

unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

v92

James

unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

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member, body part 400
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neighbor, neighborhood, neighboring 402
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unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

James

James Introduction

Introduction to James

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of James

1. Greetings (1:1)
2. Gaining endurance through trials (1:2–4)
3. Trusting God for wisdom (1:5–8)
4. What poor and rich people should boast about (1:9–11)
5. Enduring temptation (1:12–15)
6. Hearing and doing what God's Word says (1:16–27)
7. A warning against favoring rich people (2:1–13)
8. Faith and works (2:14–26)
9. The need for self-control in speech (3:1–12)
10. Worldly wisdom and heavenly wisdom contrasted (3:13–18)
11. Worldly desires and the sin and conflict they cause (4:1–12)
12. A warning against boasting about tomorrow (4:13–17)
13. Rebuke of rich people (5:1–6)
14. Waiting patiently for the Lord's return (5:7–11)
15. Oaths forbidden (5:12)
16. Prayer, forgiveness, and healing (5:13–18)
17. Restoration of a sinner (5:19–20)

Who wrote the book of James?

There is wide agreement among biblical scholars that the author of this book was James the half-brother of Jesus, who was a leader in the early church in the city of Jerusalem. He was respected for his wisdom and authority. For example, he had the last word at the Jerusalem Council, an important meeting of the early church, that is described in Acts 15:13–21. In Galatians 2:9, the apostle Paul calls him a "pillar" of the church, meaning one of its most important leaders. However, even though James was an influential church leader and the half-brother of Jesus, in this letter he introduces himself humbly as "a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ."

This is not the same man as the apostle James, who was the brother of the apostle John. That James was killed for his faith a few years after Jesus himself was killed and rose from the dead. This letter was written many years after that.

What kind of writing is the book of James?

The book of James has an opening that is typical of the letters of its time, but it does not have a main body that develops sequentially and logically the way a letter would have. Instead, the book presents a collection of short sayings and reflections on various subjects. (In that way it is similar to the book of Proverbs.) As the outline at the beginning of this introduction shows, the book is made up of many short sections that move around from topic to topic.

James uses many of the devices that speakers used in his time, such as anticipating and answering a question that someone might ask. He also uses many vivid examples drawn from both nature and everyday life. For this reason, many interpreters believe that for the content of this book, James drew on sermons he had preached and on wise advice he had given. He wanted to share all of that wisdom with Christians living in different parts of the Roman Empire to help them face difficult times. It is also possible that James wrote this letter because he was nearing the end of his life and he wanted his wisdom to be preserved and shared after his death.

To whom was the book of James written?

James wrote this letter to believers in Jesus who had a Jewish background. This is clear from many of the things that he says in the letter. For example, he addresses his readers as "the twelve tribes" in 1:1. He speaks of their meeting place as a "synagogue" in 2:2. He assumes in 2:19 that they are familiar with the essential Jewish affirmation that "God is one," and in 2:21 he calls Abraham "our father." He calls God by the Hebrew title the Lord of Sabaoth in 5:4. He assumes that his readers will be familiar from the Hebrew Scriptures with the stories of people such as Job (5:11) and Elijah (5:17). These notes will call attention to the places where James engages his readers in light of their Jewish background.

What is the book of James about?

In this letter, James writes to believers living all over the Roman Empire who are suffering. He tells them that God is working through their sufferings to help them become more mature Christians. James also writes much in this letter about how believers should live in this world and treat one another. He urges them to treat other people fairly, not to quarrel and fight, and to be compassionate and generous.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title, "James." Alternatively, they may choose a different title such as "A Letter from James" or "The Letter James Wrote." But note that "James" is actually the English form of the author's name. In the letter itself, he calls himself "Jacob," which is the original Hebrew form of his name. So you may want to refer to him in the title of the book by the same name that you will use in your translation for the character of Jacob in the book of Genesis. (See: How to Translate Names)

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Did James disagree with Paul about how a person is justified before God?

Paul taught in Romans that Christians are justified by faith and not by works. James seems to teach that Christians are justified by works. This could be confusing. However, a better understanding of what Paul and James each taught shows that they actually agree with one another. Both of them taught that a person needs faith in order to be justified. They both also taught that true faith would lead a person to do good works. Paul and James taught about these things in different ways because they had different audiences who needed to know different things about being justified. James wrote primarily to Jewish Christians, while Paul wrote to communities in which there were many Gentile Christians. (See: just, justice, unjust, injustice, justify, justification; and faith)

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

How should the translator signal transitions between topics in the book of James?

James moves briskly from one topic to another. Often he does not end his discussion of one topic with a summary and then begin the discussion of the next topic with an introduction. It might be helpful to your readers if you set topics apart by putting blank lines between them. However, your readers would have the same experience of the letter that its original audience did if you allowed the transitions between topics to remain abrupt. Just as happens in the book of Proverbs, James seems to have wanted each new thought to strike his audience with fresh force. So you may also choose not to put any blank lines between topics in your translation.

James often makes the link between topics through key words, for example, "rejoice" in 1:1 and "joy" in 1:2; "lacking" in 1:4 and "lacks" in 1:5; and so forth. If you could find ways to translate these key words similarly in both of their occurrences, this should help your readers appreciate the link and the transition.

Changes from the present tense to the past tense

In several places where James offers an illustration of a point he has just made, he narrates that illustration in the past tense as if he were telling the story of something that had happened. If this would be confusing for your readers, you could translate these illustrations in the present tense. Notes will identify each of these places and make that suggestion.

Textual issues in the book of James

See the introduction to chapter 2 for a discussion of one important textual issue in this book.

James 1

James 1 Introduction

James 1 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

1. Greetings (1:1)
2. Gaining endurance through trials (1:2–4)
3. Trusting God for wisdom (1:5–8)
4. What poor and rich people should boast about (1:9–11)
5. Enduring temptation (1:12–15)
6. Hearing and doing what God's Word says (1:16–27)

James begins this letter in 1:1 by giving his name, identifying the people to whom he is writing, and offering a greeting. That was the way people typically began letters at this time. However, as Part 1 of the Introduction to James explains, the letter does not then develop the way other letters did. Instead, it is a collection of short sayings and reflections.

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Testing and temptation

James uses a word in this chapter that can mean both "trial," as in 1:2 and 1:12, and "temptation," as in 1:13–14. In both cases the word speaks of the situation of a person who needs to choose between doing something good and doing something evil. The difference between the two senses is important. When ULT translates the word as "trial," God is testing the person and wants him to do what is good. When ULT translates the word as "temptation," Satan is tempting the person and wants him to do what is evil.

James 1:1

ULT	UST
James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes that are in the dispersion: Rejoice!	*I, James, serve God and the Lord Jesus the Messiah. I am writing this letter to you who believe in Jesus and are living in various parts of the Roman Empire. I greet you all.*

ULT **James**
UST I, James … I am writing this letter

In this culture, letter writers would give their own names first, and they would refer to themselves in the third person. If that would be confusing in your language, you could use the first person. If your language has a particular way of introducing the author of a letter, you could also use that if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [I, James, am writing this letter] or [From James]
Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT **to the twelve tribes**
UST to you who believe in Jesus

James is speaking of the nation of Israel by association with the fact that it was made up of **12 tribes**. Alternate translation: [to the nation of Israel]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **to the twelve tribes**
UST to you who believe in Jesus

James is speaking of Jesus' followers as if they were the nation of Israel, since the community of the people of God had expanded from that nation to include people of every nation who followed Jesus. Alternate translation: [to followers of Jesus]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **to the twelve tribes**
UST to you who believe in Jesus

In this culture, after giving their own names, letter writers would then say to whom they were writing, naming those people in the third person. If that would be confusing in your language, you could use the second person. Alternate translation: [to you followers of Jesus]
Support Reference: First, Second or Third Person

ULT **in the dispersion**
UST and are living in various parts of the Roman Empire

At this time, the term **dispersion** referred to those Jews who were living away from their homeland of Israel and who were scattered into various parts of the Roman Empire. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **dispersion** with a verb such as "scattered." Alternate translation: [scattered throughout the world] or, if you are using the second person, [who are scattered throughout the world]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **in the dispersion**
UST and are living in various parts of the Roman Empire

While the term **dispersion** referred literally to Jews, James is using it to describe followers of Jesus. Alternate translation: [scattered throughout the world] or, if you are using the second person, [who are scattered throughout the world]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Rejoice**
UST I greet you all

The word **Rejoice** was used at this time as a greeting. In your translation, you could use the greeting that is typical of your language and culture. Alternate translation: [Greetings!]
Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
James	James
God	God
Lord	Lord
Jesus	Jesus
Christ	Messiah
servant	serve
tribes	to you who believe in Jesus
twelve tribes	to you who believe in Jesus
dispersion	and are living in various parts of the Roman Empire

James 1:2

ULT	UST
Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you fall into various trials,	*My fellow believers, consider it something to rejoice over greatly when you experience various kinds of hardships.*

ULT **Consider {it} all joy**
UST consider it something to rejoice over greatly

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **joy** with an adjective such as "happy." Alternate translation: [You should be happy]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **Consider {it} all joy**
UST consider it something to rejoice over greatly

James says **all** as an overstatement for emphasis. He does not mean that believers should be happy about all the bad things that happen to them when they encounter **trials**. Rather, he means that the **trials** provide a general occasion for them to rejoice because of the valuable things God that is developing in their lives. He describes these things in the next verse. Alternate translation: [You should be very happy]
Support Reference: Hyperbole

ULT **my brothers**
UST My fellow believers

James is using the term **brothers** to refer to fellow believers in Jesus. Alternate translation, as in UST: [my fellow believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **my brothers**
UST My fellow believers

James is using the term **brothers** in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Be sure that this is clear in your translation so that your readers do not get the impression that James is addressing only men. If you use a word such as "believers" to translate the metaphor **brothers**, you may need to use both the masculine and the feminine forms of that word in your language. If you retain the metaphor, you could state [my brothers and sisters]
Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **you fall into various**
UST you experience various kinds

James is speaking of **trials** as if they were a hole or pit that believers could **fall into**. Alternate translation: [you encounter different trials]
Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **you fall into**
> UST you experience

The pronoun **you** is plural here, since James is writing to believers in Jesus as a group. Generally throughout the letter, the pronouns “you” and “your” are plural for this same reason. These notes will identify the few places where they are singular instead.

Support Reference: Forms of You

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
joy	rejoice
trials	of hardships

James 1:3

ULT	UST
knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.	*Understand that as you trust God in hardships, this helps you to become a stronger person.*

ULT **knowing that**
UST Understand that

It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here, as UST does. Alternate translation: [I want you to know that] or [You should realize that]
Support Reference: Information Structure

ULT **the testing of your faith produces endurance**
UST as you trust God in hardships, this helps you to become a stronger person

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **testing**, **faith**, and **endurance** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [when you rely on God to help you through a difficult situation, this teaches you not to give up]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
knowing	Understand
testing	in hardships
faith	as … trust God
endurance	a stronger person

James 1:4

ULT	UST
But let the endurance have a perfect work, so that you may be perfect and whole, lacking in nothing.	*Endure hardships to their very end, so that you may follow the Messiah in every way. Then you will not fail to do well.*

ULT **But let the endurance have a perfect work**
UST Endure hardships to their very end

The expression **let endurance have a perfect work** means "let endurance complete its work." James is speaking as if the quality of **endurance** were actively developing the character of believers. Alternate translation: [But make sure that you completely develop the ability not to give up]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **perfect and whole**
UST you may follow the Messiah in every way

The words **perfect** and **whole** mean similar things. James is using them together for emphasis. In this context, the word **perfect** does not mean without any flaws. Rather, it refers to something that has reached its goal. The word **whole** describes something that is not missing any of its parts or pieces. Together, the words describe mature Christian character. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this idea by translating this pair of words with a single expression. Alternate translation: [completely mature]
Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **lacking in nothing**
UST Then you will not fail to do well

This is a double negative, consisting of the negative verb **lacking** and the negative object **nothing**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this. Alternate translation: [having all that you need] or [being all that you need to be]
Support Reference: Double Negatives

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
endurance	Endure
perfect	Endure hardships to their very end
perfect	you may follow the Messiah in every way

James 1:5

ULT	UST
Now if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask from God, the one giving to all generously and not reproaching, and it will be given to him.	*If anyone of you needs to know what to do, let him ask God, and God will tell him. God gives generously to everyone. God does not scold people who ask for things.*

ULT **lacks wisdom**
UST needs to know what to do

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **wisdom** with an adjective such as "wise." Alternate translation: [is not sure what would be the wise thing to do]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **let him ask from God**
UST let him ask God … God

Alternate translation: [let him ask God]

ULT **it will be given to him**
UST will tell him. God

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form, and you can state who will do the action. Alternate translation: [God will give it to him]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
wisdom	needs to know what to do
God	God

James 1:6

ULT	UST
But let him ask in faith, doubting nothing, for the one doubting has become like a wave of the sea, wind-blown and tossed.	*But when you pray to God, you must trust him to answer you. Do not doubt that he will answer and help you. People who doubt God first decide to do one thing, but then they want to do something else. They never settle on a single course of action.*

ULT **in faith**
UST you must trust him to answer you

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **faith** with a verb such as "trust." Alternate translation: [confidently trusting God]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **doubting nothing**
UST Do not doubt that he will answer and help you

If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this double negative that consists of the negative verb **doubting** and the negative object **nothing** with a positive expression. Alternate translation: [with complete certainty that God will answer]
Support Reference: Double Negatives

ULT **has become like a wave of the sea, wind-blown and tossed**
UST first decide to do one thing, but then they want to do something else. They never settle on a single course of action

The point of this comparison is that anyone who doubts will be like **a wave** in the ocean, which keeps moving in different directions. In your translation, you could express this meaning plainly. (However, you could also reproduce the simile, as suggested in the next note.) Alternate translation: [will keep changing his mind about what to do]
Support Reference: Simile

ULT **a wave of the sea, wind-blown and tossed**
UST first decide to do one thing, but then they want to do something else. They never settle on a single course of action

If you would like to use a simile in your translation but your readers would not be familiar with a **wave of the sea**, you could use another illustration that would be familiar to them. Alternate translation: [the desert sand swirling in the wind] or [stalks of tall grass swaying back and forth in the wind]
Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **a wave of the sea, wind-blown and tossed**
UST first decide to do one thing, but then they want to do something else. They never settle on a single course of action

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [an ocean wave that the wind is blowing and tossing around]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
faith	you must trust him to answer you

James 1:7

ULT	UST
For let that man not think that he will receive anything from the Lord,	*Indeed, people who doubt should not think that God the Lord will give them what they ask for so uncertainly.*

ULT **For let that man not think**
UST Indeed, people who doubt should not think

James is using the term **man** in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: [Such a person should not think]

Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
receive	will give them
Lord	Lord

James 1:8

ULT	UST
a double-minded man, unsettled in all his ways.	*People like this can never decide what to do. They make a plan, but then they do not follow it.*

ULT **a double-minded man**
UST People like this can never decide what to do

James speaks of this person as if he had two minds, with one mind deciding to do one thing and the other mind deciding to do something else. Alternate translation: [a man who cannot make up his mind]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **a double-minded man**
UST People like this can never decide what to do

James is using the term **man** in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: [a person who cannot make up his mind]
Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **unsettled in all his ways**
UST They make a plan, but then they do not follow it

James is speaking as if life presented paths for people to follow, and he is speaking of this person as if he could not settle on which path to take. Alternate translation: [who cannot decide whether to do one thing or another]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
double-minded	can never decide what to do

James 1:9

ULT	UST
Now let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation,	*Believers who do not have much money should be glad, because God has honored them.*

ULT **Now let the lowly brother boast**
UST Believers who do not have much money should be glad

James assumes that his readers will understand that he is using the word **boast** in a positive sense. He does not mean it in the sinful sense of bragging or vaunting oneself over others. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Now let the lowly brother take satisfaction]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the lowly brother**
UST Believers who do not have much money

