

unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

v92

Habakkuk

unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

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unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

Habakkuk

Habakkuk Introduction

Introduction to Habakkuk

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Habakkuk

1. Superscription
2. Habakkuk's first complaint: Why does Yahweh tolerate injustice in Judah?
3. Yahweh's first reply: He is raising up the Chaldeans as his instrument of judgment
4. Habakkuk's second complaint: Why does Yahweh use a nation more wicked than Judah?
5. Habakkuk waits for Yahweh's answer
6. Yahweh's second reply: The vision is certain; the righteous shall live by faith
7. Five woe oracles against the oppressor
    - Woe to the one who increases what is not his
    - Woe to the one who gains evil gain for his house
    - Woe to the one who builds a city with bloodshed
    - Woe to the one who makes his neighbor drink
    - Woe to the one who says to wood, "Awake!"
8. Habakkuk's prayer-psalm: a theophany and confession of trust
    - Superscription
    - Petition for Yahweh to act again
    - Theophany: Yahweh appears as a divine warrior
    - Habakkuk's response: from trembling to trust
    - Liturgical colophon

What is the book of Habakkuk about?

Unlike most prophetic books, Habakkuk is not primarily a message from God to the people. Instead, it is a dialogue between the prophet and Yahweh. Habakkuk complains that

Yahweh is allowing injustice and violence to go unchecked in Judah, and Yahweh responds that he is raising up the Chaldeans (the Babylonians) to punish Judah. This answer disturbs Habakkuk even more, and he asks why Yahweh would use a nation more wicked than Judah to carry out judgment. Yahweh's second reply assures the prophet that the oppressor will also be judged in due time and that the righteous will live by faithfulness. The book concludes with a powerful prayer-psalm in which Habakkuk recounts Yahweh's mighty acts in the past and resolves to trust him even when all visible sources of provision fail.

The book moves from protest to praise, from questioning God's justice to affirming trust in God's character. This makes it a distinctive resource for communities that are experiencing suffering and questioning why God permits injustice.

Who wrote the book of Habakkuk?

The book identifies Habakkuk as a prophet, but it tells us nothing else about his background. The liturgical notations in chapter 3, including the superscription "on shigyonoth" and the colophon "to the chief musician, on my stringed instruments," suggest that Habakkuk may have been associated with the temple worship in Jerusalem. Most scholars date the book to the late seventh century B.C., shortly before the Babylonian invasion of Judah (605–586 B.C.), since Habakkuk speaks of the Chaldean rise as something Yahweh is about to do.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may use the traditional title "The Book of Habakkuk" or simply "Habakkuk." They may also use a title such as "The Prophecy of Habakkuk" or "The Prophecies of Habakkuk."

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

The "burden" or oracle

The book opens with the Hebrew word translated "burden," which also means a prophetic oracle or message. This term is used in several prophetic books to introduce a weighty message from Yahweh. Translators may need to use a word such as "message" or "prophecy" rather than a word for a physical load, unless their language has a similar dual meaning.

The righteous shall live by faith

In 2:4, Yahweh contrasts the proud person, whose soul is not upright, with the righteous person, who shall live by his faithfulness. The Hebrew word can mean both "faithfulness" (loyal trust in Yahweh) and "faith" (belief in Yahweh's promises). This verse is quoted three times in the New Testament (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38) and became central to the Protestant Reformation. Translators should be aware that their rendering of this verse will be compared with the New Testament quotations.

Theodicy: questioning God's justice

Habakkuk is one of the few biblical books that directly questions why Yahweh permits evil. The prophet does not doubt Yahweh's existence or power; he struggles to reconcile Yahweh's holiness with the presence of injustice. This theme connects Habakkuk with the book of Job and certain psalms of lament. In some cultures, it may be unusual for a person to question God openly. Translators should be aware that the text presents this questioning as an act of faith rather than rebellion.

The Chaldeans

The Chaldeans were the people group that established the Neo-Babylonian Empire, which conquered Judah and destroyed the temple in Jerusalem in 586 B.C. Yahweh describes them as “bitter and hasty” and characterizes their military power with vivid comparisons to leopards, wolves, and eagles. Translators may wish to include a footnote explaining that “Chaldeans” refers to the Babylonians.

Theophany

Chapter 3 describes Yahweh appearing as a divine warrior who shakes the earth, splits rivers, and commands the heavens. This kind of description, in which God appears with cosmic power, is called a theophany. It draws on the tradition of Yahweh’s mighty acts at the exodus and the conquest of the promised land. Translators should present these descriptions as poetic imagery of God’s power rather than as literal descriptions of a past or future event.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Dialogue structure

The book alternates between the prophet’s words and Yahweh’s words, but it does not always mark the transitions with explicit speaker labels. In chapter 1, the shifts occur at verses 2, 5, and 12. In chapter 2, Habakkuk speaks in verse 1, and Yahweh speaks from verse 2 onward. Translators may wish to use section headings, paragraph breaks, or other formatting to help readers follow the dialogue. Notes in the individual chapters will identify the speaker at each transition.

Hebrew poetry: parallelism

The book of Habakkuk is written almost entirely in poetry. Hebrew poetry was based on repetition of meaning rather than on repetition of sound. A speaker would typically say one phrase and then say another phrase that meant a similar thing, an opposite thing, or something supplementary. This second phrase would advance the meaning of the first phrase in some way. In many cases it would be good to show this to readers by including all the phrases in the translation rather than combining them. However, if the repetition might be confusing, translators could connect the phrases with a word that shows how the second phrase advances the meaning of the first one. Notes throughout the book will model ways of doing this in various cases.

Woe oracles

Chapter 2 contains five pronouncements that begin with the word “Woe” (verses 6, 9, 12, 15, 19). This word communicates a warning about coming disaster for the person described. If the word “woe” does not communicate this meaning in a target language, translators could use an equivalent expression such as “How terrible it will be for” or “Disaster will come upon.”

Difficult Hebrew in 1:9 and 3:9

Some verses in Habakkuk contain Hebrew words and phrases whose meaning is debated among scholars. In 1:9, the phrase about the direction of the Chaldeans’ faces is uncertain, and in 3:9, the line about oaths and staffs is one of the most difficult lines in the Hebrew Bible. The ULT provides a literal rendering in these cases, and the UST offers a meaning-

based interpretation. Notes at these places will alert translators to the difficulty and suggest possible readings.

Selah

The word “Selah” appears three times in chapter 3 (verses 3, 9, 13). This term is found almost exclusively in the Psalms and in Habakkuk 3. Its exact meaning is uncertain, but it likely indicates a musical or liturgical pause. Translators may choose to keep the word “Selah” as a loanword or to translate it with a term meaning “pause” or “musical interlude.”

Figurative language for military power

Throughout the book, both Yahweh and Habakkuk use vivid figurative language to describe the Chaldean military: horses swifter than leopards, fiercer than evening wolves, horsemen that fly like eagles; a fisherman catching people with hooks, nets, and dragnets; and a person making his neighbor drink to expose his nakedness. Translators should preserve these figures of speech where possible and provide alternate translations in cases where the images would not be understood in the target culture. Notes will address each of these images individually.

Habakkuk 1

Habakkuk 1 Introduction

Habakkuk 1 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is a prophetic lament dialogue: the prophet complains about injustice, Yahweh announces the Chaldean invasion, then the prophet protests again. See: lament, lamentation

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

The Oracle (Burden)

The Hebrew word for “burden” also means a prophetic oracle. Translators may need to use “message” or “oracle” rather than implying a physical load.

Justice

Habakkuk protests that justice has collapsed in Judah, then questions why Yahweh uses an even more wicked nation to punish them.

Habakkuk 1:1

ULT	UST
The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet saw.	*I am Habakkuk the prophet. This is the message that Yahweh gave me in a vision.*

ULT **The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet saw**
UST I am Habakkuk the prophet. This is the message that Yahweh gave me in a vision

Here the author is providing background information to help readers understand what happens next in the story. In your translation, introduce this information in a way that would be natural in your own language and culture.
Support Reference: Background Information

ULT **The oracle**
UST This is the message … in a vision

Here, **oracle** represents a prophetic message. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [The prophetic message that Habakkuk the prophet received]
Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Habakkuk	Habakkuk
prophet	prophet

Habakkuk 1:2

ULT	UST
“Until when, Yahweh, will I cry aloud, but you will not listen? I cry out to you ‘Violence!’ but you do not save.	*I said, “Yahweh, how long must I keep praying to you for help before you respond? I ask you to rescue us from people who are acting violently everywhere, but you do not rescue us!*

ULT **Until when, Yahweh, will I cry aloud, but you will not listen**
UST I said, “Yahweh, how long must I keep praying to you for help before you respond

Habakkuk is using the question form to express his frustration and lament to Yahweh. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, I have cried aloud for so long, but you will not listen!]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **Violence**
UST from people who are acting violently everywhere

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

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Yahweh	Yahweh
cry	must I keep praying to you for help
cry out	I ask … to rescue us
save	rescue

Habakkuk 1:3

ULT	UST
Why do you make me see iniquity, and why do you behold trouble? And destruction and violence are to the front of me, and there is strife, and contention arises.	*Why do you make me keep seeing people doing evil? Why do you not punish people who are doing what is wrong? I see people destroying things and acting violently, and there is fighting and quarreling everywhere.*

ULT **Why do you make me see iniquity, and {why} do you behold trouble**
UST Why do you make me keep seeing people doing evil? Why do you not punish people who are doing what is wrong

Habakkuk is using the question form to express his protest against what Yahweh is allowing to happen. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: [You make me see iniquity and you behold trouble!]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **iniquity**
UST people doing evil … people who are doing what is wrong

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **iniquity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [people doing wrong]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **And destruction and violence are**
UST people destroying things and acting violently

The terms **destruction** and **violence** mean similar things. Habakkuk is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [And brutal devastation is]
Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **And destruction and violence are … and {there} is strife**
UST people destroying things and acting violently, and there is fighting

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **destruction**, **violence**, or **strife**, you could express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: [And people ruining things and people acting violently are … and there are people quarreling]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
iniquity	people doing evil … people who are doing what is wrong
trouble	people doing evil … people who are doing what is wrong
destruction	destroying
strife	and there is fighting

Habakkuk 1:4

ULT	UST
Therefore the law weakens, and justice does not go forth to perpetuity. For the wicked surrounds the righteous, therefore justice goes forth perverted."	*No one obeys your instruction, and judges never decide cases fairly. Wicked people always defeat righteous people in the courts, so that no one ever gets justice."*

ULT **Therefore the law weakens, and justice does not go forth to perpetuity**
UST No one obeys your instruction, and judges never decide cases fairly

These two clauses mean basically the same thing. The second emphasizes the meaning of the first by repeating the same idea with different words. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and express the emphasis in another way. Another approach would be to connect the phrases with a word that shows that the second phrase is repeating the first one, not saying something additional. See how you as a team have decided to translate the parallel phrases in the Psalms, and follow that approach here and throughout this psalm. Alternate translation: [Therefore the law is powerless because no one upholds justice]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **Therefore the law weakens**
UST No one obeys your instruction

Here, **Therefore** indicates that what follows is the result of the injustice Habakkuk has just described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different connecting word to express a result. Alternate translation: [As a result, the law weakens]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **the law weakens**
UST No one obeys your instruction

Habakkuk is speaking of **the law** as if it were a person who could become physically weak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the law has no power]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and justice does not go forth to perpetuity**
UST and judges never decide cases fairly

Habakkuk is speaking of **justice** as if it were a person who could go out and act. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and judges do not make fair decisions]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **justice**
UST and judges never decide cases fairly

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

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the wicked**
UST Wicked people always defeat righteous people in the courts

Habakkuk is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to refer to a kind of person. If your language does not use adjectives as nouns, you could translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the wicked person]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the righteous**
UST Wicked people always defeat righteous people in the courts

Habakkuk is using the adjective **righteous** as a noun to refer to a kind of person. If your language does not use adjectives as nouns, you could translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the righteous person]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
law	No one obeys your instruction
justice	and judges never decide cases fairly
wicked	Wicked
righteous	righteous
justice	justice
perverted	so that no one ever gets justice

Habakkuk 1:5

ULT	UST
“See among the nations and consider, and be amazed, be amazed! For I am working a work in your days that you will not believe when it is recounted.	*Yahweh replied to me, “Look at the completely amazing thing happening among the other nations; you will be astounded, because I am doing something during this time that you would not believe even if someone told you about it.*

ULT **See among the nations and consider, and be amazed**
UST Yahweh replied to me, “Look at the completely amazing thing happening among the other nations; you will be astounded

Here Yahweh begins to respond to Habakkuk’s complaint. In your translation, introduce this new event in a way that would be natural in your own language and culture. See the UST for an example.
Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

ULT **See among the nations and consider, and be amazed, be amazed**
UST Yahweh replied to me, “Look at the completely amazing thing happening among the other nations; you will be astounded

Yahweh is using these imperatives to command his audience to pay attention to what he is about to reveal. If a speaker of your language would not use commands in this way, you could translate these commands using another form that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [You should look among the nations and pay attention, and you will be amazed and astonished!]
Support Reference: Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **and be amazed, be amazed**
UST the completely amazing thing … you will be astounded

Yahweh is the phrase **be amazed** in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. If your language can repeat words for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the intensification. Alternate translation: [and be utterly astonished!]
Support Reference: Reduplication

ULT **I am working a work**
UST I am doing something

The phrase **working a work** uses the same Hebrew root for both the verb and its object. This emphasizes the greatness or significance of the action. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [I am doing a mighty deed]
Support Reference: Poetry

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
nations	nations
working	I am doing
days	during this time
believe	believe

Habakkuk 1:6

ULT	UST
For behold me, raising up the Chaldeans, the bitter and hastening nation, the one going through the breadths of the earth to seize dwellings not to him.	*I am making the Chaldeans powerful; they are fierce and swift soldiers. They will march across the entire earth and conquer countries that do not belong to them.*

ULT **For behold me, raising up the Chaldeans**
UST I am making the Chaldeans powerful

The expression **behold me** was a common way of introducing a divine announcement. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [For pay attention, I am raising up the Chaldeans]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **not to him**
UST that do not belong to them

Here, **to him** refers to the Chaldean nation. Yahweh is describing the nation in the third person using a singular pronoun. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the referent plainly. Alternate translation: [not belonging to them]
Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT **the bitter and hastening nation**
UST they are fierce and swift soldiers

Yahweh is speaking of the Chaldean nation as if it were a person with the emotional qualities of being **bitter** and hasty. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [a nation whose warriors are terrible and fast]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Chaldeans	Chaldeans
nation	they are fierce and swift soldiers
earth	earth
seize	and conquer

Habakkuk 1:7

ULT	UST
He is dreadful and terrifying; from him goes forth his justice and his dignity.	*They are terrifying people who do whatever they want and pay no attention to the laws of other countries.*

ULT **and his dignity**
UST and pay no attention to the laws of other countries

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **dignity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and his worthiness of respect]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **He {is} dreadful and terrifying; from him goes forth his justice and his dignity**
UST They are terrifying people who do whatever they want and pay no attention to the laws of other countries

The pronouns **He, him,** and **his** in this verse continue to refer to the Chaldean nation. See how Yahweh introduced this nation in the previous verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the referent plainly. Alternate translation: [That nation is dreadful and terrifying; from it goes forth its own justice and its own dignity]
Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
terrifying	terrifying
justice	who do whatever they want

Habakkuk 1:8

ULT	UST
And his horses are swifter than leopards, and they are fiercer than wolves of the evening. And his horsemen spread out, and his horsemen come from a distance, they fly like an eagle rushing to devour.	*Their horses are faster than leopards and fiercer than wolves at night. Their horsemen gallop swiftly from distant places; they swoop down like eagles rushing to kill their prey.*

ULT **And his horsemen spread out, and his horsemen come from a distance**
UST Their horsemen gallop swiftly from distant places; they swoop down

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of clauses in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [And his horsemen advance rapidly from far away]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **they fly like an eagle rushing to devour**
UST they swoop down like eagles rushing to kill their prey

Yahweh is comparing the Chaldean attack to **an eagle rushing to devour** its prey. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this comparison in another way. Alternate translation: [they attack as swiftly as an eagle diving for prey]
Support Reference: Simile

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
horses	horses
leopards	leopards
and his horsemen	Their horsemen
eagle	eagles
devour	rushing to kill their prey

Habakkuk 1:9

ULT	UST
All of them will come for violence. The direction of their faces is eastward, and he gathers captives like the sand.	*They all advance with the purpose of acting violently. They advance like a desert wind, gathering prisoners as numerous as grains of sand.*

ULT **The direction of their faces {is} eastward**
UST They advance like a desert wind

The phrase **The direction of their faces {is} eastward** is a translation of the written Hebrew text. This reading, however, is only one of several possibilities suggested by scholars. Scholars have proposed some alternative readings, and you may want to follow one of those. The UST follows the first alternative. Alternate translation: [Everyone is terrified as they approach] or [The set of their faces is like the east wind]
Support Reference: Alternative Readings

ULT **The direction of their faces {is} eastward**
UST They advance like a desert wind

Here, **faces** represents the determined direction of the Chaldean advance. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [They all press forward toward the east]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **and he gathers captives**
UST gathering prisoners

Here the singular pronoun **he** refers to the Chaldean nation collectively. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the plural pronoun. Alternate translation: [and they gather captives]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and he gathers captives like the sand**
UST gathering prisoners as numerous as grains of sand

Yahweh says that the Chaldean gathers captives **like the sand** as an extreme statement to emphasize the vast number of people captured. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [and he gathers more captives than anyone can count]
Support Reference: Hyperbole

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
gathers	gathering
captives	prisoners

Habakkuk 1:10

ULT	UST
And he, he mocks at kings, and rulers are laughter to him. He, he laughs at every fortress, for he piles up dirt and captures it.	*They mock the kings and rulers of other countries and laugh at all the cities with high walls. They pile up dirt against those walls and climb up to capture those cities.*

ULT **And he, he mocks at kings, and rulers {are} laughter to him**
UST They mock the kings and rulers of other countries

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of clauses in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [And he thoroughly ridicules all rulers and kings]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **And he, he mocks at kings**
UST They mock the kings

Here, the author uses the independent pronoun **he** twice for emphasis in the Hebrew. If a speaker of your language would not repeat the pronoun, you could express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [And he himself mocks at kings]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and rulers {are} laughter to him**
UST They mock … and rulers of other countries

The author is speaking of **rulers** as if they were merely objects of his **laughter**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [he laughs at rulers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **are laughter**
UST They mock

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **laughter**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [are something he laughs at]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **for he piles up dirt and captures it**
UST They pile up dirt against those walls and climb up to capture those cities

In this verse, the mocking of kings and rulers is described before the military action that makes that mocking possible. He piles up a siege ramp and captures the fortress—and that is why he can mock. If your language needs an explicit connector to show that the second clause is the result of the first, you could use one. Alternate translation: [He piles up dirt and captures every fortress, and so he mocks at kings, and rulers are laughter to him.]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **He, he laughs at every fortress**
UST and laugh at all the cities with high walls

Here the author again uses the independent pronoun **He** twice for emphasis in the Hebrew. If a speaker of your language would not repeat the pronoun, you could express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [He himself laughs at every fortress]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
mocks	mock
kings	kings
rulers	rulers
fortress	all the cities with high walls
captures	capture

Habakkuk 1:11

ULT	UST
Then he sweeps by like the wind and goes on. But he will become guilty, this one whose might is his god."	*They rush past like the wind and move on. But they are very guilty, because they think that their own military power is their god."*

ULT **Then he sweeps by {like} the wind and goes on**
UST They rush past like the wind and move on

The word **Then** indicates that this event happens after the events previously described. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a different connecting word to express a sequential relationship. Alternate translation: [After that, he sweeps by like the wind and goes on]
Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT **Then he sweeps by {like} the wind and goes on**
UST They rush past like the wind and move on

Yahweh is comparing the Chaldean's advance to **the wind** to describe how quickly and unstoppably he passes through. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this comparison in another way. Alternate translation: [Then he passes through swiftly and goes on]
Support Reference: Simile

ULT **this {one} whose might {is} his god**
UST because they think that their own military power is their god

The author is speaking of military **might** as if it were a **god** that the Chaldean worships. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [this one who treats his own strength as his deity]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **whose might**
UST because they think that their own military power

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **might**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [whose strength in battle]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
sweeps	They rush past like the wind
guilty	guilty
might	because they think that their own military power
god	god

Habakkuk 1:12

ULT	UST
“Are you not from ancient times, Yahweh my God, my Holy One? We will not die. Yahweh, you have appointed him for judgment, and Rock, you have established him for correcting.	*Then I said, “Yahweh, you have always been God from ancient times. You are my Holy One; we will not die. You have appointed the Chaldeans to judge us and punish us. You are our Rock, and you have sent them to correct us.*

ULT **Are you not from ancient times, Yahweh my God, my Holy One**
UST Then I said, “Yahweh, you have always been God from ancient times. You are my Holy One

Habakkuk is using the question form to affirm that Yahweh has existed from ancient times. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: [You have existed from ancient times, Yahweh my God, my Holy One.]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **Yahweh my God, my Holy One**
UST Yahweh … God … You are my Holy One

The terms **Yahweh my God** and **my Holy One** mean similar things. The writer is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: [Yahweh, my holy God]
Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **for judgment**
UST the Chaldeans to judge us and punish us

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **judgment**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [for judging us]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **and Rock**
UST You are our Rock

Habakkuk is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a **Rock**, to emphasize his stability and reliability. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and our firm foundation]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Are you not from ancient times**
UST Then I said … you have always been … from ancient times

Here Habakkuk begins a second complaint to Yahweh, preparing to question why Yahweh would use the Chaldeans to punish Judah. In your translation, introduce this new event in a way that would be natural in your own language and culture. Alternate translation: [Have you not been from long ago]
Support Reference: Introduction of a New Event

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
times	times
Yahweh	Yahweh
God	God
Holy One	Holy One
appointed	appointed
judgment	judge
established	and you have sent them

Habakkuk 1:13

ULT	UST
Your eyes are pure from seeing evil, and you are not able to look at trouble. Why do you look at treacherous ones, keep silent when the wicked devours one more righteous than him?	*You are pure, and you cannot endure seeing evil, so why are you tolerating treacherous people? Why do you say nothing when wicked people destroy people who are more righteous than they are?*

ULT **Your eyes are pure from seeing evil**
UST You are pure, and you cannot endure seeing evil

Here, **Your eyes** represents Yahweh's ability to perceive and attend to things. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [You are too pure to look at evil]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **Your eyes are pure from seeing evil, and you are not able to look at trouble**
UST You are pure, and you cannot endure seeing evil

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of clauses in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [You are completely unable to look upon evil or trouble]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **Why do you look at treacherous ones, keep silent when the wicked devours {one} more righteous than him**
UST so why are you tolerating treacherous people? Why do you say nothing when wicked people destroy people who are more righteous than they are

Habakkuk is using the question form to express his protest against Yahweh's apparent tolerance of treachery. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: [You should not look at treacherous ones or keep silent when the wicked devours one more righteous than him!]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **the wicked**
UST wicked people

Habakkuk is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to refer to a kind of person. If your language does not use adjectives as nouns, you could translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the wicked person]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
pure	pure
evil	evil
trouble	and you cannot endure seeing evil
wicked	wicked
devours	when … destroy
righteous	righteous

Habakkuk 1:14

ULT	UST
And you make man like the fish of the sea, like a creeping thing with no ruler over it.	*You treat us like fish in the sea or like other sea creatures that have no one to rule over them.*

ULT **And you make man like the fish of the sea**
UST You treat us like fish in the sea

Habakkuk is comparing helpless humans to **the fish of the sea**, which can be caught without resistance. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this comparison in another way. Alternate translation: [And you make man as helpless as the fish of the sea]
Support Reference: Simile

ULT **like a creeping thing {with} no ruler over it**
UST or like other sea creatures that have no one to rule over them

Habakkuk is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [and you make man like a creeping thing with no ruler over it]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **like a creeping thing {with} no ruler over it**
UST or like other sea creatures that have no one to rule over them

Habakkuk is comparing humans to **a creeping thing** that has no one to protect or lead it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this comparison in another way. Alternate translation: [like creatures that have no one to protect them]
Support Reference: Simile

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
ruler	rule

Habakkuk 1:15

ULT	UST
All of them, he brings up with a hook. He drags him with his net, and he gathers him with his dragnet. Therefore he rejoices and exults.	*The soldiers of Chaldea treat us like fish; they pull us out with hooks or catch us in their nets, and they rejoice and celebrate.*

ULT **All of them, he brings up with a hook**
UST The soldiers of Chaldea treat us like fish; they pull us out with hooks

Habakkuk is speaking of the Chaldean conquest as if the Chaldean were a fisherman pulling people up with **a hook**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [All of them, he captures easily]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **He drags him with his net, and he gathers him with his dragnet**
UST or catch us in their nets

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of clauses in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [He catches him easily in his net] or [He drags him with his net; indeed, he gathers him with his dragnet]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **He drags him with his net, and he gathers him with his dragnet**
UST or catch us in their nets

Habakkuk is speaking of the Chaldean conquest as if the Chaldean were a fisherman catching people with **his net** and **his dragnet**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He captures people with his army, and he sweeps them up in large numbers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
gathers	in their nets
rejoices	rejoice
exults	and celebrate

Habakkuk 1:16

ULT	UST
Therefore he sacrifices to his net and burns incense to his dragnet, for by them his portion is fat and his food is rich.	*They worship the weapons with which they capture people and offer sacrifices to them and burn incense in front of them. They say, 'Those weapons have enabled us to become rich and eat expensive food.'*

ULT **Therefore he sacrifices to his net and burns incense to his dragnet**
UST They worship the weapons with which they capture people and offer sacrifices to them and burn incense in front of them

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of clauses in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [Therefore he worships his own weapons of war]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **Therefore he sacrifices to his net and burns incense to his dragnet**
UST They worship the weapons with which they capture people and offer sacrifices to them and burn incense in front of them

Habakkuk speaks of the Chaldean worshiping his **net** and **dragnet** as if those things were gods which could receive **sacrifices** and **incense**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Therefore he gives credit to his weapons of war and honors them]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **his portion {is} fat and his food is rich**
UST to become rich and eat expensive food

Habakkuk is speaking of the Chaldean's plunder as if it were **fat** and **rich** food. If this meaning would not be clear in your language, you could use a comparable expression or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his portion is plentiful and his food is abundant]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **his portion**
UST to become rich

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **his portion**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what he receives]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
sacrifices	sacrifices
incense	incense

Habakkuk 1:17

ULT	UST
Therefore will he empty his net, and will he not spare to slay the nations continually?”	*Will you allow them to keep conquering people? Will you allow them to keep destroying people of other nations without showing any mercy?”*

> ULT **Therefore will he empty his net, and will he not spare to slay the nations continually**
>
> UST Will you allow them to keep conquering people? Will you allow them to keep destroying people of other nations without showing any mercy

Habakkuk is using the question form to challenge Yahweh about whether the Chaldean will continue conquering without mercy. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: [Therefore, he should not keep emptying his net, and he should not keep slaying the nations continually!]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
slay	destroying
nations	nations

Habakkuk 2

Habakkuk 2 Introduction

Habakkuk 2 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

This chapter contains Yahweh's answer to Habakkuk's second complaint. After instructing the prophet to write down a vision, Yahweh pronounces five oracles against the oppressor (verses 6-20), each beginning with "Woe."

