother were given the task of carrying the dead bodies outside the Israelite camp.
- Another man named Mishael stood beside Ezra when he publicly read the rediscovered law.
- During the time when the people of Israel were in exile in Babylon, a young man named Mishael was also captured and forced to live in Babylon. The Babylonians gave him the name, "Meshach." He, along with his companions, Azariah (Shadrach) and Hananiah (Abednego), refused to worship the king's statue and were thrown into a fiery furnace.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Aaron, Azariah, Babylon, Daniel, Hananiah)

Bible References:

- Daniel 1:6-7
- Daniel 2:17-18

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4332, H4333

Nehemiah References:

8:4

Mizpah

Definition:

Mizpah is the name of several towns mentioned in the Old Testament. It means “look-out point” or “watchtower.”

- When David was being pursued by Saul, he left his parents in Mizpah, under the protection of the king of Moab.
- One city called Mizpah was located on the border between the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. It was a major military center.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: David, **Judah**, **kingdom of Israel**, Moab, **Saul (OT)**)

Bible References:

- **1 Kings 15:20-22**
- **1 Samuel 7:5-6**
- **1 Samuel 7:10-11**
- **Jeremiah 40:5-6**
- **Judges 10:17-18**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4708, H4709

Nehemiah References:

3:7; 3:15; 3:19

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

Nehemiah References:

13:1; 13:23

mock, mocker, mockery, ridicule, scoff at, laughingstock

Definition:

The terms “mock,” “ridicule,” and “scoff at” all refer to making fun of someone, especially in a cruel way.

- Mocking often involves imitating people’s words or actions with the intent to embarrass them or show contempt for them.
- The Roman soldiers mocked or ridiculed Jesus when they put a robe on him and pretended to honor him as king.
- A group of young people ridiculed or scoffed at Elisha when they called him a name, making fun of his bald head.
- The term “scoff at” can also refer to ridiculing an idea that is not considered believable or important.
- A “mocker” is someone who mocks and ridicules consistently.

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 3:4
- Acts 2:12-13
- Galatians 6:6-8
- Genesis 39:13-15
- Luke 22:63-65
- Mark 10:34
- Matthew 9:23-24
- Matthew 20:19
- Matthew 27:29

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 21:12 Isaiah prophesied that people would spit on, **mock**, and beat the Messiah.
- 39:5 The Jewish leaders all answered the high priest, “He deserves to die!” Then they blindfolded Jesus, spit on him, hit him, and **mocked** him.
- 39:12 The soldiers whipped Jesus, and put a royal robe and a crown made of thorns on him. Then they **mocked** him by saying, “Look, the King of the Jews!”

- 40:4 Jesus was crucified between two robbers. One of them **mocked** Jesus, but the other said, “Do you have no fear of God?”
- 40:5 The Jewish leaders and the other people in the crowd **mocked** Jesus. They said to him, “If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross and save yourself! Then we will believe you.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1422, H2048, H2049, H2778, H2781, H3213, H3887, H3931, H3932, H3933, H3934, H3944, H3945, H4167, H4485, H4912, H5058, H5607, H6026, H6711, H7046, H7048, H7814, H7832, H8103, H8148, H8437, H8595, G15920, G17010, G17020, G17030, G23010, G26060, G34560, G55120

Nehemiah References:

2:19; 4:1

month, monthly

Definition:

The term “month” refers to a period of time lasting about four weeks. The number of days in each month varies depending on whether a lunar or solar calendar is used.

- In the lunar calendar, the length of each month is based on the amount of time it takes for the moon to go around the earth, about twenty-nine days. In this system there are twelve or thirteen months in a year. Despite the year being twelve or thirteen months, the first month is always called the same name even though it may be a different season.
- The “new moon,” or beginning phase of the moon with its sliver of light, marks the beginning of each month in the lunar calendar.
- All the names of months referred to in the Bible are those of the lunar calendar since this was the system used by the Israelites. Modern Jews still use this calendar for religious purposes.
- The modern-day solar calendar is based on how long it takes the earth to go around the sun (about 365 days). In this system, the year is always divided up into twelve months, with the length of each month ranging from twenty-eight to thirty-one days.

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 20:34
- Acts 18:9-11
- Hebrews 11:23
- Numbers 10:10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2320, H3391, H3393, G33760

Nehemiah References:

1:1; 2:1; 7:73; 8:2; 8:14; 9:1

Mordecai

Definition:

Mordecai was a Jewish man living in the country of Persia. He was the guardian of his cousin Esther, who later became the wife of the Persian king, Ahasuerus.

- While working at the royal palace, Mordecai overheard men plotting together to kill King Ahasuerus. He reported this and the king's life was saved.
- Some time later, Mordecai also found out about a plan to kill all the Jews in the kingdom of Persia. He advised Esther to appeal to the king to save her people.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Ahasuerus, Babylon, Esther, Persia)

Bible References:

- Esther 2:6
- Esther 3:6
- Esther 8:2
- Esther 10:2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4782

Nehemiah References:

7:7

Moses

Definition:

Moses was a prophet and leader of the Israelite people for over 40 years. He was the leader of the Israelite people when they came out of Egypt, as described in the book of Exodus.

- When Moses was a baby, Moses' parents put him in a basket in the reeds of the Nile River to hide him from the Egyptian Pharaoh. Moses' sister Miriam watched over him there. Moses' life was spared when the pharaoh's daughter found him and took him to the palace to raise him as her son.
- God chose Moses to free the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and to lead them to the Promised Land.
- After the Israelites' escape from Egypt and while they were wandering in the desert, God gave Moses two stone tablets with the Ten Commandments written on them.
- Near the end of his life, Moses saw the Promised Land, but did not get to live in it, because he disobeyed God.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **Miriam**, Promised Land, **Ten Commandments**)

Bible References:

- **Acts 7:21**
- **Acts 7:30**
- **Exodus 2:10**
- **Exodus 9:1**
- **Matthew 17:4**
- **Romans 5:14**

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **9:12** One day while **Moses** was taking care of his sheep, he saw a bush that was on fire.
- **12:5** **Moses** told the Israelites, "Stop being afraid! God will fight for you today and save you."
- **12:7** God told **Moses** to raise his hand over the sea and divide the waters.

- 12:12 When the Israelites saw that the Egyptians were dead, they trusted in God and believed that Moses was a prophet of God.
- 13:7 Then God wrote these Ten Commandments on two stone tablets and gave them to **Moses**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4872, H4873, G34750

Nehemiah References:

1:7; 1:8; 8:14; 9:14; 10:29; 13:1

mourn, mourner, weeping

Definition:

The terms “mourn” and “mourning” refer to expressing deep grief, usually in response to the death of someone.

- In many cultures, mourning includes specific outward behaviors that show this sadness and grief.
- The Israelites and other people groups in ancient times expressed mourning through loud wailing and lamenting. They also wore rough clothing made of sackcloth and put ashes on themselves.
- Hired mourners, usually women, would loudly weep and wail from the time of death until well after the body was put in the tomb.
- The typical period of mourning was seven days, but could last as long as thirty days (as for Moses and Aaron) or seventy days (as for Jacob).
- The Bible also uses the term figuratively to talk about “mourning” because of sin. This refers to feeling deeply grieved because sin hurts God and people.

(See also: sackcloth, sin)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 15:34-35
- 2 Samuel 1:11
- Genesis 23:2
- Luke 7:31-32
- Matthew 11:17

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0056, H0057, H0060, H0205, H0578, H0584, H0585, H1058, H1065, H1068, H1671, H1897, H1899, H4553, H4798, H5092, H5098, H5110, H5594, H6937, H6941, H8386, G23540, G28750, G36020, G39960, G39970

Nehemiah References:

1:4; 8:9

multiply, multiplied, multiplication

Definition:

The term “multiply” means to greatly increase in number. It can also mean to cause something to increase in amount, such as causing pain to multiply.

- God told animals and human beings to “multiply” and fill the earth. This was a command to reproduce many more of their own kind.
- Jesus made the bread and fish multiply in order to feed the 5,000 people. The amount of food kept increasing so that there was more than enough food to feed everyone.
- Depending on the context, this term could also be translated as “increase” or “cause to increase” or “greatly increase in number” or “become greater in number” or “become more numerous.”
- The phrase “greatly multiply your pain” could also be translated as “cause your pain to become more severe” or “cause you to experience much more pain.”
- To “multiply horses” means to “greedily keep acquiring more horses” or to “get large numbers of horses.”

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 8:1
- Genesis 9:7
- Genesis 22:17
- Hosea 4:6-7

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3254, H3527, H6280, H7231, H7233, H7235, H7680, G40520, G41290

Nehemiah References:

6:17; 9:23

nation

Definition:

In the Bible, a nation is a large group of people who share a common identity and speak the same language. The people of a nation often have the same ancestors and share a common ethnicity.

- In the Bible, a nation could be a country with an extensive government structure and defined boundaries (such as Egypt or Ethiopia), but usually it is more general and refers to a people group.
- Nations in the Bible included the Israelites, the Philistines, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Canaanites, the Romans, and the Greeks, among many others.
- Sometimes the word "nation" was used figuratively to refer to the ancestor of a certain people group, as when Rebekah was told by God that her unborn sons were "nations" that would fight against each other. This could be translated as "the founders of two nations" or the "ancestors of two people groups."
- When used in the plural in a general way, the word translated as "nations" often referred to the people who were not Israelites, that is, to Gentiles, the people who do not worship Yahweh. The context usually makes the meaning clear.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the word "nation" could also be translated as "people group" or "people" or "country."
- If a language has a term for "nation" that is distinct from these other terms, then that term can be used wherever it occurs in the Bible text, as long as it is natural and accurate in each context.
- The plural term "nations" can often be translated as "people groups."
- In certain contexts, this term could also be translated as "Gentiles" or "non-Jews."

(See also: Assyria, Babylon, Canaan, **Gentile**, **Greek**, **people group**, **Philistines**, **Rome**)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 14:15-17**
- **2 Chronicles 15:6**
- **2 Kings 17:11-12**
- **Acts 2:5**

- **Acts 13:19**
- **Acts 17:26**
- **Acts 26:4**
- **Daniel 3:4**
- **Genesis 10:2-5**
- **Genesis 27:29**
- **Genesis 35:11**
- **Genesis 49:10**
- **Luke 7:5**
- **Mark 13:7-8**
- **Matthew 21:43**
- **Romans 4:16-17**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0523, H0524, H0776, H1471, H3816, H4940, H5971, G02460, G10740, G10850, G14840

Nehemiah References:

5:8; 5:9; 5:17; 6:6; 6:16; 13:26

Nebuchadnezzar

Definition:

Nebuchadnezzar was a king of the Babylonian Empire whose powerful army conquered many people groups and nations.

- Under Nebuchadnezzar's leadership, the Babylonian army attacked and conquered the kingdom of Judah, and took most of the people of Judah to Babylon as captives. The captives were forced to live there for a period of 70 years known as the "Babylonian Exile."
- One of the exiles, Daniel, interpreted some of King Nebuchadnezzar's dreams.
- Three other captured Israelites, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, were thrown into a fiery furnace when they refused to bow down to a gigantic gold statue that Nebuchadnezzar had made.
- King Nebuchadnezzar was very arrogant and worshiped false gods. When he conquered Judah, he stole many gold and silver objects from the temple in Jerusalem.
- Because Nebuchadnezzar was proud and refused to turn away from worshiping false gods, Yahweh caused him to be destitute for seven years, living like an animal. After the seven years, God restored Nebuchadnezzar when he humbled himself and praised the one true God, Yahweh.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **arrogant**, Azariah, Babylon, Hananiah, Mishael)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 6:15**
- **2 Kings 25:1-3**
- **Daniel 1:2**
- **Daniel 4:4**
- **Ezekiel 26:8**

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **20:6** About 100 years after the Assyrians destroyed the kingdom of Israel, God sent **Nebuchadnezzar**, king of the Babylonians, to attack the kingdom of Judah.
- **20:6** The king of Judah agreed to be **Nebuchadnezzar's** servant and pay him a lot of money every year.

- 20:8 To punish the king of Judah for rebelling, **Nebuchadnezzar's** soldiers killed the king's sons in front of him and then made him blind.
- 20:9 **Nebuchadnezzar** and his army took almost all of the people of the kingdom of Judah to Babylon, leaving only the poorest people behind to plant the fields.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5019, H5020

Nehemiah References:

7:6

Nehemiah

Definition:

Nehemiah was an Israelite forced to move to the Babylonian empire when the people of Israel and Judah were taken captive by the Babylonians.

- While he was the cupbearer to the Persian king, Artaxerxes, Nehemiah asked the king for permission to return to Jerusalem.
- Nehemiah led the Israelites in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem which had been destroyed by the Babylonians.
- For twelve years Nehemiah was the governor of Jerusalem before returning to the king's palace.
- The Old Testament book of Nehemiah tells the story of Nehemiah's work in rebuilding the walls and his governing of the people in Jerusalem.
- There were also other men named Nehemiah in the Old Testament. Usually the name of the father was added, to distinguish which Nehemiah was being talked about.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Artaxerxes, Babylon, Jerusalem, son)

Bible References:

- Ezra 2:1-2
- Nehemiah 1:2
- Nehemiah 10:3
- Nehemiah 12:46

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5166

Nehemiah References:

1:1; 3:16; 7:7; 8:9; 10:1; 12:26; 12:47

new moon

Definition:

The term “new moon” refers to the moon when it looks like a small, crescent-shaped sliver of light. This is the beginning phase of the moon as it moves in its orbit around the planet Earth at sunset. It also refers to the first day a new moon should be visible after the moon has been dark for a few days.

- In ancient times, new moons marked the beginnings of certain time periods, such as months.
- The Israelites celebrated a new moon festival that was marked by the blowing of a ram’s horn.
- The Bible also refers to this time as the “beginning of the month.”

(See also: month, earth, festival, horn, sheep)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 23:31
- 1 Samuel 20:5
- 2 Kings 4:23-24
- Ezekiel 45:16-17
- Isaiah 1:12-13

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2320, G33760, G35610

Nehemiah References:

10:33

noble, nobleman, royal official

Definition:

The term “noble” refers to something that is excellent and of high quality. A “nobleman” is a person who belongs to a high political or social class. A man “of noble birth” is one who was born a nobleman.

- A nobleman was often an officer of the state, a close servant to the king.
- The term “nobleman” could also be translated by, “king’s official” or “government officer.”

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 23:20-21
- Daniel 4:36
- Ecclesiastes 10:17
- Luke 19:12
- Psalm 16:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0117, H1419, H2715, H3358, H3513, H5057, H5081, H6440, H6579, H7261, H8282, H8269, G09370, G21040

Nehemiah References:

2:16; 3:5; 4:14; 4:19; 5:7; 6:17; 7:5; 10:29; 13:17

oath, vow, swear, swearing, swear by, sworn

Definition:

The term “oath” in the Bible refers to a formal promise, usually made in a legal or religious context, in which the person making the oath accepts some kind of accountability or punishment if he does not fulfill his promise. In the Bible, the term “swear” means to make an oath. A “vow” is a solemn promise or oath that a person makes to God.

- In a court of law, a witness often gives an oath to promise that whatever he says will be true and factual.
- In modern times, one meaning of the word “swear” is to use foul or vulgar language. This is never its meaning in the Bible.
- The term “swear by” means to use the name of something or someone as the basis or power on which the oath is made.
- Abraham and Abimelech swore an oath when they made a covenant together concerning the use of a well.
- Abraham told his servant to swear (formally promise) that he would find Isaac a wife from among Abraham’s relatives.
- God also made oaths in which he made promises to his people.
- If a person in ancient Israel made a vow to God, that person was obligated to fulfill the vow. The ancient Israelites believed that God might punish a person who did not fulfill a vow that he made.
- In ancient Israel, sometimes a person would ask God to protect him or provide for him in exchange for making the vow. However, the ancient Israelites did not believe that God was obligated to fulfill these requests.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “an oath” could also be translated as “a pledge” or “a solemn promise.”
- To “swear” could be translated as to “formally promise” or to “pledge” or to “commit to do something.”
- Other ways to translate “swear by my name” could include “make a promise using my name to confirm it.”
- To “swear by heaven and earth” could be translated as to, “promise to do something, stating that heaven and earth will confirm it.”
- Make sure the translation of “swear” or “oath” does not refer to cursing. In the Bible it does not have that meaning.