Since James contrasts this person with "the rich" in the next verse, he is using the word **lowly** as a spatial metaphor to mean "poor." Alternate translation: [a believer who is poor]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **brother**
UST Believers

James is using the term **brother** to refer to a fellow believer in Jesus. See how you translated **brothers** in 1:2. Alternate translation: [believer]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **his exaltation**
UST because God has honored them

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **exaltation** with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the high place he occupies]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **his exaltation**
UST because God has honored them

James is using a spatial metaphor to describe poor believers as if they were in a high place. He wants to convey that God has shown special concern for them. Alternate translation: [the special concern that God has shown for him]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
lowly	who do not have much money

James 1:10

ULT	UST
but the rich in his lowliness, because he will pass away like a flower of the grass.	*But believers who have a lot of money should be glad that God has humbled them by showing them that their wealth does not make them better than other people. After all, like wildflowers that bloom for only a short time and then wither, rich believers will die like anyone else.*

ULT **but the rich in his lowliness**
UST But believers who have a lot of money should be glad that God has humbled them by showing them that their wealth does not make them better than other people

James is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from the previous verse. Alternate translation: [but let the rich boast in his lowliness] or [but let the rich take satisfaction in his lowliness]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **the rich**
UST believers who have a lot of money

James is using the adjective **rich** as a noun in order to indicate a type of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. It is clear in context that James is speaking of a rich "brother" or "believer," in parallel with the "lowly brother" he describes in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [a believer who is rich]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **his lowliness**
UST should be glad that God has humbled them by showing them that their wealth does not make them better than other people

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **lowliness** with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the low place he occupies]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **his lowliness**
UST should be glad that God has humbled them by showing them that their wealth does not make them better than other people

James is using a spatial metaphor to describe rich believers as if they were in a low place in order to indicate that God has taught them humility. Alternate translation: [the humility that God has taught them]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **his lowliness**
UST should be glad that God has humbled them by showing them that their wealth does not make them better than other people

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate explicitly, as UST does, that God has taught rich believers humility by showing them that their wealth does not make them better than other people.
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **he will pass away**
UST rich believers will die like anyone else

James is using a mild expression to refer to death. Alternate translation: [he will die]
Support Reference: Euphemism

ULT **like a flower of the grass**
UST like wildflowers that bloom for only a short time and then wither

The point of this comparison is that just a wild **flower** blooms only for a short time, rich people will live on earth for the same relatively short time as anyone else, so their riches do not give them any advantage. You could explain the meaning of this figurative expression in your translation. (However, you could also reproduce the simile, as suggested in the next note.) Alternate translation: [after living for only a relatively short time]
Support Reference: Simile

ULT **he will pass away like a flower of the grass**
UST like wildflowers {that bloom for only a short time and then wither}, rich believers will die like anyone else

If you would like to use a simile in your translation but your readers would not be familiar with a **flower of the grass** (that is, a wildflower), you could use a different illustration. You could use something familiar to them that lasts only for a short time.
Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
lowliness	should be glad that God has humbled … by showing them that their wealth does not make them better than other people

James 1:11

ULT	UST
For the sun rose with the heat and dried up the grass, and its flower fell off and the beauty of its face perished. Thus also the rich will wither in his journeys.	*A wildflower only lasts a short time because when the sun rises, its scorching heat dries out the plants so that their flowers fall off. They are no longer beautiful. Like the flower that dies, rich people will die while they are trying to make money.*

ULT **For the sun rose with the heat and dried up the grass, and its flower fell off and the beauty of its face perished**

UST A wildflower only lasts a short time because when the sun rises, its scorching heat dries out the plants so that their flowers fall off. They are no longer beautiful

Here James is giving an illustration in the past tense as if he were telling the story of something that had happened. (See the discussion of this in Part 3 of the Introduction to James.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this sentence with the present tense. Alternate translation: [For the sun rises with heat and dries up the grass, and its flower falls off and the beauty of its face perishes]

Support Reference: Irregular Use of Tenses

ULT **For**

UST A wildflower only lasts a short time because

James uses **For** to introduce the reason for the result he implicitly described in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [This is because]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **with the heat**

UST its scorching heat

Here, **heat** could mean one of two things: (1) It could refer to intense, withering heat. Alternate translation: [and radiated withering heat] or, if you are using the present tense, [and radiates withering heat]; or (2) It could refer to a hot wind that occurs in full sunlight. Alternate translation: [and caused a hot wind] or, if you are using the present tense, [and causes a hot wind]

ULT **the beauty of its face perished**

UST They are no longer beautiful

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **beauty** with an adjective such as “beautiful.” Alternate translation: [it no longer had a beautiful appearance]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the beauty of its face perished**

UST They are no longer beautiful

James speaks of the wild **flower** as if it had a **face**. Alternate translation: [it no longer had a beautiful appearance]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the beauty of its face perished**
UST They are no longer beautiful

James speaks of the flower's **beauty** as if it **perished** or died. Alternate translation: [it no longer had a beautiful appearance]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Thus also**
UST Like the flower that dies

James uses the words **Thus also** to introduce a simile or comparison between a rich person and a fading flower. Alternate translation: [In the same way] or [Likewise]
Support Reference: Simile

ULT **the rich**
UST rich people

James is using the adjective **rich** as a noun in order to indicate a type of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [a person who is rich]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **will wither**
UST will die

James speaks of the **rich** person as if he were a flower that would **wither**. James means that this person will "die," as UST indicates.
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **in his journeys**
UST while they are trying to make money

James speaks of a **rich** person's activities as if they were a journey that he was taking. This metaphor implies that he is giving no thought to his coming death and that it will take him by surprise. Alternate translation: [in the midst of his activities]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
perished	are no longer beautiful

James 1:12

ULT	UST
Blessed is a man who endures trial. For, becoming approved, he will receive the crown of life, which he promised to the ones loving him.	*God honors those who remain faithful to him in difficult circumstances. Indeed, God will reward them by having them live forever. That is what God has promised to do for all who love him.*

ULT **Blessed {is} a man who endures trial**
UST God honors those who remain faithful to him in difficult circumstances

Blessed {is} indicates that God is giving favor to someone or that his situation is positive or good. Alternate translation: [The person who endures trial receives God's favor] or [The person who endures trial is in a positive situation]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **a man**
UST those

James is using the term **man** in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: [the person]
Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **endures trial**
UST remain faithful to him in difficult circumstances

Here, **trial** could mean one of two things. See the discussion of the word in the introduction to this chapter. James may actually want his readers to hear both senses in this case, as this verse is making a transition from a discussion of testing into a discussion of temptation. (1) The word **trial** could mean the same thing as in 1:2–3, where it describes the "testing" of "faith." The reading of UST expresses this interpretation. (2) The word could refer to being tempted, that is, being led by one's desires to do something wrong, which James discusses in the following verses. Alternate translation: [resists temptation]

ULT **becoming approved**
UST God will reward them

How you translate this will depend on how you translate **trial** earlier in the sentence. (In your translation, you could also focus on the way that God approves of this person, as UST does.) Alternate translation: [once he has demonstrated his faithfulness] or [once he has demonstrated his obedience]

ULT **he will receive the crown of life**
UST God will reward them by having them live forever

James is using the possessive form not to refer to a **crown** that belongs to **life** but to describe **life** as if it were a **crown**. Alternate translation: [he will receive the crown that is life]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **he will receive the crown of life**
UST God will reward them by having them live forever

James is using the image of a **crown** to indicate that God will honor this person. Alternate translation: [God will honor him by giving him life]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **he will receive the crown of life**
UST God will reward them by having them live forever

James is likely not speaking of physical **life** but of spiritual **life**, that is, of living forever in the presence of God after physical death. Alternate translation: [God will honor that person by giving him everlasting life in his presence]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **which he promised to the ones loving him**
UST That is what God has promised to do for all who love him

In this last clause in the verse, the words **he** and **him** refer to God, not to the person who **endures trial**. Alternate translation: [which God promised to those who love him]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Blessed	God honors
endures	remain faithful to him
trial	in difficult circumstances
receive	God will reward them
crown	by having them live forever
promised	promised
loving	love

James 1:13

ULT	UST
Let no one being tempted say, "I am tempted by God," because God is untempted by evil, and he himself tempts no one.	*When we are tempted to sin, we must not think it is God who is tempting us. No, no one can persuade God to do evil, and God never tries to persuade anyone to do evil.*

ULT **I am tempted by God**
UST it is God who is tempting us

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [God is tempting me] or [God is leading me to do something wrong]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **God is untempted by evil**
UST no one can persuade God to do evil

Even though the word that ULT translates as **untempted** is an adjective, not a passive verbal form, it may be helpful to your readers if you translate it with an active verbal form. Alternate translation: [evil does not tempt God] or [God's desires never lead him to do something wrong]

ULT **and he himself tempts no one**
UST and God never tries to persuade anyone to do evil

Alternate translation: [and God himself never leads anyone to do anything wrong]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
tempted	tempted
God	God
tempted	tempting
God	God
evil	evil
tempts	tries to persuade … to do evil

James 1:14

ULT	UST
But each one is tempted by his own desire, dragged away and enticed.	*But people want to do evil because of their own desires. When they do, it is just as if they had fallen into a trap.*

ULT **But**
UST But

James is using the word **But** to indicate a contrast between the wrong idea that God might tempt someone and the truth that each person **is tempted by his own desire**. This is actually a strong contrast, and you may wish to use a strong expression for it. Alternate translation: [No, on the contrary,]
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **each one is tempted by his own desire, dragged away and enticed**
UST people want to do evil because of their own desires. When they do, it is just as if they had fallen into a trap

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express these passive phrases by stating each of these things with active verbal forms. Alternate translation: [each person's own desire tempts him by enticing him and then dragging him away]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **each one is tempted by his own desire, dragged away and enticed**
UST people want to do evil because of their own desires. When they do, it is just as if they had fallen into a trap

James is speaking of **desire** as if it were a living thing that could actively tempt people, entice them, and drag them away captive. Alternate translation: [each person wants to do wrong when he desires something that he should not desire and, because he is attracted to that thing, he commits sin and then cannot stop sinning]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **dragged away and enticed**
UST When they do, it is just as if they had fallen into a trap

Since the word translated as **enticed** often means to use bait to trap prey, James may be stressing the result (the captured prey being **dragged away**) by speaking of it before the method that was used to achieve it (baiting a trap). It may be helpful to your readers to indicate that the method came before the result. Alternate translation: [enticed and dragged away] or [dragged away after being enticed]
Support Reference: Order of Events

ULT **dragged away and enticed**
UST When they do, it is just as if they had fallen into a trap

James is speaking of temptation as if the person who gave in to it were captured in a baited trap. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could translate this metaphor as a simile. It may also be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [It is as if the wrong thing he desired were bait in a trap that caught him so that a hunter could then drag him away]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
tempted	want to do evil
desire	desires

James 1:15

ULT	UST
Then the desire, having conceived, bears sin, and the sin, having grown up, gives birth to death.	*Then, because they have desired to do evil things, they begin to do them, and eventually they do them habitually. If they do not turn away from their sinful behavior, they will be separated from God forever.*

ULT **Then the desire, having conceived, bears sin**
UST Then, because they have desired to do evil things, they begin to do them

James uses the word **Then** to indicate that what he describes in this verse happens after something that he described in the previous verse. However, he does not mean that this happens after a person is "dragged away and enticed," as he said at the end of that verse. Rather, he means that it happens after a person begins to entertain the temptation of a wrong "desire," as he said at the beginning of that verse. It may be helpful to your readers to use the word "when" to indicate this. Alternate translation: [When desire has conceived, it bears sin]
Support Reference: Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

ULT **Then the desire, having conceived, bears sin**
UST Then, because they have desired to do evil things, they begin to do them

James continues to speak of **desire** as if it were a living thing, in this case as if it were a woman who became pregnant and gave birth. Alternate translation: [If a person entertains wrong desires, he will become more and more inclined to sin until he finally does commit sin]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **and the sin, having grown up, gives birth to death**
UST and eventually they do them habitually. {If they do not turn away from their sinful behavior,} they will be separated from God forever

James also speaks of **sin** as if it were a living thing, a baby girl who grew up to be a woman who also became pregnant and gave birth. Alternate translation: [and if he continues to sin, it will affect more and more of his life until it causes his death]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **gives birth to death**
UST If they do not turn away from their sinful behavior, they will be separated from God forever

Here, **death** could mean: (1) spiritual death, that is, separation from God. This is the interpretation in UST. (2) physical death. Alternate translation: [causes the person to die]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
desire	desired
sin	evil things … them
sin	they do them

James 1:16

ULT	UST
Do not be led astray, my beloved brothers.	*My fellow believers whom I love, stop deceiving yourselves.*

ULT **Do not be led astray**
UST stop deceiving yourselves

James is speaking as if some deceptive guides were trying to lead his readers in the wrong direction. Alternate translation: [Do not be deceived]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Do not be led astray**
UST stop deceiving yourselves

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. The meaning here is probably not truly passive. That is, even though James speaks as if someone else might lead his readers astray, that is probably not what he means. This could be: (1) a warning James' readers not to lead themselves astray, that is, not to deceive themselves. That is the interpretation in UST. (2) a simple active meaning. Alternate translation: [Make no mistake about this]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **Do not be led astray**
UST stop deceiving yourselves

James is referring back to his statement in 1:13 that God never desires to do evil and that God never leads anyone to do evil. Instead, as James will say in the next two verses, God gives only good things to people. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Do not deceive yourselves, God is not evil, God is good] or [Make no mistake about this, God is not evil, God is good]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **my beloved brothers**
UST My fellow believers whom I love

See how you translated the term **brothers** in 1:2. Alternate translation: [my dear fellow believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
beloved	whom I love

James 1:17

ULT	UST
Every good present and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no change or shadow of turning.	*Every truly good and perfect gift comes from God the Father, who is in heaven. He created the sun, moon, and stars. But God does not change the way shadows change, appearing and disappearing. God never changes. He is always good!*

ULT **Every good present and every perfect gift is from above**
UST Every truly good and perfect gift … who is in heaven

Here, **from above** is a spatial metaphor that describes God. Alternate translation: [God gives us every good present and every perfect gift]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Every good present and every perfect gift is from above**
UST Every truly good and perfect gift … who is in heaven

The phrases **good present** and **perfect gift** mean similar things. James is using them together for emphasis. (As in 1:4, the word **perfect** refers to something that has developed to the point where it is fully suited to its purpose.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection by translating both phrases with a single expression. Alternate translation: [God gives us the things that are just right for us]
Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **coming down from**
UST comes from

Continuing the spatial metaphor, James speaks of these gifts **coming down from** God. If you translate this plainly, it may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [They come to us from]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the Father of lights**
UST God the Father … He created the sun, moon, and stars

Here, **lights** likely means the lights in the sky, that is, the sun, moon, and stars. James says that God is their **Father** because he created them. Alternate translation: [God, who created all the lights in the sky]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **with whom there is no change or shadow of turning**
UST But God does not change the way shadows change, appearing and disappearing. God never changes. He is always good

Here, **change** and **shadow of turning** mean similar things. James is using repetition for emphasis. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them into a single phrase and express the metaphor of a **shadow** (See: later note) as a simile. It may also be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [God does not change as shifting shadows do]
Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **shadow of turning**
UST shadows change, appearing and disappearing

James is using the possessive form to describe a **shadow** that is characterized by **turning**. Alternate translation: [shadow that turns] or [shadow that changes position]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **shadow of turning**
UST shadows change, appearing and disappearing

James is contrasting God, the Creator of the lights in the sky, with those lights themselves, which are not as great as their Creator. They create shadows that change position, but God never deviates from wanting only good things for people. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [turning shadow such as the sun or moon casts. No, God always wants good things for people]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **shadow of turning**
UST shadows change, appearing and disappearing

There could not literally be a **shadow** in God, so this is a metaphor. Alternate translation: [variability]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
good	good
perfect	perfect
Father	God the Father