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

The Righteous Shall Live by Faith

Verse 4 contrasts the proud, whose soul is not upright, with the righteous, who shall live by faith. This verse is quoted three times in the New Testament.

Idolatry

The final woe oracle (verses 18-20) condemns the making and worshiping of idols, contrasting them with Yahweh, who is in his holy temple.

Habakkuk 2:1

ULT	UST
I shall stand at my watchpost and shall station myself on the watchtower, and I will watch to see what he will say to me and what I will respond concerning my complaint.	*After I said that, I said to myself, "I will climb up into my guard post, and stand there in my watchtower. I will wait there to find out what Yahweh will say, to know how I should answer."*

ULT **I shall stand at my watchpost and shall station myself on the watchtower**
UST After I said that, I said to myself, "I will climb up into my guard post, and stand there in my watchtower

Habakkuk is speaking of his act of waiting for God's reply as if he were a guard standing at a **watchtower**. If this meaning would not be clear in your language, you could use a comparable expression or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [I will wait attentively for what God will say to me]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **my complaint**
UST to know how I should answer

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **complaint**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what I am complaining about]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
watchtower	watchtower
watch	I will wait there to find out

Habakkuk 2:2

ULT	UST
Then Yahweh answered me and said, “Write the vision, and make it plain on the tablets, so that the one reading it may run.	*Then Yahweh replied to me, “Write plainly on tablets what I am revealing to you in this vision, and then read it to a messenger so he can run with it to tell it to other people.*

ULT **Then Yahweh answered me and said**
UST Then Yahweh replied to me

The phrase **and said** introduces a direct quotation. In your translation, use a natural way of introducing direct quotations in your language. It may not be necessary to represent this term explicitly. Alternate translation: [Then Yahweh answered me,]
Support Reference: Quotations and Quote Margins

ULT **Then Yahweh answered me and said, “Write the vision, and make {it} plain on the tablets**
UST Then Yahweh replied to me, “Write plainly on tablets what I am revealing to you in this vision, and then read it to a messenger

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: [Then Yahweh answered me and told me to write the vision and to make it plain on the tablets] or [Then Yahweh answered me, telling me to write the vision and make it plain on the tablets]
Support Reference: Quotes within Quotes

ULT **so that the one reading it may run**
UST so he can run with it to tell it to other people

Here, **so that** marks **the one reading it may run** as the goal or purpose of writing the vision and making it plain on the tablets. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [in order that the one reading it may run]
Support Reference: Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **the one reading it may run**
UST he can run with it to tell it to other people

Here, **run** represents the urgent heralding response of the one who reads the message. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the one reading it may hasten to proclaim it]
Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Yahweh	Yahweh
vision	vision

Habakkuk 2:3

ULT	UST
For the vision is still for the appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it. For coming, it will come; it will not delay.	*In this vision I will talk about things that will happen when I decide. They will certainly happen in the future, I do not lie. You want those things to happen immediately, but they are not happening. But wait patiently for them to happen! When they occur, they will occur quickly, and not slowly.*

ULT **it speaks of the end and will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it. For coming, it will come; it will not delay**

UST They will certainly happen in the future, I do not lie. You want those things to happen immediately, but they are not happening. But wait patiently for them to happen! When they occur, they will occur quickly, and not slowly

Yahweh is speaking of **the vision** as if it were a living thing that could **speak** about the end, **lie**, tarry, and **delay**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [it is a message about the end that will certainly prove true; even if its fulfillment seems slow in coming, it will surely be fulfilled at the appointed time]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **Though it tarries, wait for it**

UST You want those things to happen immediately, but they are not happening. But wait patiently for them to happen

The author uses the word **Though** here to indicate a contrast between the possibility that the vision may seem delayed and the certainty that it will come eventually. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Even if it tarries, wait for it] or [Even if it seems to be delayed, do not give up waiting for it]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **wait for it**

UST But wait patiently for them to happen

This is an imperative, but it communicates an exhortation or encouragement rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates encouragement. Alternate translation: [you should wait for it]

Support Reference: Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **coming, it will come**

UST When they occur, they will occur quickly

The author is repeating forms of the verb **come** in order to intensify his expression of the idea that it conveys. If your language can repeat words for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the intensification. Alternate translation: [it will certainly come]

Support Reference: Reduplication

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
vision	vision
appointed	I will talk about things that will happen when I decide
time	I will talk about things that will happen when I decide
lie	lie

Habakkuk 2:4

ULT	UST
Behold! His soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous will live by his faithfulness.	*Think about the people in that proud nation! They are certainly not doing what is righteous. But people who are righteous will live because they faithfully do what I want them to do.*

ULT **Behold**
UST Think about the people in that proud nation

The author is using the term **Behold** to focus his listeners' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Look!]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **His soul is puffed up**
UST Think about the people in that proud nation

Here the author is speaking of a proud person as if his **soul** were something that could be physically **puffed up** or inflated. If this meaning would not be clear in your language, you could use a comparable expression or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He is arrogant]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **His soul**
UST Think about the people in that proud nation

Here, **soul** represents the entire person from the perspective of his inner character. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [He himself]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **His soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him**
UST Think about the people in that proud nation! They are certainly not doing what is righteous

The pronouns **His** and **him** both refer to the proud, arrogant person described in this verse, who is contrasted with **the righteous** in the following clause. In the context of the book, this probably means the Chaldeans. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state this explicitly. Alternate translation: [The Chaldeans' souls are puffed up; it is not upright within them]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **is puffed up**
UST Think about the people in that proud nation

The expression **is puffed up** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [has become proud]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **it is not upright within him**
UST Think about the people in that proud nation! They are certainly not doing what is righteous

Here the author is speaking of moral character as if it were something that could be physically **upright** or straight. If this meaning would not be clear in your language, you could use a comparable expression or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [his character is not right within him]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **but the righteous**
UST But people who are righteous

The author is using the adjective **righteous** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the righteous person]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **but the righteous will live by his faithfulness**
UST But people who are righteous will live because they faithfully do what I want them to do

The author uses the word **but** here to indicate a contrast between the proud person whose soul is not upright and the righteous person who lives by faithfulness. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [however, the righteous person will live by his faithfulness]
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **by his faithfulness**
UST because they faithfully do what I want them to do

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [being faithful to God]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
soul	Think about the people in that proud nation
upright	righteous
righteous	righteous
faithfulness	because they faithfully do what I want them to do

Habakkuk 2:5

ULT	UST
And moreover wine deceives the arrogant warrior; and he will not rest, who enlarges his appetite like Sheol, and he is like death and is never satisfied. And he gathers to himself all of the nations and collects for himself all of the peoples.	*Drunk armies are foolish, they cannot stop pillaging. No matter how much they kill and steal, they want more. They will conquer every people group they encounter.*

ULT **who enlarges his appetite like Sheol**
UST No matter how much they kill and steal, they want more

The point of this comparison is that just as **Sheol** is never full and always takes in more of the dead, so the arrogant warrior is never content and always desires more conquests. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [who makes his desire as vast as the grave]
Support Reference: Simile

ULT **wine deceives the arrogant warrior**
UST Drunk armies are foolish

Yahweh is speaking of **wine** as if it were a person capable of betraying or deceiving someone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [wine causes the arrogant warrior to go astray]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **who enlarges his appetite like Sheol, and he {is} like death and is never satisfied**
UST No matter how much they kill and steal, they want more

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of clauses in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [whose appetite is never filled, like Sheol and death]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **his appetite**
UST No matter how much they kill and steal, they want more

Here, **appetite** represents desire or craving. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [his desire] or [his sense of need]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **and he {is} like death and is never satisfied**
UST No matter how much they kill and steal, they want more

The point of this comparison is that just as **death** is relentless and never stops taking people, so this person is relentless and **never satisfied** in his greed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [he is as relentless as death and is never satisfied]
Support Reference: Simile

> ULT **And he gathers to himself all of the nations and collects for himself all of the peoples**
>
> UST They will conquer every people group they encounter

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of clauses in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [And he gathers to himself every nation and every people] or [And he gathers to himself all of the nations; yes, he collects for himself all of the peoples]

Support Reference: Parallelism

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
wine	Drunk … are foolish
deceives	Drunk … are foolish
arrogant	armies
warrior	armies
Sheol	No matter how much they kill and steal, they want more
gathers	They will conquer every people group they encounter
nations	They will conquer every people group they encounter

Habakkuk 2:6

ULT	UST
Will not these, all of them, take up a proverb against him, and ridicule, a riddle about him, so that it says, 'Woe to the one increasing what is not his'—until when? 'and loading onto himself pledges'!	*But soon all those whom they have captured will ridicule the soldiers from Babylonia! They will make fun of them, saying, 'Terrible things will happen to you who have stolen things from other countries! You got many things by forcing people to give them to you. But you certainly will not keep those things for long!'*

ULT **Will not these, all of them, take up a proverb against him, and ridicule, a riddle about him, so that it says, 'Woe to the one increasing {what is} not his'—until when? 'and loading onto himself pledges**

UST But soon all those whom they have captured will ridicule the soldiers from Babylonia! They will make fun of them, saying, 'Terrible things will happen to you who have stolen things from other countries! You got many things by forcing people to give them to you. But you certainly will not keep those things for long

Yahweh is using the question form to emphasize that the conquered peoples will certainly mock the oppressor. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: [These, all of them, will certainly take up a proverb against him, and ridicule, a riddle about him, so that it says, 'Woe to the one increasing what is not his'—'until when? and loading onto himself pledges'!]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **so that it says, 'Woe to the one increasing {what is} not his'—until when? 'and loading onto himself pledges**

UST saying, 'Terrible things will happen to you who have stolen things from other countries! You got many things by forcing people to give them to you. But you certainly will not keep those things for long

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: [so that it pronounces woe on the one increasing what is not his—until when? and loading onto himself pledges]

Support Reference: Quotes within Quotes

ULT **Woe to the one increasing {what is} not his'—until when? 'and loading onto himself pledges**

UST Terrible things will happen to you who have stolen things from other countries! You got many things by forcing people to give them to you. But you certainly will not keep those things for long

Here the conquered peoples use a proverb in order to mock the greedy conqueror. Translate this proverb in a way that will be recognized as a proverb and be meaningful in your language and culture. Alternate translation: [Disaster awaits the one who endlessly takes what does not belong to him and burdens himself with debts]

Support Reference: Proverbs

> ULT **until when**
> UST But you certainly will not keep those things for long

The conquered peoples are interjecting this brief question form to express frustration that the oppressor's greed has continued for too long. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: [for far too long!]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
proverb	will ridicule the soldiers from Babylonia! They will make fun of them
ridicule	ridicule
Woe	Terrible things will happen to you who have stolen things from other countries
pledges	You got many things by forcing people to give them to you

Habakkuk 2:7

ULT	UST
Will not your biters suddenly rise up, and the ones shaking you awaken? Then you will become spoils for them.	*Suddenly those you owe a debt to because you pillaged them will come to pillage you. You will be afraid. They will recapture all the things that you stole from them.*

ULT **Will not your biters suddenly rise up**
UST Suddenly those you owe a debt to because you pillaged them will come to pillage you

Here the author is introducing **your biters** as new participants. The phrase refers to the people whom the oppressor has exploited, who will now turn against him. Your language may have its own way of introducing new participants that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [Will not those whom you oppressed suddenly rise up]
Support Reference: Introduction of New and Old Participants

ULT **Will not your biters suddenly rise up, and the ones shaking you awaken**
UST Suddenly those you owe a debt to because you pillaged them will come to pillage you. You will be afraid

The author is using the question form to emphasize that those who oppose the oppressor will certainly rebel. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: [Your biters will suddenly rise up, and the ones shaking you will awaken!]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **your biters**
UST those you owe a debt to because you pillaged them

The Hebrew word translated **biters** could mean: (1) your creditors, that is, the plundered peoples who will demand repayment as if they were animals that bite. Alternate translation: [your creditors]; or (2) those who you have oppressed by forcing them to pay you unjustly. Alternate translation: [those you forced to be in debt to you]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the ones shaking you**
UST You will be afraid

Here the author is speaking of those who will demand payment as if they were people who were **shaking** someone. If this meaning would not be clear in your language, you could use a comparable expression or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the ones who will make you tremble]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Then you will become spoils for them**
UST They will recapture all the things that you stole from them

Here the author is speaking of the oppressor as if he were plunder that could be taken as **spoils** of war. If this meaning would not be clear in your language, you could use a comparable expression or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Then they will take everything from you]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
shaking	You will be afraid
spoils	They will recapture all the things that you stole from them

Habakkuk 2:8

ULT	UST
Because you have plundered many nations, all of the remainder of the peoples will plunder you, from the bloodshed of man and the violence of the land, the city, and all the dwellers in it.	*You stole things from the people of many nations. You murdered people of many people groups, and you destroyed their land and their cities. So those who are still alive will steal valuable things from you.*

ULT **from the bloodshed of man and the violence of the land, the city, and all the dwellers in it**

UST You murdered people of many people groups, and you destroyed their land and their cities

Here the author is clarifying who suffered from the oppressor's actions. The phrase identifies the victims and the places that were harmed. Your language may have its own way of specifying the victims that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [because of the people you murdered and the violent way you treated the land, the city, and all who live in it]

Support Reference: Introduction of New and Old Participants

ULT **from the bloodshed of man**

UST You murdered people of many people groups

Here, **bloodshed** represents the act of murdering people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [because of your murderous ways]

Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
plundered	You stole things from the people of many nations
nations	nations
plunder	So those who are still alive will steal valuable things from you
bloodshed	You murdered people of many people groups
land	land

Habakkuk 2:9

ULT	UST
'Woe to the one gaining an evil gain for his house, to set his nest on high, to be delivered from the hand of evil.'	*Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia who build big houses with money that you got by forcing others to give it to you. You are proud, and you think that your houses will be safe because you have built them in places where you can easily defend them.*

ULT **Woe to the one gaining an evil gain for his house**
UST Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia who build big houses with money that you got by forcing others to give it to you

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: [They will say that terrible things will happen to the one gaining an evil gain for his house]
Support Reference: Quotes within Quotes

ULT **Woe to the one gaining an evil gain for his house**
UST Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia who build big houses with money that you got by forcing others to give it to you

The phrase **Woe to the one gaining an evil gain for his house** expresses a strong feeling of warning and coming judgment. There may be an equivalent word or phrase in your language that you can use in your translation to convey this feeling. Alternate translation: [How terrible it will be for the one gaining an evil gain for his house]
Support Reference: Exclamations

ULT **the one gaining an evil gain**
UST you people of Babylonia who build … with money that you got by forcing others to give it to you

The author is repeating forms of the word **gain** in order to intensify the idea of greedy, exploitative profit. If your language can repeat words for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the intensification. Alternate translation: [the one greedily getting evil profit]
Support Reference: Reduplication

ULT **an evil gain**
UST you people of Babylonia who build … with money that you got by forcing others to give it to you

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **an evil gain**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [money evilly]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **to set his nest on high**
UST You are proud … because you have built them in places where you can easily defend them

Here the author is speaking of the oppressor building his house in a secure, elevated place as if he were a bird setting **his nest on high**. If this meaning would not be clear in your language, you could use a comparable expression or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to make his dwelling secure in a high place]
Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **to be delivered**
> UST and you think that your houses will be safe

The expression **to be delivered** is a passive verbal form. If it would be unnatural to use that form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [to deliver himself]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

> ULT **from the hand of evil**
> UST and you think that your houses will be safe

Here, **hand** represents the power or control of evil. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from the power of evil]

Support Reference: Metonymy

> ULT **from the hand of evil**
> UST and you think that your houses will be safe

The author is using the possessive form to describe a **hand** that is characterized by **evil**. If a speaker of your language would not use the possessive form for this, you could express this idea in another way. Alternate translation: [from the evil grasp]

Support Reference: Possession

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Woe	Terrible things will happen to
evil	you people of Babylonia who build … with money that you got by forcing others to give it to you
house	houses
delivered	and you think that your houses will be safe

Habakkuk 2:10

ULT	UST
You have counseled shame for your house, cutting off many peoples, and sinning against your soul.	*But because you have destroyed others, you have harmed yourself and disgraced your own family!*

ULT **shame**
UST and disgraced your

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **shame**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what is shameful]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **cutting off many peoples**
UST But because you have destroyed others

Habakkuk is speaking of destroying nations as if it were **cutting** them **off**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [destroying many peoples]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and sinning against your soul**
UST you have harmed yourself

Here, **soul** represents the person himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [sinning against yourself]
Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
counseled	and disgraced your
shame	disgraced
house	own family
sinning	you have harmed yourself
soul	you have harmed yourself

Habakkuk 2:11

ULT	UST
For a stone will cry out from the wall, and a beam from the wood will answer it,	*The very stones in the walls of your houses and the wooden beams in your ceilings show that you did evil things to get them*

> ULT **a stone will cry out from the wall, and a beam from the wood will answer it**
> UST The … stones in the walls of your houses and the wooden beams in your ceilings show that you did evil things to get them

The author is speaking of **a stone** and **a beam** as if they were living things that could **cry out** and **answer**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [even the stolen stones in your wall and the wooden beams are evidence of your wrongdoing]

Support Reference: Personification

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
stone	stones
cry out	show that you did evil things to get them

Habakkuk 2:12

ULT	UST
'Woe to the one building a city with bloodshed, and who establishes a town with injustice.'	*Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia who kill people in order to build cities, cities that you build by using money that you have gotten by committing crimes.*

ULT **Woe to the one building a city with bloodshed**
UST Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia who kill people in order to build cities

The word **Woe** here communicates a warning about coming disaster. If a speaker of your language would not express this as an exclamation, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Terrible things will happen to the one building a city with bloodshed]
Support Reference: Exclamations

ULT **the one building a city**
UST in order to build cities

The author is not referring to one specific person but to anyone who does this. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this idea using a different form. Alternate translation: [anyone who builds a city]
Support Reference: Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **with bloodshed**
UST Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia who kill people

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **bloodshed**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [by working people so hard they die]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **with injustice**
UST by committing crimes

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **injustice**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [by acting unjustly]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Woe	Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia who kill people
bloodshed	Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia who kill people
injustice	by committing crimes

Habakkuk 2:13

ULT	UST
Behold, is it not from Yahweh of armies that peoples labor for fire and nations become weary for emptiness?	*But Yahweh, commander of the angel armies, has declared that fire will destroy everything built by people who do things like that; they will have worked hard uselessly.*

ULT **Behold**
UST has declared that

The author is using the term **Behold** to focus his listeners' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use here. Alternate translation: [Pay attention]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Behold, {is it} not from Yahweh of armies that peoples labor for fire and nations become weary for emptiness**
UST But Yahweh, commander of the angel armies, has declared that fire will destroy everything built by people who do things like that; they will have worked hard uselessly

The author is using the question form to emphasize that this is certainly true. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: [Behold, it is from Yahweh of armies that peoples labor for fire and nations weary themselves for emptiness.]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **that peoples labor for fire**
UST fire will destroy everything built by people who do things like that

Here the author is speaking as if the results of people's work were fuel that would be consumed by **fire**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use here, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [that peoples work hard for nothing]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **for emptiness**
UST uselessly

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **emptiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [for nothing]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Yahweh of armies	But Yahweh, commander of the angel armies
labor	built
nations	they

Habakkuk 2:14

ULT	UST
For the earth will be filled with knowing the glory of Yahweh, as the waters cover over the sea.	*But in contrast, just as water fills the oceans, Yahweh will fill the earth with people who know how glorious he is.*

ULT **the earth will be filled**
UST will fill the earth

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [God will fill the earth]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **with knowing the glory of Yahweh**
UST Yahweh … with people who know how glorious he is

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [with people who know how glorious Yahweh is]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the glory of Yahweh**
UST Yahweh … how glorious he is

The author is using the possessive form to describe **glory** that belongs to **Yahweh**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh's glory]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **as the waters cover over the sea**
UST just as water fills the oceans

The point of this comparison is that just as **the waters** completely **cover over the sea**, so the knowledge of Yahweh's glory will completely fill the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [just as water completely fills the ocean]
Support Reference: Simile

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
knowing	know
glory	glorious
Yahweh	Yahweh

Habakkuk 2:15

ULT	UST
'Woe to the one causing his neighbor to drink, pouring out your wineskin, and even making him drunk, in order to look upon their nakedness.	*Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia, who cause people who live in nearby countries to become drunk. You force them to drink a lot of drugged wine until they are drunk and then they walk around naked because you are happy when you see that.*

ULT **Woe to the one causing his neighbor to drink**
UST Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia, who cause people who live in nearby countries to become drunk

The word **Woe** here communicates a warning about coming disaster. If a speaker of your language would not express this as an exclamation, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Terrible things will happen to the one causing his neighbor to drink]
Support Reference: Exclamations

ULT **the one causing his neighbor to drink**
UST Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia, who cause people who live in nearby countries to become drunk

Habakkuk is not referring to one specific person but to anyone who does this. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this idea using a different form. Alternate translation: [anyone who causes his neighbor to drink]
Support Reference: Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **the one causing his neighbor to drink, pouring out your wineskin, and even making {him} drunk**
UST Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia, who cause people who live in nearby countries to become drunk. You force them to drink a lot of drugged wine until they are drunk

Here the author is speaking of exploiting and humiliating other nations as if it were **causing** them **to drink** and **making** them **drunk**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use here, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one exploiting the vulnerability of his neighbor, intoxicating him, and promoting his drunkenness]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **pouring out your wineskin**
UST You force them to drink a lot of drugged wine

Habakkuk has been speaking about the oppressor in the third person (**his** neighbor) but shifts to addressing him directly in the second person with **your**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use consistent pronouns throughout. Alternate translation: [pouring out his wineskin]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **in order to look upon their nakedness**
UST and then they walk around naked because you are happy when you see that

Here, **in order to** marks **look upon their nakedness** as the goal or purpose of **causing his neighbor to drink** and **making him drunk**. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the goal of the previous actions. Alternate translation: [so that you can look upon their nakedness]

Support Reference: Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **look upon their nakedness**
UST they walk around naked because you are happy when you see that

Here, **nakedness** represents humiliation and defeat. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [humiliate them] or [enjoy their downfall]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **upon their nakedness**
UST they walk around naked because you are happy

Habakkuk has been using second person (**your**) to address the oppressor but shifts to third person plural with **their**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use consistent pronouns. Alternate translation: [his nakedness]

Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Woe	Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia
neighbor	Terrible things will happen to you people of Babylonia
wineskin	wine
drunk	drunk

Habakkuk 2:16

ULT	UST
You have become full of shame instead of glory. Drink, you also, and be uncircumcised! The cup of the right hand of Yahweh will come around to you, and disgrace upon your glory.	*But you are the ones whom Yahweh will soon disgrace instead of honor. Yahweh will make you drink so much wine that you will also stagger around drunk and naked. Yahweh will powerfully judge and curse you, and everyone will see that you are weak and not strong.*

ULT **Drink, you also, and be uncircumcised**
UST Yahweh will make you drink so much wine that you will also stagger around drunk and naked

These imperatives, **Drink** and **be uncircumcised**, communicate a prediction of what will happen, rather than a command. If the imperative form does not communicate this in your language, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [You also will drink and be exposed]
Support Reference: Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Drink, you also**
UST Yahweh will make you drink so much wine

The word **Drink** here is a metaphor. The author is speaking of experiencing God's judgment as if it were drinking from a cup. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use here, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Experience judgment, you also]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and be uncircumcised**
UST that you will also stagger around drunk and naked

Here the author is speaking of being exposed and shamed as if it were being **uncircumcised**. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use here, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and the shame of your uncircumcision be exposed]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **The cup of the right hand of Yahweh will come around to you**
UST Yahweh will powerfully judge and curse you

Here the author is speaking of God's judgment as if it were a **cup** of wine being passed around for the oppressor to drink. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use here, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh will turn his powerful judgment upon you]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **The cup of the right hand of Yahweh**
UST Yahweh will powerfully judge and curse you

The author is using the possessive form to describe **the cup of the right hand of Yahweh**. This means the cup that Yahweh holds in his right hand to dispense judgment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the cup that Yahweh holds in his powerful hand]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **the right hand of Yahweh**
UST Yahweh will powerfully judge and curse you

Here, **the right hand** represents the power of **Yahweh**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the power of Yahweh]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **and disgrace upon your glory**
UST and everyone will see that you are weak and not strong

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **disgrace** and **glory**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and what is disgraceful will cover what is glorious about you]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
shame	disgrace
glory	instead of honor
uncircumcised	that you will also stagger around drunk and naked
Yahweh	Yahweh
disgrace	and everyone will see that you are weak
glory	strong

Habakkuk 2:17

ULT	UST
For the violence of Lebanon will cover you and the destruction of beasts will terrify them, from the bloodshed of man and the violence of the land, the city, and all the dwellers in it.'	*You did violent things to the people in Lebanon, and you killed the wild animals there, so you will be punished severely for doing that. You have killed many people and you have destroyed their lands and their cities.*

ULT **For the violence of Lebanon will cover you**
UST You did violent things to the people in Lebanon … so you will be punished severely for doing that

The word translated as **For** indicates that what follows is a reason for what came before. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that the violence against Lebanon is the reason for the judgment described in the previous verses. Alternate translation: [Because the violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **the violence of Lebanon will cover you**
UST You did violent things to the people in Lebanon … so you will be punished severely for doing that

Here the author is speaking of violence returning upon the oppressor as if it were a garment that would **cover** him. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use here, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the violent things you did to Lebanon will happen to you]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **will terrify them**
UST and you killed the wild animals there

The pronoun **them** likely refers to the Babylonians, the same people addressed as **you** earlier in the verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could clarify the referent. Alternate translation: [will terrify you]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Lebanon	Lebanon
destruction	and you killed the wild animals there
beasts	and you killed the wild animals there
terrify	and you killed the wild animals there
bloodshed	You have killed
land	lands

Habakkuk 2:18

ULT	UST
What does a carved image profit when its fashioner has carved it, a molten idol and a teacher of lies? For the one forming its form has trusted in it, to make mute idols.	*An idol that someone carves or casts from metal does not help anyone at all; it only deceives the people who trust it. The person who makes an idol trusts something that he himself created, something that cannot even speak!*

ULT **What does a carved image profit when its fashioner has carved it, a molten idol and a teacher of lies**

UST An idol that someone carves or casts from metal does not help anyone at all; it only deceives the people who trust it

Habakkuk is using the question form to emphasize that a carved image has no value at all. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: [A carved image does not profit at all even though its fashioner has carved it, a molten idol and a teacher of lies.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **its fashioner**

UST or casts from metal

The author is using the possessive form to describe the relationship between an idol and the person who made it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the person who fashioned it]

Support Reference: Possession

ULT **a molten idol and a teacher of lies**

UST or casts from metal … it only deceives the people who trust it

The phrases **a molten idol and a teacher of lies** restate and further describe the **carved image** from earlier in the verse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could show this connection explicitly. Alternate translation: [that is, a molten idol, a teacher of lies]

Support Reference: Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **and a teacher of lies**