- Depending on the context, the term “vow” can be translated as “solemn promise” or “solemn oath” or “promise made to God.”

(See also: Abimelech, covenant, promise)

Bible References:

- Genesis 21:23
- Genesis 24:3
- Genesis 31:51-53
- Genesis 47:31
- Luke 1:73
- Mark 6:26
- Matthew 5:36
- Matthew 14:6-7
- Matthew 26:72
- 1 Corinthians 7:27-28
- Acts 21:23
- Genesis 28:21
- Genesis 31:12-13
- Jonah 1:14-16
- Jonah 2:9-10
- Proverbs 7:14

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0422, H0423, H3027, H5375, H7621, H7650, G03320, G36600, G37270, G37280, H5087, H5088, G21710

Nehemiah References:

5:12; 6:18; 10:intro; 10:29; 13:25

Obadiah

Definition:

Obadiah was an Old Testament prophet who prophesied against the people of Edom, who were the descendants of Esau. There were also many other men named Obadiah in the Old Testament.

- The book of Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament and tells a prophecy that Obadiah received through a vision from God.
- It is not clear when Obadiah lived and prophesied. It may have been during the periods that Jehoram, Ahaziah, Joash, and Athaliah, reigned in Judah. The prophets Daniel, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah would also have been prophesying during part of this time.
- Obadiah may also have lived at a later time period, during the reign of King Zedekiah and the Babylonian captivity.
- Other men named Obadiah included a descendant of Saul, a Gadite who became one of David's men, a palace administrator for King Ahab, an official of King Jehoshaphat, a man who helped with repairs to the temple during the time of King Josiah, and a Levite who was also a gatekeeper during the time of Nehemiah.
- It could be that the writer of the book of Obadiah was one of these men.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: **Ahab**, Babylon, David, **Edom**, **Esau**, **Ezekiel**, Daniel, **Gad**, **Jehoshaphat**, **Josiah**, Levite, **Saul (OT)**, Zedekiah)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 3:21**
- **1 Chronicles 8:38-40**
- **Ezra 8:8-11**
- **Obadiah 1:2**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5662

Nehemiah References:

10:5; 12:25

Og

Definition:

Og is the name of a man who was an Amorite king who ruled over the land of Bashan.

- The Israelites conquered Og and his people and land.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Amorite, Bashan)

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5747

Nehemiah References:

9:22

oil

Definition:

Oil is a thick, clear liquid that can be taken from certain plants. In Bible times, oil usually came from olives.

- Olive oil was used for cooking, anointing, sacrifice, lamps, and medicine.
- In ancient times, olive oil was highly prized, and the possession of oil was considered a measurement of wealth.
- Make sure the translation of this term refers to the kind of oil that can be used in cooking, not motor oil. Some languages have different words for these different kinds of oil.

(See also: olive, sacrifice)

Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 1:21
- Exodus 29:2
- Leviticus 5:11
- Leviticus 8:1-3
- Mark 6:12-13
- Matthew 25:7-9

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2091, H3323, H4887, H6671, H7246, H8081, G16370, G34640

Nehemiah References:

5:11; 8:15; 10:37; 10:39; 13:5; 13:12

olive

Definition:

The olive is the small, oval fruit from an olive tree, which is mostly grown in the regions surrounding the Mediterranean Sea.

- Olive trees are a type of large evergreen shrub with tiny white flowers. They grow best in hot weather and can survive well with little water.
- The olive tree's fruit starts out green and changes to black as they ripen. Olives were useful for food and for the oil that could be extracted from them.
- Olive oil was used for cooking in lamps and for religious ceremonies.
- In the Bible, olive trees and branches are sometimes used figuratively to refer to people.

(See also: **lamp**, **the sea**, **Mount of Olives**)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 27:28-29**
- **Deuteronomy 6:10-12**
- **Exodus 23:10-11**
- **Genesis 8:11**
- **James 3:12**
- **Luke 16:6**
- **Psalms 52:8**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2132, H3323, H8081, G00650, G16360, G16370, G25650

Nehemiah References:

5:11; 8:15; 9:25

ordinance, regulation, requirement, strict law, custom

Definition:

An ordinance is a public regulation or law that gives rules or instructions for people to follow.

This term is related to the term “ordain.”

- Sometimes an ordinance is a custom that has become well established through years of practice.
- In the Bible, an ordinance was something that God commanded the Israelites to do. Sometimes he commanded them to do it forever.
- The term “ordinance” could be translated as “public decree” or “regulation” or “law,” depending on the context.

(See also: command, decree, law, ordain, statute)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 4:13-14
- Exodus 27:20-21
- Leviticus 8:31-33
- Malachi 3:6-7

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2706, H4687, H4931, H4941

Nehemiah References:

8:18

oversee, overseer, keeper

Definition:

The term “overseer” refers to a person who is in charge of the work and welfare of other people. In the Bible, often the term “keeper” means “overseer.”

- In the Old Testament, an overseer had the job of making sure the workers under him did their work well.
- In the New Testament, this term is used to describe leaders of the early Christian church. Their work was to take care of the spiritual needs of the church, making sure the believers received accurate biblical teaching.
- Paul refers to an overseer as being like a shepherd who takes care of the believers in a local church, who are his “flock.”
- The overseer, like a shepherd, keeps watch over the flock. He guards and protects the believers from false spiritual teaching and other evil influences.
- In the New Testament, the terms “overseers,” “elders,” and “shepherds/pastors” are different ways of referring to the same spiritual leaders.

Translation Suggestions

- Other ways to translate this term could be “supervisor” or “caretaker” or “manager.”
- When referring to a leader of a local group of God’s people, this term could be translated with a word or phrase that means “spiritual supervisor” or “someone who takes care of the spiritual needs of a group of believers” or “person who oversees the spiritual needs of the Church.”

(See also: **church**, **elder**, **pastor**, **shepherd**)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 26:31-32**
- **1 Timothy 3:2**
- **Acts 20:28**
- **Genesis 41:33-34**
- **Philippians 1:1**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5329, H6485, H6496, H7860, H8104, G19830, G19840, G19850

Nehemiah References:

2:8; 11:9; 11:14; 11:16; 11:22; 12:42

palace, house

Definition:

The term “palace” refers to the building or house where a king lived, along with his family members and servants.

- The high priest also lived in a palace complex, as mentioned in the New Testament.
- Palaces were very ornate, with beautiful architecture and furnishings.
- The buildings and furnishings of a palace were constructed of stone or wood, and often were overlaid with expensive wood, gold, or ivory.
- Many other people also lived and worked in the palace complex, which usually included several buildings and courtyards.

(See also: courtyard, high priest, king)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 28:7-8
- 2 Samuel 11:2-3
- Daniel 5:5-6
- Matthew 26:3-5
- Psalms 45:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0759, H1002, H1004, H1055, H1406, H1964, H1965, G08330, G09330, G42320

Nehemiah References:

3:25

palm

Definition:

The term “palm” refers to a type of tall tree with long, flexible, leafy branches extending from the top in a fan-like pattern.

- The palm tree in the Bible usually refers to a type of palm tree that produces a fruit called a “date.” The leaves have a feather-like pattern.
- Palm trees typically grow in places that have a hot, humid climate. Their leaves stay green all year long.
- As Jesus was entering Jerusalem riding on a donkey, the people laid palm branches on the ground in front of him.
- Palm branches signified peace and the celebration of a victory.

(See also: donkey, Jerusalem, peace)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 6:29-30
- Ezekiel 40:14-16
- John 12:12-13
- Numbers 33:9

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3712, H8558, H8560, H8561, G54040

Nehemiah References:

8:15

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

Nehemiah References:

2:intro

Perizzite

Definition:

The Perizzites were one of several people groups in the land of Canaan. Little is known about this group as to who their ancestors were or what part of Canaan they lived in.

- The Perizzites are mentioned most frequently in the Old Testament Book of Judges, where it is recorded that the Perizzites intermarried with the Israelites and influenced them to worship false gods.
- Note that the clan of Perez, called the "Perezites," was a different people group from the Perizzites. It may be necessary to spell the names very differently to make this clear.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Canaan, false god)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 9:20-21
- 2 Chronicles 8:7-8
- Exodus 3:16-18
- Genesis 13:7
- Joshua 3:9-11

Word Data:

- Strong's: H6522

Nehemiah References:

9:8

Persia, Persians

Definition:

Persia was a country that also became a powerful empire founded by Cyrus the Great in 550 BC. The country of Persia was located southeast of Babylonia and Assyria in a region that is now the modern-day country of Iran.

- The people of Persia were called “Persians.”
- Under King Cyrus’ decree, the Jews were freed from their captivity in Babylon and allowed to go home, and the temple in Jerusalem was rebuilt, with funds provided by the Persian Empire.
- King Artaxerxes was the ruler of the Persian Empire when Ezra and Nehemiah went back to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
- Esther became a queen of the Persian empire when she married King Ahasuerus.

(See also: Ahasuerus, Artaxerxes, Assyria, Babylon, Cyrus, Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 36:20
- Daniel 10:13
- Esther 1:3-4
- Ezekiel 27:10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6539, H6540, H6542, H6543

Nehemiah References:

12:22

Pharaoh, king of Egypt

Definition:

In ancient times, the kings who ruled over the country of Egypt were called pharaohs.

- Altogether, over 300 pharaohs ruled Egypt for more than 2,000 years.
- These Egyptians kings were very powerful and wealthy.
- Several of these pharaohs are mentioned in the Bible.
- Often this title is used as a name rather than as a title. In these cases, it is capitalized and written as “Pharaoh.”

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: egypt, king)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:9-10
- Acts 7:13
- Acts 7:21
- Genesis 12:15
- Genesis 40:7
- Genesis 41:25

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 8:6 One night, the **Pharaoh**, which is what the Egyptians called their kings, had two dreams that disturbed him greatly.
- 8:8 **Pharaoh** was so impressed with Joseph that he appointed him to be the second most powerful man in all of Egypt!
- 9:2 So the **Pharaoh** who was ruling over Egypt at that time made the Israelites slaves to the Egyptians.
- 9:13 “I will send you to **Pharaoh** so that you can bring the Israelites out of their slavery in Egypt.”
- 10:2 Through these plagues, God showed __Pharaoh __ that he is more powerful than **Pharaoh** and all of Egypt’s gods.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4428, H4714, H6547, G53280

Nehemiah References:

9:10

plea, plead, please, beg, implore

Definition:

The terms “plead” and “pleading” refer to urgently asking someone to do something. A “plea” is an urgent request.

- Pleading often implies that the person feels in very great need or strongly desires help.
- People can plead or make an urgent appeal to God for mercy or to ask him to grant something, either for themselves or someone else.
- Other ways to translate this could include “beg” or “implore” or “urgently ask.”
- The term “plea” could also be translated as “urgent request” or “strong urging.”
- Make sure it is clear in the context that this term does not refer to begging for money.

Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 8:3-5
- Judges 6:31
- Luke 4:39
- Proverbs 18:17

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1777, H2603, H3198, H4941, H4994, H6279, H6293, H6664, H6419, H7378, H7379, H7775, H8199, H8467, H8469, G11890, G17930, G20650, G38700

Nehemiah References:

1:6; 1:8; 1:11; 5:10; 5:11

plunder, plundered, spoil, spoils

Definition:

The terms “spoil” and “plunder,” when used as a noun, refer to things that are taken by force from a person or place, normally during a time of war. The verb “plunder” means to take things from a person or place, normally by force and during a time of war.

- When translating the verb “plunder” in the context of war you should use a different word than “steal” as “to steal” normally implies wrong doing and to “plunder”” something in war is not necessarily sinful.
- You could translate the verb “plunder” with a word such as “pillage” or with a descriptive phrase “take the goods of.”
- You could translate the term “spoil” with a descriptive phrase such as “plundered goods” or “plundered things.”
- Depending on context, you could translate the term “plunder” with a descriptive phrase such as “captured goods” or with some other descriptive phrase or with a term such as “spoil” or “spoils.”
- Your language may have a word for things that are taken by force and/or in a time of war.

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0957, H0962, H7998

Nehemiah References:

4:4

possess, possessed, possession, dispossess

Definition:

The terms “possess” and “possession” usually refer to owning something. They can also mean to gain control over something or occupy an area of land.

- In the Old Testament, this term is often used in the context of “possessing” or “taking possession of” an area of land.
- When Yahweh commanded the Israelites to “possess” the land of Canaan, it meant that they should go into the land and live there. This involved first conquering the Canaanite peoples who were living on that land.
- Yahweh told the Israelites that he had given them the land of Canaan as “their possession.” This could also be translated as “their rightful place to live.”
- The people of Israel were also called Yahweh’s “special possession.” This means that they belonged to him as his people whom he had specifically called to worship and serve him.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “possess” could also be translated as “own” or “have” or “have charge over.”
- The phrase “take possession of” could be translated as “take control of” or “occupy” or “live on,” depending on the context.
- When referring to things that people own, “possessions” could be translated as “belongings” or “property” or “owned things” or “things they owned.”
- When Yahweh calls the Israelites, “my special possession” this could also be translated as “my special people” or “people who belong to me” or “my people whom I love and rule.”
- The sentence, “they will become their possession” when referring to land, means “they will occupy the land” or “the land will belong to them.”
- The expression, “found in his possession” could be translated as “that he was holding” or “that he had with him.”
- The phrase “as your possession” could also be translated as “as something that belongs to you” or “as a place where your people will live.”
- The phrase, “in his possession” could be translated as “that he owned” or “which belonged to him.”

(See also: Canaan, worship, inherit)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 6:70

- 1 Kings 9:17-19
- Acts 2:45
- Deuteronomy 4:5-6
- Genesis 31:36-37
- Matthew 13:44

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0270, H0272, H0834, H2505, H2631, H3027, H3423, H3424, H3425, H3426, H4180, H4181, H4672, H4735, H4736, H5157, H5159, H5459, H7069, G11390, G21920, G26970, G27220, G29320, G29330, G29350, G40470, G52240, G55640

Nehemiah References:

9:15; 9:22; 9:23; 9:24; 9:25

praise, praised, praiseworthy

Definition:

To praise someone is to express admiration and honor for that person.

- People praise God because of how great he is and because of all the amazing things he has done as the Creator and Savior of the world.
- Praise for God often includes being thankful for what he has done.
- Music and singing is often used as a way to praise God.
- Praising God is part of what it means to worship him.
- The term to "praise" could also be translated as to "speak well of" or to "highly honor with words" or to "say good things about."
- The noun "praise" could be translated as "spoken honor" or "speech that honors" or "speaking good things about."

(See also: **worship**)

Bible References:

- **2 Corinthians 1:3**
- **Acts 2:47**
- **Acts 13:48**
- **Daniel 3:28**
- **Ephesians 1:3**
- **Genesis 49:8**
- **James 3:9-10**
- **John 5:41-42**
- **Luke 1:46**
- **Luke 1:64-66**
- **Luke 19:37-38**
- **Matthew 11:25-27**
- **Matthew 15:29-31**

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 12:13 The Israelites sang many songs to celebrate their new freedom and to **praise** God because he saved them from the Egyptian army.
- 17:8 When David heard these words, he immediately thanked and **praised** God because he had promised David this great honor and many blessings.
- 22:7 Zechariah said, "**Praise** God, because he has remembered his people!"
- 43:13 They (disciples) enjoyed **praising** God together and they shared everything they had with each other.
- 47:8 They put Paul and Silas in the most secure part of the prison and even locked up their feet. Yet in the middle of the night, they were singing songs of **praise** to God.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1319, H7121, H8416, G29800, G38530

Nehemiah References:

5:13; 9:5; 12:24; 12:46

pray, prayer

Definition:

The terms “pray” and “prayer” refer to talking with God. These terms are also used to refer to people trying to talk to a false god.