James 1:18

ULT	UST
Having willed, he gave birth to us by the word of truth, for us to be something like a firstfruits of his creatures.	*God became our spiritual father when we trusted in his true message. That was what he wanted to do. So now believers in Jesus have become the first people to experience the kind of relationship with God that many more people will have in the future.*

ULT **Having willed, he gave birth to us**
UST God became our spiritual father … That was what he wanted to do

Alternate translation: [God chose to give birth to us]

ULT **Having willed, he gave birth to us**
UST God became our spiritual father … That was what he wanted to do

James says that God **gave birth to us** because God gives spiritual life to everyone who believes in Jesus. Alternate translation: [God chose to give us spiritual life]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **us … us**
UST our … believers in Jesus

Here and throughout this letter, James uses the pronoun **us** to refer to himself and his readers. Sometimes by extension he also means all believers or all people. In every case, therefore, the pronoun **us** is inclusive, so use the inclusive form if your language makes that distinction. The same applies to the pronoun "our." However, in some cases the pronoun "we" is exclusive. Notes will identify those places. Everywhere else, the pronoun "we" is inclusive.
Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **by the word of truth**
UST when we trusted in his true message

James is using the possessive form to describe a **word** that is characterized by **truth**. Alternate translation: [by the true word]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **by the word of truth**
UST when we trusted in his true message

James is using term **word** to describe the message about Jesus that was conveyed by using words. Alternate translation: [by the true message]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **by the word of truth**
UST when we trusted in his true message

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract noun **truth** by translating the idea behind it with an equivalent expression that uses an adjective such as "true." Alternate translation: [when we believed the true message]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **by the word of truth**
UST when we trusted in his true message

James is referring implicitly to the message about Jesus. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [when we believed the true message about Jesus]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **for us to be something like a firstfruits of his creatures**
UST So now believers in Jesus have become the first people to experience the kind of relationship with God that many more people will have in the future

This is a purpose clause. James is stating the purpose for which God **desired to give us birth**. In your translation, follow the conventions of your language for purpose clauses. Alternate translation (without a comma preceding): [so that we would be like a firstfruits of his creatures]
Support Reference: Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

ULT **something like a firstfruits of his creatures**
UST the first people to experience the kind of relationship with God that many more people will have in the future

James is assuming that his readers will know that he is using the traditional Israelite offering known as **firstfruits** as a simile. The law of Moses required the Israelites to offer to God some of the first crops they harvested each year. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state specifically that this is the name of an offering. Alternate translation: [something like an offering of firstfruits from among his creatures]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **something like a firstfruits of his creatures**
UST the first people to experience the kind of relationship with God that many more people will have in the future

When they offered some of their first crops to God each year, the Israelites were acknowledging that the entire crop belonged to God and was a gift from God to them. James is using this **firstfruits** offering as a simile to indicate that the believers of his time are an indication that there will be many more people who will belong to God in the future. In fact, since James speaks of **creatures**, he may even mean that believers in Jesus are the first part of God's creation to be freed from the curse and come back fully under his rule. Alternate translation: [the first of many people who would believe in Jesus] or [the first of God's creatures to be freed from the curse and come back fully under his rule]
Support Reference: Simile

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
firstfruits	the first people to experience the kind of relationship with God that many more people will have in the future
of … creatures	the first people to experience the kind of relationship with God that many more people will have in the future

James 1:19

ULT	UST
Know, my beloved brothers: But let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.	*My fellow believers whom I love, I want you to know that every one of you should listen patiently to what others have to say. You should speak your own thoughts carefully. You should control your anger,*

ULT **Know**
UST I want you to know that

This Greek form of **Know** could be either imperative or indicative, and so it could mean: (1) if it is an imperative, James is telling his readers to pay attention to what he is about to say. Alternate translation: [This is important]; or (2) if it is an indicative, James is telling his readers that he is about to remind them of something that they already know. Alternate translation: [You already know this]
Support Reference: Sentence Types

ULT **my beloved brothers**
UST My fellow believers whom I love

See how you translated this expression in 1:16. Alternate translation: [my dear fellow believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **But**
UST every one of you should

But could mean: (1) if **know** is an imperative, then James is using the term **but** as a transitional particle that does not indicate a contrast. If you decided to translate **know** as an imperative, you may have a similar word in your language that you can use for this same purpose. Otherwise, you do not need to translate the term. (2) if **know** is an indicative, then James is using the term **but** to introduce a mild contrast. He is saying that even though his readers already know what he is about to say, he wants to stress it anyway. If you decided to translate **know** as an indicative, you could use a term in your language that indicates a mild contrast.
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger**
UST every one of you should listen patiently {to what others have to say}. You should speak {your own thoughts} carefully. You should control your anger

The expression **slow to speak** does not refer to speaking slowly. Rather, like the expressions before and after it, it is an idiom. Alternate translation: [each of you should listen carefully, speak only after reflecting on what to say, and not lose your tempers easily]
Support Reference: Idiom

> ULT **every man**
> UST every one of you should

James is using the term **man** in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: [each of you] or [each person]

Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Know	know
beloved	whom I love
anger	You should control your anger

James 1:20

ULT	UST
For anger of man does not work the righteousness of God.	*because when we get angry, we cannot do the good things that God wants us to do.*

ULT **For**
UST because

James uses **For** to introduce the reason why people should not get angry, as he said in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [You should not get angry, because]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **anger of man**
UST when we get angry

James is using the term **man** in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: [human anger]
Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **does not work the righteousness of God**
UST we cannot do the good things that God wants us to do

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract noun **righteousness** by translating the idea behind it with an adjective such as “righteous” or “right.” Alternate translation: [does not fulfill the righteous purposes of God] or [does not accomplish the right things that God wants to do]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
anger	when … get angry
righteousness	the good things
God	God
work	we … do

James 1:21

ULT	UST
Therefore, having laid aside all filth and abundance of wickedness, in humility receive the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.	*So stop doing all kinds of evil. Without resisting proudly, do what God has told you to do. God will help you to remember and understand it. This will show that you belong to God.*

ULT **Therefore**
UST So

Here James uses **Therefore** to introduce to his readers a statement of what they should do as a result of what he explained to them in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [Consequently]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **having laid aside all filth and abundance of wickedness**
UST stop doing all kinds of evil

James is speaking of **filth** and **abundance of wickedness** as if they were clothing that could be taken off. By those expressions he means sin and wrong actions (See: later notes to this verse). Alternate translation: [stop committing sin and doing so many wrong things]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **filth and abundance of wickedness**
UST of evil

The expressions **filth** and **abundance of wickedness** mean similar things. James is using them together for emphasis. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them into a single phrase. Alternate translation: [every kind of sinful behavior]
Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **filth**
UST of evil

James is speaking of sin as if it were **filth**, that is, something that made people dirty. Alternate translation: [sin]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **abundance of wickedness**
UST of evil

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract noun **wickedness** by translating the idea behind it with an adjective such as “wrong.” Alternate translation: [the many wrong things that people do]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **in humility**
UST Without resisting proudly

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract noun **humility** by translating the idea behind it with an adverb such as “humbly.” Alternate translation: [humbly]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **receive the implanted word**
UST do what God has told you to do. God will help you to remember and understand it

The word **implanted** describes something that has been placed inside another thing. James is speaking of God's word as if it had been planted and was growing inside believers. Alternate translation: [obey the word that you have heard]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **receive the implanted word**
UST do what God has told you to do. God will help you to remember and understand it

James is using term **word** to describe the message about Jesus that was conveyed by using words. Alternate translation: [obey the message about Jesus that you have heard]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **which is able to save your souls**
UST This will show that you belong to God

James is speaking of the **word** or message as if it were a living thing that could actively **save** believers. He means that obedience to the message will lead to salvation. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [If you do that, you will be saved]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **your souls**
UST you

James is referring to one part of his readers, their **souls**, to mean their whole beings. Alternate translation: [you]
Support Reference: Synecdoche

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
wickedness	evil
receive	do
word	what God has told you to do
save	belong to God
souls	you

James 1:22

ULT	UST
But be doers of the word and not only hearers, deluding yourselves.	*It is important to what God commands, do not just listen to it. People who only listen to it and do not obey it are fooling themselves into thinking that this will save them.*

ULT **But**
UST It is important

But draws a contrast not with what James has just said, but with a potential misunderstanding of what he has just said. He wants to clarify that by "receive the implanted word" he does not mean simply to believe it, but to put it into practice. It may be appropriate in your language to translate the word **but** with an expression that introduces a clarification. Alternate translation: [Now]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **But be doers of the word and not only hearers**
UST It is important to what God commands, do not just listen to it. People who only listen to it and do not obey it

At the end of this clause, James is leaving out some of the words that it would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from earlier in the clause. Alternate translation: [be doers of the word and not only hearers of the word]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **be doers of the word and not only hearers**
UST to what God commands, do not just listen to it. People who only listen to it and do not obey it

James is using the term **word** to describe the message about Jesus that was conveyed by using words. Alternate translation: [obey the message about Jesus, do not just listen to it]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **and not only hearers**
UST not just listen to it. People who only listen to it and do not obey it

In the Bible, the word "hear" often has the idiomatic sense of agreeing with what is heard. James may be using the word in that sense. Alternate translation: [and do not just decide that you agree with it]

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
of the word	what God commands
deluding	are fooling themselves into thinking that this will save them

James 1:23

ULT	UST
For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man beholding the face of his birth in a mirror.	*Now some people hear God's message, but they do not do what it says. Those people are like someone who looks at his face in a mirror.*

ULT **For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man beholding the face of his birth in a mirror**
UST Now some people hear God's message, but they do not do what it says. Those people are like someone who looks at his face in a mirror

James is using a hypothetical situation to teach. Alternate translation: [Suppose someone is a hearer of the word and not a doer. Then he is like a man beholding the face of his birth in a mirror]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **is a hearer of the word and not a doer**
UST hear God's message, but they do not do what it says

At the end of this clause, James is leaving out some of the words that it would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from earlier in the clause. Alternate translation: [is a hearer of the word and not a doer of the word]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **is a hearer of the word and not a doer**
UST hear God's message, but they do not do what it says

See how you translated these expressions in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [just listens to the word but does not obey it]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **of the word**
UST God's message

James is using term **word** to describe the message about Jesus that was conveyed by using words. Alternate translation: [of the message about Jesus]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **he is like a man beholding the face of his birth in a mirror**
UST Those people are like someone who looks at his face in a mirror

Here James begins a simile, an illustrative comparison, that continues through the next two verses.
Support Reference: Simile

ULT **a man**
UST someone

James is using the term **man** in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: [a person]
Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **the face of his birth**
UST his face

This is an idiom that refers to the **face** a person was born with, that is, that person's natural or physical face. Since the term "face" had many figurative meanings at this time, James is using this idiomatic expression to clarify that he means the hypothetical person's literal, physical face. You may not need to make this clarification in your language. Alternate translation: [his physical face] or [his face]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **in a mirror**
UST in a mirror

A **mirror** is a flat object made of some reflective material, such as glass or polished metal, that people use to see what they look like. If your readers would not be familiar with what a **mirror** is, you could use the name of something else that serves this purpose in your culture. Alternate translation: [reflected in the water]
Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
of the word	God's message

James 1:24

ULT	UST
For he beheld himself and went away and immediately forgot of what sort he was.	*Although he looks at himself, he goes away from the mirror and immediately forgets what he looks like.*

ULT **For**
UST Although

For introduces a reason, as would be expected, but it is a reason for something that must be inferred from the context. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what James is giving the reason for. Alternate translation: [This did not really benefit him, because]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **he beheld himself and went away and immediately forgot of what sort he was**
UST he looks at himself, he goes away {from the mirror} and immediately forgets what he looks like

Here James is giving an illustration in the past tense as if he were telling the story of something that had happened. (See the discussion of this in Part 3 of the Introduction to James.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this sentence by translating this with the present tense. Alternate translation: [he beholds himself and goes away and immediately forgets of what sort he is]
Support Reference: Irregular Use of Tenses

ULT **he beheld himself**
UST he looks at himself

James is continuing the simile he began in the previous verse, so the pronouns **he** and **himself** refer to the hypothetical person who looks in the mirror. Alternate translation (using the present tense): [such a person looked at himself in a mirror] or, if you are using the present tense, [such a person looks at himself in a mirror]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **and went away and immediately forgot of what sort he was**
UST he goes away {from the mirror} and immediately forgets what he looks like

James is saying implicitly that this is a person who sees but does not do, just like a person who hears the word of God but does not obey it. The implication is that he sees in the mirror that he needs to do something such as wash his face or fix his hair. But because he does not do that when he is looking in the mirror, when he walks away, he forgets to do it. The point of the comparison is that a person who does not obey God's word is like this. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain that explicitly. Alternate translation: [but because he did not immediately do what he saw he should do, when he walked away from the mirror, he forgot what he saw and so he did nothing about it] or, if you are using the present tense, [but because he does not immediately do what he sees he should do, when he walks away from the mirror, he forgets what he saw and so he does nothing about it]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **of what sort he was**
> UST what he looks like

Alternate translation: [what he needed to do about his appearance] or, if you are using the present tense, [what he needs to do about his appearance]

James 1:25

ULT	UST
But the one having gazed into the perfect law of freedom and having continued, not having become a hearer of forgetfulness, but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in his doing.	*But other people consider God's message carefully. It is perfect and it enables people to do voluntarily what God wants them to do. If these people remember what they have heard and continue to do what God tells them to do, then God will bless them because of what they do.*

ULT **But the one having gazed into the perfect law of freedom and having continued … this one will be blessed**

UST But other people consider God's message carefully. It is perfect and it enables people to do voluntarily {what God wants them to do}. If these people … continue … then God will bless them

James is using a further hypothetical situation to teach. This illustration is a contrast to the one he offered in 1:23. Alternate translation: [But suppose someone gazes into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres … Then that person will be blessed]

Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **the one having gazed into the perfect law**

UST other people consider God's message carefully. It is perfect

In this verse, James continues to compare hearing the word of God to looking in a mirror. But the image now becomes a metaphor rather than a simile, since James speaks about someone who has **gazed into** the **law**. He means someone who has listened attentively to God's word. Alternate translation: [someone who has listened attentively to the perfect law]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the perfect law of freedom**

UST God's message … It is perfect and it enables people to do voluntarily what God wants them to do

James is using the possessive form to describe a **law** that brings **freedom**. See the notes to 2:12 for a further explanation of what James means by the **law of freedom**. Alternate translation: [the perfect law that brings freedom]

Support Reference: Possession

ULT **the perfect law of freedom**

UST God's message … It is perfect and it enables people to do voluntarily what God wants them to do

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract noun **freedom** by translating the idea behind it with an adjective such as "free." Alternate translation: [the perfect law that sets people free]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the perfect law of freedom**
UST God's message … It is perfect and it enables people to do voluntarily what God wants them to do

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what this **law** gives people the **freedom** to do. Alternate translation: [the law that sets people free to obey God]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the perfect law of freedom**
UST God's message … It is perfect and it enables people to do voluntarily what God wants them to do

As in 1:4 and 1:17, the term **perfect** refers to something that has developed to the point where it is fully suited to its purpose. See how you translated the term in those verses. Alternate translation: [the law that is perfectly suited to set people free from sin]

ULT **and having continued**
UST If these people … continue

James is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from the context. Alternate translation: [and who has continued to obey that law]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **a hearer of forgetfulness**
UST remember what they have heard

James is using the possessive form to describe a **hearer** who is characterized by **forgetfulness**. Alternate translation: [a hearer who is forgetful]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **a hearer of forgetfulness**
UST remember what they have heard

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract noun **forgetfulness** by translating the idea behind it with a verb such as "forget." Alternate translation: [a hearer who forgets] or [someone who forgets what he hears]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **a doer of the work**
UST to do what God tells them to do

By association with the **work** that it takes to carry out God's commands, James is using the term **work** to mean what God commands. Alternate translation: [someone who does what God commands]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **this one will be blessed**
UST then God will bless them

While the word **blessed** is an adjective and so the expression **will be blessed** is not a passive verbal form, it may be helpful to your readers to translate this with an active verbal form. Alternate translation: [God will bless such a person]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

> ULT **in his doing**
> UST because of what they do

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract noun **doing** by translating the idea behind it with a verb such as “do.” Alternate translation: [in what he does]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
law	God’s message
perfect	perfect
freedom	and it enables people to do voluntarily what God wants them to do
blessed	bless

James 1:26

ULT	UST
If anyone thinks to be religious, not bridling his tongue, but deceiving his heart, the religion of that one is worthless.	*Some people think that they worship God properly, but they say bad things. Those people are wrong in what they are thinking. God is not impressed with our worship activities if we continually say bad things.*

ULT **If anyone thinks to be religious, not bridling his tongue, but deceiving his heart, the religion of that one {is} worthless**

UST Some people think that they worship God properly, but they say bad things. Those people are wrong in what they are thinking. God is not impressed with our worship activities if we continually say bad things

James is using a hypothetical situation to teach. Alternate translation: [Suppose someone thinks that he is religious, but he does not bridle his tongue, thus deceiving his heart. Then his religion is worthless]

Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **thinks to be religious**

UST think that they worship God properly

The word translated as **religious** could refer to a pattern of behavior rather than to participation in worship activities. Alternate translation: [thinks that he is honoring God by his actions]

ULT **not bridling his tongue**

UST they say bad things

James speaks of a person **bridling his tongue** as if he were controlling a horse with a bridle. Alternate translation: [but he does not control his tongue]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **not bridling his tongue**

UST they say bad things

A “bridle” is headgear that is used to control a horse. If your readers would not be familiar with what a “bridle” is, you could use a different illustration that would be familiar to them of a device that is used in your culture to control animals.