UST it only deceives the people who trust it

The author is speaking of an idol as if it were a living person who could teach **lies**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and something that deceives]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **and a teacher of lies**

UST it only deceives the people who trust it

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **lies**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [and a teacher of what is false]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the one forming its form**
UST The person who makes … something that he himself created

Habakkuk is using a construction in which a verb and its object come from the same root. You may be able to use the same construction in your language to express the meaning here. Alternatively, your language may have another way of saying this. Alternate translation: [the craftsman who shaped his own creation]
Support Reference: Poetry

ULT **its form**
UST something that

The author is using the possessive form to describe the thing that someone has formed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the thing he has formed]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **to make mute idols**
UST The person who makes an idol … he himself created, something that cannot even speak

Here, **to make mute idols** marks the purpose or result of the fashioner trusting in what he has formed. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the outcome of that trust. Alternate translation: [so that he ends up making mute idols]
Support Reference: Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
carved image	An idol
profit	does not help anyone at all
idol	or casts from metal
teacher	it only deceives the people who trust it
lies	deceives
trusted	trusts
idols	idol

Habakkuk 2:19

ULT	UST
'Woe to the one saying to the wood, Awake, to the silent stone, Arise!' It teaches! Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, but there is not any breath within it.	*Terrible things will happen to you who say to lifeless idols that are made of wood or rock, 'Wake up!' Stone idols certainly cannot tell you what you should do; they look nice because they are covered with silver and gold, but they are not alive.*

ULT **Woe to the one saying to the wood, Awake, to the silent stone, Arise**
UST Terrible things will happen to you who say to lifeless idols that are made of wood or rock, 'Wake up

The word **Woe** here communicates a warning about coming disaster. If a speaker of your language would not express this as an exclamation, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Terrible things will happen to the one saying to the wood, Awake, to the silent stone, Arise]
Support Reference: Exclamations

ULT **the one saying to the wood**
UST to you who say … idols that are made of wood

The author is not referring to one specific person but to anyone who does this. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this idea using a different form. Alternate translation: [anyone who says to the wood]
Support Reference: Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **the one saying to the wood, Awake, to the silent stone, Arise**
UST to you who say to lifeless idols that are made of wood or rock, 'Wake up

The author is speaking of **wood** and **stone** as if they were living things that could wake up and arise. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the one commanding a wooden idol to wake up and a stone idol to stand up]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **It teaches**
UST Stone idols certainly cannot tell you what you should do

The author actually means to communicate the opposite of the literal meaning of what he is saying here. **It teaches** is said about an idol that cannot speak, making the statement ironic. If a speaker of your language would not use irony for this purpose, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [It cannot teach anything!]
Support Reference: Irony

ULT **Behold**
UST they look nice because

The author is using the term **Behold** to focus his listeners' attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use here. Alternate translation: [Pay attention] or [Observe]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **it is overlaid with gold and silver**
UST they look nice because they are covered with silver and gold

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [its maker has overlaid it with gold and silver]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **but there is not any breath within it**
UST but they are not alive

Here, **breath** represents life. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [but there is not any life within it]
Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Woe	Terrible things will happen
gold	gold
silver	silver
breath	but they are not alive

Habakkuk 2:20

ULT	UST
But Yahweh is in the temple of his holiness! Hush, all the earth from his face!”	*But Yahweh is in his holy temple; everyone on the earth should be silent in his presence!”*

ULT **is in the temple of his holiness**
UST is in his holy temple

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **holiness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [the temple that is set apart for him]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **is in the temple of his holiness**
UST is in his holy temple

The author is using the possessive form to describe the **temple** that belongs to Yahweh and is characterized by **holiness**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [is in the temple where he dwells in holiness]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **Hush, all the earth from his face**
UST everyone on the earth should be silent in his presence

The word **Hush** here communicates a command for reverent silence. If a speaker of your language would not express this as an exclamation, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Let all the earth be silent from his face]
Support Reference: Exclamations

ULT **all the earth**
UST everyone on the earth

Here, **all the earth** represents all the people living on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [everyone everywhere]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **from his face**
UST in his presence

Here, **his face** represents the presence of Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from his presence] or [before him]
Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Yahweh	Yahweh
temple	temple
holiness	holy

Habakkuk 3

Habakkuk 3 Introduction

Habakkuk 3 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is a prayer-psalm (verse 1) describing a theophany, Yahweh's appearance as a divine warrior. It includes a superscription (verse 1), a liturgical colophon or ending statement (end of verse 19), and three Selah markers, indicating it was used in temple worship.

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Theophany

Verses 3-15 describe God coming from Teman with cosmic power, shaking mountains, splitting rivers, and commanding the sun and moon. These images draw on the tradition of Yahweh's actions at the Red Sea.

From Terror to Trust

The chapter pivots at verse 16: Habakkuk trembles with fear at God's power, yet resolves to wait quietly and rejoice even when all provision fails (verses 17-19).

Habakkuk 3:1

ULT	UST
A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, on shigyonoth.	*Habakkuk the prophet prayed this prayer, set to the tune called Shigyonoth.*

ULT **shigyonoth**
UST Shigyonoth

The word **shigyonoth** is from the original language. You will need to decide if you will use this word in its original-language form or if you will instead translate the meaning into your language. Either approach has broad support. The meaning of the word is uncertain, but it may refer to a type of passionate or emotional song. If you use the original-language word, you could spell it the way it sounds in your language and then put the translation in a footnote.

Support Reference: Copy or Borrow Words

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
prayer	prayer
Habakkuk	Habakkuk
prophet	prophet

Habakkuk 3:2

ULT	UST
Yahweh, I have heard your report; I feared, Yahweh, your work. In the midst of the years, revive it; in the midst of the years, make it known. In wrath, remember compassion.	*Yahweh, I have heard reports about what you have done, and I am in awe of all you have done. Do again in our time what you did long ago! Even when you are angry with us, act mercifully toward us!*

ULT **your report**
UST I have heard reports about what you have done

Here, **your report** represents the mighty deeds that people have reported about Yahweh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the report of your mighty deeds]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **your work**
UST and I am in awe of all you have done

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **work**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [what you have done]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **In the midst of the years**

Habakkuk is using **In the midst of the years** as a common expression of the culture to mean “In our own time” or “In the present era.” If this phrase does not have that meaning for your readers, you could use a comparable expression from your language that does have that meaning, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [In our own time]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **revive it**
UST Do again in our time what you did long ago

The pronoun **it** refers to Yahweh’s work mentioned earlier in the verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [revive your work]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **revive it**
UST Do again in our time what you did long ago

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates a polite request. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [please revive it]
Support Reference: Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **make it known**
UST Do again in our time what you did long ago

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates a polite request. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: [please make it known]
Support Reference: Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **In wrath, remember compassion**
UST Even when you are angry with us, act mercifully toward us

Habakkuk uses the phrase **In wrath, remember compassion** to indicate a contrast between **wrath** and **compassion**. The implicit meaning is "even in wrath." In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Even in your wrath, remember compassion]
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **In wrath**
UST Even when you are angry with us

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wrath**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [In your wrathful condition]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **remember compassion**
UST act mercifully toward us

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. If the imperative does not communicate a polite request for your readers, then use a form in your language that communicates a polite request. It may be helpful to add an expression such as "please" to make this clear. Alternate translation: [please remember compassion]
Support Reference: Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **compassion**
UST act mercifully toward us

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **compassion**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [to be merciful]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **In the midst of the years, revive it; in the midst of the years, make it known**
UST Do again in our time what you did long ago

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of clauses in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [In our own time, renew your work and make it known]
Support Reference: Parallelism

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Yahweh	Yahweh
report	reports
feared	and I am in awe of all you have done
Yahweh	יְהוָֹה
work	and I am in awe of all you have done
years	שָׁנִים
known	Do again in our time what you did long ago
wrath	Even when you are angry with us
compassion	act mercifully toward us

Habakkuk 3:3

ULT	UST
God came from Teman, and the Holy One, from Mount Paran. Selah His splendor covered the heavens, and his praise filled the earth.	*God came from Teman, and the Holy One came from Mount Paran. His glory covered the sky, and praise for him filled the whole earth.*

ULT **God came from Teman, and the Holy One, from Mount Paran**
UST God came from Teman, and the Holy One came from Mount Paran

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of clauses in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [God, the Holy One, came from the desert region south of Israel]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **from Teman**
UST from Teman

The word **Teman** is the name of a region in Edom, south of Israel.
Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **and the Holy One, from Mount Paran**
UST and the Holy One came from Mount Paran

Habakkuk is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [and the Holy One traveled from Mount Paran]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **from Mount Paran**
UST from Mount Paran

The term **Mount Paran** is the name of a mountainous region south of Edom, possibly the southern portion of the Sinai Peninsula.
Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **His splendor covered the heavens**
UST His glory covered the sky

Habakkuk is speaking of God's **splendor** as if it were a blanket that could **cover** the heavens. If this meaning would not be clear in your language, you could use a comparable expression or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [He spread his splendor across the heavens]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and his praise filled the earth**
UST and praise for him filled the whole earth

Habakkuk is speaking of God's **praise** as if the earth were a vessel that his praise could **fill**. If this meaning would not be clear in your language, you could use a comparable expression or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and people throughout the earth praised him]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
God	God
Holy One	Holy One
Paran	Paran
Selah	סֶלָה
splendor	His glory
heavens	sky
praise	praise
earth	earth

Habakkuk 3:4

ULT	UST
And his brightness was like the light; his rays came from his hand, and there was the hiding of his strength.	*He shone like the sunrise; his rays of light flashed from his hands, and that is where he conceals his awesome power.*

ULT **And {his} brightness was like the light**
UST He shone like the sunrise

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **brightness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [And he shone as brightly as the light]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **And {his} brightness was like the light**
UST He shone like the sunrise

The point of this comparison is that just as **the light** is intensely radiant, so was God's **brightness**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [And his brightness was intensely radiant]
Support Reference: Simile

ULT **from his hand**
UST his rays of light flashed from his hands

Here, **his hand** represents his power or his side. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [from his side]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **his**
UST his rays of light flashed from his hands

The pronoun **his** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [God's]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and there {was} the hiding of his strength**
UST and that is where he conceals his awesome power

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **hiding** and **strength**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [and there he hid how strong he is]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

Habakkuk 3:5

ULT	UST
Before his face plague went, and fiery bolts went out at his feet.	*Sickness went ahead of him like a soldier, and burning disease followed behind him.*

ULT **Before his face**
UST ahead of him like a soldier

Here, **face** represents the presence of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [In his presence]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **Before his face**
UST ahead of him like a soldier

The pronoun **his** refers to God, who is described in the previous verses. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [Before God's face]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **plague went**
UST Sickness went

The author is speaking of **plague** as if it were a living thing that could walk. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [God sent plague]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **and fiery bolts went out**
UST and burning disease followed behind him

The author is speaking of **fiery bolts** as if they were a living thing that could go out. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and God sent out fiery bolts]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **fiery bolts**
UST and burning disease

The word translated as **fiery bolts** can refer to different things. This could mean: (1) a burning fever or disease. Alternate translation: [a burning fever]; or (2) flaming projectiles or burning coals, describing God's destructive power against his enemies. Alternate translation: [burning coals went out at his feet]; or (3) lightning bolts. Alternate translation: [lightning bolts]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
plague	Sickness

Habakkuk 3:6

ULT	UST
He stood, and he measured the earth. He looked, and he made the nations spring apart. The eternal mountains were shattered; the everlasting hills sank down. His goings are everlasting.	*He stopped and surveyed the earth. He looked at the nations and made them tremble. The mountains that have existed from the beginning of time collapsed; the ancient hills crumbled. He has always existed and always will.*

ULT **and he measured**
UST and surveyed

The word translated as **measured** is understood in two different ways by Bible scholars. This could mean: (1) God measured out the earth, surveying its full extent. Alternate translation: [he measured the earth]; or (2) God shook the earth. Alternate translation: [he shook the earth]
Support Reference: Alternative Readings

ULT **The eternal mountains were shattered; the everlasting hills sank down**
UST The mountains that have existed from the beginning of time collapsed; the ancient hills crumbled

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of clauses in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [The most ancient mountains crumbled]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **The eternal mountains were shattered**
UST The mountains that have existed from the beginning of time collapsed

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [God shattered the eternal mountains]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **His goings {are} everlasting**
UST He has always existed and always will

The author is speaking of God's **goings** as if God's ways of acting were physical journeys. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [His ways are everlasting]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
earth	earth
nations	and made them tremble
eternal	The mountains that have existed from the beginning of time collapsed
everlasting	the ancient hills crumbled

Habakkuk 3:7

ULT	UST
Under trouble I saw the tents of Cushan; the curtains of the land of Midian trembled.	*I saw that the people in the tents of Cushan were distressed, and the people of Midian were trembling like tent curtains.*

ULT **Under trouble**
UST the people

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **trouble**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [While they suffered]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the tents of Cushan**
UST in the tents of Cushan

The author is using **the tents of Cushan** to represent the people who live in them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people of Cushan]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **Cushan**
UST Cushan

The word **Cushan** is the name of a people group or region. It may be related to Cush (Ethiopia).
Support Reference: How to Translate Names

ULT **the curtains of the land of Midian**
UST and the people of Midian were trembling like tent curtains

The author is using **the curtains of the land of Midian** to represent the people who live in the tents. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: [the people of the land of Midian]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **Midian**
UST Midian

The word **Midian** is the name of a place in southern Saudi Arabia. That name came from Midian, a son of Abraham born to Katurah.
Support Reference: How to Translate Names

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
trouble	the people
tents	tents
curtains	curtains
land	the people
Midian	Midian
trembled	were distressed

Habakkuk 3:8

ULT	UST
Was it against the rivers that Yahweh burned? Or was your nose against the rivers? Or was your fury against the sea, that you rode on your horses, your chariots of salvation?	*Yahweh, were you angry at the rivers and streams? Were you furious at the sea? No! You rode on your horses and on your chariots to defeat your enemies and rescue your people.*

ULT **Was it against the rivers that Yahweh burned? Or {was} your nose against the rivers**

UST Yahweh, were you angry at the rivers and streams? Were you furious at the sea? No

The author refers to God in the third person as **Yahweh** in the first phrase and then shifts to the second person **your** in the next phrase. If this would be confusing in your language, you could use the second person throughout. Alternate translation: [Was it against the rivers that you burned? Or was your anger against the rivers?]

Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT **Was it against the rivers that Yahweh burned**

UST Yahweh, were you angry at the rivers and streams

The author is using this question as a way of emphasizing that Yahweh's anger was not truly directed at the rivers. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: [It was not against the rivers that Yahweh burned.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **that Yahweh burned**

UST Yahweh, were you angry at the rivers and streams

The author is speaking of Yahweh as if he were a fire that **burned**. This image represents God's anger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh was angry]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Or {was} your nose against the rivers**

UST Were you furious at the sea? No

The author is using this question as a way of restating the previous question for emphasis. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: [Neither was your anger against the rivers.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **your nose**

UST Were you furious at the sea

Here, **your nose** represents Yahweh's anger. The word for nose in the source language is also the word for anger, since a person's nostrils flare when they are angry. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [your anger]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **Or {was} your fury against the sea, that you rode on your horses, your chariots of salvation**

UST Were you furious at the sea? No! You rode on your horses and on your chariots to defeat your enemies and rescue your people

The author is using this question as a way of restating the previous questions for emphasis. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement. Alternate translation: [Neither was your fury against the sea, when you rode on your horses, your chariots of salvation.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **Or {was} your fury against the sea**

UST Were you furious at the sea

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **fury**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [Or were you furious at the sea]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **you rode on your horses, your chariots of salvation**

UST You rode on your horses and on your chariots to defeat your enemies and rescue your people

The author is speaking of God as if he were a warrior who rode on horses and drove chariots. This image represents God coming in power to fight for his people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you came in great power to save your people]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **your chariots of**

UST and on your chariots

Habakkuk is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [or on your chariots of]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **your chariots of salvation**

UST and on your chariots to defeat your enemies and rescue your people

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

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Yahweh	Yahweh
fury	Were you furious at the sea
horses	horses
chariots	chariots
salvation	rescue

Habakkuk 3:9

ULT	UST
Your bow was completely bared; the oaths sworn to the staffs were a word. Selah You split the earth with rivers.	*You took your bow out of its cover, ready to shoot. You made ready your arrows, just as you had promised. You split the ground, and water gushed out in rivers.*

ULT **Your bow was completely bared**
UST You took your bow out of its cover, ready to shoot

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [You completely bared your bow] or [You made your bow ready for action]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **Your bow was completely bared**
UST You took your bow out of its cover, ready to shoot

The author is speaking of God as if he were a warrior who readied a **bow** for battle. This image represents God preparing to act in power against his enemies. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You prepared your weapons completely]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Your bow**
UST You took your bow out of its cover

Habakkuk is speaking of **Your bow** as the means by which Yahweh would shoot arrows of lightning. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Your weapon for shooting lightning]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the oaths {sworn} to the staffs {were} a word**
UST You made ready your arrows, just as you had promised

The meaning of this phrase is uncertain, and Bible scholars have understood it in different ways. Some read it as referring to God acting in fulfillment of the oaths he had sworn to the tribal leaders of Israel. Others understand it to mean that God readied his arrows for battle as he had vowed. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to follow its reading. If not, you could state the meaning plainly, as the UST does.
Support Reference: Textual Variants

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Your bow	You took your bow out of its cover
sworn	You made ready your arrows, just as you had promised
staffs	You made ready your arrows, just as you had promised
Selah	סֶלָה
earth	You split the ground

Habakkuk 3:10

ULT	UST
The mountains saw you; they writhed. A torrent of waters swept past. The deep gave its voice; it lifted its hands on high.	*The mountains trembled when they saw you. A great flood of water rushed past. The ocean depths roared loudly and seemed to raise their hands high in the air.*

ULT **The mountains saw you; they writhed**
UST The mountains trembled when they saw you

The author is speaking of **the mountains** as if they were a person who could see and writhe in pain. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The mountains shook when you appeared]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **The deep gave its voice**
UST The ocean depths roared loudly

The author is speaking of **the deep** as if it were a person who could speak. The **voice** represents the loud sound of the waters. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The deep waters sounded loud]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **it lifted its hands on high**
UST and seemed to raise their hands high in the air

The author is speaking of the deep waters as if they were a person who could lift **hands** on high. The raised hands represent the rising waves. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [its waves rose very high]
Support Reference: Personification

Habakkuk 3:11

ULT	UST
The sun and moon stood still in their habitation, at the light of your arrows as they flew, at the gleam of the lightning of your spear.	*The sun and the moon stopped moving as your arrows flew through the sky like flashes of light and your shining spear gleamed brightly.*

ULT **The sun {and} moon stood still**
UST The sun and the moon stopped moving

Habakkuk is speaking of **the sun** and **moon** as if they were living things that could have **stood still**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [The sun and moon became stationary]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **at the light of your arrows as they flew, at the gleam of the lightning of your spear**
UST as your arrows flew through the sky like flashes of light and your shining spear gleamed brightly

Here Habakkuk is speaking of lightning as if it were **arrows** and a **spear** that God uses as weapons. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [at the flash of your lightning bolts as they streaked, at the gleam of your flashing lightning]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
spear	spear

Habakkuk 3:12

ULT	UST
In indignation you marched through the earth; in anger you threshed the nations.	*You marched across the land in your anger, and you trampled the nations in your fury.*

ULT **In indignation you marched through the earth; in anger**
UST You marched across the land in your anger … in your fury

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **indignation** and **anger**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: [Because you were indignant, you marched through the earth; because you were angry,]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **you threshed the nations**
UST and you trampled the nations

Here Habakkuk is speaking of God's destruction of the nations as if he were a farmer who **threshed** grain. If this meaning would not be clear in your language, you could use a comparable expression or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [you crushed the nations]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
earth	land
threshed	and you trampled
nations	nations

Habakkuk 3:13

ULT	UST
You went out for the salvation of your people, for the salvation of your anointed one. You struck the head from the house of the wicked, laying bare the foundation to the neck. Selah	*You went out to rescue your people, to save the king you had chosen. You crushed the ruler of the wicked people, destroying his power from his crown to his very foundation.*

ULT **for the salvation of your people, for the salvation of your anointed one**
UST to rescue your people, to save the king you had chosen

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of clauses in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [to save your people, that is, to save your chosen king]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **You struck the head from the house of the wicked, laying bare the foundation to the neck**
UST You crushed the ruler of the wicked people, destroying his power from his crown to his very foundation

Habakkuk is using two images together. He is speaking of the wicked person's dynasty as if it were a **house** with a **foundation**, and he is speaking of God's destruction of the leader as if it were an execution by beheading, **striking** the **head** and **laying bare** to the **neck**. Your language may have comparable expressions that you can use in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [destroyed the wicked leader and exposed all his followers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the wicked**
UST the ruler of the wicked people

Habakkuk is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [of the wicked one]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
salvation	rescue
anointed	the king you had chosen
house	the ruler of the wicked people
wicked	wicked
foundation	from his crown
Selah	סֶלָה

Habakkuk 3:14

ULT	UST
You pierced with his own staffs the head of his warriors. They stormed to scatter me; their exultation was as if to devour the afflicted in secret.	*With the enemy's own spear you killed their leader, who had come rushing like a whirlwind to scatter us and gloated like they were about to devour helpless people in hiding.*

ULT **with his own staffs**
UST With the enemy's own spear

The pronoun **his** refers to the enemy leader. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [with the enemy's own staffs]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the head of**
UST their leader

Here, **head** represents the leader of the warriors. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the commander of his warriors]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **They stormed**
UST who had come rushing like a whirlwind

The pronoun **They** refers to the enemy warriors. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: [The enemy warriors stormed]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **They stormed**
UST who had come rushing like a whirlwind

Habakkuk is speaking of the enemy warriors' attack as if they were a violent **storm**. If this meaning would not be clear in your language, you could use a comparable expression or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [They rushed violently]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **to scatter me**
UST to scatter us

Habakkuk is using himself, one person, to represent all of his people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [to scatter us]
Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **to scatter me**
UST to scatter us

Here, **to scatter me** marks scattering Habakkuk's people as the goal or purpose of the enemy warriors storming. Use a connector in your language that makes it clear that this is the purpose. Alternate translation: [in order to scatter me]
Support Reference: Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **their exultation {was} as if**
UST and gloated like they were about to devour

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **exultation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [they exulted as if]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **was as if to devour the afflicted in secret**
UST and gloated like they were about to devour helpless people in hiding

The point of this comparison is that just as a wild animal devours helpless prey in hiding, so the enemy warriors eagerly attacked the helpless. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [was like those enjoy destroying helpless people privately]
Support Reference: Simile

ULT **the afflicted**
UST helpless people

Habakkuk is using the adjective **afflicted** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [afflicted people]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
staffs	With the enemy's own spear
פרזו	פרזו
scatter	scatter
devour	devour
afflicted	helpless people

Habakkuk 3:15

ULT	UST
You trod the sea with your horses, through the heap of great waters.	*You smashed through the sea on your horses, churning through the great surging waves.*

ULT **You trod the sea with your horses**
UST You smashed through the sea on your horses

Habakkuk is speaking of God as if God were a warrior riding **horses** through the **sea**. He is basing this image on the Israelites' historic Red Sea crossing. The **horses** represent God's power in battle and the **sea** represents God's enemies. If this meaning would not be clear in your language, you could use a comparable expression or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [You triumphed over your enemies]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **through the heap of great waters**
UST churning through the great surging waves

Habakkuk is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [you trod through the heap of great waters]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
horses	horses

Habakkuk 3:16

ULT	UST
I heard, and my belly trembled; at the sound, my lips quivered. Decay entered into my bones, and in my place I trembled. Yet I may rest for the day of distress, to come up against the people who attack us.	*When I heard this, my stomach churned inside me; at the sound of it, my lips trembled. My bones felt like they were rotting, and my legs gave way beneath me. However, I will wait quietly for the time when disaster comes to the people who are attacking us.*

ULT **and my belly trembled**
UST my stomach churned inside me

Here Habakkuk is speaking of his inner emotional turmoil as if his **belly trembled**. If this meaning would not be clear in your language, you could use a comparable expression or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [and I was deeply shaken inside]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Decay entered into my bones**
UST My bones felt like they were rotting

Habakkuk is speaking of **Decay** as if it were a living thing that could **entered into** his **bones**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [My bones felt weak and rotten]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **Decay**
UST My bones felt like they were rotting

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **Decay**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [A feeling of rot]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **Yet I may rest for the day of distress**
UST However, I will wait quietly for the time when disaster

Habakkuk uses the word **yet** here to indicate a contrast between his trembling and his quiet trust. Despite his overwhelming fear, he resolves to wait for God to act. In your translation, indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [Even so, I will wait quietly for the day of distress]
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **for the day of distress**
UST for the time when disaster

Habakkuk is using **the day of distress** to refer to the occasion when distress would come. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [for the time of distress]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **distress**
UST for the time when disaster

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **distress**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: [great trouble]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
trembled	my stomach
trembled	and my legs gave way beneath me
day	for the time when disaster
distress	for the time when disaster

Habakkuk 3:17

ULT	UST
Though the fig tree does not blossom, and there is no produce on the vines, the work of the olive has been deceptive, and the fields have not produced food, the flock has been cut off from the fold, and there are no cattle in the stalls—	*The fig trees may not blossom, and there may be no grapes on the vines. The olive trees may produce nothing, and the fields may yield no crops. The flocks of sheep and goats may disappear from the pastures, and there may be no cattle in the stalls.*

ULT **Though**

Here Habakkuk uses the word **Though** to introduce a contrast. Despite the complete failure of crops and livestock described in this verse, Habakkuk will still rejoice in Yahweh (verse 18). Use a connector in your language that indicates a strong contrast between an undesirable situation and an unexpected response. Alternate translation: [Even though]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **the work of the olive has been deceptive**

UST The olive trees may produce nothing

Habakkuk is speaking of **the work of the olive** as if it were a person who could be **deceptive**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the olive tree has failed to produce a crop]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **the work of the olive**

UST The olive trees may produce nothing

Habakkuk is using the possessive form to describe **the work** that is done by **the olive** tree, that is, the olives or oil that the olive tree produces. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [the crop from the olive tree]

Support Reference: Possession

ULT **the flock has been cut off from the fold, and {there} are no cattle in the stalls**

UST The flocks of sheep and goats may disappear from the pastures, and there may be no cattle in the stalls

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of clauses in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [and we have no domestic animals]

Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **the flock has been cut off from the fold**

UST The flocks of sheep and goats may disappear from the pastures

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: [the sheep and goats vanish from their pens]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
fig	fig
produce	and there may be no grapes
vines	vines
work	The olive trees may produce nothing
olive	olive
has been deceptive	The olive trees may produce nothing
produced	and the fields may yield no crops
flock	flocks
cattle	cattle

Habakkuk 3:18

ULT	UST
yet I, I will exult in Yahweh; I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.	*Even so, I will rejoice because I know Yahweh. I will be joyful because Yahweh is the God who saves me.*

ULT **yet I, I will exult in Yahweh**
UST Even so, I will rejoice because I know Yahweh

Habakkuk is stating the pronoun **I** separately and repeating it, even though the verb translated as **will exult** already includes this meaning. He is doing that to emphasize his personal commitment to joy in Yahweh despite the circumstances. If a speaker of your language would use an explicit pronoun for the same purpose, you may want to use that construction in your translation. If not, your language may have other ways of showing the meaning here. Alternate translation: [Yet as for me, I will exult in Yahweh]

Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **will exult in Yahweh; I will rejoice in the God of my salvation**
UST will rejoice because I know Yahweh. I will be joyful because Yahweh is the God who saves me

See how your translation team has decided to represent pairs of clauses in Hebrew poetry that mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: [I will greatly rejoice in Yahweh, God my Savior]

Support Reference: Parallelism

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
exult	will rejoice
Yahweh	Yahweh
rejoice	joyful
God	God
salvation	saves

Habakkuk 3:19

ULT	UST
Yahweh the Lord is my strength, and he made my feet like deer, and on my high places he makes me tread. To the chief musician, on my stringed instruments.	*Yahweh the Lord makes me strong. He makes me as sure-footed as a deer and enables me to go safely to the high places. (This is for the choir director to use when the people sing this prayer with stringed instruments.)*

ULT **Yahweh the Lord {is} my strength**
UST Yahweh the Lord makes me strong

Here Habakkuk is speaking of **Yahweh the Lord** as if he were **strength** itself. If this meaning would not be clear in your language, you could use a comparable expression or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: [Yahweh the Lord strengthens me]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **and he made my feet like deer**
UST He makes me as sure-footed as a deer

The point of this comparison is that just as **deer** are able to walk with sure footing on steep and rocky terrain, so God gives Habakkuk the same kind of stability and confidence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: [and he made my feet as sure-footed as deer's feet]
Support Reference: Simile

ULT **and he made my feet like deer**
UST He makes me as sure-footed as a deer

Habakkuk is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: [and he made my feet like the feet of the deer]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **and on my high places he makes me tread**
UST and enables me to go safely to the high places

Here Habakkuk is speaking of positions of safety and victory as if they were **high places** on which he could walk. If this image communicates well in your language, please use it. If not, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: [and in my places of safety he enables me to walk securely]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **To the chief musician**
UST This is for the choir director to use when the people sing this prayer

Here, **the chief musician** refers to a person who directed the singing and playing of music at the temple. This closing line indicates that the prayer in verses 1–19 was intended for use in temple worship. If your readers would not be familiar with this role, you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [For the music director] or [For the worship leader]
Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

> ULT **on my stringed instruments**
> UST with stringed instruments

Here, **my stringed instruments** refers to stringed musical instruments used in worship. This indicates how the prayer of verses 1–19 was to be accompanied. If your readers would not be familiar with this type of instrument, you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [to be accompanied by my stringed instruments] or [with music from stringed instruments]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Yahweh	Yahweh
Lord	Lord

Appendix: Translation Academy

First, Second or Third Person

Normally a speaker refers to himself as “I” and the person he is speaking to as “you.” Sometimes in the Bible a speaker refers to himself or to the person he is speaking to with terms other than “I” or “you.”