- People can pray silently, talking to God with their thoughts, or they can pray aloud, speaking to God with their voice. Sometimes prayers are written down, such as when David wrote his prayers in the Book of Psalms.
- Prayer can include asking God for mercy, for help with a problem, and for wisdom in making decisions.
- Often people ask God to heal people who are sick or who need his help in other ways.
- People also thank and praise God when they are praying to him.
- Praying includes confessing our sins to God and asking him to forgive us.
- Talking to God is sometimes called “communing” with him as our spirit communicates with his spirit, sharing our emotions and enjoying his presence.
- This term could be translated as “talking to God” or “communicating with God.” The translation of this term should be able to include praying that is silent.

(See also: false god, forgive, praise)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 3:9
- Acts 8:24
- Acts 14:26
- Colossians 4:4
- John 17:9
- Luke 11:1
- Matthew 5:43-45
- Matthew 14:22-24

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 6:5 Isaac **prayed** for Rebekah, and God allowed her to get pregnant with twins.

- 13:12 But Moses **prayed** for them, and God listened to his **prayer** and did not destroy them.
- 19:8 Then the prophets of Baal **prayed** to Baal, “Hear us, O Baal!”
- 21:7 Priests also **prayed** to God for the people.
- 38:11 Jesus told his disciples to **pray** that they would not enter into temptation.
- 43:13 The disciples continually listened to the teaching of the apostles, spent time together, ate together, and **prayed** with each other.
- 49:18 God tells you to **pray**, to study his word, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0559, H0577, H1156, H2470, H3863, H3908, H4994, H6279, H6293, H6419, H6739, H7592, H7878, H7879, H7881, H8034, H8605, G01540, G11620, G11890, G17830, G20650, G21710, G21720, G38700, G43350, G43360

Nehemiah References:

1:4; 1:6; 1:11; 2:4; 4:9; 11:17

priest, priesthood

Definition:

In the Bible, a priest was someone who was chosen to offer sacrifices to God on behalf of God's people. The "priesthood" was the name for the office or condition of being a priest.

- In the Old Testament, God chose Aaron and his descendants to be his priests for the people of Israel.
- The "priesthood" was a right and a responsibility that was passed down from father to son in the Levite clan.
- The Israelite priests had the responsibility of offering the people's sacrifices to God, along with other duties in the temple.
- Priests also offered regular prayers to God on behalf of his people and performed other religious rites.
- The priests pronounced formal blessings on people and taught them God's laws.
- In Jesus' time, there were different levels of priests, including the chief priests and the high priest.
- Jesus is our "great high priest" who intercedes for us in God's presence. He offered himself as the ultimate sacrifice for sin. This means that the sacrifices made by human priests are no longer needed.
- In the New Testament, every believer in Jesus is called a "priest" who can come directly to God in prayer to intercede for himself and other people.
- In ancient times, there were also pagan priests who presented offerings to false gods such as Baal.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term "priest" could be translated as "sacrifice person" or "God's intermediary" or "sacrificial mediator" or "person God appoints to represent him."
- The translation of "priest" should be different from the translation of "mediator."
- Some translations may prefer to always say something like "Israelite priest" or "Jewish priest" or "Yahweh's priest" or "priest of Baal" to make it clear that this does not refer to a modern-day type of priest.
- The term used to translate "priest" should be different from the terms for "chief priest" and "high priest" and "Levite" and "prophet."

(See also: Aaron, high priest, mediator, sacrifice)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 6:41
- Genesis 14:17-18
- Genesis 47:22
- John 1:19-21
- Luke 10:31
- Mark 1:44
- Mark 2:25-26
- Matthew 8:4
- Matthew 12:4
- Micah 3:9-11
- Nehemiah 10:28-29
- Nehemiah 10:34-36
- Revelation 1:6

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 4:7 “Melchizedek, the **priest** of God Most High”
- 13:9 Anyone who disobeyed God’s law could bring an animal to the altar in front of the Tent of Meeting as a sacrifice to God. A **priest** would kill the animal and burn it on the altar. The blood of the animal that was sacrificed covered the person’s sin and made that person clean in God’s sight. God chose Moses’ brother, Aaron, and Aaron’s descendants to be his **priests**.
- 19:7 So the **priests** of Baal prepared a sacrifice but did not light the fire.
- 21:7 An Israelite **priest** was someone who made sacrifices to God on behalf of the people as a substitute for the punishment of their sins. **Priests** also prayed to God for the people.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3547, H3548, H3549, H3550, G07480, G07490, G24050, G24060, G24070, G24090, G24200

Nehemiah References:

2:16; 3:intro; 3:1; 3:22; 3:28; 5:12; 7:39; 7:63; 7:64; 7:65; 7:70; 7:72; 7:73; 8:intro; 8:2; 8:9; 8:13; 9:32; 9:34; 9:38; 10:8; 10:28; 10:34; 10:36; 10:37; 10:38; 10:39; 11:3; 11:10; 11:20; 12:1; 12:7; 12:12; 12:22; 12:26; 12:30; 12:35; 12:41; 12:44; 13:4; 13:5; 13:13; 13:29; 13:30

profane, profaned

Definition:

To profane something means to act in a way that defiles, pollutes, or disrespects something that is holy.

- A profane person is one who acts in a way that is unholy and dishonoring of God.
- The verb to "profane" could be translated as to "treat as unholy" or to "be irreverent toward" or to "dishonor."
- God told the Israelites that they "profaned" themselves with idols, meaning that the people were making themselves "unclean" or "dishonored" by this sin. They were also dishonoring God.
- Depending on the context, the adjective "profane" could be translated as "dishonoring" or "godless" or "unholy."

(See also: defile, holy, clean)

Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 2:16-18
- Ezekiel 20:9
- Malachi 1:10-12
- Matthew 12:5
- Numbers 18:30-32

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2455, H2490, H2491, H5234, H8610, G09520, G09530

Nehemiah References:

13:17; 13:18

promise, promised

Definition:

When used as a verb, the term “promise” refers to the action of a person saying that he will do something in such way that he obligates himself to fulfill what he has said. When used as a noun, the term “promise” refers to the thing that a person obligates himself to do.

- The Bible records many promises that God has made for his people.
- Promises are an important part of formal agreements such as covenants.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “promise” could be translated as “commitment” or “assurance” or “guarantee.”
- To “promise to do something” could be translated as “assure someone that you will do something” or “commit to doing something.”

(See also: covenant, oath, vow)

Bible References:

- Galatians 3:15-16
- Genesis 25:31-34
- Hebrews 11:9
- James 1:12
- Numbers 30:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 3:15 God said, “I **promise** I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are sinful from the time they are children.”Â
- 3:16 God then made the first rainbow as a sign of his **promise**. Every time the rainbow appeared in the sky, God would remember what he **promised** and so would his people.
- 4:8 God spoke to Abram and **promised** again that he would have a son and as many descendants as the stars in the sky. Abram believed God’s **promise**.
- 5:4 “Your wife, Sarai, will have a son—he will be the son of **promise**.”

- 8:15 The covenant **promises** that God gave to Abraham were passed on to Isaac, then to Jacob, and then to Jacob's twelve sons and their families.
- 17:14 Though David had been unfaithful to God, God was still faithful to his **promises**.
- 50:1 Jesus **promised** he would return at the end of the world. Though he has not yet come back, he will keep his **promise**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0559, H0562, H1696, H8569, G18430, G18600, G18610, G18620, G36700, G42790

Nehemiah References:

13:intro

Promised Land

Definition:

The term “Promised Land” only occurs in the Bible stories, not the Bible text. It is an alternate way of referring to the land of Canaan which God had promised to give to Abraham and his descendants.

- When Abram was living in the city of Ur, God commanded him to go live in the land of Canaan. He and his descendants, the Israelites, lived there for many years.
- When a severe famine caused there to be no food in Canaan, the Israelites moved to Egypt.
- Four hundred years later, God rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and brought them back to Canaan again, the land God had promised to give them.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “Promised Land” can be translated as the “land that God said he would give to Abraham” or “land that God promised to Abraham” or “land God promised to his people” or “land of Canaan.”
- In the Bible text, this term occurs as some form of “the land God promised.”

(See also: Canaan, promise)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 8:1-2
- Ezekiel 7:26-27

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 12:1 They (Israelites) were no longer slaves, and they were going to the **Promised Land**!
- 14:1 After God had told the Israelites the laws he wanted them to obey as part of his covenant with them, God began leading them from Mount Sinai toward the **Promised Land**, which was also called Canaan.
- 14:2 God had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give the **Promised Land** to their descendants, but now there were many people groups living there.
- 14:14 Then God led the people to the edge of the **Promised Land** again.
- 15:2 The Israelites had to cross the Jordan River to enter into the **Promised Land**.

- 15:12 After this battle, God gave each tribe of Israel its own section of the **Promised Land**.
- 20:9 This period of time when God's people were forced to leave the **Promised Land** is called the Exile.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0776, H3068, H3423, H5159, H5414, H7650

Nehemiah References:

front:intro

prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess

Definition:

A “prophet” is a man who speaks God’s messages to people. A woman who does this is called a “prophetess.”

- Often prophets warned people to turn away from their sins and obey God.
- A “prophecy” is the message that the prophet speaks. To “prophesy” means to speak God’s messages.
- Often the message of a prophecy was about something that would happen in the future.
- Many prophecies in the Old Testament have already been fulfilled.
- In the Bible the collection of books written by prophets are sometimes referred to as “the prophets.”
- For example the phrase, “the law and the prophets” is a way of referring to all the Hebrew scriptures, which are also known as the “Old Testament.”
- An older term for a prophet was “seer” or “someone who sees.”
- Sometimes the term “seer” refers to a false prophet or to someone who practices divination.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “prophet” could be translated as “God’s spokesman” or “man who speaks for God” or “man who speaks God’s messages.”
- A “seer” could be translated as “person who sees visions” or “man who sees the future from God.”
- The term “prophetess” could be translated as “spokeswoman for God” or “woman who speaks for God” or “woman who speaks God’s messages.”
- Ways to translate “prophecy” could include, “message from God” or “prophet message.”
- The term “prophesy” could be translated as “speak words from God” or “tell God’s message.”
- The figurative expression, “law and the prophets” could also be translated as “the books of the law and of the prophets” or “everything written about God and his people, including God’s laws and what his prophets preached.” (See: synecdoche)
- When referring to a prophet (or seer) of a false god, it may be necessary to translate this as “false prophet (seer)” or “prophet (seer) of a false god” or “prophet of Baal,” for example.

(See also: **Baal**, **divination**, false god, **false prophet**, **fulfill**, law, **vision**)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16
- Acts 3:25
- John 1:43-45
- Malachi 4:4-6
- Matthew 1:23
- Matthew 2:18
- Matthew 5:17
- Psalm 51:1

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 12:12 When the Israelites saw that the Egyptians were dead, they trusted in God and believed that Moses was a **prophet** of God.
- 17:13 God was very angry about what David had done, so he sent the **prophet** Nathan to tell David how evil his sin was.
- 19:1 Throughout the history of the Israelites, God sent them **prophets**. The **prophets** heard messages from God and then told the people God's messages.
- 19:6 All the people of the entire kingdom of Israel, including the 450 **prophets** of Baal, came to Mount Carmel.
- 19:17 Most of the time, the people did not obey God. They often mistreated the **prophets** and sometimes even killed them.
- 21:9 The **prophet** Isaiah **prophesied** that the Messiah would be born from a virgin.
- 43:5 "This fulfills the **prophecy** made by the **prophet** Joel in which God said, 'In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit.'"
- 43:7 "This fulfills the **prophecy** which says, 'You will not let your Holy One rot in the grave.'"
- 48:12 Moses was a great **prophet** who proclaimed the word of God. But Jesus is the greatest **prophet** of all. He is the Word of God.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2372, H2374, H4853, H5012, H5013, H5016, H5017, H5029, H5030, H5031, H5197, G24950, G43940, G43950, G43960, G43970, G43980, G55780

Nehemiah References:

6:7; 6:12; 6:14; 9:26; 9:30; 9:32

prostrate

Definition:

The term “prostrate” means to be lying face down, stretched out on the ground.

- To “fall prostrate” or to “prostrate oneself” before someone means to suddenly bow down very low or in front of that person.
- Usually this position of being prostrate is a response that shows shock, amazement, and awe because of something miraculous that happened. It also shows honor and respect for the person being bowed to.
- Being prostrate also was a way to worship God. People often responded this way to Jesus in thanksgiving and worship when he did a miracle or to honor him as a great teacher.
- Depending on the context, ways to translate “prostrated” could include “bowed down low with the face to the ground” or “worshiped him by lying face down in front of him” or “bowed down low to the ground in amazement” or “worshiped.”
- The phrase “will not prostrate ourselves” could be translated as “will not worship” or “will not lie face down in worship” or “will not bow down and worship.”
- “Prostrate himself to” could also be translated as “worship” or “bow down in front of.”

(See also: awe, bow)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 17:36-38
- Genesis 43:28
- Revelation 19:3-4

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5307, H5457, H6440, H6915, H7812

Nehemiah References:

8:6; 9:3; 9:6

proud, pride, prideful, boast, boastful, boasting

Definition:

The terms “proud” and “pride,” in this sense, refer to a person thinking too highly of themself, and especially, thinking that he is better than other people. The term “boast,” when used with this sense, means to talk proudly about something or someone. Often it means to brag about oneself.

- A proud person often does not admit his own faults. He is not humble.
- Pride can lead to disobeying God in other ways.
- The term “prideful” is always negative, with the meaning of being “arrogant” or “conceited” or “self-important.”
- The term “boastful” is always negative, and refers to a person who brags about themself or what they possess or have done or can do.
- Someone who is “boastful” frequently talks about himself in a proud way.
- God rebuked the Israelites for “boasting in” their idols. They arrogantly worshiped false gods instead of the true God.
- The Bible also talks about people boasting in such things as their wealth, their strength, their fruitful fields, and their laws. This means that they were proud about these things and did not acknowledge that God is the one who provided these things.

Translation Suggestions:

- The noun “pride” could be translated as “arrogance” or “conceit” or “self-importance.”
- Other ways to translate “boast” could include “brag” or “talk proudly” or “be proud.”
- The term “boastful” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “full of prideful talk” or “prideful” or “talking proudly about oneself.”

(See also: **arrogant**, **humble**, **proud positive sense**)

Bible References:

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **4:2** They were very **proud**, and they did not care about what God said.
- **34:10** Then Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, God heard the tax collector’s prayer and declared him to be righteous. But he did not like the prayer of the religious leader. God will humble everyone who is **proud**, and he will lift up whoever humbles himself.”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1343, H1344, H1346, H1347, H1364, H1431, H2087, H2102, H3093, H4994, G51870, G52430, G52440, G53080, G53090, G54260, G54500

Nehemiah References:

9:10; 9:16; 9:29

province, provincial

Definition:

The term “province” refers to a large area into which a nation or empire might be divided for the purposes of government. The term “provincial” describes something that is related to a province, such as a provincial governor.

- For example, the ancient Persian Empire was divided up into provinces such as Media, Persia, Syria, and Egypt.
- During the time of the New Testament, the Roman Empire was divided up into provinces such as Macedonia, Asia, Syria, Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and Galatia.
- Each province had its own ruling authority, who was subject to the king or ruler of the empire. This ruler was sometimes called a “provincial official” or “provincial governor.”
- The terms “province” and “provincial” could also be translated as “region” and “regional.”

(See also: Asia, Egypt, Esther, Galatia, Galilee, Judea, Macedonia, Medes, Rome, Samaria, Syria)

Bible References:

- Acts 19:30
- Daniel 3:2
- Daniel 6:2
- Ecclesiastes 2:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4082, H4083, H5675, H5676, G18850

Nehemiah References:

1:3; 7:6; 11:3

provoke, provoked, provocation

Definition:

The term “provoke” means to cause someone to experience a negative reaction or feeling.

- To provoke someone to anger means to do something that causes that person to be angry. This could also be translated as to “cause to become angry” or to “anger.”
- When used in a phrase such as, “do not provoke him,” this could be translated as “do not anger him” or “do not cause him to be angry” or “do not make him angry with you.”