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **not bridling his tongue**

UST they say bad things

By association with the way that the **tongue** is used in speech, James is using the term **tongue** to mean what a person says. Alternate translation: [not controlling what he says]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **deceiving his heart**

UST Those people are wrong in what they are thinking

James is using one part of this hypothetical person, his **heart**, to mean the person himself. Alternate translation: [deceiving himself]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **the religion of that one {is} worthless**

UST God is not impressed with our worship activities if we continually say bad things

James says **worthless** as an overstatement for emphasis. There would conceivably still be some value in the religion of a person even if he did not carefully control what he said. But James wants to emphasize how inconsistent it is to claim to love God but then to say things that hurt and disparage other people. He will develop this point further in 3:9–10. Alternate translation: [his actions are not as pleasing to God as he thinks]

Support Reference: Hyperbole

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
tongue	say bad things
deceiving	Those people are wrong
is worthless	God is not impressed with

James 1:27

ULT	UST
Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to look upon orphans and widows in their distress, to keep oneself unstained by the world.	*One of the things that God has told us to do is to take care of orphans and widows who suffer hardship. People who do that truly worship God, who is our Father. People are also truly worshiping God if they do not think or act immorally like others who do not obey God. God approves of people who do these things.*

ULT **Pure and undefiled religion**
UST People who do that truly worship … People are also truly worshiping

James is speaking of **religion** as if it could be physically **Pure** and **undefiled**. Alternate translation: [Religion that is pleasing and acceptable]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Pure and undefiled religion**
UST People who do that truly worship … People are also truly worshiping

The terms **Pure** and **undefiled** mean similar things. They both indicate that something is free of contamination. James is using these terms together for emphasis. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them into a single phrase. Alternate translation: [Religion that is completely acceptable]
Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **before God**
UST God … God … God approves of people who do these things

The word **before** means "in front of" or "in the presence of" another person, and in this case **before** him indicates "where God can see." Seeing, for its part, represents attention and judgment. Alternate translation: [from God's perspective]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **God and the Father**
UST God, who is our Father … God … God

James is not talking about two different people. He is expressing a single idea by using two nouns connected with **and**. The noun **Father** further identifies **God**. Alternate translation: [God the Father]
Support Reference: Hendiadys

ULT **the Father**
UST our Father

Father is an important title for God.
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **to look upon orphans and widows in their distress**
UST to take care of orphans and widows who suffer hardship

Here, **look upon** is an idiom that means "show concern for" or "help compassionately." Alternate translation: [to help orphans and widows in their distress]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **to look upon orphans and widows in their distress**
UST to take care of orphans and widows who suffer hardship

James assumes that his readers will know that orphans and widows are in practical and financial **distress** because their fathers or husbands have died and so are no longer providing for them. In this culture, women and children were dependent on male relatives for support. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate explicitly what kind of **distress** James wants his readers to help relieve. Alternate translation: [to help poor orphans and widows with their practical needs]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **to keep oneself unstained by the world**
UST if they do not think or act immorally like others who do not obey God

This is not a purpose or result clause. James is not telling his readers that they should help **orphans and widows** in order to stay **unstained by the world** or that this would be the result if they did help them. Rather, James is saying that this is a second thing that characterizes **religion** that pleases God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could add the word "and" before this clause in order to clarify this.
Support Reference: Connecting Words and Phrases

ULT **to keep oneself unstained by the world**
UST if they do not think or act immorally like others who do not obey God

James is using the term **world** to mean the system of values shared by people who do not honor God, by association with the way those people live in the world. Alternate translation: [to keep oneself unstained by the value system of ungodly people]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **to keep oneself unstained by the world**
UST if they do not think or act immorally like others who do not obey God

James is speaking of the influence of ungodly people as if it could physically stain a person. By **unstained** he actually means free from sin. Alternate translation: [not to allow ungodly people and their influence to cause oneself to sin]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Pure	People who do that truly worship … People are also truly worshiping
Father	Father
distress	who suffer hardship
world	others who do not obey God

James 2

James 2 Introduction

James 2 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

1. A warning against favoring rich people (2:1–13)
2. Faith and works (2:14–26)

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Favoritism

Some of James's readers treated rich and powerful people well and they treated poor people badly. Treating some people better than others is called favoritism. James tells his readers that this is wrong. God wants his people to treat everyone well.

Justification

Justification is what happens when God makes a person righteous, that is, when God puts a person in right standing with himself. James says in this chapter that God justifies people when they do good works along with having faith. But that is because the good works demonstrate the faith that a person has, as James says explicitly in 2:18. James is not saying that people need to add good works to their faith in order to be justified. (See: just, justice, unjust, injustice, justify, justification; and righteous, righteousness, unrighteous, unrighteousness, upright, uprightness; and faith)

Translation Issues in This Chapter

But someone may say, "You have faith, and I have works" (2:18)

When James says this, he seems to be raising an objection that someone might make to what he has been saying. Public speakers at this time commonly raised such objections in order to answer them, and James is probably using that device. However, if that is what he is doing, we would expect the objection to be, "You have works, and I have faith," since James has been stressing the importance of works accompanying faith. So why does this hypothetical speaker say instead, "You have faith, and I have works"?

It appears that James actually has this speaker addressing these words to the same "you" whom he has been addressing himself since 2:16 as "one of you" and whom he then goes on to address in the rest of this chapter. In other words, James is raising this hypothetical objection so that he can address this same "you" in this verse as well. James is saying, "Someone might reassure you that you nevertheless have faith, while I (James) have works. He might argue that both are valid expressions of religion and that it is not necessary for a person to have both." James then answers this argument by observing that he can show his faith through his works, while a person who claims to have faith but not works has no means of proving that.

In your translation, you may wish to express this implicit information, as UST does. Alternatively, you may wish to translate as ULT does and leave it to Bible teachers and preachers to explain the meaning. See the further discussion in the notes to 2:18. (See: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information)

Faith without works is “useless” or “dead” (2:20)

In James 2:20, some ancient manuscripts say that faith without works is “useless.” ULT and UST follow that reading. Some other ancient manuscripts say that it is “dead,” perhaps under the influence of 2:17 and 2:26, where James uses the term “dead” to describe faith that is not expressed in works. If a translation of the Bible already exists in your area, consider using the reading found in that translation. If not, we recommend that you follow the reading of ULT and UST. (See: Textual Variants)

James 2:1

ULT	UST
My brothers, do not with favoritism have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory.	*My fellow believers, do not honor some people more than others and at the same time trust in our great Lord Jesus the Messiah.*

ULT **My brothers**
UST My fellow believers

See how you translated the term **brothers** in 1:2. Alternate translation: [My fellow believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **do not with favoritism have**
UST do not honor some people more than others and at the same time trust in

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **favoritism** with an equivalent phrase. (See the discussion of favoritism in the introduction to this chapter.) Alternate translation: [you should not treat some people better than others, because that is not consistent with]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ**
UST and at the same time trust in our … Lord Jesus the Messiah

James is using the possessive form to refer to **faith** that other people have in **Jesus**. Alternate translation: [faith in our Lord Jesus Christ]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory**
UST our great Lord Jesus the Messiah

James is using the possessive form to describe **Jesus** as characterized by **glory**. Alternate translation: [our glorious Lord Jesus Christ]
Support Reference: Possession

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
favoritism	do … honor some people more than others
faith	and at the same time trust in
Lord	Lord
Jesus	Jesus
Christ	Messiah
glory	great

James 2:2

ULT	UST
For if a gold-ringed man in splendid clothing comes into your synagogue, and a poor one in filthy clothing also comes in,	*For example, suppose that a person who wears gold rings and fine clothes joins you for worship. And suppose that a poor person who wears shabby clothes joins you as well.*

ULT **For if**
UST For example, suppose that

James is using a hypothetical situation to teach. He describes the condition in this verse and the next verse, and he describes the result in 2:4. Alternate translation: [Suppose]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **a gold-ringed man in splendid clothing**
UST a person who wears gold rings and fine clothes

James assumes that his readers will know that he is giving an example of what a wealthy person might wear. (The expression **a gold-ringed man** does not mean a man who is ringed around with gold, but a man who is wearing a gold ring.) If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use a different example from your own culture, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: [someone who is dressed like a wealthy person]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **a … man**
UST a person

James is using the term **man** in a generic sense that could mean either a man or a woman. Alternate translation: [person]
Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **synagogue**
UST joins … for worship

A **synagogue** is a Jewish meeting place for worship. James uses the term because he is writing primarily to Jews who have put their faith in Jesus as their Messiah. (See the discussion in Part 1 of the Introduction to James.) In your translation you could use a more general term. Alternate translation: [meeting place]
Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **a poor one**
UST a poor person

James is using the adjective **poor** as a noun in order to mean a kind of person. (ULT adds **one** to indicate this.) Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [a person who is poor]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
synagogue	joins … for worship
gold-ringed	gold

James 2:3

ULT	UST
and you look at the one wearing the splendid clothing and say, "You sit here well," and to the poor one you say, "You stand there," or, "Sit by my footstool,"	*And suppose that you show special attention to the one dressed in fine clothes. You tell him, "Please sit here in this nice seat!" But you tell the poor one to go to a less honorable place, saying, "You stand over there," or, "Sit on the floor!"*

ULT **and**
UST And

James is continuing to describe the condition in the hypothetical situation that he introduced in the previous verse. Alternate translation, as in UST: [and suppose]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **you look … say … you say**
UST suppose that you show special attention … You tell him … you tell … to go to a less honorable place, saying

In these three instances **you** is plural, since James is speaking to all of his readers about what they might do in such a situation.
Support Reference: Forms of You

ULT **you look at**
UST suppose that you show special attention to

In this context, this expression means to **look at** someone or something with admiration. Alternate translation: [you look admiringly at]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **You sit here well … You stand there … Sit by my footstool**
UST Please sit here in this nice seat … You stand over there … Sit on the floor

Since these comments are addressed to the rich person and to the poor person as individuals, **You** is singular in the first two instances and the implied "you" in the command to **sit** is also singular.
Support Reference: Forms of 'You' — Singular

ULT **You sit here well**
UST Please sit here in this nice seat

In this context **well** means "honorably." It does not refer to how well the rich person would be able to sit in the indicated seat. Alternate translation: [Sit here in this place of honor]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **You sit here well**
UST Please sit here in this nice seat

This is an imperative, but it should be translated as a polite request rather than as a command. It may be helpful to add an expression such as "please" to make this clear. Alternate translation: [Please sit here in this place of honor]
Support Reference: Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **and**

The term **and** introduces a contrast between the way the rich person and the poor person are treated. Alternate translation: [but]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **You stand there … Sit by my footstool**

UST You stand over there … Sit on the floor

These statements addressed to the poor person probably are direct imperatives rather than polite requests, since James is illustrating how believers might treat poor people differently from rich people. Not adding "please" to these statements would show the contrast with the way the rich person is addressed.

Support Reference: Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **You stand there … Sit by my footstool**

UST You stand over there … Sit on the floor

The implications are that the poor person is being told to stand or sit in a humbler and less honorable place. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly, as UST does.

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Sit by my footstool**

UST Sit on the floor

This imperative statement uses the singular first-person pronoun **my**, since it is something that one of the believers might say to the hypothetical poor person. If this would not be natural in your language, since the statement is introduced by **you** (plural) **say**, you could also use a plural form in the statement itself. Alternate translation: [Sit on the floor by our feet]

Support Reference: Forms of You

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
footstool	the floor

James 2:4

ULT	UST
have you not distinguished among yourselves and become judges of evil thoughts?	*This would show that you thought rich people were better than poor people. It would show that you were making your judgments about how to treat people based on evil thinking.*

ULT **have you not distinguished among yourselves and become judges of evil thoughts**
UST This would show that you thought rich people were better than poor people. It would show that you were making your judgments {about how to treat people} based on evil thinking

In this verse James describes the result of the hypothetical situation he has been describing since 2:2. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [Then you have distinguished among yourselves and become judges of evil thoughts.]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **have you not distinguished among yourselves and become judges of evil thoughts**
UST This would show that you thought rich people were better than poor people. It would show that you were making your judgments {about how to treat people} based on evil thinking

If it would be helpful in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: [have you not become judges who think evil things and so begun to consider some people better than others]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **have you not distinguished among yourselves and become judges of evil thoughts**
UST This would show that you thought rich people were better than poor people. It would show that you were making your judgments {about how to treat people} based on evil thinking

As James describes this result, he uses the question form for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [you have considered some people better than others, because you have become judges who think evil things!]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **become judges of evil thoughts**
UST you were making your judgments {about how to treat people} based on evil thinking

James is using the possessive form to describe **judges** who are characterized by **evil thoughts**. He is not speaking of people who judge whether thoughts are evil. Alternate translation: [become judges who think evil things]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **become judges of evil thoughts**
UST you were making your judgments {about how to treat people} based on evil thinking

James is describing something more than passively assuming a certain role and thinking in a certain way. He is describing taking action based on that way of thinking. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [made wrong judgments about how people should be treated and then treated them that way]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
judges	your judgments about how to treat people
evil	evil

James 2:5

ULT	UST
Listen, my beloved brothers, did not God choose the poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he promised to the ones loving him?	*Listen to me, my fellow believers whom I love. God has chosen poor people who seem to own nothing of value to trust in him very much. He will give them great things when he reigns everywhere. This is what he has promised to do for everyone who loves him.*

ULT **Listen**
UST Listen to me

James uses this expression to emphasize what he is about to say. Alternate translation: [Pay attention to this]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **my beloved brothers**
UST my fellow believers whom I love

See how you translated this phrase in 1:16. Alternate translation: [my dear fellow believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **did not God choose the poor in the world {to be} rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he promised to the ones loving him**
UST God has chosen poor people who seem to own nothing of value to trust in him very much. He will give them great things when he reigns everywhere. This is what he has promised to do for everyone who loves him

James is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement. Alternate translation: [God has chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him.]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **the poor**
UST poor people

James is using the adjective **poor** as a noun to refer to a group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [people who are poor]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **in the world**
UST who seem to own nothing of value

James is using the term **world** in a different sense than in 1:27. Here it refers to the world that we live in, and so it indicates ordinary life. Alternate translation: [in this life]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **to be rich in faith**
UST to trust in him very much