Description

- First person — This is how a speaker normally refers to himself. English uses the pronouns “I” and “we.” (Also: me, my, mine; us, our, ours)
- Second person — This is how a speaker normally refers to the person or people he is speaking to. English uses the pronoun “you.” (Also: your, yours)
- Third person — This is how a speaker refers to someone else. English uses the pronouns “he,” “she,” “it,” and “they.” (Also: him, his, her, hers, its; them, their, theirs) Noun phrases like “the man” or “the woman” are also third person.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker uses the third person to refer to himself or to the people he is speaking to. Readers might think that the speaker was referring to someone else. They might not understand that he meant “I” or “you.”

Examples From the Bible

Sometimes people used the third person instead of “I” or “me” to refer to themselves.

> But David said to Saul, “**Your servant** used to keep **his** father’s sheep.” (1 Samuel 17:34 ULT)

David referred to himself in the third person as “your servant” and used “his.” He was calling himself Saul’s servant in order to show his humility before Saul.

> Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said,
> “… Do you have an arm like **God’s**?
> Can you thunder with a voice like **his**?” (Job 40:6, 9 ULT)

God referred to himself in the third person with the words “God’s” and “his.” He did this to emphasize that he is God, and he is powerful.

Sometimes people use the third person instead of “you” or “your” to refer to the person or people they are speaking to.

> Abraham answered and said, “Look, I have undertaken to speak to my Lord, even though I am only dust and ashes!” (Genesis 18:27 ULT)

Abraham was speaking to the Lord, and referred to the Lord as “My Lord” rather than as “you.” He did this to show his humility before God.

> So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if **each of you** does not forgive **his** brother from your heart. (Matthew 18:35 ULT)

After saying “each of you,” Jesus used the third person “his” instead of “your.”

Translation Strategies

If using the third person to mean “I” or “you” would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

(1) Use the third person phrase along with the pronoun “I” or “you.”
(2) Simply use the first person (“I”) or second person (“you”) instead of the third person.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use the third person phrase along with the pronoun “I” or “you.”

> But David said to Saul, "**Your servant** used to keep **his** father's sheep." (1 Samuel 17:34)
>
> > But David said to Saul, "**I, your servant**, used to keep **my** father's sheep."

(2) Simply use the first person ("I") or second person ("you") instead of the third person.

> Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said, "… Do you have an arm like **God's**? Can you thunder with a voice like **his**?" (Job 40:6, 9 ULT)
>
> > Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said, "… Do you have an arm like **mine**? Can you thunder with a voice like **mine**?"
>
> So also my heavenly Father will do to you if **each of you** does not forgive **his** brother from your heart. (Matthew 18:35 ULT)
>
> > So also my heavenly Father will do to you if **each of you** does not forgive **your** brother from your heart.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:6 Habakkuk 1:7 Habakkuk 3:8

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**.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:2 Habakkuk 1:3 Habakkuk 1:3 Habakkuk 1:4 Habakkuk 1:7 Habakkuk 1:10 Habakkuk 1:11 Habakkuk 1:12 Habakkuk 1:16 Habakkuk 2:1 Habakkuk 2:4 Habakkuk 2:9 Habakkuk 2:10 Habakkuk 2:12 Habakkuk 2:12 Habakkuk 2:13 Habakkuk 2:14 Habakkuk 2:16 Habakkuk 2:18 Habakkuk 2:20 Habakkuk 3:2 Habakkuk 3:2 Habakkuk 3:2 Habakkuk 3:4 Habakkuk 3:4 Habakkuk 3:7 Habakkuk 3:8 Habakkuk 3:8 Habakkuk 3:12 Habakkuk 3:14 Habakkuk 3:16 Habakkuk 3:16

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.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:4 Habakkuk 2:9 Habakkuk 2:14 Habakkuk 2:19 Habakkuk 3:6 Habakkuk 3:9 Habakkuk 3:17

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!"

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:3 Habakkuk 1:12

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.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:14 Habakkuk 3:3 Habakkuk 3:8 Habakkuk 3:15 Habakkuk 3:19

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!"

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:9 Habakkuk 2:12 Habakkuk 2:15 Habakkuk 2:19 Habakkuk 2:20

Generic Noun Phrases

Description

Generic noun phrases refer to people or things in general rather than to specific individuals or things. This happens frequently in proverbs, because proverbs tell about things that are true about people in general.

> Can **a man** walk on hot coals without scorching his feet?
> So is **the man who goes in to his neighbor's wife**;
> **the one who touches her** will not go unpunished. (Proverbs 6:28-29 ULT)

The phrases in bold above do not refer to a specific man. They refer to any man who does these things.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages have different ways of showing that noun phrases refer to something in general. You (the translator) should refer to these general ideas in ways that are natural in your language.

Examples From the Bible

> The **righteous person** is kept away from trouble and it comes upon **the wicked** instead. (Proverbs 11:8 ULT)

The bold phrases above do not refer to a specific person but to anyone who does what is right or anyone who is wicked.

> People curse **the man who refuses to sell grain**. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

This does not refer to a particular man, but to any person who refuses to sell grain.

> Yahweh gives favor to **a good man**, but he condemns **a man who makes evil plans**. (Proverbs 12:2 ULT)

The phrase "a good man" does not refer to a particular man, but to any person who is good. The phrase "a man who makes evil plans" does not refer to a particular man, but to any person who makes evil plans.

Translation Strategies

If your language can use the same wording as in the ULT to refer to people or things in general rather than to specific individuals or things, consider using the same wording. If not, here are some strategies you might use.

(1) Use the word "the" in the noun phrase.
(2) Use the word "a" in the noun phrase.
(3) Use the word "any," as in "any person" or "anyone."
(4) Use the plural form, as in "people."
(5) Use any other way that is natural in your language.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use the word "the" in the noun phrase.

> Yahweh gives favor to **a good man**, but he condemns **a man who makes evil plans**. (Proverbs 12:2 ULT)
>
> > "Yahweh gives favor to **the good man**, but he condemns **the man who makes evil plans**." (Proverbs 12:2)

(2) Use the word "a" in the noun phrase.

> People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)
>
> > "People curse **a man** who refuses to sell grain."

(3) Use the word "any," as in "any person" or "anyone."

> People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)
>
> > "People curse **any man** who refuses to sell grain."

(4) Use the plural form, as in "people" (or in this sentence, "men").

> People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)
>
> > "People curse **men** who refuse to sell grain"

(5) Use any other way that is natural in your language.

> People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)
>
> > “People curse **whoever** refuses to sell grain.”

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:12 Habakkuk 2:15 Habakkuk 2:19

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.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:9

Idiom

An idiom is a figure of speech made up of a group of words that, as a whole, has a meaning that is different from what one would understand from the meanings of the individual words. Someone from outside of the culture usually cannot understand an idiom without someone inside the culture explaining its true meaning. Every language uses idioms. Some English examples are:

- You are pulling my leg. (This means, “You are teasing me by telling me something that is not true.”)
- Do not push the envelope. (This means, “Do not take a matter to its extreme.”)
- This house is under water. (This means, “The debt owed for this house is greater than its actual value.”)
- We are painting the town red. (This means, “We are going around town tonight celebrating very intensely.”)

Description

An idiom is a phrase that has a special meaning to the people of the language or culture who use it. Its meaning is different than what a person would understand from the meanings of the individual words that form the phrase.

> he **set his face** to go to Jerusalem. (Luke 9:51b ULT)

The words “set his face” is an idiom that means “decided.”

Sometimes people may be able to understand an idiom from another culture, but it might sound like a strange way to express the meaning.

> I am not worthy that you would **come under my roof**. (Luke 7:6b ULT)

The phrase “come under my roof” is an idiom that means “enter my house.”

> Put these words **into your ears**. (Luke 9:44a ULT)

This idiom means “Listen carefully and remember what I say.”

Purpose: An idiom is probably created in a culture somewhat by accident when someone describes something in an unusual way. But, when that unusual way communicates the message powerfully and people understand it clearly, other people start to use it. After a while, it becomes a normal way of talking in that language.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- People can easily misunderstand idioms in the original languages of the Bible if they do not know the cultures that produced the Bible.
- People can easily misunderstand idioms that are in the source language Bibles if they do not know the cultures that made those translations.
- It is useless to translate idioms literally (according to the meaning of each word) when the target language audience will not understand what they mean.

Examples From the Bible

> Then all Israel came to David at Hebron and said, “Look, we are your **flesh and bone**.” (1 Chronicles 11:1 ULT)

This means, “We and you belong to the same race, the same family.”

> The children of Israel went out **with a high hand**. (Exodus 14:8b ASV)

This means, “The Israelites went out defiantly.”

> the one who **lifts up my head** (Psalm 3:3b ULT)

This means, “the one who helps me.”

Translation Strategies

If the idiom would be clearly understood in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

(1) Translate the meaning plainly without using an idiom.
(2) Use a different idiom that people use in your own language that has the same meaning.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Translate the meaning plainly without using an idiom.

> Then all Israel came to David at Hebron and said, “Look, we are your **flesh and bone**.” (1 Chronicles 11:1 ULT)
>
> > Look, we all **belong to the same nation**.

> Then he **set his face** to go to Jerusalem. (Luke 9:51b ULT)
>
> > He started to travel to Jerusalem, **determined to reach it**.

> I am not worthy that you would come **under my roof**. (Luke 7:6b ULT)
>
> > I am not worthy that you should enter **my house**.

(2) Use an idiom that people use in your own language that has the same meaning.

> Put these words **into your ears.** (Luke 9:44a ULT)
>
> > **Be all ears** when I say these words to you.

> My **eyes grow dim** from grief. (Psalm 6:7a ULT)
>
> > I am crying my **eyes out**

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:6 Habakkuk 3:2 Habakkuk 3:16

Imperatives — Other Uses

Description

Imperative sentences are mainly used to express a desire or requirement that someone do something. In the Bible, sometimes imperative sentences have other uses.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages would not use an imperative sentence for some of the functions that they are used for in the Bible.

Examples From the Bible

Speakers often use imperative sentences to tell or ask their listeners to do something. In Genesis 26, God spoke to Isaac and told him not to go to Egypt but to live where God would tell him to live.

> Now Yahweh appeared to him and said, "**Do not go down** to Egypt; **live** in the land that I tell you to live in." (Genesis 26:2 ULT)

Sometimes imperative sentences in the Bible have other uses.

Imperatives that make things happen

God can make things happen by commanding that they happen. Jesus healed a man by commanding that the man be healed. The man could not do anything to obey the command, but Jesus caused him to be healed by commanding it. (In this context, the command "Be clean" means to "be healed" so that others around would know that it was safe to touch the man again.)

> "I am willing. **Be clean**." Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy. (Matthew 8:3b ULT)

In Genesis 1, God commanded that there should be light, and by commanding it, he caused it to exist. Some languages, such as the Hebrew of the Bible, have commands that are in the third person. English does not do that, and so it must turn the third-person command into a general, second-person command, as in the ULT:

> God said, "**Let there be** light," and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

Languages that have third-person commands can follow the original Hebrew, which translates into English as something like "light must be."

Imperatives that function as blessings

In the Bible, God blesses people by using imperatives. This indicates what his will is for them.

> God blessed them and said to them, "**Be fruitful**, and **multiply**. **Fill** the earth, and **subdue** it. **Have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." (Genesis 1:28 ULT)

Imperatives that function as conditions

An imperative sentence can also be used to tell the **condition** under which something will happen. The proverbs mainly tell about life and things that often happen. The purpose of Proverbs 4:6 below is not primarily to give a command, but to teach what people can expect to happen **if** they love wisdom.

> **Do not abandon** wisdom and she will watch over you;
> **love** her and she will keep you safe. (Proverbs 4:6 ULT)

The purpose of Proverbs 22:6, below, is to teach what people can expect to happen if they teach their children the way they should go.

> **Teach** a child the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction. (Proverbs 22:6 ULT)

Imperatives that function as good results

An imperative sentence can also describe a desirable result. In Proverbs 3:3-4, several imperatives give instructions, then the final imperative describes the good outcome of following those instructions.

> Do not let covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness leave you;
> tie them on your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart,
> and **find favor** and good insight in the eyes of God and man! (Proverbs 3:3-4 ULT)

Translation Strategies

(1) If people would not use an imperative sentence for one of the functions in the Bible, try using a statement instead.
(2) If people would not understand that a sentence is used to cause something to happen, add a connecting word like "so" to show that what happened was a result of what was said.
(3) If people would not use a command as a condition, translate it as a statement with the words "if" and "then."

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If people would not use an imperative sentence for one of the functions in the Bible, try using a statement instead.

> **Be clean**. (Matthew 8:3b ULT)
>
> > **You are now clean.**
> > **I now cleanse you.**
>
> God said, "**Let there be** light," and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)
>
> > God said, "**There is now** light" and there was light.
>
> God blessed them and said to them, "**Be fruitful**, and **multiply**. **Fill** the earth, and **subdue** it. **Have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." (Genesis 1:28 ULT)
>
> > God blessed them and said to them, "**My will for you is that you be fruitful**, and **multiply**. **Fill** the earth, and **subdue** it. **I want you to have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

> Do not let covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness leave you;
> tie them on your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart,
> **and find favor** and good insight in the eyes of God and man! (Proverbs 3:3-4 ULT)
>
> > Do not let covenant faithfulness and trustworthiness leave you;
> > tie them on your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart,
> > **then you will find favor** and good insight in the eyes of God and man!

(2) If people would not understand that a sentence is used to cause something to happen, add a connecting word like "so" to show that what happened was a result of what was said.

> God said, "**Let there be** light," and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)
>
> > God said, 'Let there be light,' **so** there was light.
> > God said, "Light must be;" **as a result**, there was light.

(3) If people would not use a command as a condition, translate it as a statement with the words "if" and "then."

> Teach a child the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction. (Proverbs 22:6 ULT)

Translated as:

> "**If** you teach a child the way he should go,
> **then** when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction."

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:5 Habakkuk 2:3 Habakkuk 2:16
Habakkuk 3:2 Habakkuk 3:2 Habakkuk 3:2

Irony

Description

Irony is a figure of speech in which the sense that the speaker intends to communicate is actually the opposite of the literal meaning of the words. Sometimes a person does this by using someone else's words, but in a way that communicates that he does not agree with them. People do this to emphasize how different something is from what it should be, or how someone else's belief about something is wrong or foolish. It is often humorous.

> Then Jesus answered and said to them, "People who are well do not have need of a physician, but those who have sickness. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Luke 5:31-32 ULT)

When Jesus spoke of "the righteous," he was not referring to people who were truly righteous, but to people who wrongly believed that they were righteous. By using irony, Jesus communicated that they were wrong to think that they were better than others and did not need to repent.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

If someone does not realize that a speaker is using irony, he will think that the speaker actually believes what he is saying. He will understand the passage to mean the opposite of what it was intended to mean.

Examples From the Bible

> **How well you reject the commandment of God** so that you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9b ULT)

Here Jesus praises the Pharisees for doing something that is obviously wrong. Through irony, he communicates the opposite of praise: He communicates that the Pharisees, who take great pride in keeping the commandments, are so far from God that they do not even recognize that their traditions are breaking God's commandments. The use of irony makes the Pharisee's sin more obvious and startling.

> "Present your case," says Yahweh;
> "present your best arguments for your idols," says the King of Jacob. **"Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen, so we may know these things well. Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled**." (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULT)

People worshiped idols as if their idols had knowledge or power, and Yahweh was angry at them for doing that. So he used irony and challenged their idols to tell what would happen in the future. He knew that the idols could not do this, but by speaking as if they could, he mocked the idols, making their inability more obvious, and rebuked the people for worshiping them.

> Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work?
> Can you find the way back to their houses for them?
> **You know, for you were born then, and the number of your days is many!** (Job 38:20-21 ULT)

Job thought that he was wise. Yahweh used irony to show Job that he was not so wise. The two phrases in bold above are irony. They emphasize the opposite of what they say, because they are so obviously false. They emphasize that Job could not possibly answer God's questions about the creation of light because Job was not born until many, many years later.

> Already you are satisfied! Already you have become rich! **You began to reign** apart from us, and I wish you really did reign, so that we also might reign with you. (1 Corinthians 4:8 ULT)

The Corinthians considered themselves to be very wise, self-sufficient, and not in need of any instruction from the Apostle Paul. Paul used irony, speaking as if he agreed with them, to show how proudly they were acting and how far from being wise they really were.

Translation Strategies

If the irony would be understood correctly in your language, translate it as it is stated. If not, here are some other strategies.

(1) Translate the irony in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.
(2) Translate the actual, intended meaning of the statement of irony. (Remember: The true meaning of the irony is **not** found in the literal words of the speaker, but instead the true meaning is found in the opposite of the literal meaning of the speaker's words.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Translate it in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.

> **How well you reject the commandment of God** so that you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9a ULT)
>
> > **You think that you are doing well when you reject God's commandment** so you may keep your tradition!
> > or:
> > **You act like it is good to reject God's commandment** so you may keep your tradition!
>
> I did not come to call **the righteous**, but sinners to repentance. (Luke 5:32 ULT)
>
> > I did not come to call **people who think that they are righteous** to repentance, but to call people who know that they are sinners to repentance.

(2) Translate the actual, intended meaning of the statement of irony.

> **How well you reject the commandment of God** so that you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9a ULT)
>
> > **You are doing a terrible thing when you reject the commandment of God** so you may keep your tradition!

"Present your case," says Yahweh;
"present your best arguments for your idols," says the King of Jacob. "**Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen**, so we may know these things well. **Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled**." (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULT)

> 'Present your case,' says Yahweh;
> 'present your best arguments for your idols,' says the King of Jacob.
> **Can your idols bring us their own arguments or come forward to declare to us what will happen** so we may know these things well?
> **No!** We cannot hear them because **they cannot speak** to tell us their earlier predictive declarations, so we cannot reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled.

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work?
Can you find the way back to their houses for them?
You know, for you were born then, and the number of your days is many! (Job 38:20-21 ULT)

> Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work? Can you find the way back to their houses for them? **You act like you know how light and darkness were created, as if you were there; as if you are as old as creation, but you are not**!

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:19

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.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:4 Habakkuk 1:4 Habakkuk 1:6 Habakkuk 1:10 Habakkuk 1:11 Habakkuk 1:12 Habakkuk 1:15 Habakkuk 1:15 Habakkuk 1:16 Habakkuk 2:1 Habakkuk 2:4 Habakkuk 2:4 Habakkuk 2:4 Habakkuk 2:7 Habakkuk 2:7 Habakkuk 2:7 Habakkuk 2:9 Habakkuk 2:10 Habakkuk 2:13 Habakkuk 2:13 Habakkuk 2:15 Habakkuk 2:16 Habakkuk 2:16 Habakkuk 2:16 Habakkuk 2:17 Habakkuk 2:19 Habakkuk 3:3 Habakkuk 3:3 Habakkuk 3:6 Habakkuk 3:8 Habakkuk 3:8 Habakkuk 3:9 Habakkuk 3:9 Habakkuk 3:11 Habakkuk 3:12 Habakkuk 3:13 Habakkuk 3:14 Habakkuk 3:15 Habakkuk 3:16 Habakkuk 3:19 Habakkuk 3:19

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.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:1 Habakkuk 1:9 Habakkuk 1:13 Habakkuk 2:2 Habakkuk 2:4 Habakkuk 2:5 Habakkuk 2:8 Habakkuk 2:9 Habakkuk 2:10 Habakkuk 2:15 Habakkuk 2:16 Habakkuk 2:19 Habakkuk 2:20 Habakkuk 2:20 Habakkuk 3:2 Habakkuk 3:4 Habakkuk 3:5 Habakkuk 3:7 Habakkuk 3:7 Habakkuk 3:8 Habakkuk 3:14

Nominal Adjectives

Description

In some languages an adjective can be used to refer to a class of things that the adjective describes. When it does, it acts like a noun. For example, the word "rich" is an adjective. Here are two sentences that show that "rich" is an adjective.

> **The rich man** had huge numbers of flocks and herds. (2 Samuel 12:2 ULT)

The adjective "rich" comes before the word "man" and describes "man."

> **He will not be rich**; his wealth will not last. (Job 15:29a ULT)

The adjective "rich" comes after the verb "be" and describes "He."

Here is a sentence that shows that "rich" can also function as a noun.

> **The rich** must not give more than the half shekel, and **the poor** must not give less. (Exodus 30:15b ULT)

In Exodus 30:15, the word "rich" acts as a noun in the phrase "the rich," and it refers to rich people. The word "poor" also acts as a noun and refers to poor people.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Many times in the Bible adjectives are used as nouns to describe a group of people.
- Some languages do not use adjectives in this way.
- Readers of these languages may think that the text is talking about one particular person when it is really talking about the group of people whom the adjective describes.

Examples From the Bible

> The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **the righteous**. (Psalms 125:3a ULT)

"The righteous" here are people who are righteous, not one particular righteous person.

> Blessed are **the meek**. (Matthew 5:5a ULT)

"The meek" here are all people who are meek, not one particular meek person.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses adjectives as nouns to refer to a class of people, consider using the adjectives in this way. If it would sound strange, or if the meaning would be unclear or wrong, here is another option:

(1) Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

> The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **the righteous**. (Psalms 125:3a ULT)
>
> > The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **righteous people**.

> Blessed are **the meek**. (Matthew 5:5a ULT)
>
> > Blessed are **people who are meek**.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:4 Habakkuk 1:4 Habakkuk 1:13 Habakkuk 2:4 Habakkuk 3:13 Habakkuk 3:14

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.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:4 Habakkuk 1:8 Habakkuk 1:10 Habakkuk 1:13 Habakkuk 1:15 Habakkuk 1:16 Habakkuk 2:5 Habakkuk 2:5 Habakkuk 3:2 Habakkuk 3:3 Habakkuk 3:6 Habakkuk 3:13 Habakkuk 3:17 Habakkuk 3:18

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.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:16 Habakkuk 2:3 Habakkuk 2:5 Habakkuk 2:11 Habakkuk 2:18 Habakkuk 2:19 Habakkuk 3:5 Habakkuk 3:5 Habakkuk 3:10 Habakkuk 3:10 Habakkuk 3:10 Habakkuk 3:11 Habakkuk 3:16 Habakkuk 3:17

Possession

Description

In English, the grammatical form that commonly indicates possession is also used to indicate a variety of relationships between people and objects or people and other people. In English, that grammatical relationship is shown by using the word "**of**," by using **an apostrophe and the letter "s"**, or by using a **possessive pronoun**. The following examples are different ways to indicate that my grandfather owns a house.

- the house **of** my grandfather
- my **grandfather's** house
- **his** house

Possession is used in Hebrew, Greek, and English for a variety of situations. Here are a few common situations that it is used for.

- Ownership — Someone owns something.

> The clothes of me - my clothes — The clothes that I own

- Social Relationship — Someone has some kind of social relationship with another.

> The mother of John — John's mother - the woman who gave birth to John, or the woman who cared for John

> A teacher of Israel - Israel's teacher — a person who teaches Israel

- Association — A particular thing is associated with a particular person, place, or thing.

> The sickness of David - David's sickness — the sickness that David is experiencing

> the fear of the Lord — the fear that is appropriate for a human being to have when relating to the Lord

- Contents — Something has something in it.

> a bag of clothes — a bag that has clothes in it, or a bag that is full of clothes

- Part and whole: One thing is part of another.

> my head — the head that is part of my body

> the roof of a house — the roof that is part of a house

In some languages there is a special form of possession, termed **inalienable possession.** This form of possession is used for things that cannot be removed from you, as opposed to things you could lose. In the examples above, *my head* and *my mother* are examples of inalienable possession (at least in some languages), while *my clothes* or *my teacher* would be alienably possessed. What may be considered alienable vs. inalienable may differ by language. In languages that mark the difference, the expression of inalienable possession and alienable possession will be different.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- You (the translator) need to understand the relationship between two ideas represented by the two nouns when one is in the grammatical relationship of possessing the other.
- Some languages do not use grammatical possession for all of the situations that your source text Bible might use it for.

Examples From the Bible

Ownership — In the example below, the son owned the money.

> The younger son … wasted his wealth by living recklessly. (Luke 15:13b)

Social Relationship — In the example below, the disciples were people who learned from John.

> Then **the disciples of John** came to him. (Matthew 9:14a ULT)

Association — In the example below, the gospel is the message associated with Paul because he preaches it.

> Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, from the seed of David, according to **my gospel**, (2 Timothy 2:8 ULT)

Material — In the example below, the material used for making the crowns was gold.

> On their heads were something like **crowns of gold.** (Revelation 9:7b)

Contents — In the example below, the cup has water in it.

> For whoever gives you **a cup of water** to drink … will not lose his reward. (Mark 9:41 ULT)

Part of a whole — In the example below, the door was a part of the palace.

> But Uriah slept at **the door of the king's palace.** (2 Samuel 11:9a ULT)

Part of a group — In the example below, "us" refers to the whole group and "each one" refers to the individual members.

> Now to **each one of us** grace has been given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. (Ephesians 4:7 ULT)

Events and Possession

Sometimes one or both of the nouns is an abstract noun that refers to an event or action. In the examples below, the abstract nouns are in **bold** print. These are just some of the relationships that are possible between two nouns when one of them refers to an event.

Subject — Sometimes the word after "of" tells who would do the action named by the first noun. In the example below, **John baptized people**.

> The **baptism of John**, was it from heaven or from men? Answer me. (Mark 11:30)

In the example below, **Christ loves us**.

> Who will separate us from the **love of Christ**? (Romans 8:35)

Object — Sometimes the word after "of" tells who or what something would happen

to. In the example below, **people love money**.

> For the **love of money** is a root of all kinds of evil. (1 Timothy 6:10a ULT)

Instrument — Sometimes the word after "of" tells how something would happen. In the example below, God would **punish people by sending enemies to attack them with swords**.

> Then be afraid of the sword, because wrath brings **the punishment of the sword**. (Job 19:29a ULT)

Representation — In the example below, John was baptizing people who were repenting of their sins. They were being baptized to show that they were repenting. Their **baptism represented their repentance**.

> John came, baptizing in the wilderness and preaching **a baptism of repentance** for the forgiveness of sins. (Mark 1:4 ULT)

Strategies for learning what the relationship is between the two nouns

(1) Read the surrounding verses to see if they help you to understand the relationship between the two nouns.
(2) Read the verse in the UST. Sometimes it shows the relationship clearly.
(3) See what the notes say about it.

Translation Strategies

If possession would be a natural way to show a particular relationship between two nouns, consider using it. If it would be strange or hard to understand, consider these.

(1) Use an adjective to show that one noun describes the other.
(2) Use a verb to show how the two are related.
(3) If one of the nouns refers to an event, translate it as a verb.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use an adjective to show that one noun describes the other.

> On their heads were something like **crowns of gold.** (Revelation 9:7b)
>
> > "On their heads were **gold crowns**"

(2) Use a verb to show how the two are related.

> Whoever gives you **a cup of water** to drink … will not lose his reward. (Mark 9:41 ULT)
>
> > Whoever gives you a **cup that has water in it** to drink … will not lose his reward.

Wealth is worthless on **the day of wrath.** (Proverbs 11:4a ULT)

> Wealth is worthless on **the day when God shows his wrath**.
> or:
> Wealth is worthless on the **day when God punishes people because of his wrath**.

(3) If one of the nouns refers to an event, translate it as a verb. (In the example below, there are two possession relationships, "punishment of Yahweh" and "your God.")

> Notice that I am not speaking to your children, who have not known or seen **the punishment of Yahweh your God.** (Deuteronomy 11:2a ULT)
>
> > Notice that I am not speaking to your children who have not known or seen **how Yahweh, the God whom you worship, punished the people of Egypt**.

You will only observe and see the **punishment of the wicked**. (Psalms 91:8 ULT)

> You will only observe and see **how Yahweh punishes the wicked**.

You will receive **the gift of the Holy Spirit**. (Acts 2:38b ULT)

> You will receive the **Holy Spirit, whom God will give to you**.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:9 Habakkuk 2:14 Habakkuk 2:16 Habakkuk 2:18 Habakkuk 2:18 Habakkuk 2:20 Habakkuk 3:17

Quotes within Quotes

Description

A quotation may have a quote within it, and quotes that are inside of other quotes can also have quotes within them. When a quote has quotes within it, we say there are "layers" of quotation, and each of the quotes is a layer. When there are many layers of quotes inside of quotes, it can be hard for listeners and readers to know who is saying what. Some languages use a combination of direct quotes and indirect quotes to make it easier.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

1. When there is a quote within a quote, the listener needs to know who the pronouns refer to. For example: if a quote that is inside a quote has the word "I," the listener needs to know whether "I" refers to the speaker of the inner quote or the outer quote.
2. Some languages make this clear by using different kinds of quotes when there are quotes within quotes. They may use direct quotes for some and indirect quotes for others.
3. Some languages do not use indirect quotes.

Examples From the Bible

A quotation with only one layer

> But Paul said, "I, however, was indeed born a citizen." (Acts 22:28b ULT)

Quotations with two layers

> Jesus answered and said to them, "Be careful that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name. They will say, 'I am the Christ,' and will lead many astray." (Matthew 24:4-5 ULT)

The outermost layer is what Jesus said to his disciples. The second layer is what other people will say.

> Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king." (John 18:37b ULT)

The outermost layer is what Jesus said to Pilate. The second layer is what Pilate said about Jesus.

A quotation with three layers

> Abraham said, "… I said to her, 'You must show me this faithfulness as my wife: At every place where we go, say about me, **"He is my brother."**'" (Genesis 20:11a, 13 ULT)

The outermost layer is what Abraham responded to Abimelech. The second layer is what Abraham had told his wife. The third layer is what he wanted his wife to say. (We have bolded the third layer.)

A quotation with four layers

> They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: **'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal- Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'**"'" (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)

The outermost layer is what the messengers said to the king. The second layer is what the man who had met the messengers told them. The third is what that man wanted the messengers to say to the king. The fourth is what Yahweh said. (We have bolded the fourth layer.)

Translation Strategies

Some languages use only direct quotes. Other languages use a combination of direct quotes and indirect quotes. In those languages it might sound strange and perhaps even be confusing if there are many layers of direct quotes.

(1) Translate all of the quotes as direct quotes.
(2) Translate one or some of the quotes as indirect quotes. (See Direct and Indirect Quotations.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Translate all of the quotes as direct quotes. In the example below we have bolded the indirect quotes in the ULT and the quotes that we have changed to direct quotes below it.

> Festus presented to the king the things concerning Paul, saying, "There is a certain man was left here as a prisoner by Felix. So I am uncertain about the things concerning this matter. I asked **if he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there to be judged concerning these things**. But when Paul appealed **to keep him in custody for the decision of the emperor**, I ordered him **to be held in custody until when I could send him to Caesar**." (Acts 25:14b, 20-21 ULT)
>
> > Festus presented Paul's case to the king. He said, "A certain man was left behind here by Felix as a prisoner. I was uncertain about the things concerning this matter. I asked him, **'Will you go to Jerusalem to be judged there concerning these things?'** But when Paul said, **'I want to be kept in custody for the emperor's decision,'** I told the guard, **'Keep him in custody until when I can send him to Caesar.'**"

(2) Translate one or some of the quotes as indirect quotes. In English the word "that" can come before indirect quotes. It is bolded in the examples below. The pronouns that changed because of the indirect quote are also bolded.

> And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, “I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel. Speak to them and say, ‘During the evenings you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be satisfied with bread. And you will know that I am Yahweh your God.’” (Exodus 16:11-12 ULT)
>
> > And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, “I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel. Tell them **that** during the evenings **they** will eat meat, and in the morning **they** will be satisfied with bread. And **they** will know that I am Yahweh **their** God.’”
>
> They said to him, “A man came to meet us who said to us, ‘Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, “Yahweh says this: ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.’”””” (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)
>
> > They told him **that** a man had come to meet **them** who said to **them**, “Go back to the king who sent you, and tell him **that** Yahweh says this: ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.’”

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:2 Habakkuk 2:6 Habakkuk 2:9

Reduplication

Description

Writers and speakers in the Bible sometimes repeat the same word or forms of the same word. This is to increase the intensity, completeness, or certainty of the action that the word describes, or to otherwise increase the emotional impact of the word.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages may not repeat words to increase the intensity, completeness, or certainty of an action, or they may not repeat words to increase the level of emotion that they communicate. In these cases, repeated words may appear to be a mistake or may indicate that the speaker is unable to speak correctly.

Examples From the Bible

To the woman he said, “To multiply I will multiply your pain and your childbearing…” (Genesis 3:16 ULT)

The speaker is repeating forms of the verb “multiply” in order to intensify the idea of multiplying.

To be circumcised he must be circumcised (Genesis 17:13)

The speaker is repeating forms of the verb “circumcise” in order to increase the certainty that this must happen.

Begin, possess, to possess his land (Deuteronomy 2:31 ULT)

Moses repeats the word “possess” to emphasize the completeness of the action of possessing the land.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Psalm 22:1 ULT)

The writer repeats “my God” to increase the level of emotion that he wants to communicate; he is crying out desperately to God.

“Fallen, fallen has Babylon the Great…” (Revelation 14:8 ULT)

The angel repeats the word “fallen” in order to show deep emotion in this lament for the ruined city of Babylon.

Translation Strategies

If repeating words would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, then do the same in your translation. If not, here are some other options:

(1) If your language would not repeat words to increase the intensity, completeness, or certainty of an action, then use a different word or phrase to add that meaning.
(2) If your language would not repeat words to increase emotional intensity, then use an emotional word to do that.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If your language would not repeat words to increase the intensity, completeness, or certainty of an action, then use a different word or phrase to add that meaning.

> To the woman he said, “To multiply I will multiply your pain and your childbearing…” (Genesis 3:16 ULT)
>
> > To the woman he said, “I will greatly multiply your pain and your childbearing…”

> To be circumcised he must be circumcised (Genesis 17:13 ULT)
>
> > He certainly must be circumcised
> > Or By all means, he must be circumcised

> Begin, possess, to possess his land (Deuteronomy 2:31 ULT)
>
> > Begin to completely possess his land
> > Or Enter his land until you completely possess it

(2) If your language would not repeat words to increase emotional intensity, then use an emotional word to do that.

> My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Psalm 22:1 ULT)
>
> > You are my God! Why, then, have you forsaken me?
> > Or My God, oh, why have you forsaken me?

> “Fallen, fallen has Babylon the Great…” (Revelation 14:8 ULT)
>
> > “Alas, Babylon the Great has fallen!

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:5 Habakkuk 2:3 Habakkuk 2:9

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?

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:2 Habakkuk 1:3 Habakkuk 1:12 Habakkuk 1:13 Habakkuk 1:17 Habakkuk 2:6 Habakkuk 2:6 Habakkuk 2:7 Habakkuk 2:13 Habakkuk 2:18 Habakkuk 3:8 Habakkuk 3:8 Habakkuk 3:8

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!

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:8 Habakkuk 1:11 Habakkuk 1:14 Habakkuk 1:14 Habakkuk 2:5 Habakkuk 2:5 Habakkuk 2:14 Habakkuk 3:4 Habakkuk 3:14 Habakkuk 3:19

Synecdoche

Description

Synecdoche is a figure of speech in which a speaker uses a part of something to refer to the whole thing, or uses the whole to refer to a part.

> **My soul** magnifies the Lord. (Luke 1:46b ULT)

Mary was was very happy about what the Lord was doing, so she said "my soul," which means the inner, emotional part of herself, to refer to her whole self.

> So **the Pharisees** said to him, "Look, why are they doing that which is not lawful?" (Mark 2:24a ULT)

The Pharisees who were standing there did not all say the same words at the same time. Instead, it is more likely that one man representing the group said those words.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Some readers may not recognize the synecdoche and thus misunderstand the words as a literal statement.
- Some readers may realize that they are not to understand the words literally, but they may not know what the meaning is.

Example From the Bible

> Then I looked on all the deeds that **my hands** had accomplished. (Ecclesiastes 2:11a ULT)

"My hands" is a synecdoche for the whole person because clearly the arms and the rest of the body and the mind were also involved in the person's accomplishments. The hands are chosen to represent the person because they are the parts of the body most directly involved in the work.

Translation Strategies

If the synecdoche would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

(1) State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) State specifically what the synecdoche refers to.

> "**My soul** magnifies the Lord." (Luke 1:46b ULT)
>
> > "**I** magnify the Lord."
>
> So **the Pharisees** said to him … (Mark 2:24a ULT)
>
> > **A representative of the Pharisees** said to him …
>
> Then I looked on all the deeds that **my hands** had accomplished. (Ecclesiastes 2:11a ULT)
>
> > I looked on all the deeds that **I** had accomplished

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:14

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.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:3 Habakkuk 2:4 Habakkuk 3:2 Habakkuk 3:16 Habakkuk 3:17

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 be wise** in everything in which you walk. (Joshua 1:7c ULT)

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

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

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

Translation Strategies

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

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

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

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

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

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

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

> "… if you want **to enter into life**, keep the commandments." (Matthew 19:17bULT)
>
> > "… 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**.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:2 Habakkuk 2:15 Habakkuk 2:18 Habakkuk 3:14

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.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:4 Habakkuk 1:10 Habakkuk 2:17

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.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:11

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.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:18

Alternative Readings

Description

In some places in the traditional Hebrew text of the Bible as we have it today, there are words or phrases that some scribes or translators have thought to be incorrect or unacceptable in some way. Their proposals for what the text was originally can be put into three groups.

1. Corrections of the scribes

Sometimes it seems that the earlier scribe made an error while copying the text, and so a later scribe recommended a correction. In other cases, a later scribe wanted to update the spelling, grammar, or vocabulary, or he wanted to replace objectionable words with something more acceptable. In many cases, the later scribes put notes in the margin that tell people who are reading the Scriptures out loud to say something different from what is in the written text. Scribes developed this system both to preserve wording that they thought might be original and to encourage readers to speak a more acceptable or understandable word or phrase.

1. Readings from ancient translations

Sometimes there are words or phrases in the Hebrew text that do not seem to make sense or it seems that there are words missing. In these cases, we can look to ancient translations of the Hebrew that may have been made before the problem entered the Hebrew text, such as the ancient Greek and Syriac translations. It may be that these translations preserve the original reading in these places.

1. Proposals of modern scholars

Some of the words or phrases that do not seem to make sense in the Hebrew text as we have it today are equally problematic in the ancient translations. This may mean that the problem entered the Hebrew text before the ancient translation was made. In some of these cases, scholars have proposed that the scribe mistook one word for a different word that has a very similar spelling. Also, the original Hebrew text contained only the consonants of the words and the vowels were added hundreds of years later. In some cases, it seems that the later scribe divided the consonants incorrectly or added the vowels of the wrong word. In these cases, scholars have proposed that a simple correction would be to group the consonants differently or to change the vowels.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

In order to make the best translation possible, translators need to know what is the best source text for their translation. Wherever there may be errors or problems in the source text, they need to know what both ancient scribes and modern scholars consider to be the most likely solution to that problem that best represents what the original text said.

Examples from the Bible

> **when** they spoke to him day after day, he did not listen to them. (Esther 3:4 text)

In the margin of the Hebrew text, a scribe has suggested a different word:

> **as** they spoke to him day after day, he did not listen to them. (Esther 3:4 margin)

In the following examples of the Hebrew text from Ruth, Naomi is speaking to Ruth about visiting Boaz at the threshing floor. In the Hebrew text, Naomi speaks as though she were doing these actions herself. This may be because the child that will be born to Ruth and Boaz will be considered to belong to Naomi (Ruth 4:16-17). But to avoid confusion, a scribe made a note in the margin to read the text as instructions to Ruth:

> **I will go down** to the threshing floor (Ruth 3:3 text)

> **go down** to the threshing floor (Ruth 3:3 margin)

> Then go and uncover his feet **and I will lie down** (Ruth 3:4 text)

> Then go and uncover his feet **and lie down** (Ruth 3:4 margin)

In the following examples, it seems that the Hebrew scribe skipped over the numbers.

They can be supplied, however, from some manuscripts of the ancient Greek translation:

> Saul {was} a son of **a year** in his becoming king, and he reigned over Israel **two years**. (1 Sam 13:1 ULT)

> Saul {was} a son of **thirty years** in his becoming king, and he reigned over Israel **forty-two years**. (ancient Greek translation)

In Psalm 103:5, the word "ornaments" does not seem to make any sense. It seems that the scribe mistook it for a similar word that means "existence." Modern scholars propose using that other word instead:

> The one satisfying your **ornaments** with good; (Psalm 103:5 ULT)

> The one satisfying your **existence** with good; (proposed alternate reading)

Translation Strategies

• Decide which reading to follow: Discuss as a team whether you will translate the written text or translate the reading that marginal notes or modern scholars suggest. It may be best to decide this on a case-by-case basis. If a translation of the Bible already exists in your region and the readers of your translation will be familiar with it, consider using the readings that it translates.

• Use footnotes for significant differences: If the written text and the marginal or suggested text have different meanings or implications that could affect readers' understanding of the text, provide a footnote to explain both readings.

• Consider how your translation will sound when read aloud: Even if you decide generally to translate the written text, you may wish to follow the marginal instructions and substitute different language when the written text uses words that might not be appropriate for public reading. You can put the reading of the written text in a footnote.

• Consult church communities and leaders for difficult cases: For readings that may be controversial or theologically sensitive, discuss options with church communities and leaders as part of the translation-checking process.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(Ruth 3:4) Then go and uncover his feet and lie down^1^

^1^From the marginal reading. The Hebrew says, "…and I will lie down."

(1 Samuel 13:1) Saul {was} a son of thirty years in his becoming king, and he reigned over Israel forty-two years.^2^

^2^From the ancient Greek translation. The Hebrew says, "Saul {was} a son of a year in his becoming king, and he reigned over Israel two years."

(Psalm 103:5) The one satisfying your ornaments with good;^3^

^3^The original reading may have been, "The one satisfying your existence with good;"

This page answers the question:

Why does the ULT have some different readings from other Bible translations?

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

• Textual Variants (How to handle differences between manuscripts)

• Create Accurate Translations (Ensuring the meaning is faithfully communicated)

• Create Church-Approved Translations (Involving church networks in the translation process)

Next we recommend you learn about:

• Create Authoritative Translations

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:9 Habakkuk 3:6

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.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:3 Habakkuk 3:3 Habakkuk 3:7 Habakkuk 3:7

Textual Variants

Description

Thousands of years ago, people wrote the books of the Bible. Other people then copied them by hand and translated them. They did this work very carefully, and over the years many people made thousands of copies. However, people who looked at them later saw that there were small differences between them. Some copiers accidentally left out some words, or some mistook one word for another that looked like it. Occasionally, they added words or even whole sentences, either by accident or because they wanted to explain something. Modern Bibles are translations of the old copies. Some modern Bibles include some of these sentences that were added. In the ULT, these added sentences are usually written in footnotes.

Bible scholars have read many old copies and compared them with each other. For each place in the Bible where there was a difference, they have figured out which wordings are most likely correct. The translators of the ULT based the ULT New Testament on wordings that scholars say are most likely correct. The ULT Old Testament is based on the Westminster Leningrad Codex, which is considered to be the best representative of the ancient copies. Because people who use the ULT may have access to Bibles that are based on other copies, the ULT translators have sometimes included information about some of the differences between them, either in the ULT footnotes or in the unfoldingWord® Translation Notes.

Translators are encouraged to translate the text in the ULT and to write about added sentences in footnotes, as is done in the ULT. However, if the local church really wants those sentences to be included in the main text, translators may put them in the text and include a footnote about them.

Examples From the Bible

Matthew 18:10-11 ULT has a footnote about verse 11.

> 10 See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I say to you that in heaven their angels always look on the face of my Father who is in heaven. 11 [1]
>
> [1] Many authorities, some ancient, insert v. 11: **For the Son of Man came to save that which was lost.**

John 7:53-8:11 is not in the best earliest copies. It has been included in the ULT, but it is marked off with square brackets ([ ]) at the beginning and end, and there is a footnote after verse 11.

> 53 [Then everyone went to his own house … 11 She said, “No one, Lord.” Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.”] [2]
>
> [2] Some ancient manuscripts include John 7:53-8:11

Psalm 100:3 ULT follows the Westminster Leningrad Codex. It says:

> Know that Yahweh, he {is} God; he, he made us, **and not we**,

There are some other ancient copies that say:

> Know that Yahweh, he {is} God; he, he made us, **and we are his**,

There is an unfoldingWord® Translation Note at that place to tell the translator about this other reading and that either one is an acceptable choice.

Translation Strategies

When there is a textual variant, you may choose to follow the ULT or another version that you have access to.

(1) Translate the verses as they are in the ULT and include a footnote about the alternate reading such as the one that the ULT provides or one in the unfoldingWord® Translation Notes.

(2) Translate the verses as another version has them, and change the footnote so that it fits this situation.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

The translation strategies are applied to Mark 7:14-16 ULT, which has a footnote about verse 16.

> 14 He called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand. 15 There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man.” 16 [1]
>
> [1] Some ancient manuscripts include verse 16: **If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.**

(1) Translate the verses as they are in the ULT and include the footnote that the ULT provides.

> 14 He called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand. 15 There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man.” 16 [1]
>
> > [1] Some ancient manuscripts include verse 16: **If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.**

(2) Translate the verses as another version has them, and change the footnote so that it fits this situation.

> 14 He called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand. 15There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man. 16 If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.” [1]
>
> > [1] Some ancient manuscripts do not include verse 16.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:9

Copy or Borrow Words

Description

Sometimes the Bible includes things that are not part of your culture and for which your language may not have a word. The Bible also includes people and places for which you may not have names.

When that happens you can "borrow" the word from the Bible in a familiar language and use it in your translation in your own language. This means that you basically copy it from the other language. This page tells how to "borrow" words. (There are also other ways to translate words for things that are not in your language. See Translate Unknowns.)

Examples From the Bible

> Seeing one fig tree along the roadside, he went to it. (Matthew 21:19a ULT)

If there are no fig trees where your language is spoken, there might not be a name for this kind of tree in your language.

> Above him were the **seraphim**; each one had six wings; with two each covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. (Isaiah 6:2 ULT)

Your language might not have a name for this kind of creature.

> The declaration of the word of Yahweh to Israel by the hand of **Malachi**. (Malachi 1:1 ULT)

Malachi might not be a name that people who speak your language use.

Translation Strategies

There are several things to be aware of when borrowing words from another language.

- Different languages use different scripts, such as the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Cyrillic, Devanagari, and Korean scripts. These scripts use different shapes to represent the letters in their alphabets.
- Languages that use the same script might pronounce the letters in that script differently. For example, when speaking German, people pronounce the letter "j" the same way that people pronounce the letter "y" when speaking English.
- Languages do not all have the same sounds or combinations of sounds. For example, many languages do not have the soft "th" sound in the English word "think," and some languages cannot start a word with a combination of sounds like "st" as in "stop."

There are several ways to borrow a word.

(1) If your language uses a different script from the language you are translating from, you can simply substitute each letter shape with the corresponding letter shape of the script of your language.
(2) You can spell the word as the Other Language spells it, and pronounce it the way your language normally pronounces those letters.
(3) You can pronounce the word similarly to the way the Other Language does, and adjust the spelling to fit the rules of your language.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If your language uses a different script from the language you are translating from, you can simply substitute each letter shape with the corresponding letter shape of the script of your language.

> צְפַנְיָה — A man's name in Hebrew letters.
>
> > "Zephaniah" — The same name in Roman letters

(2) You can spell the word as the Other Language spells it, and pronounce it the way your language normally pronounces those letters.

> Zephaniah — This is a man's name.
>
> > "Zephaniah" — The name as it is spelled in English, but you can pronounce it according to the rules of your language.

(3) You can pronounce the word similarly to the way the Other Language does, and adjust the spelling to fit the rules of your language.

> Zephaniah — If your language does not have the “z,” you could use “s.” If your writing system does not use “ph” you could use “f.” Depending on how you pronounce the “i” you could spell it with “i” or “ai” or “ay.”
>
> > “Sefania”
> >
> > “Sefanaia”
> >
> > “Sefanaya”

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:1

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**

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:19 Habakkuk 3:19

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."

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:1

Introduction of a New Event

Description

When people tell a story, they tell about an event or a series of events. Often they put certain information at the beginning of the story, such as who the story is about, when it happened, and where it happened. This information that the writer gives before the events of the story begin is called the setting of the story. Some new events in a story also have a setting because they might involve new people, new times, and new places. In some languages, people also tell if they saw the event or heard about it from someone else.

When your people tell about events, what information do they give at the beginning? Is there a certain order that they put it in? In your translation, you will need to follow the way your language introduces new information at the beginning of a story or a new event rather than the way the source language did that. In this way your translation will sound natural and communicate clearly in your language.

Examples From the Bible

> **In the days of Herod**, king of Judea, **there was a certain priest named Zechariah**, from the division of Abijah. And **his wife was** from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. (Luke 1:5 ULT)

The verses above introduce a story about Zechariah. The first bolded phrase tells when it happened, and the next two bolded phrases introduce the main people. The next two verses go on to explain that Zechariah and Elizabeth were old and did not have any children. All of this is the setting. Then the phrase “And it happened that” in Luke 1:8 helps to introduce the first event in this story:

> **And it happened that** in his performing as priest before God, in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood, he came up by lot to enter into the temple of the Lord to burn incense. (Luke 1:8-9 ULT)

> **The birth of Jesus Christ happened in the following way.** His mother, Mary, was engaged to marry Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 1:18 ULT)

The bolded sentence above makes it explicit that a story about Jesus is being introduced. The story will tell about how the birth of Jesus happened.

> **Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king**, behold, learned men from the east arrived in Jerusalem. (Matthew 2:1 ULT)

The bolded phrase above shows that the events concerning the learned men happened **after** Jesus was born.

> **Now in those days** John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea. (Matthew 3:1-22 ULT)

The bolded phrase above shows that John the Baptist came preaching around the time of the previous events. It is probably very general and refers to when Jesus lived in Nazareth.

> **Then** Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River to John, to be baptized by him. (Matthew 3:13 ULT)

The word “then” shows that Jesus came to the Jordan River some time after the events in the previous verses.

> Now there was **a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader**. This man came to Jesus at night. (John 3:1-2a ULT)

The author first introduced the new person and then told about what he did and when he did it. In some languages, it might be more natural to tell about the time first.

> 6 Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. 7 Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood. (Genesis 7:6-7 ULT)

Verse 6 is a statement of the events that happen in the rest of chapter 7. Chapter 6 already told about how God told Noah that there would be a flood, and how Noah prepared for it. Chapter 7 verse 6 introduces the part of the story that tells about Noah and his family and the animals going into the ship, the rain starting, and the rain flooding the earth. Some languages might need to make it clear that this verse simply introduces the event, or move this verse after verse 7. Verse 6 is not one of the events of the story. The people went into the ship before the flood came.

Translation Strategies

If the information given at the beginning of a new event is clear and natural to your readers, consider translating it as it is in the ULT or UST. If not, consider one of these strategies:

(1) Put the information that introduces the event in the order that your people put it.
(2) If readers would expect certain information but it is not in the Bible, consider using an indefinite word or phrase to fill in that information, such as: "another time" or "someone."
(3) If the introduction is a summary of the whole event, use your language's way of showing that it is a summary.
(4) If it would be strange in the target language to give a summary of the event at the beginning, indicate that the event would actually happen later in the story.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Put the information that introduces the event in the order that your people put it.