Bible References:

- Ezekiel 20:27-29

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3707, H3708, H4784, H4843, H5006, H7065, H7069, H7107, H7264, G20420, G38630, G39470, G39490, G42920

Nehemiah References:

4:5

pure, purify, purification

Definition:

To be “pure” means to have no flaw or to have nothing mixed in that is not supposed to be there. To purify something is to cleanse it and remove anything that contaminates or pollutes it.

- In regard to Old Testament laws, “purify” and “purification” refer mainly to the cleansing from things that make an object or a person ritually unclean, such as disease, body fluids, or childbirth.
- The Old Testament also had laws telling people how to be purified from sin, usually by the sacrifice of an animal. This was only temporary and the sacrifices had to be repeated over and over again.
- In the New Testament, to be purified often refers to being cleansed from sin.
- The only way that people can be completely and permanently purified from sin is through repenting and receiving God’s forgiveness, through trusting in Jesus and his sacrifice.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “purify” could be translated as “make pure” or “cleanse” or “cleanse from all contamination” or “get rid of all sin.”
- A phrase such as “when the time for their purification was over” could be translated as “when they had purified themselves by waiting the required number of days.”
- The phrase “provided purification for sins” could be translated as “provided a way for people to be completely cleansed from their sin.”
- Other ways to translate “purification” could include “cleansing” or “spiritual washing” or “becoming ritually clean.”

(See also: **atonement**, **clean**, **spirit**)

Bible References:

- **1 Timothy 1:5**
- **Exodus 31:6-9**
- **Hebrews 9:13-15**
- **James 4:8**
- **Luke 2:22**
- **Revelation 14:4**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1249, H1252, H1253, H1305, H1865, H2134, H2135, H2141, H2212, H2398, H2403, H2561, H2889, H2890, H2891, H2892, H2893, H3795, H3800, H4795, H5343, H5462, H6337, H6884, H6942, H8562, G00480, G00490, G00530, G00540, G15060, G25110, G25120, G25130, G25140

Nehemiah References:

12:30; 12:45; 13:9; 13:22; 13:30

queen

Definition:

A queen is either the female ruler of a country or the wife of a king.

- Esther became the queen of the Persian empire when she married King Ahasuerus.
- Queen Jezebel was the evil wife of King Ahab.
- The Queen of Sheba was a famous ruler who came to visit King Solomon.
- A term such as “queen mother” usually referred to the mother or grandmother of a ruling king or the widow of the previous king. A queen mother had much influence; Athaliah, for example, influenced the people to worship idols.

(See also: Ahasuerus, Athaliah, Esther, king. Persiaruler, Sheba)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 10:10
- 1 Kings 11:18-19
- 2 Kings 10:12-14
- Acts 8:27
- Esther 1:17
- Luke 11:31
- Matthew 12:42

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1404, H1377, H4410, H4427, H4433, H4436, H4438, H4446, H7694, H8282, G09380

Nehemiah References:

2:6

Ramah

Definition:

Ramah was an ancient Israelite city located about 8 kilometers from Jerusalem. It was in the region where the tribe of Benjamin lived.

- Ramah was where Rachel died after giving birth to Benjamin.
- When the Israelites were taken captive to Babylon, they were first brought to Ramah before being moved to Babylon.
- Ramah was the home of Samuel's mother and father.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Benjamin, twelve tribes of Israel)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 27:27
- 1 Samuel 2:11
- 2 Chronicles 16:1
- Jeremiah 31:15
- Joshua 18:25-28
- Matthew 2:17-18

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7414, G44710

Nehemiah References:

7:30; 11:33

rebel, rebellion, rebellious, rebelliousness

Definition:

The term “rebel” means to refuse to submit to someone’s authority. A “rebellious” person often disobeys and does evil things. This kind of person is called “a rebel.”

- A person is rebelling when he does something the authorities over him have told him not to do.
- A person can also rebel by refusing to do what the authorities have commanded him to do.
- Sometimes people rebel against their government or leader who is ruling over them.
- The term to “rebel” could also be translated as to “disobey” or to “revolt,” depending on the context.
- “Rebellious” could also be translated as “continually disobedient” or “refusing to obey.”
- The term “rebellion” means “refusal to obey” or “disobedience” or “law-breaking.”
- The phrase “the rebellion” or “a rebellion” can also refer to an organized group of people who publicly rebel against ruling authorities by breaking the law and attacking leaders and other people. Often they try to get other people to join them in rebelling.

(See also: authority, governor)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 12:18-19
- 1 Samuel 12:14
- 1 Timothy 1:9-11
- 2 Chronicles 10:17-19
- Acts 21:38
- Luke 23:19

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 14:14 After the Israelites had wandered in the wilderness for forty years, all of them who had **rebelled** against God were dead.
- 18:7 Ten of the tribes of the nation of Israel **rebelled** against Rehoboam.
- 18:9 Jeroboam **rebelled** against God and caused the people to sin.
- 18:13 Most of the people of Judah also **rebelled** against God and worshiped other gods.

- 20:7 But after a few years, the king of Judah **rebelled** against Babylon.
- 45:3 Then he (Stephen) said, “You stubborn and **rebellious** people always reject the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors always rejected God and killed his prophets.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4775, H4776, H4777, H4779, H4780, H4784, H4805, H5327, H5627, H5637, H6586, H6588, H7846, G38930, G49550

Nehemiah References:

2:19; 6:6; 9:17; 9:26

receive, welcome, taken up, acceptance

Definition:

The term “receive” generally means to get or accept something that is given, offered, or presented.

- To “receive” can also mean to suffer or experience something, as in “he received punishment for what he did.”
- There is also a special sense in which we can “receive” a person. For example, to “receive” guests or visitors means to welcome them and treat them with honor in order to build a relationship with them.
- To “receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” means we are given the Holy Spirit and welcome him to work in and through our lives.
- To “receive Jesus” means to accept God’s offer of salvation through Jesus Christ.
- When a blind person “receives his sight” means that God has healed him and enabled him to see.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “receive” could be translated as “accept” or “welcome” or “experience” or “be given.”
- The expression “you will receive power” could be translated as “you will be given power” or “God will give you power” or “power will be given to you (by God)” or “God will cause the Holy Spirit to work powerfully in you.”
- The phrase “received his sight” could be translated as “was able to see” or “became able to see again” or “was healed by God so that he was able to see.”

(See also: Holy Spirit, Jesus, lord, save)

Bible References:

- 1 John 5:9
- 1 Thessalonians 1:6
- 1 Thessalonians 4:1
- Acts 8:15
- Jeremiah 32:33
- Luke 9:5
- Malachi 3:10-12

- Psalms 49:14-15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 21:13 The prophets also said that the Messiah would be perfect, having no sin. He would die to **receive** the punishment for other people's sin. His punishment would bring peace between God and people.
- 45:5 As Stephen was dying, he cried out, "Jesus, **receive** my spirit."
- 49:6 He (Jesus) taught that some people will receive him and be saved, but others will not.
- 49:10 When Jesus died on the cross, he **received** your punishment.
- 49:13 God will save everyone who believes in Jesus and **receives** him as their Master.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3557, H3947, H6901, H6902, H8254, G03080, G03240, G03530, G03540, G05680, G05880, G06180, G11830, G12090, G15230, G16530, G19260, G28650, G29830, G30280, G33350, G33360, G35490, G38580, G38800, G43270, G43550, G43560, G46870, G52640, G55620

Nehemiah References:

10:37; 10:38

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

Nehemiah References:

1:10

reign, rule

Definition:

The term to “reign” means to rule over the people of a particular country or kingdom. The reign of a king is the time period during which he is ruling.

- The term “reign” is also used to refer to God reigning as king over the entire world.
- God allowed human kings to reign over Israel after the people rejected him as their king.
- When Jesus Christ returns, he will openly reign as king over the whole world, and Christians will reign with Him.
- This term could also be translated as “absolute rule” or “rule as king.”

(See also: kingdom)

Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 2:11-13
- Genesis 36:34-36
- Luke 1:30-33
- Luke 19:26-27
- Matthew 2:22-23

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3427, H4427, H4437, H4438, H4467, H4468, H4475, H4791, H4910, H6113, H7287, H7786, G07570, G09360, G22310, G48210

Nehemiah References:

12:22

remnant

Definition:

The term “remnant” literally refers to people or things that are “remaining” or “left over” from a larger amount or group.

- Often a “remnant” refers to people who survive a life-threatening situation or who remain faithful to God while undergoing persecution.
- Isaiah referred to a group of Jews as being a remnant who would survive attacks from outsiders and live to return to the Promised Land in Canaan.
- Paul talks about there being a “remnant” of people who were chosen by God to receive his grace.
- The term “remnant” also implies that there were other people who did not remain or were not left over.

Translation Suggestions:

- A phrase such as “the remnant of this people” could be translated as “the rest of these people” or “the people who are left.”
- The “whole remnant of people” could be translated by “all the rest of the people” or “the remaining people.”

Bible References:

- Acts 15:17
- Amos 9:12
- Ezekiel 6:8-10
- Genesis 45:7
- Isaiah 11:11
- Micah 4:6-8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3498, H3499, H5629, H6413, H7604, H7605, H7611, H8281, H8300, G26400, G30050, G30620

Nehemiah References:

7:72

repent, repentance

Definition:

The terms “repent” and “repentance” refer to turning away from sin and turning back to God.

- To “repent” literally means to “change one’s mind.”
- In the Bible, “repent” usually means to turn away from a sinful, human way of thinking and acting, and to turn to God’s way of thinking and acting.
- When people truly repent of their sins, God forgives them and helps them start obeying him.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “repent” can be translated with a word or phrase that means “turn back (to God)” or “turn away from sin and toward God” or “turn toward God, away from sin.”
- Often the term “repentance” can be translated using the verb “repent.” For example, “God has given repentance to Israel” could be translated as “God has enabled Israel to repent.”
- Other ways to translate “repentance” could include “turning away from sin” or “turning to God and away from sin.”

(See also: forgive, sin, turn)

Bible References:

- Acts 3:19-20
- Luke 3:3
- Luke 3:8
- Luke 5:32
- Luke 24:47
- Mark 1:14-15
- Matthew 3:3
- Matthew 3:11
- Matthew 4:17
- Romans 2:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 16:2 After many years of disobeying God and being oppressed by their enemies, the Israelites **repented** and asked God to rescue them.
- 17:13 David **repented** of his sin and God forgave him.
- 19:18 They (prophets) warned people that God would destroy them if they did not **repent**.
- 24:2 Many people came out to the wilderness to listen to John. He preached to them, saying, "**Repent**, for the kingdom of God is near!"
- 42:8 "It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to **receive** forgiveness for their sins."
- 44:5 "So now, **repent** and turn to God so that your sins will be washed away."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5150, H5162, H5164, G02780, G33380, G33400, G33410

Nehemiah References:

1:intro; 9:intro

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

Nehemiah References:

2:12; 7:61

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

Nehemiah References:

3:8; 4:2

righteous, righteousness, unrighteous, unrighteousness, upright, uprightness

Definition:

The term “righteousness” refers to God’s absolute goodness, justice, faithfulness, and love. Having these qualities makes God “righteous.” Because God is righteous, he must condemn sin.

- These terms are also often used to describe a person who obeys God and is morally good. However, because all people have sinned, no one except God is completely righteous.
- Examples of people the Bible who were called “righteous” include Noah, Job, Abraham, Zachariah, and Elisabeth.
- When people trust in Jesus to save them, God cleanses them from their sins and declares them to be righteous because of Jesus’ righteousness.

The term “unrighteous” means to be sinful and morally corrupt. “Unrighteousness” refers to sin or the condition of being sinful.

- These terms especially refer to living in a way that disobeys God’s teachings and commands.
- Unrighteous people are immoral in their thoughts and actions.
- Sometimes “the unrighteous” refers specifically to people who do not believe in Jesus.

The terms “upright” and “uprightness” refer to acting in a way that follows God’s laws.

- The meaning of these words includes the idea of standing up straight and looking directly ahead.
- A person who is “upright” is someone who obeys God’s rules and does not do things that are against his will.
- Terms such as “integrity” and “righteous” have similar meanings and are sometimes used in parallelism constructions, such as “integrity and uprightness.” (See: parallelism)

Translation Suggestions:

- When it describes God, the term “righteous” could be translated as “perfectly good and just” or “always acting rightly.”
- God’s “righteousness” could also be translated as “perfect faithfulness and goodness.”

- When it describes people who are obedient to God, the term “righteous” could also be translated as “morally good” or “just” or “living a God-pleasing life.”
- The phrase “the righteous” could also be translated as “righteous people” or “God-fearing people.”
- Depending on the context, “righteousness” could also be translated with a word or phrase that means “goodness” or “being perfect before God” or “acting in a right way by obeying God” or “doing perfectly good.”
- The term “unrighteous” could simply be translated as “not righteous.”
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this could include “wicked” or “immoral” or “people who rebel against God” or “sinful.”
- The phrase “the unrighteous” could be translated as “unrighteous people.”
- The term “unrighteousness” could be translated as “sin” or “evil thoughts and actions” or “wickedness.”
- If possible, it is best to translate this in a way that shows its relationship to “righteous, righteousness.”
- Ways to translate “upright” could include “acting rightly” or “one who acts rightly” or “following God’s laws” or “obedient to God” or “behaving in a way that is right.”
- The term “uprightness” could be translated as “moral purity” or “good moral conduct” or “rightness.”
- The phrase “the upright” could be translated as “people who are upright” or “upright people.”

(See also: evil, faithful, good, holy, **integrity**, just, law, law, **obey**, pure, righteous, sin, **unlawful**)

Bible References:

- **Deuteronomy 19:16**
- **Job 1:8**

- Psalms 37:30
- Psalms 49:14
- Psalms 107:42
- Ecclesiastes 12:10-11
- Isaiah 48:1-2
- Ezekiel 33:13
- Malachi 2:6
- Matthew 6:1
- Acts 3:13-14
- Romans 1:29-31
- 1 Corinthians 6:9
- Galatians 3:7
- Colossians 3:25
- 2 Thessalonians 2:10
- 2 Timothy 3:16
- 1 Peter 3:18-20
- 1 John 1:9
- 1 John 5:16-17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 3:2 But Noah found favor with God. He was a **righteous** man, living among wicked people.
- 4:8 God declared that Abram was **righteous** because he believed in God's promise.
- 17:2 David was a humble and **righteous** man who trusted and obeyed God.
- 23:1 Joseph, the man Mary was engaged to, was a **righteous** man.
- 50:10 Then the **righteous** ones will shine like the sun in the kingdom of God their Father.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H1368, H2555, H3072, H3474, H3476, H3477, H3483, H4334, H4339, H4749, H5228, H5229, H5324, H5765, H5766, H5767, H5977, H6662, H6663, H6664, H6665, H6666, H6968, H8535, H8537, H8549, H8552, G00930, G00940, G04580, G13410, G13420, G13430, G13440, G13450, G13460, G21180, G37160, G37170

Nehemiah References:

9:8; 9:33

Rimmon

Definition:

Rimmon was the name of a man and of several places mentioned in the Bible. It was also the name of a false god.

- A man named Rimmon was a Benjamite from the city of Beeroth in Zebulun. This man's sons murdered Ishbosheth, the crippled son of Jonathan.
- Rimmon was a town in the southern part of Judah, in the region occupied by the tribe of Benjamin.
- The "rock of Rimmon" was a place of safety where the Benjamites went to escape from being killed in a battle.
- Rimmon Perez was an unknown location in the Judean wilderness.
- The Syrian commander Naaman spoke of the temple of the false god Rimmon, where the king of Syria worshiped.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Benjamin, Judea, Naaman, Syria, Zebulun)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 5:18
- 2 Samuel 4:5-7
- Judges 20:45-46
- Judges 21:13-15

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7417

Nehemiah References:

11:29

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

Nehemiah References:

2:16; 4:14; 4:16; 4:19; 5:7; 5:17; 7:2; 7:5; 9:32; 9:34; 9:37; 12:31; 12:32; 12:40; 13:11

Sabbath

Definition:

The term “Sabbath” refers to the seventh day of the week, which God commanded the Israelites to set apart as a day of rest and doing no work.