James speaks of having much **faith** as if that made a person wealthy. Alternate translation: [to have strong faith]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **to be rich in faith**
UST to trust in him very much

Your language may require you to specify the object of **faith**. Alternate translation: [to have strong faith in Jesus]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **heirs of the kingdom that**
UST He will give them great things when he reigns everywhere. This is what

James speaks of the people to whom God has promised the kingdom as if they were going to inherit wealth from a family member. Alternate translation: [participants in the kingdom that]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **heirs of the kingdom that**
UST He will give them great things when he reigns everywhere. This is what

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **kingdom** with a verb such as “rule.” Alternate translation: [to enjoy advantages when God rules, as]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
beloved	whom I love
God	God
choose	chosen
world	who seem to own nothing of value
faith	to trust in him
heirs	He will give them great things
of the kingdom	when he reigns everywhere
promised	promised
loving	loves

James 2:6

ULT	UST
But you dishonored the poor! Do not the rich overpower you and themselves drag you into court?	*But you have treated poor people disrespectfully! Think about it! It is the rich people, not the poor people, who are causing you to suffer! It is the rich people who forcibly take you to court to accuse you in front of judges!*

ULT **dishonored the poor**
UST have treated poor people disrespectfully … not the poor people

What James means by this is clear from the example he gives in 2:2–3. Alternate translation: [you have treated people who are poor much worse than you have treated people who are rich]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the poor**
UST poor people … not the poor people

James is using the adjective **poor** as a noun to refer to a group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [people who are poor]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **Do not the rich overpower you and themselves drag you into court**
UST Think about it! It is the rich people … who are causing you to suffer! It is the rich people who forcibly take you to court to accuse you in front of judges

The word that is translated as **themselves** here is the same word that is translated **they** in the next verse. It is effectively the subject of a new independent clause, so you could translate this as two sentences. Alternate translation: [Do not the rich overpower you? Do they not drag you into court]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **Do not the rich overpower you and themselves drag you into court**
UST Think about it! It is the rich people … who are causing you to suffer! It is the rich people who forcibly take you to court to accuse you in front of judges

James is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [It is the rich who overpower you and drag you into court themselves!]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **Do not the rich overpower you and themselves drag you into court**
UST Think about it! It is the rich people … who are causing you to suffer! It is the rich people who forcibly take you to court to accuse you in front of judges

James is implying that rich people do not deserve to be treated better by the believers to whom he is writing, since rich people have actually treated them badly. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [People who are rich do not deserve to have you treat them better than others. They are the ones who overpower you and drag you into court themselves!]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the rich**
UST Think about it! It is the rich people

James is using the adjective **rich** as a noun to refer to a group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [people who are rich]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **Do not the rich overpower you**
UST Think about it! It is the rich people … who are causing you to suffer

Alternate translation: [Is it not the rich who oppress you]

ULT **drag you into court**
UST who forcibly take you to court to accuse you in front of judges

James is speaking of the rich as if they would physically **drag** the poor into court. Alternate translation: [force you to go to court]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **drag you into court**
UST who forcibly take you to court to accuse you in front of judges

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly why rich people were taking poor people to court. Alternate translation: [force you to go to court so that they can exploit you through lawsuits]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

James 2:7

ULT	UST
Do they not blaspheme the good name that has been called upon you?	*And they are the ones who insult you because you are Christians!*

ULT **Do they not blaspheme the good name that has been called upon you**
UST And they are the ones who insult you because you are Christians

James is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [They are the ones who blaspheme the good name that has been called upon you!]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **Do they not blaspheme the good name**
UST And they are the ones who insult you because … Christians

The word **blaspheme** can have a technical sense. It can describe a human being wrongly denying that something is divine. But the word can also have the general sense of "insult," and that is probably the sense in which James is using it here. (However, by insulting the **name** of Jesus, these rich people were also guilty of blasphemy in the technical sense, since Jesus is divine and his name should be honored.) Alternate translation: [Do they not insult the good name]
Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **the good name**
UST because … Christians

James is referring to the **name** of Jesus by association with the way that it is **good**. Alternate translation: [the name of Jesus]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **that has been called upon you**
UST because you are Christians

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: [by which you are called] or [by which you are known]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **that has been called upon you**
UST because you are Christians

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [by which people call you]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
blaspheme	who insult you
good	because … Christians
called	because … Christians

James 2:8

ULT	UST
If, however, you fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You will love your neighbor as yourself," you do well.	*So you should not treat rich people better than poor people. Instead, you should obey the commandment that Jesus said was so important. It is from the law of Moses: "Love your neighbor as you love yourself." If you show love to everyone equally, you will be doing what is right.*

ULT **If, however**

UST So you should not treat rich people better than poor people. Instead … If

James is using these words to introduce a contrast with what he said in 2:6, "you have dishonored the poor," meaning "you have treated rich people much better than you have treated poor people." Alternate translation: [But if, instead of favoring rich people]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **the royal law**

UST the commandment that Jesus said was so important

There are two possible reasons for why James describes the **law** that he quotes here from Leviticus 19:18 as **royal**: (1) When Jesus came proclaiming the kingdom of God, he said that this law was one of two that summed up all of the other laws and guided life in the kingdom of God. (The other law was to love God with all of one's heart, soul, mind, and strength.) Alternate translation: [the law that guides life in the kingdom of God]; or (2) James may say that this **law** is **royal** because God, the true king, gave it to people. Alternate translation: [God's law]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **You will love your neighbor as yourself**

UST Love your neighbor as you love yourself … you show love to everyone equally

Here the law of Moses is using a future statement to give a command. Alternate translation: [You are to love your neighbor as you love yourself]

Support Reference: Statements — Other Uses

ULT **You will love your neighbor as yourself**

UST Love your neighbor as you love yourself … you show love to everyone equally

The words **You**, **your**, and **yourself** are singular in this quotation because, even though Moses gave this law to the Israelites as a group, each individual person was expected to obey it. So in your translation, use the singular forms of "You," "your," and "yourself" if your language marks that distinction.

Support Reference: Singular Pronouns that refer to Groups

ULT **your neighbor**

UST your neighbor … to everyone equally

This is an idiom. It does not mean only someone who lives nearby. Alternate translation: [other people] or [anyone you encounter]

Support Reference: Idiom

> ULT **you do well**
> UST you will be doing what is right

Alternate translation: [you are doing what God wants you to do]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
law	the commandment
royal	that Jesus said was so important
scripture	law of Moses
love	Love
neighbor	neighbor

James 2:9

ULT	UST
But if you favor, you are committing sin, convicted by the law as transgressors.	*But if you honor some people more than others, you are doing wrong. And because you are not doing what God has commanded, God will say that you have broken his law.*

ULT **you favor**
UST you honor some people more than others

Your language may require you to specify the object of **favor**. Alternate translation: [you favor the rich]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **convicted by the law as transgressors**
UST And {because you are not doing what God has commanded,} God will say that you have broken his law

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [and the law convicts you as transgressors]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **convicted by the law as transgressors**
UST And {because you are not doing what God has commanded,} God will say that you have broken his law

James is speaking of the law as if it were a human judge. Alternate translation: [and you are guilty of breaking God's law]
Support Reference: Personification

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
favor	you honor some people more than others
sin	wrong
law	And because you are not doing what God has commanded
transgressors	you have broken his law

James 2:10

ULT	UST
For whoever might keep the whole law but stumble in one thing has become guilty of all.	*God will say this because if you break one of God's laws, even if you obey all the other ones, it is just as if you had broken all the laws.*

ULT **For**
UST God will say this because

James is giving the reason for the statement he made in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [The reason why showing favoritism makes a person guilty of breaking God's law is that]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **whoever might keep**
UST if you … you obey

Here, **keep** is an idiom that means "obey." Alternate translation: [whoever might obey]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **but stumble in one thing**
UST break one of God's laws, even if

James speaks of a person disobeying a commandment as if he would **stumble**, that is, trip and lose his balance while walking. Alternate translation: [but disobey one thing]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **but stumble in one thing**
UST break one of God's laws, even if

James is using the adjective **one** as a noun to refer to one commandment of the law. (ULT adds the term **thing** to show this.) Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate the term with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [but disobey one commandment]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **guilty of all**
UST it is just as if you had broken all the laws

Alternate translation: [guilty of breaking the entire law]

ULT **guilty of all**
UST it is just as if you had broken all the laws

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly why James says that this is true. Alternate translation: [guilty of breaking the entire law, because God gave the entire law to show people how he wanted them to live, and if you break one part of it, you are not living in that way]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

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TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
law	the other ones
stumble	break
guilty	it is just as if you had broken

James 2:11

ULT	UST
For the one having said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If, then, you do not commit adultery but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.	*For example, God said, "Do not commit adultery," but he also said, "Do not murder anyone." So if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder someone, then you have become a person who disobeys God's laws.*

ULT **For**
UST For example

James is giving the reason for the statement he made in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [The reason why breaking one law makes a person guilty of breaking every law is that]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **the one having said**
UST God said

James is referring implicitly to God, who spoke the commandments quoted in this verse when he gave the law to Moses. Alternate translation: [God who said]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Do not commit adultery … Do not murder … you do not commit adultery … you do murder, you have become**
UST Do not commit adultery … Do not murder anyone … you do not commit adultery … you do murder someone, then you have become

The implied "you" in the two commandments that James quotes in this verse is singular because, even though Moses gave these laws to the Israelites as a group, each individual person was expected to obey them. The word **you** is also singular in the rest of the verse because James is carrying forward that usage from the commandments. So in your translation, use the singular form of "you" if your language marks that distinction.
Support Reference: Singular Pronouns that refer to Groups

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
adultery	adultery
adultery	adultery
a transgressor	a person who disobeys
law	laws

James 2:12

ULT	UST
Thus speak and thus act, as ones who are going to be judged by means of the law of freedom.	*Always speak and act towards others knowing that God will judge you based on the commandment he gave us to love others. When we follow that commandment, we obey God freely.*

ULT **Thus speak and thus act**
UST Always speak and act towards others

The implied "you" in these imperatives is plural. James returns here to the plural usage that he follows in most of his letter. So in your translation, use the plural form of "you" if your language marks that distinction and if it reflects it in imperatives. Alternate translation: [Speak and act in this way]
Support Reference: Forms of You

ULT **ones who are going to be judged**
UST God will judge you

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form, and you can state who will do the action. Alternate translation: [people whom God is going to judge]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **the law of freedom**
UST the commandment he gave us {to love others}. When we follow that commandment, we obey God freely

As in 1:25, James is using the possessive form to describe a **law** that brings **freedom**. Alternate translation: [the law that brings freedom]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **the law of freedom**
UST the commandment he gave us {to love others}. When we follow that commandment, we obey God freely

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract noun **freedom** by translating the idea behind it with an adjective such as "free." Alternate translation: [the law that sets people free]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the law of freedom**
UST the commandment he gave us {to love others}. When we follow that commandment, we obey God freely

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what the **law** gives people the **freedom** to do. Alternate translation: [the law that sets people free to obey God]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **the law of freedom**
> UST the commandment he gave us {to love others}. When we follow that commandment, we obey God freely

In this context, it appears that when James speaks of **the law of freedom**, he is referring to the commandment that he quoted in 2:8, “You will love your neighbor as yourself.” If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express this explicitly and explain how this law sets people free. Alternate translation: [the law to love one’s neighbor, which sets people free to obey God by giving them a principle to follow in all of their actions]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
law	the commandment he gave us to love others
freedom	When we follow that commandment, we obey God freely
judged	judge

James 2:13

ULT	UST
For the judgment is merciless to the ones not having done mercy. Mercy boasts against judgment.	*You should speak and act in this way because when God judges us, he will not act mercifully toward those who have not acted mercifully toward others. But if we are merciful to others, then we can expect that God will be merciful to us when he judges us.*

ULT **For**

UST You should speak and act in this way because

James is giving the reason why people should be guided in their actions by the principle of loving others, as he said in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [You should follow the principle of loving others because]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **For the judgment {is} merciless to the ones not having done mercy**

UST You should speak and act in this way because when God judges us, he will not act mercifully toward those who have not acted mercifully toward others

James is using the word **judgment** to represent God, the one who judges. Alternate translation: [when God judges people, he will not be merciful to people who have not shown mercy to others]

Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **For the judgment {is} merciless to the ones not having done mercy**

UST You should speak and act in this way because when God judges us, he will not act mercifully toward those who have not acted mercifully toward others

James is speaking of **judgment** as if it were a living thing that could act in a **merciless** way. Alternate translation: [When God judges people, he will not be merciful to people who have not shown mercy to others]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **to the ones not having done mercy**

UST toward those who have not acted mercifully toward others

The word translated as **mercy** can also refer to compassion. Since James is referring in this context to following the command to love others, that is likely what it means here. Alternate translation: [those who have not acted compassionately towards others]

ULT **Mercy boasts against judgment**

UST But if we are merciful to others, then we can expect that God will be merciful to us when he judges us

There is an implied contrast between this sentence and the statement in the previous sentence that “judgment is merciless.” If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that contrast explicitly at the start of this sentence with a word such as “however.” Alternate translation: [However, mercy boasts against judgment]

Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

> ULT **Mercy boasts against judgment**
> UST But if we are merciful to others, then we can expect that God will be merciful to us when he judges us

James is speaking of **mercy** and **judgment** as if they were living things that could fight a contest against one another. He is also speaking of **mercy** as if it could boast after defeating **judgment** in such a contest. James is continuing to describe how God will judge people.
Alternate translation: [However, God will show mercy when he judges people who have acted compassionately towards others]
Support Reference: Personification

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
judgment	judges
mercy	mercifully
Mercy	merciful
judgment	judges

James 2:14

ULT	UST
What would be the profit, my brothers, if someone would say he has faith, but he does not have works? That faith is not able to save him, is it?	*My fellow believers, some people say, "I believe in the Lord Jesus the Messiah," but they do not do loving things. What they say will do them no good. If they only believe with words, God will certainly not save them.*

ULT **What {would be} the profit, my brothers, if someone would say he has faith, but he does not have works**

UST My fellow believers, some people say, "I believe in the Lord Jesus the Messiah," but they do not do loving things. What they say will do them no good

James is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement. Alternate translation: [It does no good, my brothers, for someone to say he has faith if he does not have works.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **What {would be} the profit**

UST What they say will do them no good

This is an idiom. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use here. Alternate translation: [What good would it do]

Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **my brothers**

UST My fellow believers

See how you translated the term **brothers** in 1:2. Alternate translation: [my fellow believers]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **if someone would say he has faith, but he does not have works**

UST some people say, "I believe in the Lord Jesus the Messiah," but they do not do loving things

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **faith** and **works** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [if someone said he believed in God but he did not do what God wanted him to do]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **That faith is not able to save him, is it**

UST If they only believe with words, God will certainly not save them

In context, James is clearly asking not about **faith** in general, but about faith that is not demonstrated in **works**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: [That kind of faith is not able to save him, is it]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **That faith is not able to save him, is it**
> UST If they only believe with words, God will certainly not save them

The first word of this sentence in Greek is a negative word that can be used to turn a statement into a question that expects a negative answer. ULT shows this by adding "is it?" Your language may have other ways of asking a question that expects a negative answer, for example, by changing the word order of a positive statement. Alternate translation: [Is that kind of faith able to save him]

Support Reference: Double Negatives

> ULT **That faith is not able to save him, is it**
> UST If they only believe with words, God will certainly not save them

James is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [That kind of faith is certainly not able to save him!]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

> ULT **That faith is not able to save him, is it**
> UST If they only believe with words, God will certainly not save them

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract noun **faith** by stating the ideas behind it with a verb such as "believe." Alternate translation: [Will merely believing in God save him?]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

> ULT **to save him**
> UST save them

Your language may require you to specify what this kind of faith cannot **save** a person from. Alternate translation: [save him from God's judgment]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
profit	What they say will do them no good
faith	I believe in the Lord Jesus the Messiah
faith	If they only believe with words
save	save