> Now there was **a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader**. This man came to Jesus at night. (John 3:1-2a ULT)
>
> > There was a **man whose name was Nicodemus. He was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish Council**. One night he came to Jesus.
>
> > One night **a man named Nicodemus, who was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish Council**, came to Jesus.

> As he passed by, **he saw Levi the son of Alpheus, sitting** at the tax collector's tent, and he said to him … (Mark 2:14a ULT)
>
> > As he passed by, **Levi the son of Alpheus was sitting** at the tax collector's tent. Jesus saw him and and said to him …
>
> > As he passed by, **there was a man sitting** at the tax collector's tent. His name was Levi, and he was the son of Alpheus. Jesus saw him and said to him …
>
> > As he passed by, **there was a tax collector** sitting at the tax collector's tent. His name was Levi, and he was the son of Alpheus. Jesus saw him and said to him …

(2) If readers would expect certain information, but it is not in the Bible, consider using an indefinite word or phrase such as "another time," or "someone."

> Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. (Genesis 7:6 ULT) — If people expect to be told something about when the new event happened, the phrase "after that" can help them see that it happened after the events already mentioned.
>
> > **After that**, when Noah was 600 years old, the flood came upon the earth.

> **Again he began** to teach beside the sea. (Mark 4:1a ULT) — In chapter 3 Jesus was teaching at someone's house. Readers may need to be told that this new event happened at another time, or that Jesus actually went to the sea.
>
> > **Another time** Jesus began to teach people again beside the sea.
>
> > Jesus went to the sea and **began to teach people again** there.

(3) If the introduction is a summary of the whole event, use your language's way of showing that it is a summary.

> Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. (Genesis 7:6 ULT)
>
> > **Now this is what happened when** Noah was 600 years old and the flood came upon the earth.
>
> > **This part tells about what happened when** the flood came upon the earth. It happened when Noah was 600 years old.

(4) If it would be strange in the target language to give a summary of the event at the beginning, show that the event will actually happen later in the story.

> Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood. (Genesis 7:6-7 ULT)
>
> > **Now this is what happened when** Noah was 600 years old. Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives went into the ark together because **God had said that the waters of the flood would come**.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:5 Habakkuk 1:12

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.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:7 Habakkuk 2:8

Poetry

Description

Poetry is one of the ways that people use the words and sounds of their language to make their speech and writing more beautiful and to express strong emotion. Through poetry, people can communicate deeper emotion than they can through simple non-poetic forms. Poetry gives more weight and elegance to statements of truth, such as proverbs, and is also easier to remember than ordinary speech.

In poetry we commonly find:

- many figures of speech such as Apostrophe
- arrangements of clauses into particular patterns such as:
  - parallel lines (See Parallelism)
  - acrostics (beginning lines with successive letters of the alphabet)
  - chiasms (in which the first line relates to the last line, the second to the next-to-last line, etc.):

> You should not give what is holy to the dogs,
>
> > and should not throw your pearls in front of the pigs.
> >
> > Otherwise they will trample them under their feet,
>
> and having turned, they might tear you to pieces. (Matt 7:6 ULT)

- repetition of some or all of a line:

> Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts. Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars. (Psalm 148:2-3 ULT)

- lines of similar length:

> Listen to my call to you,
>
> Yahweh; think about my groanings.
>
> Listen to the sound of my call, my King and my God,
>
> for it is to you that I pray. (Psalm 5:1-2 ULT)

- the same sound used at the end or at the beginning of two or more lines:

> "Twinkle, twinkle little **star**. How I wonder what you **are**." (from an English rhyme)

- the same sound repeated many times:

> "Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater" (from an English rhyme)

- The same root word used as both a verb and as a noun:

> Your old men will **dream dreams** (Joel 2:28 ULT)

> Yahweh,…**light lightning** and scatter them (Psalm 144:5-6 ULT)

We also find:

- old words and expressions
- dramatic imagery
- different use of grammar — including:
  - incomplete sentences
  - lack of connective words

Some places to look for poetry in your language

1. Songs, particularly old songs or songs used in children's games
2. Religious ceremony or chants of priests or witch doctors
3. Prayers, blessings, and curses
4. Old legends

Elegant or fancy speech

Elegant or fancy speech is similar to poetry in that it uses beautiful language, but it does not use all of the language's features of poetry, and it does not use them as much as poetry does. Popular speakers in the language often use elegant speech, and this is probably the easiest source of text to study to find out what makes speech elegant in your language.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue:

- Different languages use poetry for different things. If a poetic form would not communicate the same meaning in your language, you may need to write it without the poetry.
- Different languages use different poetic devices. A poetic device that conveys elegance or emotion in a biblical language may be confusing or misunderstood in another language.
- In some languages, using poetry for a particular part of the Bible would make it much more powerful.

Examples From the Bible

The Bible uses poetry for songs, teaching, and prophecy. Almost all of the books of the Old Testament have poetry in them and many of the books are completely made up of poetry.

> … for you saw my affliction; you knew the distress of my soul. (Psalm 31:7b ULT)

This example of Parallelism has two lines that mean the same thing.

> Yahweh, judge the nations; vindicate me, Yahweh, because I am righteous and innocent, Most High. (Psalm 7:8 ULT)

This example of parallelism shows the contrast between what David wants God to do to him and what he wants God to do to the unrighteous nations. (See Parallelism.)

> Keep your servant also from arrogant sins; let them not rule over me. (Psalm 19:13a ULT)

This example of personification speaks of sins as if they could rule over a person. (See Personification.)

> Oh, give thanks to Yahweh; for he is good,
>
> for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
>
> Oh, give thanks to the God of gods,
>
> for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
>
> Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords,
>
> for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
>
> (Psalm 136:1-3 ULT)

This example repeats the phrases “give thanks” and “his covenant faithfulness endures forever.”

Translation Strategies

If the style of poetry that is used in the source text would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other ways of translating it.

(1) Translate the poetry using one of your styles of poetry.
(2) Translate the poetry using your style of elegant speech.
(3) Translate the poetry using your style of ordinary speech.

If you use poetry it may be more beautiful.

If you use ordinary speech it may be more clear.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

> Blessed is the man who does not walk in the advice of the wicked, or stand in the pathway with sinners, or sit in the assembly of mockers. But his delight is in the law of Yahweh, and on his law he meditates day and night. (Psalm 1:1-2 ULT)

The following are examples of how people might translate Psalm 1:1-2.

(1) Translate the poetry using one of your styles of poetry. (The style in this example has words that sound similar at the end of each line.)

> “Happy is the person not encouraged **to sin**, Disrespect for God he will not **begin**, To those who laugh at God he is **no kin.** God is his constant **delight**, He does what God says **is right**, He thinks of it all day **and night**.”

(2) Translate the poetry using your style of elegant speech.

> This is the kind of person who is truly blessed: the one who does not follow the advice of wicked people nor stop along the road to speak with sinners nor join the gathering of those who mock God. Rather, he takes great joy in Yahweh’s law, and he meditates on it day and night.

(3) Translate the poetry using your style of ordinary speech.

> The people who do not listen to the advice of bad people are really happy. They do not spend time with people who continually do evil things or join with those who do not respect God. Instead, they love to obey Yahweh’s law, and they think about it all the time.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:5 Habakkuk 2:18

Pronouns — When to Use Them

Description

When we talk or write, we use pronouns to refer to people or things without always having to repeat the noun or name. Usually, the first time we refer to someone in a story, we use a descriptive phrase or a name. The next time we might refer to that person with a simple noun or by name. After that we might refer to him simply with a pronoun as long as we think that our listeners will be able to understand easily to whom the pronoun refers.

> Now there was **a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader**. **This man** came to Jesus at night. Jesus replied and said to **him** … (John 3:1, 2a, 3a ULT)

In John 3, Nicodemus is first referred to with noun phrases and his name. Then he is referred to with the noun phrase “this man.” Then he is referred to with the pronoun “him.”

Each language has its rules and exceptions to this usual way of referring to people and things.

- In some languages, the first time something is referred to in a paragraph or chapter, it is referred to with a noun rather than a pronoun.
- The main character is the person whom a story is about. In some languages, after a main character is introduced in a story, he is usually referred to with a pronoun. Some languages have special pronouns that refer only to the main character.
- In some languages, marking on the verb helps people know who the subject is. (See Verbs.) In some of these languages, listeners rely on this marking to help them understand who the subject is. Speakers will use a pronoun, noun phrase, or proper name only when they want either to emphasize or to clarify who the subject is.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- If translators use a pronoun at the wrong time for their language, readers might not know about whom the writer is talking.
- If translators too frequently refer to a main character by name, listeners of some languages might not realize that the person is a main character, or they might think that there is a new character with the same name.
- If translators use pronouns, nouns, or names at the wrong time, people might think that there is some special emphasis on the person or thing to which it refers.

Examples From the Bible

The example below occurs at the beginning of a chapter. In some languages it might not be clear to whom the pronouns refer.

> Then Jesus entered into the synagogue again, and there was a man who had a withered hand. Some people watched **him** closely to see if **he** would heal **him** on the Sabbath so that they might accuse **him**. (Mark 3:1-2 ULT)

In the example below, two men are named in the first sentence. It might not be clear whom “he” in the second sentence refers to.

> Now after some days had passed, **King Agrippa** and Bernice came down to Caesarea to pay their respects to **Festus**. After **he** had been there for many days, Festus presented to the king the things concerning Paul. (Acts 25:13-14)

Jesus is the main character of the book of Matthew, but in the verses below he is referred to four times by name. This may lead speakers of some languages to think that Jesus is not the main character. Or it might lead them to think that there is more than one person named Jesus in this story. Or it might lead them to think that there is some kind of emphasis on him, even though there is no emphasis.

> At that time **Jesus** went on the Sabbath day through the grainfields. **His** disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and eat them. But when the Pharisees saw that, they said to **Jesus**, “See, your disciples do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath.” But **Jesus** said to them, “Have you never read what David did, when he was hungry, and the men who were with him?” Then **Jesus** left from there and went into their synagogue. (Matthew 12:1-3,9 ULT)

Translation Strategies

(1) If it would not be clear to your readers to whom or to what a pronoun refers, use a name or a noun.
(2) If repeating a noun or name would lead people to think that a main character is not a main character, or that the writer is talking about more than one person with that name, or that there is some kind of emphasis on someone when there is no emphasis, use a pronoun instead.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If it would not be clear to your readers to whom or to what a pronoun refers, use a name or a noun.

> Again **he** walked into the synagogue, and a man with a withered hand was there. Some Pharisees watched **him** to see if **he** would heal the man on the Sabbath. (Mark 3:1-2)
>
> > Again **Jesus** walked into the synagogue, and a man with a withered hand was there. Some Pharisees watched **Jesus** to see if **he** would heal the man on the Sabbath.

(2) If repeating a noun or name would lead people to think that a main character is not a main character, or that the writer is talking about more than one person with that name, or that there is some kind of emphasis on someone when there is no emphasis, use a pronoun instead.

> At that time **Jesus** went on the Sabbath day through the grainfields. **His** disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and eat them. But when the Pharisees saw that, they said to **Jesus**, “See, your disciples do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath.” But **Jesus** said to them, “Have you never read what David did, when he was hungry, and the men who were with him?” Then **Jesus** left from there and went into their synagogue. (Matthew 12:1-3,9 ULT)

This may be translated as:

> At that time **Jesus** went on the Sabbath day through the grainfields. **His** disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and eat them. But when the Pharisees saw that, they said to **him**, “See, your disciples do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath.” But **he** said to them, “Have you never read what David did, when he was hungry, and the men who were with him?” Then **he** left from there and went into their synagogue.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:9 Habakkuk 1:10 Habakkuk 1:10 Habakkuk 2:4 Habakkuk 2:15 Habakkuk 2:15 Habakkuk 2:17 Habakkuk 3:2 Habakkuk 3:4 Habakkuk 3:5 Habakkuk 3:14 Habakkuk 3:14 Habakkuk 3:18

Proverbs

Description

Proverbs are short sayings that give wise advice or teach something that is generally true about life. People enjoy proverbs because they give a lot of wisdom in few words. Proverbs in the Bible often use metaphor and parallelism. Proverbs should not be understood as absolute and unchangeable laws. Rather, proverbs offer general advice to a person about how to live his life.

> Hatred stirs up conflicts, but love covers over all offenses. (Proverbs 10:12 ULT)

Here is another example from the book of Proverbs.

> Look at the ant, you lazy person, consider her ways, and be wise. It has no commander, officer, or ruler, yet it prepares its food in the summer, and during the harvest it stores up what it will eat. (Proverbs 6:6-8 ULT)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Each language has its own ways of saying proverbs. There are many proverbs in the Bible. They need to be translated in the way that people say proverbs in your language so that people recognize them as proverbs and understand what they teach.

Examples From the Bible

> A good name is to be chosen over great riches,
>
> and favor is better than silver and gold. (Proverbs 22:1 ULT)

This means that it is better to be a good person and to have a good reputation than it is to have a lot of money.

> Like vinegar on the teeth and smoke in the eyes,
>
> so is the sluggard to those who send him. (Proverbs 10:26 ULT)

This means that a lazy person is very annoying to those who send him to do something.

> The way of Yahweh protects those who have integrity,
>
> but it is destruction for the wicked. (Proverbs 10:29 ULT)

This means that Yahweh protects people who do what is right, but he destroys those who are wicked.

Translation Strategies

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

(1) Find out how people say proverbs in your language, and use one of those ways.
(2) If certain objects in the proverb are not known to many people in your language group, consider replacing them with objects that people know and that function in the same way in your language.
(3) Substitute a proverb in your language that has the same teaching as the proverb in the Bible.
(4) Give the same teaching but not in a form of a proverb.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Find out how people say proverbs in your language, and use one of those ways.

> A good name is to be chosen over great riches,
>
> and favor is better than silver and gold. (Proverbs 22:1 ULT)

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

> It is better to have a good name than to have great riches,
>
> and to be favored by people than to have silver and gold.
>
> Wise people choose a good name over great riches,
>
> and favor over silver and gold.
>
> Try to have a good reputation rather than great riches.
>
> Will riches really help you?
>
> I would rather have a good reputation.

(2) If certain objects in the proverb are not known to many people in your language group, consider replacing them with objects that people know and that function in the same way in your language.

> Like **snow in summer** or rain in harvest,
>
> so a fool does not deserve honor. (Proverbs 26:1 ULT)
>
> It is not natural for **a cold wind to blow in the hot season** or for it to rain in the harvest season;
>
> And it is not natural to honor a foolish person.

(3) Substitute a proverb in your language that has the same teaching as the proverb in the Bible.

> Do not boast about tomorrow,
>
> for you do not know what a day may bring. (Proverbs 27:1a ULT)
>
> Do not count your chickens before they hatch.

(4) Give the same teaching but not in a form of a proverb.

> There is a generation that curses their father
>
> and does not bless their mother.
>
> There is a generation that is pure in their own eyes,
>
> and yet they are not washed of their filth. (Proverbs 30:11-12 ULT)
>
> People who do not respect their parents think that they are righteous,
>
> and they do not turn away from their sin.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:6

Quotations and Quote Margins

Description

When saying that someone said something, we often tell who spoke, whom they spoke to, and what they said. The information about who spoke and whom they spoke to is called the quote margin. What the person said is the quotation. (This is also called a quote.) In some languages the quote margin may come first, last, or even in between two parts of the quotation.

The quote margins are bolded below.

- **She said**, "The food is ready. Come and eat."
- "The food is ready. Come and eat," **she said**.
- "The food is ready," **she said.** "Come and eat."

Also in some languages, the quote margin may have more than one verb meaning "said."

> But his mother **answered** and **said**, "No. Rather, he will be called John." (Luke 1:60 ULT)

When writing that someone said something, some languages put the quote (what was said) in quotation marks called inverted commas (" "). Some languages use other symbols around the quotation, such as these angle quote marks (« »), or something else.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators need to put the quote margin where it is most clear and natural in their language.
- Translators need to decide whether they want the quote margin to have one or two verbs meaning "said."
- Translators need to decide which marks to use around the quotation.

Examples From the Bible

Quote margin before the quote

> **Then Zechariah said to the angel**, "How will I know this? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in her days." (Luke 1:18 ULT)

> Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and **they said to him**, "Teacher, what should we do?" (Luke 3:12 ULT)

> So **he said to them**, "Collect nothing more than what you have been ordered." (Luke 3:13 ULT)

Quote margin after the quote

> Yahweh relented concerning this. "It will not happen," **he said**. (Amos 7:3 ULT)

Quote margin between two parts of the quote

> "I will hide my face from them," **he said,** "and I will see what their end will be; for they are a perverse generation, children who are unfaithful." (Deuteronomy 32:20 ULT)

> For look, days are coming—**this is Yahweh's declaration**—when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah. (Jeremiah 30:3a ULT)

Translation Strategies

(1) Decide where to put the quote margin.
(2) Decide whether to use one or two words meaning "said."

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Decide where to put the quote margin.

> **He said**, "Therefore, those among you who are leaders should go down with us. If there is something wrong with the man, let them accuse him." (Acts 25:5 ULT)

> > "Therefore, those who can should go there with us," **he said**. "If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him."

> > "Therefore, those who can should go there with us. If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him," **he said**.

> "Therefore, those who can," **he said**, "should go there with us. If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him."

(2) Decide whether to use one or two words meaning "said."

> But his mother **answered and said**, "No. Rather, he will be called John." (Luke 1:60 ULT)

> But his mother **replied**, "No. Rather, he will be called John."

> But his mother **said**, "No. Rather, he will be called John."

> But his mother **answered** like this. "No. Rather, he will be called John," she **said**.

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:2

Appendix: Translation Words

anoint, anointed, anointing

Definition:

The term “anoint” means to rub or pour oil on a person or object. In biblical times, there were several reasons for anointing someone with oil. Often this was a Symbolic Action, representing God empowering that person with the Holy Spirit for special service to him.

- In the Old Testament, priests, kings, and prophets were anointed with oil to set them apart for special service to God.
- Objects such as altars or the tabernacle were also anointed with oil to show that they were to be used to worship and glorify God.
- In the New Testament, sick people were anointed with oil for their healing.
- Sometimes the oil was mixed with spices, giving it a sweet, perfumed smell.
- The New Testament records two times that Jesus was anointed with perfumed oil by a woman, as an act of worship.
- People prepared dead bodies for burial by anointing them with perfumed oils and spices.
- In the New Testament, receiving the Holy Spirit is described as anointing.
- The titles “Messiah” (Hebrew) and “Christ” (Greek) mean “the Anointed (One).”
- Jesus the Messiah is the one who was chosen and anointed as a Prophet, High Priest, and King.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “anoint” could be translated as “pour/put oil on” or “consecrate by pouring oil on” or “consecrate” or “appoint.”
- Depending on the context, to “be anointed” could be translated as “be consecrated with oil” or “be appointed” or “be consecrated” or “be given the Holy Spirit.”
- A phrase like “the anointed priest,” could be translated as “the priest who was consecrated with oil” or “the priest who was set apart by the pouring on of oil.”

(See also: Christ, consecrate, high priest, King of the Jews, priest, prophet)

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:20
- 1 John 2:27
- 2 Corinthians 1:21
- 1 Samuel 16:2-3
- Acts 4:27-28
- Amos 6:5-6
- Exodus 29:5-7
- James 5:13-15

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0047, H0430, H1101, H1878, H3323, H4397, H4398, H4473, H4886, H4888, H4899, H5480, H8136, G00320, G02180, G07430, G14720, G20250, G34620, G55450, G55480

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:13

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:12 Habakkuk 2:3

believe, believer, belief, unbeliever, unbelief

Definition:

The terms “believe” and “believe in” are closely related, but have slightly different meanings:

1. believe

- To believe something is to accept or trust that it is true.
- To believe someone is to acknowledge that what that person has said is true.

2. believe in

- To “believe in” someone means to “trust in” that person. It means to trust that the person is who he says he is, that he always speaks the truth, and that he will do what he has promised to do.
- When a person truly believes in something, he will act in such a way that shows that belief.
- The phrase “have faith in” usually has the same meaning as “believe in.”
- To “believe in Jesus” means to believe that he is the Son of God, that he is God himself who also became human and who died as a sacrifice to pay for our sins. It means to trust him as Savior and live in a way that honors him.

3. believer

In the Bible, the term “believer” refers to someone who believes in and relies on Jesus Christ as Savior.

- The term “believer” literally means “person who believes.”
- The term “Christian” eventually came to be the main title for believers because it indicates that they believe in Christ and obey his teachings.

4. unbelief

The term “unbelief” refers to not believing something or someone.

- In the Bible, “unbelief” refers to not believing in or not trusting in Jesus as one’s Savior.
- A person who does not believe in Jesus is called an “unbeliever.”

Translation Suggestions:

- To “believe” could be translated as to “know to be true” or “know to be right.”
- To “believe in” could be translated as “trust completely” or “trust and obey” or “completely rely on and follow.”
- Some translations may prefer to say “believer in Jesus” or “believer in Christ.”
- This term could also be translated by a word or phrase that means “person who trusts in Jesus” or “someone who knows Jesus and lives for him.”
- Other ways to translate “believer” could be “follower of Jesus” or “person who knows and obeys Jesus.”
- The term “believer” is a general term for any believer in Christ, while “disciple” and “apostle” were used more specifically for people who knew Jesus while he was alive. It is best to translate these terms in different ways, in order to keep them distinct.
- Other ways to translate “unbelief” could include “lack of faith” or “not believing.”
- The term “unbeliever” could be translated as “person who does not believe in Jesus” or “someone who does not trust in Jesus as Savior.”

(See also: believe, apostle, Christian, disciple, faith, trust)

Bible References:

- Genesis 15:6
- Genesis 45:26
- Job 9:16-18
- Habakkuk 1:5-7
- Mark 6:4-6
- Mark 1:14-15
- Luke 9:41
- John 1:12
- Acts 6:5
- Acts 9:42
- Acts 28:23-24
- Romans 3:3
- 1 Corinthians 6:1
- 1 Corinthians 9:5
- 2 Corinthians 6:15

- Hebrews 3:12
- 1 John 3:23

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:4** Noah warned the people about the coming flood and told them to turn to God, but they did not **believe** him.
- **4:8** Abram **believed** God's promise. God declared that Abram was righteous because he **believed** God's promise.
- **11:2** God provided a way to save the firstborn of anyone who **believed in** him.
- **11:6** But the Egyptians did not **believe** God or obey his commands.
- **37:5** Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever **believes in** me will live, even though he dies. Everyone who **believes in** me will never die. Do you **believe** this?"
- **43:1** After Jesus returned to heaven, the disciples stayed in Jerusalem as Jesus had commanded them to do. The **believers** there constantly gathered together to pray.
- **43:3** While the **believers** were all together, suddenly the house where they were was filled with a sound like a strong wind. Then something that looked like flames of fire appeared over the heads of all the **believers**.
- **43:13** Every day, more people became **believers**.
- **46:6** That day many people in Jerusalem started persecuting the followers of Jesus, so the **believers** fled to other places. But in spite of this, they preached about Jesus everywhere they went.
- **46:1** Saul was the young man who guarded the robes of the men who killed Stephen. He did not believe in Jesus, so he persecuted the **believers**.
- **46:9** Some **believers** who fled from the persecution in Jerusalem went far away to the city of Antioch and preached about Jesus.
- **46:9** It was at Antioch that **believers** in Jesus were first called "Christians."
- **47:14** They also wrote many letters to encourage and teach the **believers** in the churches.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0539, H0540, G05430, G05440, G05690, G05700, G05710, G39820, G41000, G41020, G41030, G41350

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:5

circumcise, circumcised, circumcision, uncircumcised, uncircumcision

Definition:

The term "circumcise" means to cut off the foreskin of a man or male child. A circumcision ceremony may be performed in connection with this.

- God commanded Abraham to circumcise every male among his family and servants as a sign of God's covenant with them.
- God also commanded Abraham's descendants to continue to do this for every baby boy born into their households.
- The phrase, "circumcision of the heart" refers figuratively to the "cutting away" or removal of sin from a person.
- In a spiritual sense, "the circumcised" refers to people whom God has purified from sin through the blood of Jesus and who are his people.
- The term "uncircumcised" refers to those who have not been circumcised physically. It can also refer figuratively to those who have not been circumcised spiritually, who do not have a relationship with God.

The terms "uncircumcised" and "uncircumcision" refer to a male who has not been physically circumcised. These terms are also used figuratively.

- Egypt was a nation that also required circumcision. So when God talks about Egypt being defeated by the "uncircumcised," he is referring to people whom the Egyptians despised for not being circumcised.

- The Bible refers to people who have an "uncircumcised heart" or who are "uncircumcised in heart." This a figurative way of saying that these people are not God's people, and are stubbornly disobedient to him.

- If a word for circumcision is used or known in the language, "uncircumcised" could be translated as "not circumcised."

- The expression "the uncircumcision" could be translated as "people who are not circumcised" or "people who do not belong to God," depending on the context.

- Other ways to translate figurative senses of this term could include "not God's people" or "rebellious like those who do not belong to God" or "people who have no sign of belonging to God."

- The expression "uncircumcised in heart" could be translated as "stubbornly rebellious" or "refusing to believe." However, if possible it is best to keep the expression or a similar one since spiritual circumcision is an important concept.

Translation Suggestions:

- If the culture of the target language performs circumcisions on males, the word used to refer to this should be used for this term.
- Other ways to translate this term would be, "cut around" or "cut in a circle" or "cut off the foreskin."
- In cultures where circumcision is not known, it may be necessary to explain it in a footnote or glossary.
- Make sure the term used to translate this does not refer to females. It may be necessary to translate this with a word or phrase that includes the meaning of "male."

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: Abraham, covenant)

Bible References:

- Genesis 17:11
- Genesis 17:14
- Exodus 12:48
- Leviticus 26:41
- Joshua 5:3
- Judges 15:18
- 2 Samuel 1:20
- Jeremiah 9:26
- Ezekiel 32:25
- Acts 10:44-45
- Acts 11:3
- Acts 15:1
- Acts 11:3
- Romans 2:27

- Galatians 5:3
- Ephesians 2:11
- Philippians 3:3
- Colossians 2:11
- Colossians 2:13

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **5:3** "You must **circumcise** every male in your family."
- **5:5** That day Abraham **circumcised** all the males in his household.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4135, H4139, H5243, H6188, H6189, H6190, G02030, G05640, G19860, G40590, G40610

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:16

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:2

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:6 Habakkuk 3:6

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:4 Habakkuk 1:13 Habakkuk 1:13 Habakkuk 2:9 Habakkuk 3:13

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:4

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:11 Habakkuk 2:18 Habakkuk 2:18

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:2

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:14 Habakkuk 2:16 Habakkuk 2:16

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:12 Habakkuk 3:3 Habakkuk 3:18

guilt, guilty

Definition:

The term “guilt” refers to the fact of having sinned or committed a crime.

- To “be guilty” means to have done something morally wrong, that is, to have disobeyed God.
- The opposite of “guilty” is “innocent.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Some languages might translate “guilt” as “the weight of sin” or “the counting of sins.”
- Ways to translate to “be guilty” could include a word or phrase that means, to “be at fault” or “having done something morally wrong” or “having committed a sin.”