- After God finished creating the world in six days, he rested on the seventh day. In the same way, God commanded the Israelites to set aside the seventh day as a special day to rest and worship him.
- The command to “keep the Sabbath holy” is one of the ten commandments that God wrote on the stone tablets that he gave Moses for the Israelites.
- Following the Jewish system of counting days, the Sabbath begins on Friday at sundown and lasts until Saturday at sundown.
- Sometimes in the Bible the Sabbath is called “Sabbath day” rather than only the Sabbath.

Translation Suggestions:

- This could also be translated as “resting day” or “day for resting” or “day of not working” or “God’s day of rest.”
- Some translations capitalize this term to show that it is a special day, as in “Sabbath Day” or “Resting Day.”
- Consider how this term is translated in a local or national language.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: rest)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 31:2-3
- Acts 13:26-27
- Exodus 31:14
- Isaiah 56:6-7
- Lamentations 2:6
- Leviticus 19:3
- Luke 13:14
- Mark 2:27

- Matthew 12:2
- Nehemiah 10:32-33

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 13:5 "Always be sure to keep the **Sabbath day** holy. That is, do all your work in six days, for the seventh day is a day for you to rest and to honor me."
- 26:2 Jesus went to the town of Nazareth where he had lived during his childhood. On the **Sabbath**, he went to the place of worship.
- 41:3 The day after Jesus was buried was a **Sabbath** day, and the Jews were not permitted to go to the tomb on that day.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4868, H7676, H7677, G43150, G45210

Nehemiah References:

9:14; 10:intro; 10:31; 10:33; 13:intro; 13:15; 13:16; 13:17; 13:18; 13:19; 13:21; 13:22

sackcloth

Definition:

Sackcloth was a coarse, scratchy type of cloth that was made from goat hair or camel hair.

- A person who wore clothing made from it would be uncomfortable. Sackcloth was worn to show mourning, grief, or humble repentance.
- The phrase “sackcloth and ashes” was a common term referring to a traditional expression of grief and repentance.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated as “coarse cloth from animal hair” or “clothes made of goat hair” or “rough, scratchy clothing.”
- Another way to translate this term could be “rough, scratchy mourning clothes.”
- The phrase “sit in sackcloth and ashes” could be translated as “show mourning and humility by wearing scratchy cloth and sitting in ashes.”

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: **ash**, camel, **goat**, **humble**, mourn, repent, **sign**)

Bible References:

- **2 Samuel 3:31**
- **Genesis 37:34**
- **Joel 1:8-10**
- **Jonah 3:5**
- **Luke 10:13**
- **Matthew 11:21**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H8242, G45260

Nehemiah References:

9:1

sacrifice, offering

Definition:

In the Bible, the terms “sacrifice” and “offering” refer to special gifts given to God as an act of worshiping him. People also offered sacrifices to false gods.

sacrifice

- Sacrifices to God often involved the killing of an animal.
- Only the sacrifice of Jesus, God’s perfect sinless Son, can completely cleanse people from sin; animal sacrifices could never do that.

offering

- The word “offering” generally refers to anything that is offered or given. The term “sacrifice” refers to something that is given or done at great cost to the giver.
- Offerings to God were specific things that he commanded the Israelites to give in order to express devotion and obedience to him.
- The names of the different offerings, such as “burnt offering” and “peace offering,” indicated what kind of offering was being given.

Translation Suggestions

- The term “offering” could also be translated as “a gift to God” or “something given to God” or “something valuable that is presented to God.”
- Depending on the context, the term “sacrifice” could also be translated as “something valuable given in worship” or “a special animal killed and presented to God.”
- The action to “sacrifice” could be translated as to “give up something valuable” or to “kill an animal and give it to God.”
- Another way to translate “present yourself as a living sacrifice” could be “as you live your life, offer yourself to God as completely as an animal is offered on an altar.”

(See also: altar, burnt offering, **drink offering**, false god, **fellowship offering**, **freewill offering** **peace offering**, priest, sin offering, **worship**)

Bible References:

- **2 Timothy 4:6**
- **Acts 7:42**

- Acts 21:25
- Genesis 4:3-5
- James 2:21-24
- Mark 1:43-44
- Mark 14:12
- Matthew 5:23

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 3:14 After Noah got off the boat, he built an altar and **sacrificed** some of each kind of animal which could be used for a **sacrifice**. God was happy with the **sacrifice** and blessed Noah and his family.
- 5:6 “Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a **sacrifice** to me.” Again Abraham obeyed God and prepared to **sacrifice** his son.
- 5:9 God had provided the ram to be the **sacrifice** instead of Isaac.
- 13:9 Anyone who disobeyed God’s law could bring an animal to the Tent of Meeting as a **sacrifice** to God. A priest would kill the animal and burn it on the altar. The blood of the animal that was **sacrificed** covered the person’s sin and made that person clean in God’s sight.
- 17:6 David wanted to build a temple where all the Israelites could worship God and offer him **sacrifices**.
- 48:6 Jesus is the Great High Priest. Unlike other priests, he offered himself as the only **sacrifice** that could to take away the sin of all the people in the world.
- 48:8 But God provided Jesus, the Lamb of God, as a **sacrifice** to die in our place.
- 49:11 Because Jesus **sacrificed** himself, God can forgive any sin, even terrible sins.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0801, H0817, H0819, H1685, H1890, H1974, H2076, H2077, H2281, H2282, H2398, H2401, H2402, H2403, H2409, H3632, H4394, H4503, H4504, H5066, H5068, H5071, H5257, H5258, H5261, H5262, H5927, H5928, H5930, H6453, H6944, H6999, H7133, H7311, H8002, H8426, H8548, H8573, H8641, G02660, G03340, G10490, G14350, G14940, G23780, G23800, G36460, G43760, G54850

Nehemiah References:

4:2; 10:33; 10:34; 10:37; 10:39; 12:43; 12:44; 13:5; 13:9; 13:31

Samaria, Samaritan

Definition:

Samaria was the name of a city and its surrounding region in the northern part of Israel. The region was located between the Plain of Sharon on its west and the Jordan River on its east.

- In the Old Testament, Samaria was the capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel. Later the region surrounding it was also called Samaria.
- When the Assyrians conquered the northern kingdom of Israel, they captured the city of Samaria and forced most of the northern Israelites to leave the region, moving them far away to different cities in Assyria.
- The Assyrians also brought many foreigners into the region of Samaria to replace the Israelites who had been moved.
- Some of the Israelites who remained in that region married the foreigners who had moved there, and their descendants were called Samaritans.
- The Jews despised the Samaritans because they were only partly Jewish and because their ancestors had worshiped pagan gods.
- In New Testament times, the region of Samaria was bordered by the region of Galilee on its north and the region of Judea on its south.

(See also: Assyria, Galilee, Judea, Sharon, kingdom of Israel)

Bible References:

- Acts 8:1-3
- Acts 8:5
- John 4:4-5
- Luke 9:51-53
- Luke 10:33

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 20:4 Then the Assyrians brought foreigners to live in the land where the kingdom of Israel had been. The foreigners rebuilt the destroyed cities and married the Israelites who were left there. The descendants of the Israelites who married foreigners were called **Samaritans**.
- 27:8 “The next person to walk down that road was a **Samaritan**. (**Samaritans** were the descendants of Jews who had married people from other nations. **Samaritans** and Jews hated each other.)”

- 27:9 “The **Samaritan** then lifted the man onto his own donkey and took him to a roadside inn where he took care of him.”
- 45:7 He (Philip) went to **Samaria** where he preached about Jesus and many people were saved.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H8111, H8115, H8118, G45400, G45410, G45420

Nehemiah References:

4:2

sanctuary

Definition:

The term “sanctuary” literally means “holy place” and refers to a place that God has made sacred and holy. It also can refer to a place that provides protection and safety.

- In the Old Testament, the term “sanctuary” was often used to refer to the tabernacle or temple building where the “holy place” and “most holy place” were located.
- God referred to the sanctuary as the place where he lived among his people, the Israelites.
- He also called himself a “sanctuary” or safe place for his people where they can find protection.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term has a basic meaning of “holy place” or “place that is set apart.”
- Depending on the context, the term “sanctuary” could be translated as “holy place” or “sacred building” or “God’s holy dwelling place” or “holy place of protection” or “sacred place of safety.”
- The phrase “shekel of the sanctuary” could be translated as “kind of shekel given for the tabernacle” or “shekel used in paying the tax to take care of the temple.”
- Note: Be careful that the translation of this term does not refer to a worship room in a modern-day church.

(See also: holy, Holy Spirit, holy, **set apart**, **tabernacle**, tax, temple)

Bible References:

- **Amos 7:13**
- **Exodus 25:3-7**
- **Ezekiel 25:3**
- **Hebrews 8:1-2**
- **Luke 11:49-51**
- **Numbers 18:1**
- **Psalms 78:69**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4720, H6944, G00400

Nehemiah References:

10:39

save, saved, safe, salvation, rescue

Definition:

The term “save” refers to keeping someone from experiencing something bad or harmful. To “be safe” means to be protected from harm or danger.

- In a physical sense, people can be saved or rescued from harm, danger, or death.
- In a spiritual sense, if a person has been “saved,” then God, through Jesus’ death on the cross, has forgiven him and rescued him from being punished in hell for his sin.
- People can save or rescue people from danger, but only God can save people from being punished eternally for their sins.

The term “salvation” refers to being saved or rescued from evil and danger.

- In the Bible, “salvation” usually refers to the spiritual and eternal deliverance granted by God to those who repent of their sins and believe in Jesus.
- The Bible also talks about God saving or delivering his people from their physical enemies.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “save” could include “deliver” or “keep from harm” or “take out of harm’s way” or “keep from dying.”
- In the expression “whoever would save his life,” the term “save” could also be translated as “preserve” or “protect.”
- The term “safe” could be translated as “protected from danger” or “in a place where nothing can harm.”
- The term “salvation” could also be translated using words related to “save” or “rescue,” as in “God’s saving people (from being punished for their sins)” or “God’s rescuing his people (from their enemies).”
- “God is my salvation” could be translated as “God is the one who saves me.”
- “You will draw water from the wells of salvation” could be translated as “You will be refreshed as with water because God is rescuing you.”

(See also: cross, deliver, punish, sin, Savior)

Bible References:

- Genesis 49:18
- Genesis 47:25-26
- Psalms 80:3
- Jeremiah 16:19-21
- Micah 6:3-5
- Luke 2:30
- Luke 8:36-37
- Acts 4:12
- Acts 28:28
- Acts 2:21
- Romans 1:16
- Romans 10:10
- Ephesians 6:17
- Philippians 1:28
- 1 Timothy 1:15-17
- Revelation 19:1-2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 9:8 Moses tried to **save** his fellow Israelite.
- 11:2 God provided a way to **save** the firstborn son of anyone who believed in him.
- 12:5 Moses told the Israelites, “Stop being afraid! God will fight for you today and **save** you.”
- 12:13 The Israelites sang many songs to celebrate their new freedom and to praise God because he **saved** them from the Egyptian army.
- 16:17 This pattern repeated many times: the Israelites would sin, God would punish them, they would repent, and God would send a deliverer to **save** them.
- 44:8 “You crucified Jesus, but God raised him to life again! You rejected him, but there is no other way to be **saved** except through the power of Jesus!”

- 47:11 The jailer trembled as he came to Paul and Silas and asked, “What must I do to be **saved**?” Paul answered, “Believe in Jesus, the Master, and you and your family will be **saved**.”
- 49:12 Good works cannot **save** you.
- 49:13 God will **save** everyone who believes in Jesus and receives him as their Master. But he will not **save** anyone who does not believe in him.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0983, H2421, H2502, H3444, H3467, H3468, H4190, H4422, H4931, H5338, H6308, H6403, H7682, H7951, H7965, H8104, H8199, H8668, G08030, G08040, G08060, G12950, G15080, G49820, G49910, G49920, G51980

Nehemiah References:

9:27

Savior, savior

Definition:

The term “savior” refers to a person who saves or rescues others from danger. It can also refer to someone who gives strength to others or provides for them.

- In the Old Testament, God is referred to as Israel’s Savior because he often rescued them from their enemies, gave them strength, and provided them with what they needed to live.
- In the Old Testament, God appointed judges to protect the Israelites by leading them in battle against other people groups who came to attack them. These judges are sometimes called “saviors.” The Old Testament book of Judges records the time in history when these judges were governing Israel.
- In the New Testament, “Savior” is used as a description or title for Jesus Christ because he saves people from being eternally punished for their sin. He also saves them from being controlled by their sin.

Translation Suggestions:

- If possible, “Savior” should be translated with a word that is related to the words “save” and “salvation.”
- Ways to translate this term could include “the One who saves” or “God, who saves” or “who delivers from danger” or “who rescues from enemies” or “Jesus, the one who rescues (people) from sin.”

(See also: deliver, Jesus, save, save)

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 4:10
- 2 Peter 2:20
- Acts 5:29-32
- Isaiah 60:15-16
- Luke 1:47
- Psalms 106:19-21

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3467, G49900

Nehemiah References:

9:27

scribe

Definition:

Scribes were officials who were responsible for writing or copying important government or religious documents by hand. Another name for a Jewish scribe was “expert in Jewish law.”

- Scribes were responsible for copying and preserving the books of the Old Testament.
- They also copied, preserved, and interpreted religious opinions and commentary on the law of God.
- At times, scribes were important government officials.
- Important biblical scribes include Baruch and Ezra.
- In the New Testament, the term translated “scribes” was also translated as “teachers of the Law.”
- In the New Testament, scribes were usually part of the religious group called the “Pharisees,” and the two groups were frequently mentioned together.

(See also: law, Pharisee)

Bible References:

- Acts 4:5
- Luke 7:29-30
- Luke 20:47
- Mark 1:22
- Mark 2:16
- Matthew 5:19-20
- Matthew 7:28
- Matthew 12:38
- Matthew 13:52

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5608, H5613, H7083, G11220

Nehemiah References:

8:1; 8:4; 8:9; 8:13; 12:26; 12:36; 13:13

Sea of Reeds, Red Sea

Definition:

The “Sea of Reeds” was the name of a body of water located between Egypt and Arabia. It is now called the “Red Sea.”

- The Red Sea is long and narrow. It is larger than a lake or river, but much smaller than an ocean.
- The Israelites had to cross the Red Sea when they were fleeing from Egypt. God performed a miracle and caused the waters of the sea to divide so that the people could walk across on dry land.
- The land of Canaan was north of this sea.
- This could also be translated as “Reed Sea.”

(See also: Arabia.Canaan, Egypt)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:35-37
- Exodus 13:17-18
- Joshua 4:22-24
- Numbers 14:23-25

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 12:4 When the Israelites saw the Egyptian army coming, they realized they were trapped between Pharaoh’s army and the **Red Sea**.
- 12:5 Then God told Moses, “Tell the people to move toward the **Red Sea**.”
- 13:1 After God led the Israelites through the **Red Sea**, he led them through the wilderness to a mountain called Sinai.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3220, H5488, G20630, G22810

Nehemiah References:

9:9

seal, sealed, unsealed

Definition:

When referring to an action, the term “seal” means to close an object with something (usually called a “seal”) that makes the object impossible to open without breaking the seal. When referring to an object, the term “seal” refers to something that was made of wood or metal or stone that was formed into a design so that it could be used to stamp something (make an imprint on it).

- A seal was marked with a design to show who it belonged to.
- Seals were used to mark different objects for the purpose of showing that the thing belonged to the owner or had come from the owner or was approved by the owner.
- Seals were used to indicate the authenticity of something as deriving from the owner or being approved by the owner or belonging to the owner in some way.
- Sometimes a seal was put on the top of a ring so that the owner of the ring could press the seal down into something and make an imprint on it.
- Sometimes seals were attached to a string or cord and worn around the neck.
- Melted wax was used to seal letters or other documents that needed to be protected. When the wax cooled and hardened, the letter could not be opened without breaking the wax seal. The person who received the letter would see the unbroken seal and know that no one had opened it.
- A seal was put on the stone in front of Jesus’ grave in order to keep anyone from moving the stone.