James 2:15

ULT	UST
If a brother or sister were unclothed and lacking their daily food,	*To illustrate, suppose that a fellow believer, whether a man or a woman, is continually lacking clothes and food for each day.*

ULT **If**
UST To illustrate, suppose that

James is using a hypothetical situation to teach. He begins to describe the condition in this verse. He describes the rest of the condition and the result in the next verse. Alternate translation: [Suppose]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **a brother or sister**
UST a fellow believer, whether a man or a woman

As everywhere else in the book, the term **brother** refers to a fellow believer. In every other instance, the term can mean either a man or a woman. But in this verse James uses **brother** to mean a believer who is a man and **sister** to mean a believer who is a woman. If your language has both masculine and the feminine forms of the word you have been using to translate "brother," you can use them both here. Otherwise, you could use an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [another man or woman who believes in Jesus]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **unclothed**
UST clothes

The word **unclothed** can mean "naked," and if a Bible translation already exists in your area, it may say that. But in this context, the word actually refers to lacking adequate clothes. Alternate translation: [badly clothed]

James 2:16

ULT	UST
and someone of you said to them, "Go in peace, warm yourself and be satisfied," but you did not give them the necessary things of the body, what would be the profit?	*And suppose one of you says to them, "Do not worry, get warm, and have the food you need." But suppose that you then do not give them any clothing or food. Then that will be no help to them!*

ULT **and**
UST And suppose

James is continuing to describe the condition of the hypothetical situation that he is using to teach. Alternate translation: [and suppose that]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **to them … them**
UST to them … them

Even though in the previous verse James spoke in the singular of "a brother or sister," he now speaks of needy people generally in the plural, saying **them**. If this might be confusing for your readers, you could use the singular in this verse as well. Alternate translation: [to him or her … him or her]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **warm yourself and be satisfied**
UST get warm, and have the food you need

The person who would say this to people in need would be speaking of clothing by association with the way its keeps people warm and of food by association with the way it satisfies people. Alternate translation: [have adequate clothing and enough food]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **warm yourself**
UST get warm

Alternate translation: [stay warm]

ULT **be satisfied**
UST have the food you need

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an equivalent expression that uses an active verbal form. Alternate translation: [have enough food to satisfy you]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **but**
UST But suppose that … then

James is continuing to describe the hypothetical situation that he is using to teach. Alternate translation: [but also suppose that]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **you did not give**
UST you … do not give

At the beginning of this verse, James speaks in the third-person singular of **one of you**. But he now speaks of believers generally in the second-person plural, saying **you**, to indicate how the community as a whole might respond to this situation. If this might be confusing for your readers, you could use the third-person singular here as well. Alternate translation: [he does not give]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the necessary things**
UST any clothing or food

James is using the adjective **necessary** in the plural as a noun. (ULT adds **things** to show this.) Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate the term with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [the things that are necessary]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **of the body**
UST any clothing or food

James is speaking of meeting physical needs that also have an emotional and spiritual dimension by association with the way that these are needs of the human **body**. Alternate translation: [for people to be warm and well-fed]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **what {would be} the profit**
UST Then that will be no help to them

James is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement or an exclamation. See how you translated the similar expression in 2:14. Alternate translation: [that does no good!]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **what {would be} the profit**
UST Then that will be no help to them

This is the result of the hypothetical situation that James has been using to teach. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [Then that does no good!]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
peace	Do not worry
profit	Then that will be no help to them

James 2:17

ULT	UST
Thus also the faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.	*Similarly, if you just say that you believe in Jesus but you do not do anything that demonstrates that, you do not really believe in Jesus.*

ULT **the faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead**
UST if you just say that you believe in Jesus but you do not do anything that demonstrates that, you do not really believe in Jesus

James is speaking of **faith** as if it would be a living thing if it had works but not be alive if it did not have them. Alternate translation: [a person's faith is not genuine by itself; he must express it through works]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **the faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead**
UST if you just say that you believe in Jesus but you do not do anything that demonstrates that, you do not really believe in Jesus

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **faith** and **works** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [if a person says he believes in God but he does not do what God wants him to do, then he does not really believe in God]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
faith	if you … say that you believe in Jesus

James 2:18

ULT	UST
But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith from the works.	*But someone might say to you that you have faith, while I have works. He might claim that a person can express his religion through either faith or works and that he does not need to have both. But I would say in response that you cannot show me your faith without works. I, on the other hand, can show you my faith by my works.*

ULT **But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works**
UST But someone might say {to you} that you have faith, while I have works. He might claim that a person can express his religion through either faith or works and that he does not need to have both

See the discussion of this sentence in the Introduction to this chapter. You may want to turn the direct quotation into an indirect quotation to help your readers understand that the **You** who is being addressed is the same "one of you" as in 2:16 and that when James says **I**, he is referring to himself. Alternate translation: [But someone may tell you that you have faith and I have works]
Support Reference: Direct and Indirect Quotations

ULT **But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works**
UST But someone might say {to you} that you have faith, while I have works. He might claim that a person can express his religion through either faith or works and that he does not need to have both

See the discussion of this sentence in the introduction to this chapter. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate more explicitly what this statement means. (UST explains the implications even further than is suggested here.) Alternate translation: [But someone may try to reassure you that you nevertheless have faith, while I, James, have works]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **But someone will say**
UST But someone might say {to you} that … He might claim that a person can express his religion through either faith or works and that he does not need to have both

James is using a hypothetical situation to teach. This expression introduces the condition of the hypothetical situation. (As Part 1 of the General Introduction to James explains, in the style of speakers of this time, James is anticipating an objection that someone might make and saying how he would respond to it.) Alternate translation: [But suppose someone said to you]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **You have faith**
UST you have faith

Here, **You** is singular because James is illustrating how someone might address one individual. James himself then addresses that same individual in the rest of this verse and in verses 19–22. So if your language marks the distinction, use the singular form of "you" in your translation from here through verse 22.
Support Reference: Forms of 'You' — Singular

ULT **Show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith from the works**
UST But I would say in response that you cannot show me your faith without works. I{, on the other hand,} can show you my faith by my works

It may be helpful to make this sentence a direct quotation after an introduction to show that it is what James would say in response to the hypothetical objection. Alternate translation: [Then I would say to you, “Show me your faith without works, and I will show you my faith from works”]
Support Reference: Direct and Indirect Quotations

ULT **Show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith from the works**
UST But I would say in response that you cannot show me your faith without works. I{, on the other hand,} can show you my faith by my works

This is the result of the hypothetical situation that James has been describing. Alternate translation: [Then I would say to you, “Show me your faith without works, and I will show you my faith from works.”]
Support Reference: Hypothetical Situations

ULT **Show me your faith without the works**
UST But I would say in response that you cannot show me your faith without works

James is using the imperative **Show me** to challenge the hypothetical “You” and make him realize that he really cannot do what James is telling him to do. Alternate translation: [You cannot show me your faith without works]
Support Reference: Imperatives — Other Uses

ULT **Show me your faith without the works**
UST But I would say in response that you cannot show me your faith without works

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **faith** and **works** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [you could not show me that you truly believe in God if you are not doing what God wants you to do]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **and I will show you my faith from the works**
UST I{, on the other hand,} can show you my faith by my works

James is using a future statement to indicate something he is capable of doing. Alternate translation: [but I can show you my faith from works]
Support Reference: Statements — Other Uses

ULT **and I will show you my faith from the works**
UST I{, on the other hand,} can show you my faith by my works

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **faith** and **works** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [but by doing what God wants me to do, I can show you that I truly believe in God]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
faith	faith
faith	faith
faith	faith

James 2:19

ULT	UST
You believe that God is one. You do well. The demons also believe, and they tremble.	*Let me illustrate how believing in God without doing what God wants you to do cannot save you. You believe that there is only one true God. You are right to believe that. But the demons also believe that, and they shake with fear because they also know that the one true God is going to punish them.*

ULT **You believe that God is one**
UST Let me illustrate how believing in God without doing what God wants you to do cannot save you. You believe that there is only one true God

The verb translated as **believe** comes from the same root as the word translated as "faith." It may be helpful to your readers to show in your translation that James is continuing to speak to the same person as in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [You have faith that God is one]
Support Reference: Reduplication

ULT **You believe that God is one**
UST Let me illustrate how believing in God without doing what God wants you to do cannot save you. You believe that there is only one true God

As Part 1 of the General Introduction to James explains, the people to whom James was writing were believers in Jesus who had a Jewish background. As a result, they would have known that he was referring here to the essential Jewish affirmation, "Listen, Israel, Yahweh our God is one." Moses says this in Deuteronomy 6:4. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [You believe the essential teaching of Moses that there is one God]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **You do well. The demons also believe, and they tremble**
UST You are right to believe that. But the demons also believe that, and they shake {with fear} because they also know that the one true God is going to punish them

When James says **You do well**, he is saying the opposite of what he really means. He grants that believing in one God is a good thing in itself, but he is actually saying that by itself, it is the kind of faith without works that cannot save a person. He proves this by observing that the demons, who are not saved, also believe that there is one God, and this makes them tremble. Alternate translation: [You may think that is a good thing to do. But the demons also believe in one God, and they tremble]
Support Reference: Irony

ULT **The demons also believe, and they tremble**
UST But the demons also believe that, and they shake {with fear} because they also know that the one true God is going to punish them

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly why the **demons tremble** at the thought of God. Alternate translation: [The demons also believe in one God, and they tremble, knowing that God is going to punish them]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
believe	believe
God	God
demons	demons
believe	believe
tremble	shake

James 2:20

ULT	UST
But do you wish to know, O foolish man, that the faith without the works is idle?	*Also, you foolish person, I will give you proof that if someone says he believes in Jesus but he does not do anything that demonstrates that, then what he says does not help him in any way.*

ULT **But do you wish to know, O foolish man, that the faith without the works is idle**
UST Also, you foolish person, I will give you proof that if someone says he believes in Jesus but he does not do anything that demonstrates that, then what he says does not help him in any way

James is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement. Alternate translation: [But I can show you, O foolish man, that faith without works is idle.]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **do you wish to know**
UST I will give you proof

This is an idiom. It means “I can show you” by suggesting implicitly, “If you really want to know, I can show you.” Alternate translation as a statement: [I can show you]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **O foolish man**
UST you foolish person

James continues to argue with the hypothetical opponent whom he referred to as “someone” in verse 18. Here he addresses him directly as foolish man. He means by this any foolish person who might argue against what James is saying. He is not addressing any particular foolish man. Use a natural expression in your language. Alternate translation: [any of you who are foolish]
Support Reference: Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **O foolish man**
UST you foolish person

James is using the term **man** in a generic sense that could mean any person, male or female. Alternate translation: [you foolish person]
Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **the faith without the works is idle**
UST if someone says he believes in Jesus but he does not do anything that demonstrates that, then what he says does not help him in any way

James is speaking of **faith** as if it were a living thing that would be lazily doing nothing if it did not have works. Alternate translation: [a person’s faith is useless if he does not express it through works] or [a person’s faith is unproductive if he does not express it through works]
Support Reference: Personification

> ULT **the faith without the works is idle**
> UST if someone says he believes in Jesus but he does not do anything that demonstrates that, then what he says does not help him in any way

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **faith** and **works** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [it is useless for a person to say that he believes in God if he does not do what God wants him to do]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

> ULT **the faith without the works is idle**
> UST if someone says he believes in Jesus but he does not do anything that demonstrates that, then what he says does not help him in any way

See the discussion of textual issues at the end of the introduction to this chapter to decide whether to use this reading in your translation or a different reading, [faith without works is dead.] The note below discusses a translation issue in that reading, for those who decide to use it.

Support Reference: Textual Variants

> ULT **the faith without the works is idle**
> UST if someone says he believes in Jesus but he does not do anything that demonstrates that, then what he says does not help him in any way

If the reading “faith without works is dead” is accurate, then James is speaking of **faith** as if it would be alive if it had works but it would not be alive if it did not have them. Alternate translation: [a person’s faith is not genuine if he does not express it through works]

Support Reference: Personification

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	I will give you proof
foolish	foolish
faith	if someone says he believes in Jesus

James 2:21

ULT	UST
Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar?	*Here is the proof. Abraham, from whom we are descended, showed that he was willing to offer his son Isaac to God as a sacrifice if God wanted him to do that. God considered Abraham to be a righteous person because he showed that he would obey him and that proved that he genuinely trusted God.*

> ULT **Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar**
>
> UST Here is the proof. Abraham, from whom we are descended, showed that he was willing to offer his son Isaac {to God} as a sacrifice {if God wanted him to do that}. God considered Abraham to be a righteous person because he showed that he would obey him and that proved that he genuinely trusted God

James is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement. Alternate translation: [Abraham our father was justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

> ULT **Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar**
>
> UST Here is the proof. Abraham, from whom we are descended, showed that he was willing to offer his son Isaac {to God} as a sacrifice {if God wanted him to do that}. God considered Abraham to be a righteous person because he showed that he would obey him and that proved that he genuinely trusted God

James assumes that his readers will know that he is referring to a story recorded in the book of Genesis. In that story, God tells Abraham to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice, but God does not really want Abraham to do that. Rather, God wants Abraham to demonstrate his faith and obedience by showing that he is willing to do it. God ultimately stops Abraham from sacrificing his son Isaac. You could indicate this explicitly if it would be helpful to your readers, particularly if they would not know the story and if they would think that Abraham actually did offer his son as a sacrifice. Alternate translation, as a statement: [Abraham our father was justified by works when he demonstrated that he was willing to obey God even if that meant offering his son Isaac as a sacrifice, although God did not actually want him to do that and God stopped him from doing it]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Was not Abraham our father justified by works**

UST Here is the proof. Abraham, from whom we are descended … God considered Abraham to be a righteous person because he showed that he would obey him and that proved that he genuinely trusted God

See the discussion in Part 2 of the General Introduction to James about how a person is justified before God. James is not saying that Abraham did something that made God consider him righteous. Rather, as James will explain in more detail in the next two verses, God had previously declared Abraham to be righteous because Abraham believed in him. What Abraham did subsequently, when he proved that he was willing to obey God, demonstrated that his faith was genuine. You could indicate this explicitly if it would be helpful to your readers, particularly if they might misunderstand and think that Abraham did something that made God consider him righteous. Alternate translation, as a statement: [God declared Abraham our father to be righteous because what he did demonstrated that he genuinely believed in God]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Was not Abraham our father justified**

UST Here is the proof. Abraham, from whom we are descended … God considered Abraham to be a righteous person

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form, and you can state who did the action. Alternate translation, as a statement: [God justified Abraham our father" or "God declared Abraham our father to be righteous]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **our father**

UST from whom we are descended

James is using the term **father** to mean "ancestor." Alternate translation: [Abraham our ancestor]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **our father**

UST from whom we are descended

James is Jewish, descended from Abraham, and the people to whom he is writing also come from a Jewish background, so the word **our** would be inclusive, if your language marks that distinction.

Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Abraham	Abraham
justified	God considered Abraham to be a righteous person
Isaac	Isaac
altar	as a sacrifice

James 2:22

ULT	UST
You see that the faith was working with his works and the faith was perfected from the works.	*In this way, Abraham obeyed God because he trusted him. When he obeyed him, that helped him trust God completely.*

ULT **You see**
UST In this way

Here, to **see** represents to understand. Alternate translation: [So you should understand]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the faith was working with his works and the faith was perfected from the works**
UST Abraham obeyed God because he trusted him. When he obeyed him, that helped him trust God completely

James is speaking of **faith** and **works** as if they were living things that could work together and help each other. Alternate translation: [Abraham was strengthened to do these works by his faith, and doing these works made his faith even stronger]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **the faith was working with his works and the faith was perfected from the works**
UST Abraham obeyed God because he trusted him. When he obeyed him, that helped him trust God completely

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **faith** and **works** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [Abraham did these things because he believed in God, and because he did these things, he believed in God even more]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the faith was perfected from the works**
UST When he obeyed him, that helped him trust God completely

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [his works perfected his faith]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **the faith was perfected from the works**
UST When he obeyed him, that helped him trust God completely

The verb **perfected** comes from the same root as the adjective “perfect” that James uses several times earlier in this letter. The verb refers similarly to something developing to the point where it is fully suited to its purpose. Alternate translation: [what he did helped his faith become fully mature]
Support Reference: Reduplication

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
faith	he trusted him
faith	trust God
perfected	that helped him … completely

James 2:23

ULT	UST
And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "And Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness," and he was called a friend of God.	*That was how the scripture came true that says, "Because Abraham truly trusted in God, God viewed him as someone who did what was right." Other scriptures say that Abraham was God's friend.*

ULT **the scripture was fulfilled**

UST the scripture came true

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [this fulfilled the scripture]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **And Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness**

UST Because Abraham truly trusted in God, God viewed him as someone who did what was right

This is a quotation from Genesis 15:6. James assumes that his readers will know that it refers to how Abraham responded to God's promise that even though he and his wife were old and had no children, he would have as many descendants as the stars in the sky. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could give an explicit indication of this. Alternate translation: [Abraham believed God's promise that he would have many descendants, and so God considered Abraham to be in a right relationship with him]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **he was called a friend of God**

UST Other scriptures say that Abraham was God's friend

James assumes that his readers will know that in Isaiah 41:8, God refers to the Israelites as "the offspring of Abraham my friend" and that in 2 Chronicles 20:7, in a prayer to God, King Jehoshaphat refers to the Israelites as "the descendants of Abraham your friend." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could give an explicit indication of this. Alternate translation: [he was called a friend of God in later scriptures]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **he was called a friend of God**

UST Other scriptures say that Abraham was God's friend

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form, and you can state who did the action. Alternate translation: [God, speaking through Isaiah, later called him his friend, and in prayer King Jehoshaphat also described him as God's friend]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
fulfilled	came true
scripture	scripture
believed	truly trusted
Abraham	Abraham
God	God
righteousness	as someone who did what was right
God	God’s
called	Other scriptures say that Abraham was

James 2:24

ULT	UST
You see that a man is justified from works and not from faith alone.	*From the example of Abraham, you should recognize that God considers people to be righteous because of what they do, not simply because they trust in him.*

ULT **You see**
UST From the example of Abraham, you should recognize

Here, to **see** represents to understand. Alternate translation: [So you should understand]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **You see**
UST From the example of Abraham, you should recognize

James returns here to the plural usage that he follows in most of the letter. So in your translation, use the plural form of "You" if your language marks that distinction. Other languages may have other ways of indicating the shift back to plural here. Alternate translation: [So all of you should understand]
Support Reference: Forms of You

ULT **a man**
UST people

James is using the term **man** in a generic sense that could mean any person, male or female. Alternate translation: [a person]
Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **is justified**
UST God considers … to be righteous

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [becomes right with God] or [comes to have a right relationship with God]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **from works and not from faith alone**
UST because of what they do, not simply because they trust in him

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **faith** and **works** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [by what he does and not just by what he believes]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

> ULT **from works and not from faith alone**
> UST because of what they do, not simply because they trust in him

See the discussion in Part 2 of the General Introduction to James about how a person is justified before God. James is not saying that we need to add works to our faith in order to be justified. Rather, James is speaking of works that are an expression and proof of the saving faith that a person already has. You could indicate this explicitly if it would be helpful to your readers, particularly if they might misunderstand and think that James is saying that we have to add works to our faith in order for God to consider us righteous. Alternate translation: [by what he does as an expression of what he believes, and not just by what he believes]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
justified	God considers … to be righteous
faith	they trust in him

James 2:25

ULT	UST
And similarly was not Rahab the prostitute also justified from works, having welcomed the messengers and having sent them away by another road?	*Just as he did for Abraham, God also considered Rahab to be righteous because of what she did. She had been a prostitute, but she took care of the messengers Joshua sent to spy out the land. She then helped them to escape by sending them back on a safer road.*

ULT **And similarly was not Rahab the prostitute also justified from works, having welcomed the messengers and having sent them away by another road**

UST Just as he did for Abraham, God also considered Rahab to be righteous because of what she did. She had been a prostitute, but she took care of the messengers {Joshua sent to spy out the land}. She then helped them to escape by sending them back on a safer road

James is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement. Alternate translation: [Rahab the prostitute was also justified similarly from works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them away by another road.]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **similarly was not Rahab the prostitute also justified**

UST Just as he did for Abraham, God also considered Rahab to be righteous because of what she did. She had been a prostitute

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form, and you can state who did the action. Alternate translation: [did not God similarly justify Rahab the prostitute] or [did not God similarly declare Rahab the prostitute to be righteous]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **similarly**

UST Just as he did for Abraham

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what **similarly** means in this context. Alternate translation: [in the same way as Abraham,]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **from works**

UST because of what she did

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **works** with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [by what she did]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **having welcomed the messengers and having sent them away by another road**

UST but she took care of the messengers {Joshua sent to spy out the land}. She then helped them to escape by sending them back on a safer road

James assumes that his readers will know that he is referring to the episode recorded in the book of Joshua in which Joshua sent two spies to explore the land of Canaan. Rahab provided safety and shelter for these spies in her home, and she then sent them away safely by a route that their pursuers would not have expected them to take. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could give an explicit indication of this. Alternate translation: [when she provided shelter and safety in her home for the spies whom Joshua sent to explore the land of Canaan and when she sent these spies safely away by a route that their pursuers would not have expected them to take]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **having sent them away**

UST She … helped them to escape by sending them back

Since there were two **messengers**, the pronoun **them** would be in the dual, if your language uses that form.

Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Rahab	Rahab
prostitute	prostitute
justified	God … considered … to be righteous
welcomed	but she took care of
messengers	messengers

James 2:26

ULT	UST
For just as the body without the spirit is dead, thus also the faith without works is dead.	*All of this illustrates an important truth. Just as a person's body is not alive if he is no longer breathing, in the same way, a person does not really trust in God if he does not express that trust through what he does.*

ULT **For**
UST All of this illustrates an important truth

James is using the word **For** to introduce a general principle that can be deduced from the argument he has been making since 2:14 that **faith** needs to be expressed in **works**. He does not say **For**, which often means "because," to indicate that God justified Abraham and Rahab for this reason. Rather, he is using the word **For** in order to bring his argument to its conclusion. Alternate translation: [These specific cases confirm the general principle that]

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **the body without the spirit is dead**
UST a person's body is not alive if he is no longer breathing

The word translated as **spirit** can also mean "breath." Alternate translation: [a body that does not have the breath of life in it is dead]

ULT **the faith without works is dead**
UST a person does not really trust in God if he does not express that trust through what he does

James is speaking of **faith** as if it would be a living thing if it had works but not be alive if it did not have them. Alternate translation: [a person's faith is not genuine if he does not express it through works]

Support Reference: Personification

ULT **the faith without works is dead**
UST a person does not really trust in God if he does not express that trust through what he does

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **faith** and **works** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [if a person says he believes in God but he does not do what God wants him to do, then he does not really believe in God]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
spirit	breathing
faith	a person does not really trust in God

James 3

James 3 Introduction

James 3 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

1. The need for self-control in speech (3:1–12)
2. Worldly wisdom and heavenly wisdom contrasted (3:13–18)

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Metaphors

In this chapter, James uses many illustrations from everyday life to teach his readers how to live in a way that pleases God. He speaks about horses in 3:3, ships in 3:4, forest fires in 3:5, animal taming in 3:7, springs of water in 3:11, and fruit trees in 3:12. (See: Metaphor)

James 3:1

ULT	UST
Do not become many teachers, my brothers, knowing that we will receive greater judgment.	*My fellow believers, most of you should not desire to become teachers of God's word. As you know, God will judge us teachers more severely than he will judge other people.*

ULT **Do not become many teachers**
UST most of you should not desire to become teachers of God's word

Alternate translation: [Not many of you should become teachers]

ULT **my brothers**
UST My fellow believers

See how you translated the term **brothers** in 1:2. Alternate translation: [my fellow believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **knowing that**
UST As you know

Alternate translation: [since you know that]

ULT **we will receive greater judgment**
UST God will judge us teachers more severely than he will judge other people

James is speaking of himself and other teachers but not of his readers, so the pronoun **we** is exclusive here. Alternate translation: [we who teach will receive greater judgment]
Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **we will receive greater judgment**
UST God will judge us teachers more severely than he will judge other people

By **greater judgment**, James means that God will judge people who teach his word more strictly than he will judge other people. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate explicitly why that is true. Alternate translation: [God will judge us who teach his word more strictly than he will judge other people, because our teaching greatly influences what other people believe and how they live]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
teachers	teachers
knowing	know
judgment	judge
receive	God will judge us teachers

James 3:2

ULT	UST
For we all stumble much. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able to bridle even the whole body.	*I will tell you why most of you should not become teachers. All of us often do things that are wrong. But if anyone is able to avoid saying things that are wrong, he has become the person God intends him to be. He will be able to control all of his actions as well.*

ULT **For**
UST I will tell you why most of you should not become teachers

James is using **For** to introduce the reason why most of his readers should not become teachers, not the reason why God will judge teachers more strictly. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain this reason more fully as a separate sentence, as UST does.
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **we all stumble much**
UST All of us often do things that are wrong

James is using the adjective **much** as an adverb. Alternate translation: [we all stumble in many ways]

ULT **we all stumble much**
UST All of us often do things that are wrong

James is now speaking of himself and other teachers and also of his readers and people in general, so the pronoun **we** is inclusive here. Alternate translation: [everyone stumbles in many ways]
Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **we all stumble much … does not stumble in word**
UST All of us often do things that are wrong … is able to avoid saying things that are wrong

As in 2:10, James is speaking of people sinning as if they would **stumble**, that is, trip and lose their balance while walking. Alternate translation: [we all sin in many ways … does not sin in word]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **If anyone does not stumble in word**
UST But if anyone is able to avoid saying things that are wrong

James is using the term **word** to mean what people say by using words. Alternate translation: [If anyone does not sin in what he says] or [If anyone does not say things that are wrong]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **he {is} a perfect man**
UST he has become the person God intends him to be

As in 1:4 and several other places earlier in this letter, the term **perfect** refers to something that has developed to the point where it is fully suited to its purpose. Alternate translation: [he is a spiritually mature person]

> ULT **able to bridle even the whole body**
> UST He will be able to control all of his actions as well

As in 1:26, James speaks of a person being able to **bridle** himself as if that person were controlling a horse with a bridle. Alternate translation: [able to control his whole body]
Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **able to bridle even the whole body**
> UST He will be able to control all of his actions as well

James speaks of a person's **body** to mean all of that person, including his actions and behavior. Alternate translation: [able to control everything he does]
Support Reference: Synecdoche

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
stumble	do things that are wrong
stumble	is able to avoid saying things that are wrong
perfect	God intends him to be

James 3:3

ULT	UST
Now if we put the bits into the mouths of the horses for them to obey us, we also turn their whole body.	*To illustrate, we can put a small metal bar into the mouth of a horse and use it to make the horse go where we want it to go. When we do that, we can direct the horse's large body just by means of that small device.*

ULT **Now**
UST To illustrate

James uses **Now** to introduce background information in the form of an illustration that will help his readers understand what he wants to teach them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could translate the word with a phrase that shows that James is going to offer an illustration, as UST does.
Support Reference: Connect — Background Information

ULT **we put the bits into the mouths of the horses**
UST we can put a small metal bar into the mouth of a horse … just by means of that small device

These **horses** are large animals that are used in many cultures to transport people and goods, and **bits** are small pieces of metal that are placed into horses' mouths to control where they go. If your readers would not be familiar with **horses** and **bits**, in your translation you could use the name of another animal and a different device, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: [we put pegs into the noses of camels] or [we use small devices on the bodies of large animals]
Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **for them to obey us**
UST and use it to make the horse go where we want it to go

Alternate translation: [so that they will obey us]

ULT **we also turn their whole body**
UST When we do that, we can direct the horse's large body

James means that by using a bit, people can **turn** the body of a horse in whatever direction they want. James is using the action of turning a horse to mean guiding or controlling it in general. Alternate translation: [this enables us to guide their whole body] or [this enables us to control their whole body]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **their whole body**
UST the horse's large body

Since James speaks of **horses** in the plural, it might be more natural in your language to use the plural form of **body**. Alternate translation: [their whole bodies]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
horses	horse

James 3:4

ULT	UST
Behold also the ships, being so large and driven by strong winds, it is turned by the smallest rudder where the inclination of the one steering desires.	*Think about ships too. A ship may be very large and the winds that propel it forward may be very strong. Even so, by using a tiny rudder, the pilot can direct the ship wherever he wants it to go.*

ULT **Behold also the ships**
UST Think about ships too

The term **Behold** focuses the attention of a listener or reader on what a speaker or writer is about to say. Though it literally means “look” or “see,” the term can be used to suggest giving notice and attention, and that is how James is using it here. Alternate translation: [Also consider the case of ships]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **ships … the … rudder**
UST ships … a … rudder

These **ships** are large vessels that are used to transport people or goods by water. A **rudder** is a flat device attached to the back of a ship under water that is used to steer it. If your readers would not be familiar with what **ships** are and what a **rudder** is, in your translation you could use the name of another transportation vehicle and a different device, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: [trucks … steering wheel] or [large vehicles … steering device]
Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **being so large and driven by strong winds**
UST A ship may be very large and the winds that propel it forward may be very strong

It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [Even though they are so large and driven by strong winds]

ULT **being so large and driven by strong winds**
UST A ship may be very large and the winds that propel it forward may be very strong

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [Even though they are so large, and strong winds drive them]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **it is turned by the smallest rudder**
UST Even so, by using a tiny rudder … can direct the ship

James is using the action of turning a ship to mean guiding or controlling the ship in general. (For example, a person might turn a ship in order to keep it upright, not just to direct it to a certain place.) Alternate translation: [it is controlled by the smallest rudder] or [it is guided by the smallest rudder]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **it is turned by the smallest rudder**
UST Even so, by using a tiny rudder … can direct the ship

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [the smallest rudder turns it]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **it is turned by the smallest rudder**
UST Even so, by using a tiny rudder … can direct the ship

Since James speaks of **ships** in the plural, it might be more natural in your language to use the plural in this clause as well. Alternate translation: [they are turned by the smallest rudders] or [the smallest rudders turn them]

ULT **the smallest rudder**
UST a tiny rudder

James says **smallest**, using the superlative form of the adjective "small," to express a meaning of the adjective in its positive form. Your language may use superlative forms in the same way. If not, you could translate this using the positive form. Alternate translation: [a very small rudder]
Support Reference: Hyperbole

ULT **where the inclination of the one steering desires**
UST the pilot … wherever he wants it to go

James speaks of the **inclination** of the person steering a boat as if it were a living thing that desired to go in one direction or another. Alternate translation: [in whatever direction the one steering the boat wants it to go]
Support Reference: Personification

James 3:5

ULT	UST
Thus also the tongue is a small member, but it boasts great things. Behold how small a fire kindles so large a forest.	*Similarly, although our tongues are very small, we use them to brag that we have done great things. Note also that a fire that starts as a small flame can burn up many trees.*

ULT **Thus also**
UST Similarly

James uses the words **Thus also** to introduce a simile or comparison between the human tongue and the small items he discussed in the previous two verses, a horse's bit and a ship's rudder. Alternate translation: [In the same way] or [Likewise]
Support Reference: Simile

ULT **a small member**
UST very small

Alternate translation: [a small part of the body]

ULT **but**
UST although

Here, **but** introduces a contrast between the small size of the tongue and the great things that people use their tongues in speech to boast about.
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **it boasts great things**
UST we use them to brag that we have done great things