(See also: innocent, iniquity, punish, sin)

Bible References:

- Exodus 28:36-38
- Isaiah 6:7
- James 2:10-11
- John 19:4
- Jonah 1:14

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **39:2** They brought many witnesses who lied about him (Jesus). However, their statements did not agree with each other, so the Jewish leaders could not prove he was **guilty** of anything.
- **39:11** After speaking with Jesus, Pilate went out to the crowd and said, “I find no **guilt** in this man.” But the Jewish leaders and the crowd shouted, “Crucify him!” Pilate replied, “He is not **guilty**.” But they shouted even louder. Then Pilate said a third time, “He is not **guilty**!”
- **40:4** Jesus was crucified between two robbers. One of them mocked Jesus, but the other said, “Do you not fear God? We are **guilty**, but this man is innocent.”
- **49:10** Because of your sin, you are **guilty** and deserve to die.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0816, H0817, H0818, H5352, H5355, H7563, G03380, G17770, G37840, G52670

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:11

Hades, Sheol

Definition:

The terms “Hades” (in Greek) and “Sheol” (in Hebrew) are proper names for the place where the spirits of dead people would go after they had died.

- In these ancient cultures, people thought of this as an underground dwelling place where the spirits of dead people existed in a shadowy, semi-conscious form.
- Although these terms are place names, in the Bible they often mean the same thing as “death” or “the grave.”
- Throughout most of biblical history, “Sheol” and “Hades” refer to a neutral place where all of the dead go to await judgment, both the righteous and the unrighteous. In the New Testament, however, “Hades” begins to be seen as a place for only the unrighteous, in contrast with “Abraham’s side” (Luke 16:22) or “paradise” (Luke 23:43), which describe the place for the righteous.

Translation Suggestions

- Both “Sheol” and “Hades” can be translated in various ways, depending on the context. Some possibilities include: “place of the dead,” “place for dead spirits,” “the underworld,” “the pit,” “the grave,” or “death.”
- Some translations keep the proper names “Sheol” and “Hades,” spelling them to fit the sound patterns of the language of translation. (See: How to Translate Unknowns).
- A phrase could also be added to each term to explain it. Examples of doing this are, “Sheol, place where dead people are” and “Hades, place of death.”

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: death, heaven, hell, tomb)

Bible References:

- Acts 2:31
- Genesis 44:29
- Jonah 2:2
- Luke 10:15
- Luke 16:23
- Matthew 11:23
- Matthew 16:18
- Revelation 1:18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7585, G00860

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:5

heaven, sky, heavens, heavenly

Definition:

The term that is translated as “heaven” usually refers to where God lives. The same word can also mean “sky,” depending on the context.

- The term “heavens” refers to everything we see above the earth, including the sun, moon, and stars. It also includes the heavenly bodies, such as far-off planets, that we cannot directly see from the earth.
- The term “sky” refers to the blue expanse above the earth that has clouds and the air we breathe. Often the sun and moon are also said to be “up in the sky.”
- In some contexts in the Bible, the word “heaven” could refer to either the sky or the place where God lives.

Translation Suggestions:

- For “kingdom of heaven” in the book of Matthew, it is best to keep the word “heaven” since this is distinctive to Matthew’s gospel.
- The terms “heavens” or “heavenly bodies” could also be translated as “sun, moon, and stars” or “all the stars in the universe.”
- The phrase, “stars of heaven” could be translated as “stars in the sky” or “stars in the galaxy” or “stars in the universe.”

(See also: kingdom of God)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 8:22-24
- 1 Thessalonians 1:8-10
- 1 Thessalonians 4:17
- Deuteronomy 9:1
- Ephesians 6:9
- Genesis 1:1
- Genesis 7:11
- John 3:12
- John 3:27
- Matthew 5:18
- Matthew 5:46-48

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **4:2** They even began building a tall tower to reach **heaven**.
- **14:11** He (God) gave them bread from **heaven**, called “manna.”
- **23:7** Suddenly, the skies were filled with angels praising God, saying, “Glory to God in **heaven** and peace on earth to the people he favors!”
- **29:9** Then Jesus said, “This is what my **heavenly** Father will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”
- **37:9** Then Jesus looked up to **heaven** and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me.”
- **42:11** Then Jesus went up to **heaven**, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1534, H6160, H6183, H7834, H8064, H8065, G09320, G20320, G33210, G37700, G37710, G37720

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:3

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:20

Holy One

Definition:

The term "Holy One" is a title in the Bible that almost always refers to God.

- In the Old Testament, this title often occurs in the phrase "Holy One of Israel."
- In the New Testament, Jesus is also referred to as the "Holy One."
- The term "holy one" is sometimes used in the Bible to refer to an angel.

Translation Suggestions:

- The literal term is "the Holy" (with "One" being implied.) Many languages (like English) will translate this with the implied noun included (such as "One" or "God").
- This term could also be translated as "God, who is holy" or "the Set Apart One."
- The phrase "the Holy One of Israel" could be translated as "the Holy God whom Israel worships" or "the Holy One who rules Israel."
- It is best to translate this term using the same word or phrase that is used to translate "holy."

(See also: holy, God)

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:20
- 2 Kings 19:22
- Acts 2:27
- Acts 3:13-14
- Isaiah 5:15-17
- Isaiah 41:14
- Luke 4:33-34

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2623, H0376, H6918, G00400, G37410

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:12 Habakkuk 3:3

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:3

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:12

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:4 Habakkuk 1:4 Habakkuk 1:7 Habakkuk 2:12

lament, lamentation

Definition:

The terms “lament” and “lamentation” refer to a strong expression of mourning, sorrow, or grief.

- Sometimes this includes deep regret for sin, or compassion for people who have experienced disaster.
- A lamentation could include moaning, weeping, or wailing.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term to “lament” could be translated as to “deeply mourn” or to “wail in grief” or to “be sorrowful.”
- A “lamentation” (or a “lament”) could be translated as “loud wailing and weeping” or “deep sorrow” or “sorrowful sobbing” or “mournful moaning.”

Bible References:

- Amos 8:9-10
- Ezekiel 32:1-2
- Jeremiah 22:18
- Job 27:15-17
- Lamentations 2:5
- Lamentations 2:8
- Micah 2:4
- Psalm 102:1-2
- Zechariah 11:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0056, H0421, H0578, H0592, H1058, H4553, H5091, H5092, H5594, H6088, H6969, H7015, H8567, G23540, G23550, G28700, G28750

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1 Introduction

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:4

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:19

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:1

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:1 Habakkuk 3:1

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:13

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:4 Habakkuk 1:13 Habakkuk 2:4 Habakkuk 2:4

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:2 Habakkuk 3:8 Habakkuk 3:13 Habakkuk 3:18

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:10

soul, self

Definition:

The term “soul” can either refer generally to the non-physical part of a person or refer specifically to a person’s awareness of themselves as a person distinct from others.

- In the Bible, the terms “soul” and “spirit” may be two different concepts, or they may be two terms that refer to the same concept.
- When a person dies, his soul leaves his body.
- In contrast to the body, the “soul” can be spoken of as the part of a person that “relates to God.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “soul” could also be translated as “inner self” or “inner person.”
- In some contexts, “my soul” could be translated as “I” or “me.”
- Usually the phrase “the soul” can be translated as “the person” or “he” or “him,” depending on the context.
- Some languages might only have one word for the concepts “soul” and “spirit.”
- In Hebrews 4:12, the figurative phrase “dividing soul and spirit” could mean “deeply discerning or exposing the inner person.”

(See also: spirit)

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 2:8
- Acts 2:27-28
- Acts 2:41
- Genesis 49:6
- Isaiah 53:10-11
- James 1:21
- Jeremiah 6:16-19
- Jonah 2:7-8
- Luke 1:47
- Matthew 22:37
- Psalms 19:7
- Revelation 20:4

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5082, H5315, H5397, G55900

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:4 Habakkuk 2:10

spirit, wind, breath

Definition:

The term “spirit” refers to the non-physical part of a person which cannot be seen. In biblical times, the concept of a person’s spirit was closely related to the concept of a person’s breath. The term can also refer to wind, that is, the movement of air in the natural world.

- The term “spirit” can refer to a being that does not have a physical body, such as an evil spirit.
- In general, the term “spiritual” describes things in the non-physical world.
- The term “spirit of” can also mean “having the characteristics of,” such as in “spirit of wisdom” or “in the spirit of Elijah.” Sometimes the Bible applies this term in the context of a person’s attitude or emotional state, such as “spirit of fear” and “spirit of jealousy.”
- Jesus said that God is a spirit.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, some ways to translate “spirit” might include “non-physical being” or “inside part” or “inner being.”
- In some contexts, the term “spirit” could be translated as “evil spirit” or “evil spirit being.”
- Sometimes the term “spirit” is used to express the feelings of a person, as in “my spirit was grieved in my inmost being.” This could also be translated as “I felt grieved in my spirit” or “I felt deeply grieved.”
- The phrase “spirit of” could be translated as “character of” or “influence of” or “attitude of” or “thinking (that is) characterized by.”
- Depending on the context, “spiritual” could be translated as “non-physical” or “from the Holy Spirit” or “God’s” or “part of the non-physical world.”
- The phrase “spiritual maturity” could be translated as “godly behavior that shows obedience to the Holy Spirit.”
- The term “spiritual gift” could be translated as “special ability that the Holy Spirit gives.”
- Sometimes this term can be translated as “wind” when referring to the simple movement of air or “breath” when referring to air movement caused by living beings.

(See also: soul, Holy Spirit, demon, breath)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 5:5
- 1 John 4:3
- 1 Thessalonians 5:23
- Acts 5:9
- Colossians 1:9
- Ephesians 4:23
- Genesis 7:21-22
- Genesis 8:1
- Isaiah 4:4
- Mark 1:23-26
- Matthew 26:41
- Philippians 1:27

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:3** Three days later, after the people had prepared themselves **spiritually**, God came down on top of Mount Sinai with thunder, lightning, smoke, and a loud trumpet blast.
- **40:7** Then Jesus cried out, “It is finished! Father, I give my **spirit** into your hands.” Then he bowed his head and gave up his **spirit**.
- **45:5** As Stephen was dying, he cried out, “Jesus, receive my **spirit**.”
- **48:7** All the people groups are blessed through him, because everyone who believes in Jesus is saved from sin, and becomes a **spiritual** descendant of Abraham.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0178, H1172, H5397, H7307, H7308, G41510, G41520, G41530, G53260, G54270

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:19

stone, stoning

Definition:

A stone is a small rock. To “stone” someone is to throw stones and larger rocks at that person with the intention of killing him. A “stoning” is an event in which someone was stoned.

- In ancient times, stoning was a common method of executing people as punishment for crimes they had committed.
- God commanded the Israelite leaders to stone people for certain sins, such as adultery.
- In the New Testament, Jesus forgave a woman caught in adultery and stopped people from stoning her.
- Stephen, who was the first person in the Bible to be killed for testifying about Jesus, was stoned to death.
- In the city of Lystra, the apostle Paul was stoned, but he did not die from his wounds.

(See also: adultery, commit, crime, death, Lystra, testimony)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:57-58
- Acts 7:59-60
- Acts 14:5
- Acts 14:19-20
- John 8:4-6
- Luke 13:34
- Luke 20:6
- Matthew 23:37-39

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0068, H0069, H0810, H1382, H1496, H1530, H2106, H2672, H2687, H2789, H4676, H4678, H5553, H5601, H5619, H6344, H6443, H6697, H6864, H6872, H7275, H7671, H8068, G26420, G29910, G30340, G30350, G30360, G30370, G40740, G43480, G55860

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:11

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:20

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:18

woe

Definition:

The term "woe" refers to a feeling of great distress. It also gives a warning that someone will experience severe trouble.

- The expression "woe to" is followed by a warning to people that they will experience suffering as punishment for their sins.
- In several places in the Bible, the word "woe" is repeated, to emphasize an especially terrible judgment.
- A person who says "woe is me" or "woe to me" is expressing sorrow about severe suffering.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term "woe" could also be translated as "great sorrow" or "sadness" or "calamity" or "disaster."
- Other ways to translate the expression "Woe to (name of city)" could include, "How terrible it will be for (name of city)" or "The people in (that city) will be severely punished" or "Those people will suffer greatly."
- The expression, "Woe is me!" or "Woe to me!" could be translated as "How sad I am!" or "I am so sad!" or "How terrible this is for me!"
- The expression "Woe to you" could also be translated as "You will suffer terribly" or "You will experience terrible troubles."

Bible References:

- Ezekiel 13:17-18
- Habakkuk 2:12
- Isaiah 31:1-2
- Jeremiah 45:1-3
- Jude 1:9-11
- Luke 6:24
- Luke 17:1-2
- Matthew 23:23

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0188, H0190, H0337, H0480, H1929, H1945, H1958, G37590

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:6 Habakkuk 2:9 Habakkuk 2:12
Habakkuk 2:15 Habakkuk 2:19

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:2 Habakkuk 3:8

Yahweh, Yah

Definition:

The term "Yahweh" is God's personal name in the Old Testament. The specific origin of this name is unknown, but it is probably derived from the Hebrew verb meaning, "to be."

- Following tradition, many Bible versions use the term "LORD" or "the LORD" to represent "Yahweh." This tradition resulted from the fact that historically, the Jewish people became afraid of mispronouncing Yahweh's name and started saying "Lord" every time the term "Yahweh" appeared in the text. Modern Bibles write "LORD" with all capital letters to show that this represents God's personal name and to distinguish it from "Lord" which is a different Hebrew word.
- The ULT and UST texts always translate this term as "Yahweh," in agreement with the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.
- The term "Yahweh" never occurs in the original text of the New Testament; only the Greek term for "Lord" is used, even when quoting the Old Testament.
- In the Old Testament, when God spoke about himself, he would often use his name instead of a pronoun.
- "Yah" is a shortened form of the name Yahweh that occurs in poetry and praise (e.g. Hallelujah = "Praise Yah"), and in some Hebrew names (e.g. Zechariah = "Yah remembers").

Translation Suggestions:

- "Yahweh" could be translated by a word or phrase that means "I am" or "existing one" or "the one who is" or "he who is present."
- This name could also be written in a way that is similar to how "Yahweh" is spelled, or how it sounds in your language.
- Some church denominations prefer not to use the term "Yahweh" and instead use the traditional rendering, "LORD." An important consideration is that this may be confusing when read aloud because it will sound the same as the title "Lord." Some languages may have an affix or other grammatical marker that could be added to distinguish "LORD" as a name (Yahweh) from "Lord" as a title.
- In most cases it is good to keep the name Yahweh where it occurs in the text, but some translations may decide to use only a pronoun in some places to make the text more natural and clear.
- An introduction of a quote from Yahweh could be something like, "This is what Yahweh says."

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: God, Lord)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 21:20
- 1 Samuel 16:7
- Daniel 9:3
- Ezekiel 17:24
- Genesis 2:4
- Genesis 4:3-5
- Genesis 28:13
- Hosea 11:12
- Isaiah 10:4
- Isaiah 38:8
- Job 12:10
- Joshua 1:9
- Lamentations 1:5
- Leviticus 25:35
- Malachi 3:4
- Micah 2:5
- Micah 6:5
- Numbers 8:11
- Psalm 124:3
- Ruth 1:21
- Zechariah 14:5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **9:14** God said, "I AM WHO I AM. Tell them, 'I AM has sent me to you.' Also tell them, 'I am **Yahweh**, the God of your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is my name forever.'"

- **13:4** Then God gave them the covenant and said, “I am **Yahweh**, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship other gods.”
- **13:5** “Do not make idols or worship them, for I, **Yahweh**, am a jealous God.”
- **16:1** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of **Yahweh**, the true God.
- **19:10** Then Elijah prayed, “O **Yahweh**, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, show us today that you are the God of Israel and that I am your servant.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3050, H3068, H3069

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:2 Habakkuk 1:12 Habakkuk 2:2 Habakkuk 2:14 Habakkuk 2:16 Habakkuk 2:20 Habakkuk 3:2 Habakkuk 3:2 Habakkuk 3:8 Habakkuk 3:18 Habakkuk 3:19

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:13

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:6

Habakkuk

Definition:

Habakkuk was an Old Testament prophet who lived around the time that King Jehoiakim was reigning over Judah. The prophet Jeremiah was also alive during some of this time.

- This prophet wrote the book of Habakkuk around 600 BC when the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem and took many of the people of Judah into exile.
- Yahweh gave Habakkuk the prophecy about how the "Chaldeans" (Babylonians) would come and conquer the people of Judah.
- One of Habakkuk's most well-known statements is: "the righteous person shall live by his faith."

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Babylon, Jehoiakim, Jeremiah)

Bible References:

- Habakkuk 1:2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2265

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:1 Habakkuk 3:1

Lebanon

Definition:

Lebanon is a beautiful mountainous region located along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, north of Israel. In Bible times this region was thickly wooded with fir trees, such as cedar and cypress.

- King Solomon sent workers to Lebanon to harvest cedar trees for use in building God's temple.
- Ancient Lebanon was inhabited by Phoenician people, who were skilled builders of ships that were used for a successful trading industry.
- The cities of Tyre and Sidon were located in Lebanon. It was in these cities that a valuable purple dye was first used.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: cedar, cypress, fir, Phoenicia)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 4:32-34
- 2 Chronicles 2:8-10
- Deuteronomy 1:7-8
- Psalms 29:3-5
- Zechariah 10:8-10

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3844

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:17

Midian, Midianite

Definition:

Midian was a son of Abraham and his wife Keturah. It is also the name of a people group and region located in the northern Arabian Desert to the south of the land of Canaan. The people of that group were called “Midianites.”

- When Moses first left Egypt, he went to the region of Midian where he met the daughters of Jethro and helped them water their flocks. Later Moses married one of Jethro’s daughters.
- Joseph was taken to Egypt by a group of Midianite slave traders.
- Many years later the Midianites attacked and raided the Israelites in the land of Canaan. Gideon led the Israelites in defeating them.
- Many of the modern-day Arabian tribes are descendants of this group.

(See also Arabia, Egypt, flock, Gideon, Jethro, Moses)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:30
- Exodus 2:16
- Genesis 25:1-4
- Genesis 36:34-36
- Genesis 37:28
- Judges 7:1

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **16:3** But then the people forgot about God and started worshiping idols again. So God allowed the **Midianites**, a nearby enemy people group, to defeat them.
- **16:4** The Israelites were so scared, they hid in caves so the **Midianites** would not find them.
- **16:11** The man’s friend said, “This dream means that Gideon’s army will defeat the **Midianite** army!”
- **16:14** God confused the **Midianites**, so that they started attacking and killing each other.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4080, H4084, H4092

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:7

Paran

Definition:

Paran was a desert or wilderness area east of Egypt and south of the land of Canaan. There was also a Mount Paran, which may have been another name for Mount Sinai.

- The slave Hagar and her son Ishmael went to live in the wilderness of Paran after Sarah ordered Abraham to send them away.
- When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, they passed through the wilderness of Paran.
- It was from Kadesh-Barnea in the wilderness of Paran that Moses sent twelve men to spy out the land of Canaan and bring back a report.
- The wilderness of Zin was north of Paran and the wilderness of Sin was south of Paran.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Canaan, desert, Egypt, Kadesh, Sinai)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 11:18
- 1 Samuel 25:1
- Genesis 21:19-21
- Numbers 10:11-13
- Numbers 13:3-4

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0364, H6290

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:3

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:14

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:12 Habakkuk 2:3

arrogant, presumptuous

Definition:

The term “arrogant” means proud, usually in an obvious, outward way.

- An arrogant person will often boast about himself.
- Being arrogant usually includes thinking that other people are not as important or talented as oneself.
- People who do not honor God and who are in rebellion against him are arrogant because they do not acknowledge how great God is.

(See also: acknowledge, boast, proud)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 4:18
- 2 Peter 2:18
- Ezekiel 16:49
- Proverbs 16:5
- Psalm 56:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1346, H1347, H2102, H2103, H6277, G02120, G54500

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:5

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:9 Habakkuk 1:15 Habakkuk 2:5

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:17 Habakkuk 3:17

beast

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “beast” is often just another way of saying “animal.”

- A wild beast is a type of animal that lives freely in the forest or fields and has not been trained by people.
- A domestic beast is an animal that lives with people and is kept for food or for performing work, such as plowing fields. Often the term “livestock” is used to refer to this kind of animal.
- The Old Testament book of Daniel and the New Testament book of Revelation describe visions which have beasts that represent evil powers and authorities that oppose God. (See: Metaphor)
- Some of these beasts are described as having strange features, such as several heads and many horns. They often have power and authority, indicating that they may represent countries, nations, or other political powers.
- Ways to translate this could include “creature” or “created thing” or “animal” or “wild animal,” depending on the context.

(See also: authority, Daniel, livestock, nation, power, reveal, Beelzebul)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 15:32
- 1 Samuel 17:44
- 2 Chronicles 25:18
- Jeremiah 16:1-4
- Leviticus 7:21
- Psalms 49:12-13

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0338, H0929, H1165, H2123, H2416, H2423, H2874, H3753, H4806, H7409, G22260, G23410, G23420, G29340, G49680, G50740

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:17

day

Definition:

The term “day” generally refers to the time it takes for the alternating periods of light and darkness in the sky to complete one cycle (that is, 24 hours). However, in the Bible the same term is often used to refer to a shorter period of time (such as the time between sunrise and sunset) or a longer period of time that is often not specified.

- “Day” is sometimes used in contrast to “night.” In these cases, the term refers to the period of time when the sky is light.
- The term may also refer to a specific point in time, such as “today.”
- Sometimes the term “day” is used figuratively to refer to a longer period of time, such as the “day of Yahweh” or “last days.” Some languages will use a different expression to translate these figurative uses or will translate “day” non-figuratively.

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term literally as “day” or “daytime” using the word in your language that refers to the part of the day when there is light.
- Other translations of “day” could include “daytime,” “time,” “season,” “occasion” or “event,” depending on the context.

(See also: time, judgment day, last day)

Bible References:

- Acts 20:6
- Daniel 10:4
- Ezra 6:15
- Ezra 6:19
- Matthew 9:15

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3117, H3118, H6242, G22500

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:5 Habakkuk 3:16

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:2

bloodshed

Definition:

The term “bloodshed” refers to the death of human beings due to murder, war, or some other violent act.

- This term literally means “shedding of blood,” which refers to when blood comes out of a person’s body from an open wound.
- The term “bloodshed” is often used to refer to widespread killing of people.
- It is also used as a general reference to the sin of murder.

Translation Suggestions:

- “The bloodshed” could be translated as “the killing of people” or “the many people who were killed.”
- “Through bloodshed” could also be translated as “by killing people.”
- “Innocent bloodshed” could be translated as “killing innocent people.”
- “Bloodshed follows bloodshed” could be translated as “they keep killing people” or “the killing of people goes on and on” or “they have killed many people and continue to do that” or “people keep killing other people.”
- Another figurative use, “bloodshed will pursue you,” could be translated as “your people will continue to experience bloodshed” or “your people will keep being killed” or “your people will continue to be at war with other nations and people will keep dying.”

(See also: blood; slaughter)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 22:6-8
- Genesis 9:5-7
- Hebrews 9:21-22
- Isaiah 26:21
- Matthew 23:29-31

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1818

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:8 Habakkuk 2:12 Habakkuk 2:17

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:9

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:9

chariot, charioteer

Definition:

In ancient times, chariots were lightweight, two-wheeled carts that were pulled by horses.

- People would sit or stand in chariots, using them for war or travel.
- In war, an army that had chariots had a great advantage of speed and mobility over an army that did not have chariots.
- The ancient Egyptians and Romans were well-known for their use of horses and chariots.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: Egypt, Rome)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 9:22
- 2 Chronicles 18:28-30
- Acts 8:29
- Acts 8:38
- Daniel 11:40-41
- Exodus 14:25
- Genesis 41:43

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **12:10** So they followed the Israelites onto the path through the sea, but God caused the Egyptians to panic and caused their **chariots** to get stuck.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2021, H4817, H4818, H7393, H7395, H7398, G07160, G44800

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:8

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:10

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:17

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:2 Habakkuk 1:2 Habakkuk 2:11

curtain

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “curtain” refers to a very thick, heavy piece of material used in the making of the tabernacle and the temple.

- The tabernacle was built using four layers of curtains for the top and sides. These curtain coverings were made of cloth or animal skins.
- Cloth curtains were also used to form a wall surrounding the tabernacle courtyard. These curtains were made out of “linen” which was a kind of cloth made out of the flax plant.
- In both the tabernacle and temple building, a thick cloth curtain hung between the holy place and the most holy place. It was this curtain that was miraculously torn into two parts when Jesus died.

Translation Suggestions:

- Since modern-day curtains are very different from the curtains used in the Bible, it may be more clear to use a different word or to add words that describe the curtains.
- Depending on the context, ways to translate this term could include, “curtain covering” or “covering” or “piece of thick cloth” or “animal skin covering” or “hanging piece of cloth.”

(See also: holy place, tabernacle, temple)

Bible References:

- Hebrews 10:20
- Leviticus 4:17
- Luke 23:45
- Matthew 27:51
- Numbers 4:5

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1852, H3407, H4539, H6532, H7050, G26650

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:7

deceive, lie, deception, illusion

Definition:

The term “deceive” means to cause someone to believe something that is not true, often by telling a “lie.” The act of deceiving someone is called “lying,” “deceit,” or “deception.”

- Someone who causes others to believe something false is a “deceiver.” For example, Satan is called a “deceiver.” The evil spirits that he controls are also deceivers.
- To “lie” is to say something that is not true.
- A person, action, or message that is not truthful can be described as “deceptive.”
- The terms “deceit” and “deception” have the same meaning, but there are some small differences in how they are used.
- The descriptive terms “deceitful” and “deceptive” have the same meaning and are used in the same contexts.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “deceive” could include “lie to” or “cause to have a false belief” or “cause someone to think something that is not true.”
- The term “deceived” could also be translated as “caused to think something false” or “lied to” or “tricked” or “fooled” or “misled.”
- “Deceiver” could be translated as “liar” or “one who misleads” or “someone who deceives.”
- Depending on the context, the terms “deception” or “deceit” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “falsehood” or “lying” or “trickery” or “dishonesty.”
- The terms “deceptive” or “deceitful” could be translated as “untruthful” or “misleading” or “lying” to describe a person who speaks or acts in a way that causes other people to believe things that are not true.

(See also: true)

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:8

- 1 Timothy 2:14
- 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4
- Genesis 3:12-13
- Genesis 31:26-28
- Leviticus 19:11-12
- Matthew 27:64
- Micah 6:11

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0898, H2048, H3577, H3584, H3868, H4123, H4820, H4860, H5230, H5377, H5558, H6121, H6231, H6601, H7411, H7423, H7683, H7686, H7952, H8267, H8496, H8582, H8591, H8649, G05380, G05390, G13860, G13870, G13880, G18180, G38840, G41050, G41060, G41080, G54220, G54230

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:3 Habakkuk 2:5 Habakkuk 2:18 Habakkuk 3:17

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:12

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:9

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:3 Habakkuk 2:17

devour

Definition:

The term “devour” means to eat or consume in an aggressive manner.