(See also: Holy Spirit, tomb)

Bible References:

- Exodus 2:3
- Isaiah 29:11
- John 6:27
- Matthew 27:66
- Revelation 5:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2368, H2560, H2856, H2857, H2858, H5640, G26960, G49720, G49730

Nehemiah References:

9:38; 10:1

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

Nehemiah References:

7:61; 9:2; 9:8

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

Nehemiah References:

2:4; 2:10; 5:12; 5:18; 7:64; 12:27

seize, seizure, capture

Definition:

The term “seize” means to take or capture someone or something by force. It can also mean to overpower and control someone.

- When a city was taken by means of military force, the soldiers would seize the valuable property of the people they had conquered.
- When used figuratively, a person can be described as being “seized with fear.” This means that the person was suddenly “overcome by fear.” If a person was “seized with fear” it could also be stated that the person “suddenly became very afraid.”
- In the context of labor pains that “seize” a woman, the meaning is that the pains are sudden and overpowering. This could be translated by saying that the pains “overcome” or “suddenly come upon” the woman.
- This term could also be translated as “take control of” or “suddenly take” or “grab.”
- The expression “seized and slept with her” could be translated as “forced himself on her” or “violated her” or “raped her.” Make sure the translation of this concept is acceptable.

(See: euphemism)

Bible References:

- Acts 16:19-21
- Exodus 15:14
- John 10:37-39
- Luke 8:29
- Matthew 26:48

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0270, H1497, H2388, H3027, H3920, H3947, H4672, H5377, H5860, H6031, H7760, H8610, G07240, G19490, G26380, G29020, G29830, G48150, G48840

Nehemiah References:

9:25

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

Nehemiah References:

1:6; 1:7; 1:8; 1:10; 1:11; 2:5; 2:10; 2:19; 2:20; 4:16; 4:22; 4:23; 5:10; 5:15; 5:16; 6:5; 7:57; 7:60; 7:67; 9:10; 9:14; 9:35; 9:36; 10:29; 11:3; 13:19

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

Nehemiah References:

1:3; 2:17; 5:9; 6:13

shield

Definition:

A shield was an object held by a soldier in battle to protect himself from being injured by the enemy's weapons. To "shield" someone means to protect that person from harm.

- Shields were often circular or oval, were made of materials such as leather, wood, or metal, and were sturdy and thick enough to keep a sword or arrow from piercing them.
- Using this term as a metaphor, the Bible refers to God as a protective shield for his people. (See: Metaphor)
- Paul talked about the "shield of faith," which is a figurative way of saying that having faith in Jesus and living out that faith in obedience to God will protect believers from the spiritual attacks of Satan.

(See also: **faith**, **obey**, **Satan**, **spirit**)

Bible References:

- **1 Kings 14:26**
- **2 Chronicles 23:8-9**
- **2 Samuel 22:36**
- **Deuteronomy 33:29**
- **Psalms 18:35**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2653, H3591, H4043, H5437, H5526, H6793, H7982, G23750

Nehemiah References:

4:16

Sihon

Definition:

Sihon is the name of a man who was an Amorite king who ruled over the land of Heshbon.

- The Israelites conquered Sihon and his people and land.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Amorite, Heshbon)

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5511

Nehemiah References:

9:22

silver

Definition:

Silver is a shiny, gray precious metal used to make coins, jewelry, containers, and ornaments.

- The various containers that are made from silver include silver cups and bowls, and other things used for cooking, eating, or serving.
- Silver and gold were used in the building of the tabernacle and the temple. The temple in Jerusalem had containers made of silver.
- In Bible times, a shekel was a unit of weight, and a purchase was often priced at a certain number of shekels of silver. By New Testament times there were silver coins of various weights that were measured in shekels.
- Joseph's brothers sold him as a slave for twenty shekels of silver.
- Judas was paid thirty silver coins for betraying Jesus.
- If your culture does not have silver you could translate this term as "precious metal"

(See also: tabernacle, temple)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:9-11
- 1 Samuel 2:36
- 2 Kings 25:13-15
- Acts 3:6
- Matthew 26:15

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3701, H3702, H7192, G06930, G06940, G06950, G06960, G14060

Nehemiah References:

5:4; 5:10; 5:11; 5:15; 7:71; 7:72

sin offering, purification offering

Definition:

The “sin offering” was one of several sacrifices that God required the Israelites to offer.

- This offering involved sacrificing a bull, burning its blood and fat on the altar, and taking the rest of the animal’s body and burning it on the ground outside the Israelite camp.
- The complete burning up of this animal sacrifice shows how holy God is and how terrible sin is.
- The Bible teaches that in order for there to be a cleansing from sin, blood must be shed to pay the cost for the sin that was committed.
- Animal sacrifices could not permanently bring about forgiveness of sin.
- Jesus’ death on the cross paid the penalty for sin, for all time. He was the perfect sin offering.

(See also: altar, cow, forgive, sacrifice, sin)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 29:20-21
- Exodus 29:35-37
- Ezekiel 44:25-27
- Leviticus 5:11
- Numbers 7:15-17

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2401, H2402, H2398, H2403

Nehemiah References:

10:33

sin, sinful, sinner, sinning

Definition:

The term "sin" refers to actions, thoughts, and words that are against God's will and laws. Sin can also refer to not doing something that God wants us to do.

- Sin includes anything we do that does not obey or please God, even things that other people do not know about.
- Thoughts and actions that disobey God's will are called "sinful."
- Because Adam sinned, all human beings are born with a "sinful nature," a nature that that controls them and causes them to sin.
- A "sinner" is someone who sins, so every human being is a sinner.
- Sometimes the word "sinners" was used by religious people like the Pharisees to refer to people who did not keep the law as well as the Pharisees thought they should.
- The term "sinner" was also used for people who were considered to be worse sinners than other people. For example, this label was given to tax collectors and prostitutes.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term "sin" could be translated with a word or phrase that means "disobedience to God" or "going against God's will" or "evil behavior and thoughts" or "wrongdoing."
- To "sin" could also be translated as to "disobey God" or to "do wrong."
- Depending on the context "sinful" could be translated as "full of wrongdoing" or "wicked" or "immoral" or "evil" or "rebelling against God."
- Depending on the context the term "sinner" could be translated with a word or phrase that means "person who sins" or "person who does wrong things" or "person who disobeys God" or "person who disobeys the law."
- The term "sinners" could be translated by a word or phrase that means "very sinful people" or "people considered to be very sinful" or "immoral people."
- Ways to translate "tax collectors and sinners" could include "people who collect money for the government, and other very sinful people" or "very sinful people, including (even) tax collectors."
- Make sure the translation of this term can include sinful behavior and thoughts, even those that other people do not see or know about.
- The term "sin" should be general, and different from the terms for "wickedness" and "evil."

(See also: disobey, evil, flesh, tax collector)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 9:1-3
- 1 John 1:10
- 1 John 2:2
- 2 Samuel 7:12-14
- Acts 3:19
- Daniel 9:24
- Genesis 4:7
- Hebrews 12:2
- Isaiah 53:11
- Jeremiah 18:23
- Leviticus 4:14
- Luke 15:18
- Matthew 12:31
- Romans 6:23
- Romans 8:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 3:15 God said, “I promise I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are **sinful** from the time they are children.”
- 13:12 God was very angry with them because of their **sin** and planned to destroy them.
- 20:1 The kingdoms of Israel and Judah both **sinned** against God. They broke the covenant that God made with them at Sinai.
- 21:13 The prophets also said that the Messiah would be perfect, having no **sin**. He would die to receive the punishment for other people’s **sin**.
- 35:1 One day, Jesus was teaching many tax collectors and other **sinners** who had gathered to hear him.
- 38:5 Then Jesus took a cup and said, “Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the forgiveness of **sins**.”
- 43:11 Peter answered them, “Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that God will forgive your **sins**.”
- 48:8 We all deserve to die for our **sins**!

- 49:17 Even though you are a Christian, you will still be tempted to **sin**. But God is faithful and says that if you confess your **sins**, he will forgive you. He will give you strength to fight against **sin**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0817, H0819, H2398, H2399, H2400, H2401, H2402, H2403, H2408, H2409, H5771, H6588, H7683, H7686, G02640, G02650, G02660, G02680, G03610, G37810, G39000, G42580

Nehemiah References:

1:6; 4:5; 6:13; 9:intro; 9:2; 9:29; 9:37; 13:26

Sinai, Horeb

Definition:

Mount Sinai, also called Mount Horeb, is a mountain that was probably located in the southern part of what is now called the Sinai Peninsula, but the exact location of this mountain is not known.

- It is the place where God revealed his covenant to the Israelites and gave Moses the stone tablets on which he had written the ten commandments.
- It is also called the "mountain of God."
- It was also the place where God later told Moses to strike a rock to provide water for the Israelites as they were wandering in the desert.
- It was the place where Moses saw the burning bush when he was tending sheep.
- It is possible that "Horeb" was the actual name of the mountain and that "Mount Sinai" simply means "mountain of Sinai," referring to the fact that Mount Horeb was located in the desert of Sinai.

(See also: desert, Ten Commandments, covenant, Israel, Moses, Sinai)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:29-30
- Exodus 16:1-3
- Galatians 4:24
- Leviticus 27:34
- Numbers 1:17-19
- 1 Kings 8:9-11
- 2 Chronicles 5:9-10
- Deuteronomy 1:2
- Exodus 3:1-3
- Psalms 106:19

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 13:1 After God led the Israelites through the Red Sea, he led them through the wilderness to a mountain called **Sinai**.

- 13:3 Three days later, after the people had prepared themselves spiritually, God came down on top of **Mount Sinai** with thunder, lightning, smoke, and a loud trumpet blast.
- 13:11 For many days, Moses was on top of **Mount Sinai** talking with God.
- 15:13 Then Joshua reminded the people of their obligation to obey the covenant that God had made with the Israelites at **Sinai**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2722, H5514, G37350, G46140

Nehemiah References:

9:13

slay, slain, slaughter, kill, murder

Definition:

To “slay” a person or animal means to kill it. Often it means to kill it in a forceful or violent way. If a man has killed an animal he has “slain” it.

- When referring to an animal or to a large number of people, the term “slaughter” is another term that is often used.
- An act of slaughtering is also called a “slaughter.”
- The phrase “the slain” could also be translated as “the slain people” or “the people who were killed.”

(See also: **slaughter**)

Bible References:

- **Ezekiel 28:23**
- **Isaiah 26:21**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2026, H2076, H2491, H2717, H2763, H2873, H2874, H4191, H4194, H5221, H6991, H6992, H7523, H7819, G03370, G06150, G13150, G23800, G26950, G49680, G49690, G54070

Nehemiah References:

4:11; 6:10; 9:26

Solomon

Definition:

Solomon was one of King David's sons. His mother was Bathsheba.

- When Solomon became king, God told him to ask for anything he wanted. So Solomon asked for wisdom to rule the people justly and well. God was pleased with Solomon's request and gave him both wisdom and much wealth.
- Solomon is also well known for having a magnificent temple built in Jerusalem.
- Although Solomon ruled wisely in the first years of his reign, later on he foolishly married many foreign women and started worshiping their gods.
- Because of Solomon's unfaithfulness, after his death God divided the Israelites into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah. These kingdoms often fought against each other.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **Bathsheba**, David, Israel, **Judah**, **kingdom of Israel**, temple)

Bible References:

- **Acts 7:47-50**
- **Luke 12:27**
- **Matthew 1:7-8**
- **Matthew 6:29**
- **Matthew 12:42**

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:14** Later, David and Bathsheba had another son, and they named him **Solomon**.
- **18:1** After many years, David died, and his son **Solomon** began to rule. God spoke to **Solomon** and asked him what he wanted most. When **Solomon** asked for wisdom, God was pleased and made him the wisest man in the world. **Solomon** learned many things and was a very wise judge. God also made him very wealthy.
- **18:2** In Jerusalem, **Solomon** built the Temple for which his father David had planned and gathered materials.
- **18:3** But **Solomon** loved women from other countries.…When **Solomon** was old, he also worshiped their gods.

- 18:4 God was angry with **Solomon** and, as a punishment for **Solomon's** unfaithfulness, he promised to divide the nation of Israel into two kingdoms after **Solomon's** death.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H8010, G46720

Nehemiah References:

7:57; 7:60; 11:3; 12:45; 13:26

spear, spearmen

Definition:

A spear is a weapon with a long wooden handle and sharp metal blade on one end that is thrown a long distance.

- Spears were commonly used for war in biblical times. They are sometimes still used in present-day conflicts between certain people groups.
- A spear was used by a Roman soldier to pierce the side of Jesus while he hung on the cross.
- Sometimes people throw spears to catch fish or other prey to eat.
- Similar weapons are the “javelin” or “lance.”
- Make sure that the translation of “spear” is different from the translation of “sword,” which is a weapon that is used for thrusting or stabbing, not throwing. Also, a sword has a long blade with a handle, while a spear has a small blade on the end of a long shaft.

(See also: prey, Rome, sword, warrior)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 13:19-21
- 2 Samuel 21:19
- Nehemiah 4:12-14
- Psalm 35:3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1265, H2595, H3591, H6767, H7013, H7420, G30570

Nehemiah References:

4:13; 4:16; 4:21

statute

Definition:

A statute is a specific written law that provides guidance for people to live by.

- The term “statute” is similar in meaning to “ordinance” and “command” and “law” and “decree.” All these terms involve instructions and requirements that God gives to his people or rulers give to their people.
- King David said that he delighted himself in Yahweh’s statutes.
- The term “statute” could also be translated as “specific command” or “special decree.”

(See also: command, decree, law, ordinance, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 11:11-13
- Deuteronomy 6:20-23
- Ezekiel 33:15
- Numbers 19:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2706, H2708, H7010, G13450

Nehemiah References:

1:7; 9:13; 9:14; 10:29

stone, stoning

Definition:

A stone is a small rock. To “stone” someone is to throw stones and larger rocks at that person with the intention of killing him. A “stoning” is an event in which someone was stoned.

- In ancient times, stoning was a common method of executing people as punishment for crimes they had committed.
- God commanded the Israelite leaders to stone people for certain sins, such as adultery.
- In the New Testament, Jesus forgave a woman caught in adultery and stopped people from stoning her.
- Stephen, who was the first person in the Bible to be killed for testifying about Jesus, was stoned to death.
- In the city of Lystra, the apostle Paul was stoned, but he did not die from his wounds.

(See also: **adultery**, **commit**, **crime**, **death**, **Lystra**, testimony)

Bible References:

- **Acts 7:57-58**
- **Acts 7:59-60**
- **Acts 14:5**
- **Acts 14:19-20**
- **John 8:4-6**
- **Luke 13:34**
- **Luke 20:6**
- **Matthew 23:37-39**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0068, H0069, H0810, H1382, H1496, H1530, H2106, H2672, H2687, H2789, H4676, H4678, H5553, H5601, H5619, H6344, H6443, H6697, H6864, H6872, H7275, H7671, H8068, G26420, G29910, G30340, G30350, G30360, G30370, G40740, G43480, G55860

Nehemiah References:

4:2; 4:3; 9:11

storehouse

Definition:

A “storehouse” is a large building that is used for keeping food or other things, often for a long time.

- In the Bible a “storehouse” was usually used to store extra grain and other food to be used later when there was a famine.
- This term was also used figuratively to refer to all the good things that God wants to give to his people.
- The storehouses of the temple and tent of meeting (sometimes called “the tabernacle”)contained valuable things that had been dedicated to Yahweh, such as gold and silver. Some of these things used to repair and maintain the temple were also kept there.
- Other ways to translate “storehouse” could include “a building for storing grain” or “place for keeping food” or “room for keeping valuable things safe.”
- When referring to the place where valuable things were kept for the tent of meeting or temple, another way to translate the word “storehouse” is “treasury.”