- Using this word in a figurative sense, Paul warned believers to not devour one another, meaning to not attack or destroy each other with words or actions (Galatians 5:15).
- Also in a figurative sense, the term “devour” is often used with a meaning of “completely destroy” as when talking about nations devouring each other or a fire devouring buildings and people.
- This term could also be translated as “completely consume” or “totally destroy.”

(See also: consume)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 5:8
- Amos 1:10
- Exodus 24:17
- Ezekiel 16:20
- Luke 15:30
- Matthew 23:13-15
- Psalms 21:9

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0398, H0399, H0400, H0402, H1104, H1105, H3216, H3615, H3857, H3898, H7462, H7602, G20680, G26660, G27190, G53150

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:8 Habakkuk 1:13 Habakkuk 3:14

disperse, dispersion, scatter, distributed

Definition:

The terms “disperse” and “dispersion” refer to the scattering of people or things into many different directions.

- In the Old Testament, God talks about “dispersing” people, causing them to have to separate and live in different places apart from each other. He did this to punish them for their sin. Perhaps being dispersed would help them repent and start worshiping God again.
- The term “dispersion” is used in the New Testament to refer to Christians who had to leave their homes and move to many different locations to escape persecution.
- The phrase “the dispersion” could be translated as “believers in many different places” or “the people who moved away to live in different nations.”
- The term “disperse” could be translated as “send away into many different places” or “scatter abroad” or “cause to move away to live in different countries.”

(See also: believe, persecute, captive, exile)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 1:1
- Ezekiel 12:15
- Ezekiel 30:23
- Psalms 18:14

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2219, H5310, H6327, H6340, H6504, H8600, G12870, G12900, G46500

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:14

drunk, drunkard

Definition:

The term “drunk” means to be intoxicated from drinking too much of an alcoholic beverage.

- A “drunkard” is a person who is often drunk. This kind of person could also be referred to as an “alcoholic.”
- The Bible tells believers not to be drunk with alcoholic drinks, but to be controlled by God’s Holy Spirit.
- The Bible teaches that drunkenness is unwise and influences a person to sin in other ways.
- Other ways to translate “drunk” could include “inebriated” or “intoxicated” or “having too much alcohol” or “filled with fermented drink.”

(See also: wine)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 5:11-13
- 1 Samuel 25:36
- Jeremiah 13:13
- Luke 7:34
- Luke 21:34
- Proverbs 23:19-21

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5433, H7301, H7910, H7937, H7941, H7943, H8354, H8358, G31780, G31820, G31830, G31840, G36300, G36320

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:15

eagle

Definition:

An eagle is a very large, powerful bird of prey that eats small animals such as fish, mice, snakes, and chickens.

- The Bible compares the speed and strength of an army to how fast and suddenly an eagle swoops down to catch its prey.
- Isaiah states that those who trust in the Lord will soar as an eagle does. This is figurative language used to describe the freedom and strength that comes from trusting and obeying God.
- In the book of Daniel, King Nebuchadnezzar’s hair length was compared to the length of an eagle’s feathers, which can be more than 50 centimeters long.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: Daniel, free, Nebuchadnezzar, power)

Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 1:23
- Daniel 7:4
- Jeremiah 4:13-15
- Leviticus 11:13-16
- Revelation 4:7

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5403, H5404, G01050

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:8

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:6 Habakkuk 2:8 Habakkuk 2:17
Habakkuk 3:3 Habakkuk 3:6 Habakkuk 3:7
Habakkuk 3:9 Habakkuk 3:12

exult, exultant

Definition:

The terms “exult” and “exultant” refer to being very happy because of a success or special blessing.

- To “exult” includes a feeling of celebrating something wonderful.
- A person can exult in God’s goodness.
- The term “exultant” can also include being arrogant in one’s feeling of gladness about success or prosperity.
- The term “exult” could also be translated as “celebrate joyfully” or “praise with great joy.”
- Depending on the context, the term “exultant” could be translated as “praising triumphantly” or “celebrating with self praise” or “arrogant.”

(See also: arrogant, joy, praise, rejoice)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 2:1
- Isaiah 13:3
- Job 6:10
- Psalm 68:1-3
- Zephaniah 2:15

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5539, H5947, H5970

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:15 Habakkuk 3:18

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:17

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:17

foundation, founder, founded

Definition:

Used in this sense, the verb “found” means build, create, or lay a base for. The phrase “founded on” means supported by or based on. A “foundation” is the base of support on which something is built or created.

- The foundation of a house or building must be strong and dependable in order to support the entire structure.
- The term “foundation” can also refer to the beginning of something or to the time when something was first created.
- A “foundation stone” was a stone that was laid as part of the foundation. These stones were tested to make sure they were strong enough to support an entire building.

Translation Suggestions:

- The phrase “before the foundation of the world” could be translated as “before the creation of the world” or “before the time when the world first existed” or “before everything was first created.”
- The term “founded on” could be translated as “securely built on” or “firmly based on.”
- Depending on the context, “foundation” could be translated as “strong base” or “solid support” or “beginning” or “creation.”

(See also: cornerstone, create)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 6:37-38
- 2 Chronicles 3:1-3
- Ezekiel 13:13-14
- Luke 14:29
- Matthew 13:35
- Matthew 25:34

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0134, H0787, H2713, H3245, H3247, H3248, H4143, H4144, H4146, H4328, H4349, H4527, H8356, G23100, G23110, G26020

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:13

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:19

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:8 Habakkuk 3:8 Habakkuk 3:15

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:8

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:9 Habakkuk 2:10 Habakkuk 3:13

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:18

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:16

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:15 Habakkuk 3:18

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:10

know, knew, knowledge, known, unknown, distinguish

Definition:

Used in this sense the term "know" and "knowledge" mean generally to understand something. It can also mean to be aware of a fact. The expression "to make known" means to tell information.

- The term "knowledge" refers to information that people know. It can apply to knowing physical concepts or abstract concepts.
- To "know about" God means to understand facts about him because of what he has revealed to us.
- To "know the Law" means to be aware of what God has commanded or to understand what God has instructed in the laws he gave to Moses.
- Sometimes "knowledge" is used as a synonym for "wisdom," which includes living in a way that is pleasing to God.
- The "knowledge of God" is sometimes used as a synonym for the "fear of Yahweh."

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, ways to translate "know" could include "understand" or "be familiar with" or "be aware of" or "be acquainted with."
- In the context of understanding the difference between two things, the term is usually translated as "distinguish." When used in this way, the term is often followed by the preposition "between."
- The term "make known" could be translated as "cause people to know" or "reveal" or "tell about" or "explain."
- To "know about" something could be translated as "be aware of" or "be familiar with."
- The expression "know how to" means to understand the process or method of getting something done. It could also be translated as "be able to" or "have the skill to."
- The term "knowledge" could also be translated as "what is known" or "wisdom" or "understanding," depending on the context.

- Some languages have two different words for “know,” one for knowing facts and one for knowing a person and having a relationship with that person. The word for knowing facts should be used when translating this sense of the word “know.”

(See also: know-relationship, law, reveal, understand, wise)

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1844, H1847, H3045, H3046, H3318, G00500, G00560, G03190, G10970, G11070, G11080, G11100, G14920, G19210, G19220, G19870, G42670

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:14 Habakkuk 3:2

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:5 Habakkuk 2:13 Habakkuk 3:2 Habakkuk 3:17

leopard

Definition:

A leopard is a large, cat-like, wild animal that is brown with black spots.

- A leopard is a kind of animal which catches other animals and eats them.
- In the Bible, the suddenness of disaster is compared to a leopard, which pounces suddenly on its prey.
- The prophet Daniel and the apostle John tell about visions in which they saw a beast that looked like a leopard.

(See also: How to Translate Unknowns)

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: beast, Daniel, prey, vision)

Bible References:

- Daniel 7:6
- Hosea 13:7
- Revelation 13:1-2
- Song of Songs 4:8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5245, H5246

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:8

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:11

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:10 Habakkuk 2:6

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:5 Habakkuk 1:6 Habakkuk 1:17 Habakkuk 2:5 Habakkuk 2:8 Habakkuk 2:13 Habakkuk 3:6 Habakkuk 3:12

neighbor, neighborhood, neighboring

Definition:

The term "neighbor" usually refers to a person who lives nearby. It can also refer more generally to someone who lives in the same community or people group.

- A "neighbor" is someone who would be protected and treated kindly because he is part of the same community.
- In the New Testament parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus used the term "neighbor" figuratively, expanding its meaning to include all human beings, even someone who is considered an enemy.
- If possible, it is best to translate this term literally with a word or phrase that means "person who lives nearby."

(See also: adversary, parable, people group, Samaria)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:26-28
- Ephesians 4:25-27
- Galatians 5:14
- James 2:8
- John 9:8-9
- Luke 1:58
- Matthew 5:43
- Matthew 19:19
- Matthew 22:39

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5997, H7138, H7453, H7468, H7934, G10690, G20870, G40400, G41390

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:15

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:9

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:17

perverse, perversion, pervert, depraved, malicious, devious, dishonest, distortion

Definition:

The term "perverse" is used to describe a person or action that is morally crooked or twisted. The term "perversely" means "in a perverse manner." To "pervert" something means to twist it or turn it away from what is right or good.

- Someone or something that is perverse has deviated from what is good and right.
- In the Bible, the Israelites acted perversely when they disobeyed God. They often did this by worshiping false gods.
- Any action which is against God's standards or behavior is considered perverse.
- Ways to translate "perverse" could include "morally twisted" or "immoral" or "turning away from God's straight path," depending on the context.
- "Perverse speech" could be translated as "speaking in an evil way" or "deceitful talk" or "immoral way of talking."
- "Perverse people" could be described as "immoral people" or "people who are morally deviant" or "people who continually disobey God."
- The phrase "acting perversely" could be translated as "behaving in an evil way" or "doing things against God's commands" or "living in a way that rejects God's teachings."
- The term "pervert" could also be translated as "cause to be corrupt" or "turn into something evil."

(See also: corrupt, deceive, disobey, evil, turn)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 8:47
- 1 Samuel 20:30
- Job 33:27-28
- Luke 23:2
- Psalms 101:4-6

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1942, H2015, H3868, H4297, H5186, H5557, H5558, H5753, H5766, H5773, H5791, H6140, H6141, H8138, H8397, H8419, G12940

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:4

plague

Definition:

Plagues are events which cause suffering or death to a large number of people. Often a plague is a disease that spreads quickly and causes many people to die before it can be stopped.

- Many plagues have natural causes, but some were sent by God to punish people for sin.
- In the time of Moses, God sent ten plagues against Egypt to force Pharaoh to let Israel leave Egypt. These plagues included water turning into blood, physical diseases, destruction of crops by insects and hail, three days of complete darkness, and death of the firstborn sons.
- This could also be translated as "widespread disasters" or "widespread disease," depending on the context.

(See also: hail, Israel, Moses, Pharaoh)

Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 24:13-14
- Exodus 9:14
- Genesis 12:17-20
- Luke 21:11
- Revelation 9:18

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1698, H4046, H4194, H4347, H5061, H5062, H5063, G30610, G41270

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:5

pledge

Definition:

The term “pledge” refers to formally and solemnly promising to do something or give something.

- In the Old Testament the officials of Israel pledged to be loyal to King David.
- To “pledge” could be translate as to “formally commit to” or to “strongly promise.”
- The term “pledge” can also refer to an object given as a guarantee or promise that a debt will be paid.
- The object given as a pledge would be returned to its owner when the promise was fulfilled.
- Ways to translate “a pledge” could include “a solemn promise” or “a formal commitment” or “a guarantee” or “a formal assurance,” depending on the context.

(See also: promise, oath, vow)

Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 5:4-5
- Exodus 22:26
- Genesis 38:17-18
- Nehemiah 10:28-29

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0781, H2254, H2258, H5667, H5671, H6148, H6161, H6162

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:6

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:7 Habakkuk 2:8 Habakkuk 2:8

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:3

profit, profits, profited, profitable

Definition:

Used in this sense, the terms “profit” and “profitable” refer to gaining some material thing through doing certain actions or behaviors. Something is “profitable” to someone if it enables them to earn or attain good material things.

- More specifically, the term “profit” often refers to money that is gained from doing business. A business is “profitable” if it gains more money than it spends.
- Actions are profitable if they cause material things to be gained for people.

(See also: worthy,profit-spiritual)

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “profit” could also be translated as “benefit” or “help” or “gain.”
- Depending on context, the term “profits” could be translated as “earnings” when referring to wages earned by working.
- The term “profitable” could be translated as “useful” or “beneficial” or “helpful.”
- The term “profited” could be translated as “gained.”
- To “profit from” something could be translated as “benefit from” or “gain money from.”
- In the context of a business, “profit” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “money gained” or “surplus of money” or “extra money.”

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1215, H3276, H4195, G12810, G20390, G27700, G27710, G36850, G37860, G48510, G48525, G55390, G56220, G56230, G56240

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:18

proverb

Definition:

A proverb is a short statement that expresses some wisdom or truth.

- Proverbs are powerful because they are easy to remember and repeat.
- Often a proverb will include practical examples from everyday life.
- Some proverbs are very clear and direct, while others are more difficult to understand.
- King Solomon was known for his wisdom and wrote over 1,000 proverbs.
- Jesus often used proverbs or parables when he taught people.
- Ways to translate “proverb” could include “wise saying” or “true word.”

(See also: Solomon, true, wise)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 4:32-34
- 1 Samuel 24:12-13
- 2 Peter 2:22
- Luke 4:24
- Proverbs 1:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2420, H4911, H4912, G38500, G39420

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:6

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:2

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:10 Habakkuk 1:14

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:16

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:6 Habakkuk 1:10

selah

Definition:

The term “selah” is a Hebrew word that occurs mostly in the book of Psalms. It has several possible meanings.

- It could mean “pause and praise,” which would invite the audience to think carefully about what was just said.
- Since many of the Psalms were written as songs, it is thought that “selah” may have been a musical term to instruct the singer to pause in his singing to allow for the musical instruments to play alone or to encourage listeners to think about the words of the song.

(See also: psalm)

Bible References:

- Psalm 3:3-4
- Psalm 24:5-6
- Psalms 46:6-7

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5542

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:3 Habakkuk 3:9 Habakkuk 3:13

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:10 Habakkuk 2:16 Habakkuk 2:16

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:19

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:17

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:11

splendor

Definition:

The term “splendor” refers to the extreme beauty and elegance that is often associated with wealth and a magnificent appearance.

- Often splendor is used to describe the wealth that a king has, or how he looks in his expensive, beautiful finery.
- The word “splendor” can also be used to describe the beauty of trees, mountains, and other things that God has created.
- Certain cities are said to have splendor because of o their natural resources, elaborate buildings and roads, and the wealth of their people, which includes rich clothing, gold, and silver.
- Depending on the context, this word could be translated as “magnificent beauty” or “amazing majesty” or “kingly greatness.”

(See also: glory, king, majesty)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 16:27
- Exodus 28:1-3
- Ezekiel 28:7
- Luke 4:7
- Psalms 89:44-45
- Revelation 21:26-27

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1925, H1926, H1927, H1935, H2091, H2122, H2892, H3314, H3519, H6643, H7613, H8597

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:3

staff, clubs

Definition:

A staff is a long wooden stick or rod, often used as a walking stick.

- When Jacob was old, he used a staff to help him walk.
- God turned Moses’ staff into a snake to show his power to Pharaoh.
- Shepherds also used a staff to help guide their sheep, or to rescue the sheep when they fell or wandered.
- The shepherd’s staff had a hook on the end, so it differed from the shepherd’s rod, which was straight and was used to kill wild animals that were trying to attack the sheep.

(See also: Pharaoh, power, sheep, shepherd)

Bible References:

- Exodus 4:1-3
- Exodus 7:9
- Luke 9:3
- Mark 6:7-9
- Matthew 10:8-10
- Matthew 27:29

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4132, H4294, H4731, H4938, H6086, H6418, H7626, G25630, G35860, G44640

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:9 Habakkuk 3:14

strife, disputes, quarrel, arguing, conflict

Definition:

The term “strife” refers to physical or emotional conflict between people.

- A person who causes strife does things that result in strong disagreements between people and in hurt feelings.
- Sometimes the use of the word “strife” implies that strong emotions are involved, such as anger or bitterness.
- Other ways to translate this term could include “disagreement” or “dispute” or “conflict.”

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 3:3-5
- Habakkuk 1:3
- Philippians 1:17
- Proverbs 17:1
- Psalms 55:8-9
- Romans 13:13

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1777, H1779, H4066, H4090, H4683, H4808, H7379, H7701, G04850, G20520, G20540, G30550, G31630, G53790

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:3

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:10

sweep

Definition:

To "sweep" usually means to remove dirt by making broad, quick movements with a broom or brush. "Swept" is the past tense of "sweep." These words are also used figuratively.

- The term "sweep" is used figuratively to describe how an army attacks with swift, decisive, wide-reaching movements.
- For example, Isaiah prophesied that the Assyrians would "sweep through" the Kingdom of Judah. This means they would destroy Judah and capture its people.
- The term "sweep" can also be used to describe the manner in which rapidly flowing water pushes things and forces them away.
- When overwhelming, difficult things are happening to a person, it can be said that they are "sweeping over" him.

(See also: Assyria, Isaiah, Judah, prophet)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 16:3
- Daniel 11:40-41
- Genesis 18:24
- Proverbs 21:7-8
- Psalms 90:5

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0622, H0857, H1640, H2498, H2894, H3261, H5500, H5595, H7857, G42160, G45630, G49510

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:11

teacher, Teacher

Definition:

A teacher is a person who gives other people new information. Teachers help others to obtain and use both knowledge and skills.

- In the Bible, the word "teacher" is used in a special sense to refer to someone who teaches about God.
- People who learn from a teacher are called "students" or "disciples."
- In some Bible translations, this term is capitalized ("Teacher") when it is used as a title for Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- The usual word for a teacher can be used to translate this term, unless that word is only used for a school teacher.
- Some cultures may have a special title that is used for religious teachers, such as "Sir" or "Rabbi" or "Preacher."

(See also: disciple, preach)

Bible References:

- Ecclesiastes 1:12-15
- Ephesians 4:11-13
- Galatians 6:6-8
- Habakkuk 2:18
- James 3:2
- John 1:37-39
- Luke 6:40
- Matthew 12:38-40

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **27:1** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, "**Teacher**, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"
- **28:1** One day a rich young ruler came up to Jesus and asked him, "Good **Teacher**, what must I do to have eternal life?"
- **37:2** After the two days had passed, Jesus said to his disciples, "Let's go back to Judea." "But **Teacher**," the disciples answered, "Just a short time ago the people there wanted to kill you!"
- **38:14** Judas came to Jesus and said, "Greetings, **Teacher**," and kissed him.
- **49:3** Jesus was also a great **teacher**, and he spoke with authority because he is the Son of God.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3384, H3925, G13200, G25670, G35470, G55720

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:18

tent, tentmaker

Definition:

A tent is a portable shelter made of sturdy fabric that is draped over a structure of poles and attached to them.

- Tents can be small, with just enough space for a few people to sleep in, or they can be very large, with space for an entire family to sleep, cook, and live in.
- For many people, tents are used as permanent dwelling places. For example, during most of the time that Abraham's family lived in the land of Canaan, they dwelled in large tents constructed from sturdy cloth made of goat hair.
- The Israelites also lived in tents during their forty-year wanderings through the desert of Sinai.
- The tabernacle building was a kind of very large tent, with thick walls made of cloth curtains.
- When the apostle Paul traveled to different cities to share the gospel, he supported himself by making tents.
- The term "tents" is sometimes used figuratively to refer generally to where people live. This could also be translated as "homes" or "dwellings" or "houses" or even "bodies." (See: synecdoche)

(See also: Abraham, Canaan, curtain, Paul, Sinai, tabernacle, tent of meeting)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 5:10
- Daniel 11:45
- Exodus 16:18
- Genesis 12:9

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0167, H0168, H2583, H3407, H6898

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:7

terror, terrorize, terrify, dread, panic

Definition:

The term "terror" refers to a feeling of extreme or intense fear. To "terrify" someone means to cause that person to feel very afraid.

- A "terror" is something or someone that causes great fear or dread. An example of a terror could be an attacking enemy army or a plague or disease that is widespread, killing many people.
- These terrors can be described as "terrifying." This term could be translated as "fear-causing" or "terror-producing."
- The judgment of God will someday cause terror in unrepentant people who reject his grace.
- The "terror of Yahweh" could be translated as "the terrifying presence of Yahweh" or "the dreaded judgment of Yahweh" or "when Yahweh causes great fear."
- Ways to translate "terror" could also include "extreme fear" or "deep dread."

(See also: adversary, fear, judge, plague, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 2:25
- Exodus 14:10
- Luke 21:9
- Mark 6:48-50

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0367, H0926, H0928, H1091, H1161, H1204, H1205, H1763, H2111, H2113, H2189, H2731, H2847, H2851, H2865, H3372, H3707, H4032, H4172, H4288, H4637, H6184, H6206, H6343, H6973, G16290, G16300, G22580, G44220, G44260, G54010

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:7 Habakkuk 2:17

thresh

Definition:

The terms “thresh” and “threshing” refer to the first part of the process of separating grain from the rest of the plant.

- Threshing a crop loosens the grain from the stalk. Afterwards the grain is “winnowed” to completely separate the seed from all unwanted materials, leaving only the part the grain that can be eaten.
- In Bible times, a “threshing floor” was a large flat rock or an area of packed-down dirt, giving a hard, level surface to crush the grain stalks and remove the grain.
- A “threshing cart” or “threshing wheel” was sometimes used to crush the grain and help separate it from the straw and chaff.
- A “threshing sledge” or “threshing board” was also used for separating grain. It was made of wooden boards that had sharp metal spikes on the end.

(See also: chaff, grain, winnow)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 3:1-3
- 2 Kings 13:7
- 2 Samuel 24:16
- Daniel 2:35
- Luke 3:17
- Matthew 3:12
- Ruth 3:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0212, H4173, H1637, H1758, H1786, H1869, H2251, G02480

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:12

tremble, shake, shaken, quake

Definition:

The term “tremble” means to quiver or to shake slightly and repeatedly, usually from fear or distress. The term can also be used figuratively, meaning “to be very afraid.”

- Sometimes when the ground shakes it is said to “tremble.” It can do this during an earthquake or in response to a very loud noise.
- The Bible says that in the presence of the Lord the earth will tremble. This could mean that the people of the earth will shake out of fear of God or that the earth itself will shake.
- This term could be translated as “be afraid” or “fear God” or “shake,” depending on the context.

(See also: earth, fear, Lord)

Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 7:15
- 2 Samuel 22:44-46
- Acts 16:29-31
- Jeremiah 5:22
- Luke 8:47

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1674, H2111, H2112, H2151, H2342, H2648, H2729, H2730, H2731, H5128, H5568, H6342, H6426, H6427, H7264, H7268, H7269, H7322, H7460, H7461, H7481, H7493, H7578, H8078, H8653, G17900, G51410, G51560, G54250

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:7 Habakkuk 3:7 Habakkuk 3:16 Habakkuk 3:16

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 1:3 Habakkuk 1:13 Habakkuk 3:7 Habakkuk 3:16

vine

Definition:

The term “vine” refers to a plant that grows by trailing along the ground or by climbing trees and other structures. The word “vine” in the Bible is used only of fruit-bearing vines and usually refers to grape vines.

- In the Bible, the word “vine” almost always means “grapevine.”
- The branches of the grapevine are attached to the main stem which gives them water and other nutrients so that they can grow.
- Jesus called himself the “vine” and called his people the “branches.” In this context, the word “vine” could also be translated as “grapevine stem” or “grape plant stem.” (See: Metaphor)

(See also: grape, vineyard)

Bible References:

- Genesis 40:9
- Genesis 49:11
- John 15:1
- Luke 22:18
- Mark 12:3
- Matthew 21:35-37

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5139, H1612, H8321, G02880, G02900, G10090, G10920

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 3:17

vision, envision

Definition:

The term “vision” refers to something that a person sees. It especially refers to something unusual or supernatural that God shows people in order to give them a message.

- Usually, visions are seen while the person is awake. However, sometimes a vision is something a person sees in a dream while asleep.
- God sends visions to tell people something that is very important. For example, Peter was shown a vision to tell him that God wanted him to welcome Gentiles.

Translation Suggestion

- The phrase “saw a vision” could be translated as “saw something unusual from God” or “God showed him something special.”
- Some languages may not have separate words for “vision” and “dream.” So a sentence such as “Daniel had dreams and visions in his mind” could be translated as something like “Daniel was dreaming while asleep and God caused him to see unusual things.”

(See also: dream)

Bible References:

- Acts 9:10-12
- Acts 10:3-6
- Acts 10:11
- Acts 12:9-10
- Luke 1:22
- Luke 24:23
- Matthew 17:9-10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2376, H2377, H2378, H2380, H2384, H4236, H4758, H4759, H7203, H7723, H8602, G37010, G37050, G37060

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:2 Habakkuk 2:3

soldier, warrior

Definition:

The terms “warrior” and “soldier” both can refer to someone who fights in an army. But there are also some differences.

- Usually the term “warrior” is a general, broad term to refer to a man who is gifted and courageous in battle.
- Yahweh is figuratively described as a “warrior.”
- The term “soldier” more specifically refers to someone who belongs to a certain army or who is fighting in a certain battle.
- Roman soldiers in Jerusalem were there to keep order and to carry out duties such as executing prisoners. They guarded Jesus before crucifying him and some were ordered to stand guard at his tomb.
- The translator should consider whether there are two words in the project language for “warrior” and “soldier” that also differ in meaning and use.

(See also: courage, crucify, Rome, tomb)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 21:5
- Acts 21:33
- Luke 3:14
- Luke 23:11
- Matthew 8:8-10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0352, H0510, H1368, H1416, H1995, H2389, H2428, H2502, H3715, H4421, H5971, H6518, H6635, H7273, H7916, G46860, G47530, G47540, G47570, G47580, G49610

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:5 Habakkuk 3:14

watch, guard, take heed, beware

Definition:

The term “watch” means to look at something very closely and carefully. It also has several figurative meanings. A “watchman” was someone whose job was to guard a city by looking carefully all around him for any danger or threat to the people in the city.

- The command to “watch your life and doctrine closely” means to be careful to live wisely and to not believe false teachings.
- To “watch out” is a warning to be careful to avoid a danger or harmful influence.
- To “watch” or “keep watch” means to always be alert and on guard against sin and evil. It can also mean to “be ready.”
- To “keep watch over” or “keep close watch” can mean to guard, protect or take care of someone or something.
- Other ways of translating “watch” could include “pay close attention to” or “be diligent” or “be very careful” or “be on guard.”
- Other words for “watchman” are “sentry” or “guard.”

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:6
- Hebrews 13:17
- Jeremiah 31:4-6
- Mark 8:15
- Mark 13:33-34
- Matthew 25:10-13

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0821, H2370, H4929, H4931, H5027, H5341, H6486, H6822, H6836, H6974, H7462, H7789, H7919, H8104, H8108, H8245, G00690, G09910, G11270, G14920, G23340, G28920, G35250, G37080, G39060, G43370, G46480, G50830, G54380

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:1

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:1

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

Habakkuk References:

Habakkuk 2:5 Habakkuk 2:15