(See also: consecrate, dedicate, famine, gold, grain, silver, temple)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 16:2-3
- Luke 3:17
- Matthew 3:12
- Psalms 33:7

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0214, H0618, H0624, H4035, H4200, H4543, G05960

Nehemiah References:

12:25; 12:44

stronghold, fortification, fortress, citadel

Definition:

The terms “stronghold” and “fortress” both refer to places that are well protected against an attack by enemy soldiers. A “citadel” is a fortress inside a city. The term “fortified” describes a city or other place that has been made safe from attack.

- Often, strongholds and fortresses were manmade structures with defensive walls. They could also have been places with natural protective barriers such as rocky cliffs or high mountains.
- People fortified strongholds by building thick walls or other structures that made it difficult for an enemy to break through.
- “Stronghold” or “fortress” could be translated as “securely strong place” or “strongly protected place.”
- The term “fortified city” could be translated as “securely protected city” or “strongly built city.”
- Another figurative meaning for the term “stronghold” referred to something that someone wrongly trusted in for security, such as a false god or other thing that was worshiped instead of Yahweh. This could be translated as “false strongholds.”
- This term should be translated differently from “refuge,” which emphasizes safety more than the concept of being fortified.

(See also: false god, false god, **refuge**, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- **2 Corinthians 10:4**
- **2 Kings 8:10-12**
- **2 Samuel 5:8-10**
- **Acts 21:35**
- **Habakkuk 1:10-11**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0490, H0553, H0759, H1001, H1002, H1003, H1219, H1225, H2388, H4013, H4026, H4581, H4526, H4679, H4685, H4686, H4692, H4694, H4869, H5794, H5797, H5800, H6438, H6877, H7682, G37940, G39250

Nehemiah References:

1:1; 2:8; 7:2

sword, swordsmen

Definition:

A sword is a flat-bladed metal weapon used to cut or stab. It has a handle and a long, pointed blade with a very sharp cutting edge.

- In ancient times the length of a sword's blade was about 60 to 91 centimeters.
- Some swords have two sharp edges and are called "double-edged" or "two-edged" swords.
- Jesus' disciples had swords for self defense. With his sword, Peter cut off the ear of the high priest's servant.
- Both John the Baptist and the apostle James were beheaded with swords.

Translation Suggestions

- A sword is used as a metaphor for God's word. God's teachings in the Bible exposed people's innermost thoughts and convicted them of their sin. In a similar way, a sword cuts deeply, causing pain. (See: Metaphor)
- One way to translate this figurative use would be, "God's word is like a sword, which cuts deeply and exposes sin."
- Another figurative use of this term occurred in the book of Psalms, where the tongue or speech of a person was compared to a sword, which can injure people. This could be translated as "the tongue is like a sword that can badly injure someone."
- If swords are not known in your culture, this word could be translated with the name of another long-bladed weapon that is used to cut or stab.
- A sword could also be described as a "sharp weapon" or "long knife." Some translations could include a picture of a sword.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: James (brother of Jesus), John (the Baptist), tongue, word of God)

Bible References:

- Acts 12:2
- Genesis 27:40
- Genesis 34:25
- Luke 2:33-35

- **Luke 21:24**
- **Matthew 10:34**
- **Matthew 26:55**
- **Revelation 1:16**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0019, H1300, H2719, H4380, H6609, H7524, H7973, G31620, G45010

Nehemiah References:

4:13; 4:18

tax, tribute, taxation, taxpayer, tax collector

Definition:

The terms “tax” and “taxes” refer to money or goods that people pay to a government that is in authority over them. A “tax collector” was a government worker whose job was to receive money that people were required to pay the government in taxes.

- The amount of money that is paid as a tax is usually based on the value of an item or on how much a person’s property is worth.
- In the time of Jesus and and the apostles, the Roman government required taxes from everyone living in the Roman empire, including the Jews.
- If taxes are not paid, the government can take legal action against a person to get the money that is owed.
- Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem to be counted in the census held to tax everyone living in the Roman empire.
- The term “tax” could also be translated as “required payment” or “government money” or “temple money,” depending on the context.
- To “pay taxes” could also be translated as to “pay money to the government” or “receive money for the government” or “make the required payment.” To “collect taxes” could be translated as to “receive money for the government.”
- A “tax collector” is someone who works for the government and receives the money that people are required to pay it.
- The people who collected taxes for the Roman government would often demand more money from the people than the government required. The tax collectors would keep the extra amount for themselves.
- Because tax collectors cheated people in this way, the Jews considered them to be among the worst of sinners.
- The Jews also considered Jewish tax collectors to be traitors to their own people because they worked for the Roman government which was oppressing the Jewish people.
- The phrase, “tax collectors and sinners” was a common expression in the New Testament, showing how much the Jews despised tax collectors.

(See also: Jew, Rome, sin)

Strong’s for Tax: H2670, H4060, H4371, H4522, H4864, H6186, G13230, G27780, G50550, G54110

Strong’s for Tax Collector: H5065, H5674, G50570, G50580

Bible References:

- Luke 20:21-22
- Mark 2:13-14
- Matthew 9:7-9
- Numbers 31:28-29
- Romans 13:6-7
- Luke 3:12-13
- Luke 5:27-28
- Matthew 5:46-48
- Matthew 9:10-11
- Matthew 11:18-19
- Matthew 17:26-27
- Matthew 18:17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 34:6 He said, “Two men went to the Temple to pray. One of them was a tax collector, and the other was a religious leader.”
- 34:7 “The religious leader prayed like this, ‘Thank you, God, that I am not a sinner like other men—such as robbers, unjust men, adulterers, or even like that tax collector.’”
- 34:9 “But the tax collector stood far away from the religious ruler, did not even look up to heaven. Instead, he pounded on his chest and prayed, ‘God, please be merciful to me because I am a sinner.’”
- 34:10 Then Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, God heard the tax collector’s prayer and declared him to be righteous.”
- 35:1 One day, Jesus was teaching many tax collectors and other sinners who had gathered to hear him.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2670, H4060, H4371, H4522, H4864, H6186, G13230, H5065, H5674, G27780, G50550, G54110, G50570, G50580

Nehemiah References:

5:4

temple, house, house of God

Definition:

A temple is a building dedicated to the worship of a specific diety where that diety was thought to dwell. Nations around Israel had temples dedicated to their various gods. The temple in Israel was a building surrounded by walled courtyards where the Israelites came to pray and to offer sacrifices to God. It was located on Mount Moriah in the city of Jerusalem.

- Often the term “temple” referred to the whole temple complex, including the courtyards that surrounded the main building. Sometimes it referred only to the building.
- The temple building had two rooms, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place.
- God referred to the temple as his dwelling place.
- King Solomon built the first temple during his reign. It was supposed to be the permanent place of worship in Jerusalem.

Translation Suggestions:

- Usually when the text says that people were “in the temple,” it is referring to the courtyards outside the building. This could be translated as “in the temple courtyards” or “in the temple complex.”
- Where it refers specifically to the building itself, some translations translate “temple” as “temple building,” to make it the reference clear.
- Ways to translate “temple” could include, “God’s holy house” or “sacred worship place.”
- Often in the Bible, the temple is referred to as “the house of Yahweh” or “the house of God.”

(See also: sacrifice, Solomon, Babylon, Holy Spirit, **tabernacle**, **courtyard**, **Zion**, house)

Bible References:

- **Acts 3:2**
- **Acts 3:8**
- **Ezekiel 45:18-20**
- **Luke 19:46**
- Nehemiah 10:28
- **Psalm 79:1-3**

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 17:6 David wanted to build a **temple** where all the Israelites could worship God and offer him sacrifices.
- 18:2 In Jerusalem, Solomon built the **Temple** for which his father David had planned and gathered materials. Instead of at the Tent of Meeting, people now worshiped God and offered sacrifices to him at the **Temple**. God came and was present in the **Temple**, and he lived there with his people.
- 20:7 They (Babylonians) captured the city of Jerusalem, destroyed the **Temple**, and took away all the treasures.
- 20:13 When the people arrived in Jerusalem, they rebuilt the **Temple** and the wall around the city.
- 25:4 Then Satan took Jesus to the highest point on the **Temple** and said, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ‘God will command his angels to carry you so your foot does not hit a stone.’”
- 40:7 When he died, there was an earthquake and the large curtain that separated the people from the presence of God in the **Temple** was torn in two, from the top to the bottom.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1004, H1964, H1965, G14930, G24110, G34850

Nehemiah References:

2:8; 6:10; 6:11; 10:intro; 10:32; 10:33; 10:34; 10:36; 10:37; 10:38; 10:39; 11:12; 13:intro; 13:4; 13:14

tenth, tithe

Definition:

The terms “tenth” and “tithe” refer to “ten percent” or “one-out-of-ten portion” of one’s money, crops, livestock, or other possessions, which is given to God.

- In the Old Testament, God instructed the Israelites to set aside a tenth of their belongings to give as an offering of thanksgiving to him.
- This offering was used to support the Levite tribe of Israel who served the Israelites as priests and caretakers of the tabernacle and later, the temple.
- In the New Testament, God does not require giving a tithe, but instead he instructs believers to generously and cheerfully help people in need and support the work of Christian ministry.
- This could also be translated as “one-tenth” or “one out of ten.”

(See also: **believe**, Israel, Levite, livestock, **Melchizedek**, minister, sacrifice, **tabernacle**, temple)

Bible References:

- **Genesis 14:19-20**
- **Genesis 28:20-22**
- **Hebrews 7:4-6**
- **Isaiah 6:13**
- **Luke 11:42**
- **Luke 18:11-12**
- **Matthew 23:23-24**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4643, H6237, H6241, G05860, G11810, G11830

Nehemiah References:

10:37; 10:38; 12:44; 13:5; 13:12

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

Nehemiah References:

9:26; 9:29; 9:30; 9:34; 13:21

to minister, ministry

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “ministry” refers to serving others by teaching them about God and caring for their spiritual needs.

- In the Old Testament, the priests would “minister” to God in the temple by offering sacrifices to him.
- Their “ministry” also included taking care of the temple and offering prayers to God on behalf of the people.
- The job of “ministering” to people can include serving them spiritually by teaching them about God.
- It can also refer to serving people in physical ways, such as caring for the sick and providing food for the poor.

Translation Suggestions:

- In the context of ministering to people, to “minister” could also be translated as to “serve” or to “care for” or to “meet the needs of.”
- When referring to ministering in the temple, the term “minister” could be translated as “serve God in the temple” or “offer sacrifices to God for the people.”
- In the context of ministering to God, this could be translated as to “serve” or to “work for God.”
- The phrase “ministered to” could also be translated as “took care of” or “provided for” or “helped.”

(See also: serve, sacrifice)

Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 20:23-26
- Acts 6:4
- Acts 21:17-19

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6399, H8120, H8334, H8335, G12470, G12480, G12490, G20230, G20380, G24180, G30080, G30090, G30100, G30110, G39300, G52560, G52570, G55240

Nehemiah References:

10:36; 10:39

tongue, language

Definition:

The term “tongue” refers to the organ inside a person’s mouth that is used to speak. The term is often used figuratively to mean “language” or “speaking.” There also several other figurative meanings as well.

- In the Bible, the most common figurative meaning for this term is “language” or “speech.”
- Sometimes “tongue” may refer to a human language spoken by a certain people group.
- Other times it refers to a supernatural language that the Holy Spirit gives believers in Christ as one of the “gifts of the Spirit.”
- In the book of Acts, the expression “tongues” of fire refers to “flames” of fire, presumably shaped like tongues.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, the term “tongue” can be translated as “language” or “supernatural language.” If it is not clear which one it is referring to, it is better to translate it as “language.”
- When referring to fire, this term could be translated as “flames.”
- The expression “my tongue rejoices” could be translated as “I rejoice and praise God” or “I am joyfully praising God.”
- The phrase, “tongue that lies” could be translated as “person who tell lies” or “people who lie.”
- Phrases such as “with their tongues” could be translated as “with what they say” or “by their words.”

(See also: gift, Holy Spirit, joy, praise, rejoice, spirit)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 12:10
- 1 John 3:18
- 2 Samuel 23:2
- Acts 2:26
- Ezekiel 36:3

- **Philippians 2:11**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3956, G11000, G12580, G20840

Nehemiah References:

13:24

trouble, disturb, stir up, distress, hardship, calamity

Definition:

A “trouble” is an experience in life that is very difficult and distressing. To “trouble” someone means to “bother” that person or to cause him distress. To be “troubled” means to feel upset or distressed about something.

- Troubles can be physical, emotional, or spiritual things that hurt a person.
- In the Bible, often troubles are times of testing that God uses to help believers mature and grow in their faith.
- The Old Testament use of “trouble” also referred to judgment that came on people groups who were immoral and rejected God.

Translation Suggestions

- The term “trouble” or “troubles” could also be translated as “danger” or “painful things that happen” or “persecution” or “difficult experiences” or “distress.”
- The term “troubled” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “undergoing distress” or “feeling terrible distress” or “worried” or “anxious” or “distressed” or “terrified” or “disturbed.”
- “Do not trouble her” could also be translated as “do not bother her” or “do not criticize her.”
- The phrase “day of trouble” or “times of trouble” could also be translated as “when you experience distress” or “when difficult things happen to you” or “when God causes distressing things to happen.”
- Ways to translate “make trouble” or “bring trouble” could include “cause distressing things to happen” or “cause difficulties” or “make them experience very difficult things.”

(See also: afflict, persecute)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 18:18-19
- 2 Chronicles 25:19
- Luke 24:38
- Matthew 24:6
- Matthew 26:36-38

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H0926, H0927, H1204, H1607, H1644, H1804, H2000, H4103, H5916, H5999, H6031, H6040, H6470, H6696, H6862, H6869, H6887, H7264, H7267, H7451, H7489, H8513, G03870, G16130, G17760, G23460, G23470, G23500, G23600, G28730, G36360, G39260, G39300, G39860, G44230, G46600, G50150, G51820

Nehemiah References:

9:27; 9:32; 9:37

trumpet, trumpeter

Definition:

The term “trumpet” refers to an instrument for producing music or for calling people to gather together for an announcement or meeting.

- A trumpet was commonly made from either metal, seashell, or an animal horn.
- Trumpets were most commonly blown to call people to come together for battle, and for Israel’s public assemblies.
- The book of Revelation describes a scene in the end times in which angels blow their trumpets to signal the outpouring of the wrath of God on the earth.

(See also: angel, assembly, earth, horn, Israel, wrath)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 13:7-8
- 2 Kings 9:13
- Exodus 19:12-13
- Hebrews 12:19
- Matthew 6:2
- Matthew 24:31

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2689, H2690, H3104, H7782, H8619, H8643, G45360, G45370, G45380

Nehemiah References:

12:35; 12:41

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

Nehemiah References:

4:intro

tunic

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “tunic” referred to a garment that was worn next to the skin, under other clothing.

- A tunic reached from the shoulders down to the waist or knees and was usually worn with a belt. Tunics worn by wealthy people sometimes had sleeves and reached down to the ankles.
- Tunics were made of leather, haircloth, wool, or linen, and were worn by both men and women.
- A tunic was normally worn under a longer over-garment, such as a toga or outer robe. In warmer weather a tunic was sometimes worn with no outer garment.
- This term could be translated as “long shirt” or “long undergarment” or “shirt-like garment.” It could also be written in a similar way to “tunic,” with a note to explain what kind of clothing it was.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See Also: robe)

Bible References:

- Daniel 3:21-23
- Isaiah 22:21
- Leviticus 8:12-13
- Luke 3:11
- Mark 6:7-9
- Matthew 10:10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2243, H3801, H6361, G55090

Nehemiah References:

7:70; 7:72

Tyre, Tyrians

Definition:

Tyre was an ancient Canaanite city located on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in a region that is now part of the modern-day country of Lebanon. Its people were called "Tyrians."

- Part of the city was located on an island in the sea, about one kilometer from the mainland.
- Because of its location and its valuable natural resources, such as cedar trees, Tyre had a prosperous trading industry and was very wealthy.
- King Hiram of Tyre sent wood from cedar trees and skilled laborers to help build a palace for King David.
- Years later, Hiram also sent King Solomon wood and skilled laborers to help build the temple. Solomon paid him with large amounts of wheat and olive oil.
- Tyre was often associated with the nearby ancient city of Sidon. These were the most important cities of the region of Canaan called Phoenicia.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Canaan, **cedar**, Israel, **the sea**, **Phoenicia**, **Sidon**)

Bible References:

- **Acts 12:20**
- **Mark 3:7-8**
- **Matthew 11:22**
- **Matthew 15:22**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H6865, H6876, G51830, G51840

Nehemiah References:

13:16

understand, understanding, thinking

Definition:

The term “understand” means to hear or receive information and know what it means.

- The term “understanding” can refer to “knowledge” or “wisdom” or realizing how to do something.
- To understand someone can also mean to know how that person is feeling.
- While walking on the road to Emmaus, Jesus caused the disciples to understand the meaning of the scriptures about the Messiah.
- Depending on the context, the term “understand” could be translated by “know” or “believe” or “comprehend” or “know what (something) means.”
- Often the term “understanding” can be translated by “knowledge” or “wisdom” or “insight.”

(See also: **believe**, know, **wise**)

Bible References:

- **Job 34:16-17**
- **Luke 2:47**
- **Luke 8:10**
- **Matthew 13:12**
- **Matthew 13:14**
- **Proverbs 3:5**

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0995, H0998, H0999, H1847, H2940, H3045, H3820, H3824, H4486, H7200, H7919, H7922, H7924, H8085, H8394, G00500, G01450, G01910, G08010, G10970, G11080, G12710, G19210, G19220, G19870, G19900, G26570, G35390, G35630, G49070, G49080, G49200, G54240, G54280, G54290

Nehemiah References:

6:2; 6:6; 8:2; 8:3; 8:7; 8:9; 8:12; 10:28

Ur

Definition:

Ur was an important city along the Euphrates River in the ancient region of Chaldea, which was part of Mesopotamia. This region was located in what is now the modern-day country of Iraq.

- Abraham was from the city of Ur and it was from there that God called him to leave to go to the land of Canaan.
- Haran, the brother of Abraham and father of Lot, died in Ur. This was probably a factor that influenced Lot to leave Ur with Abraham.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Abraham, Canaan, Chaldea, Euphrates River, **Haran**, **Lot**, **Mesopotamia**)

Bible References:

- **Genesis 11:27-28**
- **Genesis 11:31**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0218

Nehemiah References:

9:7

Uriah

Definition:

Uriah was a righteous man and one of King David's best soldiers. He is often referred to as "Uriah the Hittite."

- Uriah had a very beautiful wife named Bathsheba.
- David committed adultery with Uriah's wife, and she became pregnant with David's child.
- To cover up this sin, David caused Uriah to be killed in battle. Then David married Bathsheba.
- Another man named Uriah was a priest during the time of King Ahaz.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **Ahaz**, **Bathsheba**, David, Hittite)

Bible References:

- **1 Kings 15:5**
- **2 Samuel 11:3**
- **2 Samuel 11:26-27**
- Nehemiah 3:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:12** Bathsheba's husband, a man named **Uriah**, was one of David's best soldiers. David called **Uriah** back from the battle and told him to go be with his wife. But **Uriah** refused to go home while the rest of the soldiers were in battle. So David sent **Uriah** back to the battle and told the general to place him where the enemy was strongest so that he would be killed.
- **17:13** After **Uriah** was killed, David married Bathsheba.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0223, G37740

Nehemiah References:

3:4; 8:4

Uzziah, Azariah

Definition:

Uzziah became king of Judah at the age of 16 and reigned 52 years, which was an unusually long reign. Uzziah was also known as "Azariah."

- King Uzziah was well-known for his organized and skilled military. He had towers built to protect the city and had specially-designed weapons of war mounted on them to hurl arrows and large stones.
- As long as Uzziah served the Lord, he prospered. Toward the end of his reign, however, he became proud and he disobeyed the Lord by burning incense in the temple, which only the priest was permitted to do.
- Because of this sin, Uzziah became sick with leprosy and had to live separately from other people until the end of his reign.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **Judah**, king, **leprosy**, reign, watchtower)

Bible References:

- **2 Kings 14:21**
- **Amos 1:1**
- **Hosea 1:1**
- **Isaiah 6:1-2**
- **Matthew 1:7-8**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5818, H5838, H5839

Nehemiah References:

11:4

vineyard

Definition:

A vineyard is a large garden area where grapevines are grown and grapes are cultivated.

- A vineyard often has a wall around it to protect the fruit from thieves and animals.
- God compared the people of Israel to a vineyard that did not bear good fruit. (See: Metaphor)
- Vineyard could be also translated as “grapevine garden” or “grape plantation.”

(See also: grape, Israel, vine)

Bible References:

- Genesis 9:20-21
- Luke 13:6
- Luke 20:15
- Matthew 20:2
- Matthew 21:40-41

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1612, H3754, H3755, H8284, G02900

Nehemiah References:

5:3; 5:4; 5:5; 5:11; 9:25

wadi

Definition:

The term “wadi” refers to a seasonal stream, seasonal river, or a valley that is a stream bed during part of the year.

- A “wadi” has water in it part of the year and is dry for part of the year.
- When a “wadi” has water in it, the amount of water that it has in it depends on what time of year it is and how much rain the area has received as well as how big the wadi is.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “wadi” could include “seasonal stream” or “seasonal stream bed” or “river basin” or “river bed”

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5158

Nehemiah References:

2:15

watch (biblical time)

Definition:

In biblical times, a “watch” was a period of time at night during which a watchman or guard for a city would be on duty looking out for any danger from an enemy.

- In the Old Testament, the Israelites had three watches which were called “beginning” (sunset to 10 PM), “middle” (10 PM to 2 AM), and “morning” (2 AM to sunrise) watches.
- In the New Testament, the Jews followed the Roman system and had four watches, named simply “first” (sunset to 9 PM), “second” (9 PM to 12 midnight), “third” (12 midnight to 3 AM), and “fourth” (3 AM to sunrise) watches.
- These could also be translated with more general expressions such as “late evening” or “middle of the night” or “very early in the morning,” depending on which watch is being referred to.

(See also: watch)

Bible References:

- Luke 12:37-38
- Mark 6:48-50
- Matthew 14:25-27
- Psalms 90:3-4

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0821, G54380

Nehemiah References:

4:9; 4:22; 4:23; 7:3; 11:19; 12:9; 12:24; 12:25; 12:39; 12:45; 13:14; 13:30

watchtower, tower

Definition:

The term “watchtower” refers to a tall structure built as a place from which guards could look out for any danger. These towers were often made of stone.

- Landowners sometimes built watchtowers from which they could guard their crops and protect them from being stolen.
- The towers often included rooms where the watchmen or family lived, so that they could guard the crops day and night.
- Watchtowers for cities were built higher than the city walls so that watchmen could see if any enemies were coming to attack the city.
- The term “watchtower” is also used as a symbol of protection from enemies. (See: Metaphor)

(See also: adversary, watch)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 27:25-27
- Ezekiel 26:3-4
- Mark 12:1-3
- Matthew 21:33-34
- Psalm 62:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0803, H0971, H0975, H1785, H2918, H4026, H4029, H4692, H4707, H4869, H6076, H6438, H6836, G44440

Nehemiah References:

3:1; 3:11; 3:25; 3:26; 3:27; 12:38; 12:39

wine, wineskin, new wine

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “wine” refers to a kind of fermented drink made from the juice of a fruit called grapes. Wine was stored in “wineskins,” which were containers made out of animal skin.

- The term “new wine” referred to grape juice that had just been taken from the grape and was not fermented yet. Sometimes the term “wine” also referred to unfermented grape juice.
- To make wine, grapes are crushed in a winepress so that the juice comes out. The juice eventually ferments and alcohol forms in it.
- In Bible times, wine was the normal drink with meals. It did not have as much alcohol as present-day wine has.
- Before wine was served for a meal, it was often mixed with water.
- A wineskin that was old and brittle would get cracks in it, which allowed the wine to leak out. New wineskins were soft and flexible, which meant they did not tear easily and could store the wine safely.
- If wine is unknown in your culture, it could be translated as “fermented grape juice” or “fermented drink made from a fruit called grapes” or “fermented fruit juice.” (See: How to Translate Unknowns)
- Ways to translate “wineskin” could include “bag for wine” or “animal skin wine bag” or “animal skin container for wine.”

(See also: grape, vine, vineyard, winepress)

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 5:23
- Genesis 9:21
- Genesis 49:12
- John 2:3-5
- John 2:10
- Matthew 9:17
- Matthew 11:18

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2561, H2562, H3196, H4469, H4997, H5435, H6025, H6071, H8492, G10980, G36310, G38200, G39430

Nehemiah References:

2:1; 5:11; 5:15; 5:18; 10:37; 10:39; 13:5; 13:12; 13:15

winepress

Definition:

During Bible times, a “winepress” was a large container or open place where the juice of grapes was extracted in order to make wine.

- In Israel, winepresses were usually large, wide basins that were dug out of solid rock. Clusters of grapes were put on the flat bottom of the hole and people trampled the grapes with their feet to get the grape juice to flow out.
- Usually a winepress had two levels, with the grapes being trampled in the top level so that the juice would run down into the lower level where it could be collected.
- The term “winepress” is also used figuratively in the Bible as a picture of God’s wrath being poured out on wicked people. (See: Metaphor)

(See also: grape, wrath)

Bible References:

- Isaiah 63:2
- Mark 12:1
- Matthew 21:33
- Revelation 14:20

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1660, H3342, H6333, G30250, G52760

Nehemiah References:

13:15

wrath, fury

Definition:

Wrath is an intense anger that is sometimes long-lasting. The Bible describes both people and God as experiencing intense anger. When speaking about God's "wrath," make sure the word or phrase used to translate this term does not refer to a sinful fit of rage (which might be true of a human person).

- In the Bible, "wrath" often refers to God's righteous judgment of sin and punishment of people who rebel against him.
- The "wrath of God" can also refer to his judgment and punishment for sin.
- God's wrath is the righteous penalty for those who do not repent of their sin.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways this term could be translated include "intense anger" or "righteous judgment" or "anger."
- God's wrath is just and holy. When talking about God's wrath, make sure the word or phrase used to translate this term does not refer to a sinful human rage.

(See also: judge, sin)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 1:8-10
- 1 Timothy 2:8-10
- Luke 3:7
- Luke 21:23
- Matthew 3:7
- Revelation 14:10
- Romans 1:18
- Romans 5:9

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0639, H2197, H2528, H2534, H2740, H3707, H3708, H5678, H7107, H7109, H7110, H7265, H7267, G23720, G37090, G39490, G39500

Nehemiah References:

13:18

Yahweh of hosts, Yahweh of armies, God of armies, God of hosts, host of heaven, host of the heavens, Lord of hosts

Definition:

The terms “Yahweh of hosts” and “God of hosts” are titles that express God’s authority over the thousands of angels who obey him.

- The term “host” or “hosts” is a word that refers to a large number of something, such as an army of people or the massive number of stars. It can also refer to all the many spirit beings, including evil spirits. The context makes it clear what is being referred to.
- Phrases similar to “host of the heavens” refer to all the stars, planets and other heavenly bodies.
- In the New Testament, the phrase, “Lord of hosts” means the same as “Yahweh of hosts” but it cannot be translated that way since the Hebrew word “Yahweh” is not used in the New Testament.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “Yahweh of hosts” could include, “Yahweh, who rules all the angels” or “Yahweh, the ruler over armies of angels” or “Yahweh, the ruler of all creation.”
- The phrase “of hosts” in the terms “God of hosts” and “Lord of hosts” would be translated the same way as in the phrase “Yahweh of hosts” above.
- Certain churches do not accept the literal term “Yahweh” and prefer to use the capitalized word, “LORD” instead, following the tradition of many Bible versions. For these churches, a translation of the term “LORD of hosts” would be used in the Old Testament for “Yahweh of hosts.”

(See also: angel, authority, God, lord, Lord, Lord Yahweh, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- Zechariah 13:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0430, H3068, H6635, G29620, G45190

Nehemiah References:

9:6

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

Nehemiah References:

1:5; 5:13; 8:1; 8:6; 8:9; 8:10; 8:14; 9:3; 9:4; 9:5; 9:6; 9:7; 10:29; 10:34

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

Nehemiah References:

1:1; 2:1; 5:14; 9:21; 9:30; 10:31; 10:32; 10:34; 10:35; 13:6

Zadok

Definition:

Zadok was the name of an important high priest in Israel during the reign of King David.

- When Absalom rebelled against King David, Zadok supported David and helped bring the ark of the covenant back into Jerusalem.
- Years later, he also took part in the ceremony to anoint David's son Solomon as king.
- Two different men by the name of Zadok helped rebuild the walls of Jerusalem during Nehemiah's time.
- Zadok was also the name of King Jotham's grandfather.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: **ark of the covenant**, David, **Jotham**, Nehemiah, reign, Solomon)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 24:1-3**
- **1 Kings 1:26-27**
- **2 Samuel 15:24-26**
- **Matthew 1:12-14**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H6659, G45240

Nehemiah References:

3:4; 3:29; 10:21; 11:11; 13:13

Zechariah (OT)

Definition:

Zechariah was a prophet who prophesied during the reign of King Darius I of Persia. The Old Testament book of Zechariah contains his prophecies, which urged the returning exiles to rebuild the temple.

- The prophet Zechariah lived during the same time period as Ezra, Nehemiah, Zerubbabel and Haggai. He was also mentioned by Jesus as the last of the prophets who were murdered during Old Testament times.
- Another man named Zechariah was a gatekeeper at the tent of meeting during the time of David.
- One of King Jehoshaphat's sons who was named Zechariah was murdered by his brother Jehoram.
- Zechariah was the name of a priest who was stoned by the people of Israel when he rebuked them for their idol worship.
- King Zechariah was the son of Jeroboam and he reigned over Israel for only six months before being murdered.

(Translation Suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Darius, Ezra, **Jehoshaphat**, **Jeroboam**, Nehemiah, Zerubbabel)

Bible References:

- **Ezra 5:1-2**
- **Matthew 23:34-36**
- **Zechariah 1:1-3**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2148

Nehemiah References:

8:4; 11:4; 11:5; 11:12; 12:16; 12:35; 12:41

Zedekiah

Definition:

Zedekiah, son of Josiah, was the last king of Judah (597-587 B.C.). There are also several other men named Zedekiah in the Old Testament.

- King Nebuchadnezzar made Zedekiah king of Judah after capturing King Jehoiachin and taking him away to Babylon. Zedekiah later rebelled and as a result Nebuchadnezzar captured him and destroyed all of Jerusalem.
- Zedekiah, son of Kenaanah, was a false prophet during the time of King Ahab of Israel.
- A man named Zedekiah was one of those who signed an agreement to the Lord during the time of Nehemiah.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: **Ahab**, Babylon, **Ezekiel**, **kingdom of Israel**, **Jehoiachin**, Jeremiah, **Josiah**, **Judah**, Nebuchadnezzar, Nehemiah)

Bible References:

- **1 Chronicles 3:15-16**
- **Jeremiah 37:1-2**
- **Jeremiah 39:2**

Word Data:

- Strong's: H6667

Nehemiah References:

10:1

Zerubbabel

Definition:

Zerubbabel was the name of two Israelite men in the Old Testament.

- One of these was a descendant of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah.
- A different Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, was the head of the tribe of Judah during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, when Cyrus king of Persia released the Israelites from their captivity in Babylon.
- Zerubbabel and the high priest Joshua were among those who helped rebuild the temple and altar of God.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Babylon, captive, Cyrus, Ezra, high priest, Jehoiakim, Joshua, Judah, Nehemiah, Persia, Zedekiah)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 3:19-21
- Ezra 2:1-2
- Ezra 3:8-9
- Luke 3:27-29
- Matthew 1:12

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2216, H2217, G22160

Nehemiah References:

7:7; 12:1; 12:47