James is saying that the **tongue** is a living thing that **boasts**. Alternate translation: [with it people boast great things]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **it boasts great things**
UST we use them to brag that we have done great things

James is using the adjective **great** in the plural as a noun. (ULT adds **things** to show this.) Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate the term with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [with it people boast that they have done great things]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **Behold**
UST Note also that

The term **Behold** focuses the attention of a listener or reader on what a speaker or writer is about to say. Alternate translation: [Consider]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Behold**

UST Note also that

The implication is that James is offering his readers a further analogy. You could include this information if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [Consider as a further example]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **how small a fire kindles so large a forest**

UST a fire that starts as a small flame can burn up many trees

A **forest** is a place where there are many trees. If your readers would not be familiar with what a **forest** is, you could use a different illustration that would be familiar to them of an area that could be destroyed by fire, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: [how a small fire can quickly spread and burn much grassland] or [how a small fire can quickly spread and burn everything in a large area]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
tongue	tongues
member	very small

James 3:6

ULT	UST
The tongue represents also a fire, the world of unrighteousness. The tongue is placed among our members, the thing staining the whole body and setting the course of existence on fire, and it is set on fire by Gehenna.	*Just as a fire burns a forest, when we say bad things, we hurt many people. What we say reveals that there is much evil within us. When we say bad things, this contaminates all that we think and do. It can ruin our whole life. It is Satan himself who influences us to speak what is evil.*

ULT **The tongue {represents} also a fire**
UST Just as a fire burns a forest, when we say bad things, we hurt many people. What we say reveals that

James is using the **tongue** to represent what people say, by association with the way the tongue is used for speech. Alternate translation: [What we say is also a fire]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **The tongue {represents} also a fire**
UST Just as a fire burns a forest, when we say bad things, we hurt many people. What we say reveals that

James is using **fire** as an analogy for the destructive effects of what people say. Alternate translation: [What we say can also be very destructive]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the world of unrighteousness**
UST there is much evil

This is an idiom. The sense is that all the **unrighteousness** in the **world** could be expressed in what someone said. Alternate translation: [a vast source of unrighteousness]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **of unrighteousness**
UST there is … evil

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **unrighteousness** with an equivalent expression. In this context, the term refers to wrong things that people say. Alternate translation: [of sinful sayings]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **is placed among**
UST within us

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this with an active verbal form. Alternate translation: [is in the middle of]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **our members**
UST within us

Alternate translation: [the other parts of our body]

ULT **staining the whole body**
UST this contaminates all that we think and do

James speaks of the effects of speech as if a person's tongue were **staining** his **body**. Alternate translation: [making the whole body impure]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **staining the whole body**
UST this contaminates all that we think and do

James is using the **body** to represent the entire person, since he is saying in this verse that bad speech has morally corrupting effects. Alternate translation: [making the whole person morally corrupt]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **setting the course of existence on fire**
UST It can ruin our whole life

The **course of existence** is an idiom that could refer to: (1) a person's entire life, from birth to death. Alternate translation: [setting a person's entire life on fire]; or (2) succeeding generations. Alternate translation: [setting on fire one generation of people after another]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **setting the course of existence on fire**
UST It can ruin our whole life

James is speaking of the destructive effects of bad speech as if they were **setting** a person's life **on fire**. Alternate translation: [causing destruction throughout a person's entire life]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **it is set on fire by Gehenna**
UST It is Satan himself who influences us to speak what is evil

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this with an active verbal form. Alternate translation: [Gehenna sets it on fire]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **it is set on fire by Gehenna**
UST It is Satan himself who influences us to speak what is evil

James continues to speak of the destructive effects of bad speech as if they were **fire**. Alternate translation: [its destructive effects come from Gehenna]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Gehenna**
UST It is Satan himself

James is using **Gehenna**, where refuse was thrown and fires burned continually, to mean hell. Alternate translation: [hell]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Gehenna**
UST It is Satan himself

Since hell, as a location, would not be able to influence people's speech and conduct, James is likely using the name **Gehenna** to mean the devil by association. Alternate translation: [the devil]

Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
tongue	when we say bad things … What we say reveals that
world	much
of unrighteousness	there is … evil
tongue	When we say bad things
is placed	within us
members	within us
staining	this contaminates
Gehenna	It is Satan himself

James 3:7

ULT	UST
For every kind, both of beasts and birds, both of reptiles and marine animals, is being tamed and has been tamed by the human kind.	*To give another example, people have been able to tame a wide variety of wild animals, birds, reptiles, and animals that live in the water.*

ULT **For**
UST To give another example

James uses **For** to introduce background information in the form of an illustration that will help his readers understand what he wants to teach them. Alternate translation: [Now]
Support Reference: Connect — Background Information

ULT **every kind, both of beasts and birds, both of reptiles and marine animals, is being tamed and has been tamed**
UST have been able to tame a wide variety of wild animals, birds, reptiles, and animals that live in the water

Here, **every** is a generalization for emphasis. Alternate translation: [many different kinds of beasts, birds, reptiles, and marine animals are being tamed and have been tamed]
Support Reference: Hyperbole

ULT **For every kind, both of beasts and birds, both of reptiles and marine animals**
UST To give another example … a wide variety of wild animals, birds, reptiles, and animals that live in the water

If you retain the generalization in your translation, it might be more natural in your language to use the singular for the creatures on this list. Alternate translation: [every kind of beast, bird, reptile, and marine animal]

ULT **For every kind, both of beasts and birds, both of reptiles and marine animals**
UST To give another example … a wide variety of wild animals, birds, reptiles, and animals that live in the water

James is using various categories of creatures to mean every creature. Alternate translation: [every kind of creature that exists]
Support Reference: Merism

ULT **marine animals**
UST animals that live in the water

James is using the adjective **marine** in the plural as a noun. (ULT adds **animals** to show this.) Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate the term with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [sea creatures]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

> ULT **is being tamed and has been tamed by the human kind**
> UST people have been able to tame

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation (place the phrase right after “For”): [the human kind is taming and has tamed]

Support Reference: Active or Passive

> ULT **is being tamed and has been tamed by the human kind**
> UST people have been able to tame

James says both **is being tamed** and **has been tamed** for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them. Alternate translation (place the phrase right after “For”): [the human kind is in the process of taming]

Support Reference: Doublet

> ULT **by the human kind**
> UST people

Alternate translation: [by people]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
beasts	of wild animals

James 3:8

ULT	UST
But no one of men is able to tame the tongue, an unsettled evil, full of deadly poison.	*But no one can control the things he says. The things people say are like a dangerous creature that never stops killing people with its venom.*

ULT **no one of men**
UST no one

James is using the term **men** in a generic sense that includes all people. Alternate translation: [no human being]
Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **to tame**
UST control

By analogy with the animals he discussed in the previous verse, James is using the word **tame** to mean "control." Alternate translation: [to control]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the tongue**
UST the things he says. The things people say are like

James is using the **tongue** to represent what people say, by association with the way the tongue is used for speech. Alternate translation: [what he says]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **an unsettled evil**
UST a dangerous creature that never stops

James is using the adjective **evil** as a noun. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: [an unsettled evil thing]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **an unsettled evil**
UST a dangerous creature that never stops

In this context, the word **unsettled** means "restless." James is speaking of the **tongue** as if it were a living thing that could never rest because it always had to be saying bad things. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: [We are constantly saying evil things]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **full of deadly poison**
UST killing people with its venom

James is using **deadly poison** as an analogy for the destructive effects of what people say. Alternate translation: [and having very destructive effects]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
tongue	the things he says. The things people say are like
evil	a dangerous creature

James 3:9

ULT	UST
With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse the men, the ones having come into being according to the likeness of God.	*We use speech to praise God, who is our Lord and Father. But we also use speech to say that we want bad things to happen to people. That is very wrong, because God made people like himself.*

ULT **With it we bless … and with it we curse**
UST We use speech to praise … But we also use speech to say that we want bad things to happen to … That is very wrong, because

The pronoun **it** refers to the tongue. Alternate translation: [With our tongue we bless … and with our tongue we curse]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **With it we bless … and with it we curse**
UST We use speech to praise … But we also use speech to say that we want bad things to happen to … That is very wrong, because

James is using the **tongue** to represent what people say, by association with the way the tongue is used for speech. Alternate translation: [We use our tongue in speech to bless … and we use our tongue in speech to curse] or [By what we say, we bless … and by what we say, we curse]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **we bless**
UST to praise

In this context, **bless** does not mean to confer a blessing on someone, as a superior would to an inferior. Rather, it means to say good things about someone. Alternate translation: [we say good things about]
Support Reference: Blessings

ULT **the Lord and Father**
UST God, who is our Lord and Father

James is not talking about two different people. He is expressing a single idea by using two nouns connected with **and**. The noun **Father** further identifies **the Lord**. Alternate translation: [the Lord our Father]
Support Reference: Hendiadys

ULT **Father**
UST Father

Father is an important title for God.
Support Reference: Translating Son and Father

ULT **the men**
UST people

James is using the term **men** in a generic sense that includes all people. Alternate translation: [people]
Support Reference: When Masculine Words Include Women

ULT **the ones having come into being according to the likeness of God**
UST God made people like himself

James means implicitly that God created people in his own **likeness**. Alternate translation: [whom God made according to his own likeness]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
bless	to praise
Lord	Lord
Father	Father
curse	to say that we want bad things to happen to … That is very wrong, because
God	himself

James 3:10

ULT	UST
Out from the same mouth come blessing and cursing. It is not fitting, my brothers, for these things to happen thus.	*Someone may use his speech to praise God. But then he will use that same speech to wish that bad things would happen to people. My fellow believers, this should not happen!*

ULT **Out from the same mouth come blessing and cursing**
UST Someone may use his speech to praise God. But then he will use that same speech to wish that bad things would happen to people

By association with the way the mouth is used for speech, James is using the **mouth** to represent what people say. Alternate translation: [The same person speaks blessing and cursing]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **Out from the same mouth come blessing and cursing**
UST Someone may use his speech to praise God. But then he will use that same speech to wish that bad things would happen to people

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **blessing** and **cursing** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [The same person says things to bless God and to curse people]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **blessing**
UST to praise God

See how you translated the word “bless” in 3:9. You may wish to use a similar translation here. Alternate translation: [good sayings]
Support Reference: Blessings

ULT **It is not fitting, my brothers, {for} these things to happen thus**
UST My fellow believers, this should not happen

James is speaking here. Alternate translation: [My brothers, things like this should not happen]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **my brothers**
UST My fellow believers

See how you translated the term **brothers** in 1:2. Alternate translation: [my fellow believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
blessing	to praise God
cursing	to wish that bad things would happen to people

James 3:11

ULT	UST
The spring does not gush the sweet and the bitter from the same opening, does it?	*Surely good-tasting water and bad-tasting water do not come from the same source!*

ULT **The spring does not gush the sweet and the bitter from the same opening, does it**
UST Surely good-tasting water and bad-tasting water do not come from the same source

The first word of this sentence in Greek is a negative word that can be used to turn a statement into a question that expects a negative answer. ULT shows this by adding “does it?” Your language may have other ways of asking a question that expects a negative answer, for example, by changing the word order of a positive statement. Alternate translation: [Does a spring gush the sweet and the bitter from the same opening]

Support Reference: Double Negatives

ULT **The spring does not gush the sweet and the bitter from the same opening, does it**
UST Surely good-tasting water and bad-tasting water do not come from the same source

James is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [A spring does not gush the sweet and the bitter from the same opening!]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **The spring**
UST source

If your readers would not be familiar with a **spring**, you could use the name of something similar in your area, or you could use a more general term. In this context, the term **spring** refers to a spring of water, that is, a flow of water that comes up from a source under the ground. Alternate translation: [A spring of water]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **the sweet and the bitter**
UST good-tasting water and bad-tasting water

James is using the adjectives **sweet** and **bitter** as nouns to refer to types of water. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate these with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [sweet water and bitter water]

Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
spring	source

James 3:12

ULT	UST
A fig tree is not able to make olives, is it, my brothers, or a grapevine, figs? Nor salty to make sweet water.	*My fellow believers, a fig tree cannot produce olives. And a grapevine cannot produce figs. Nor can a salty source produce good water. Similarly, we should speak only what is good, and we should not speak what is evil.*

ULT **A fig tree is not able to make olives, is it, my brothers**
UST My fellow believers, a fig tree cannot produce olives … cannot produce

The first word of this sentence in Greek is a negative word that can be used to turn a statement into a question that expects a negative answer. ULT shows this by adding "is it?" Your language may have other ways of asking a question that expects a negative answer, for example, by changing the word order of a positive statement. Alternate translation: [Is a fig tree able to make olives]

Support Reference: Double Negatives

ULT **A fig tree is not able to make olives, is it, my brothers**
UST My fellow believers, a fig tree cannot produce olives … cannot produce

James is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement. Alternate translation: [A fig tree is not able to make olives]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **A fig tree is not able to make olives, is it, my brothers**
UST My fellow believers, a fig tree cannot produce olives … cannot produce

A **fig tree** is a tree that produces small, sweet fruit. Although **olives** also grow on trees and are technically fruit, they are oily and pungent. If your readers would not be familiar with these kinds of fruit, you could use two other contrasting kinds of fruit as examples, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation (as a statement): [One kind of tree is not able to produce fruit that would grow on a different kind of tree]

Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **my brothers**
UST My fellow believers

See how you translated the term **brothers** in 1:2. Alternate translation: [my fellow believers]

Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **or a grapevine, figs**
UST And a grapevine … figs

James is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from earlier in the sentence. Alternate translation: [or is a grapevine able to make figs]

Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **or a grapevine, figs**
UST And a grapevine … figs

James is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement if you also translated the question in the earlier part of the sentence as a statement. Alternate translation: [and a grapevine is not able to make figs]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **or a grapevine, figs**
UST And a grapevine … figs

A **grapevine** is a woody vine that produces small, juicy fruit. This fruit is quite different from **figs**. If your readers would not be familiar with these kinds of fruit, you could use two other contrasting kinds of fruit as examples, or you could use a general expression. If you already used a general expression earlier in the verse, you could restate it here as a separate sentence for emphasis. Alternate translation: [No, a tree is not able to do that]
Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

ULT **or a grapevine, figs**
UST And a grapevine … figs

James is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from earlier in the verse. Alternate translation: [or is a grapevine able to produce figs]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **Nor salty to make sweet water**
UST Nor can a salty source produce good water. Similarly, we should speak only what is good, and we should not speak what is evil

James concludes his teaching about speech with this final example. It may be helpful after this example to restate the implications of all the examples that James has given in this verse and in the previous verse, as UST does.
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Nor salty to make sweet water**
UST Nor can a salty source produce good water. Similarly, we should speak only what is good, and we should not speak what is evil

James is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from earlier in the verse. Alternate translation: [And water that is salty is not able to produce sweet water]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **salty**
UST a salty source … what is evil

James is using the adjective **salty** as a noun. Since James is speaking of something that can **make** or produce **water**, he is likely speaking of a spring. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [a saline spring]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
fig	fig
olives	olives
a grapevine	a grapevine
figs	figs

James 3:13

ULT	UST
Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show his works from his good conduct in humility of wisdom.	*If any of you are very understanding, you will demonstrate that by living your life properly. Being wise leads us to act gently toward others.*

ULT **Who {is} wise and understanding among you? Let him show**
UST If any of you are very understanding, you will demonstrate

James is not looking for information. He is using the question form to express a condition. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating this as a conditional statement. Alternate translation: [If anyone is wise and understanding among you, let him show]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **wise and understanding**
UST very understanding

The words **wise** and **understanding** mean similar things. James is using them together for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection by translating them with a single expression. Alternate translation: [truly wise]
Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **Let him show his works from his good conduct in humility of wisdom**
UST you will demonstrate that by living your life properly. Being wise leads us to act gently toward others

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **works**, **conduct**, **humility**, and **wisdom** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [Let him show by conducting himself well, and by being humble as a wise person should be, that he does what God wants him to do]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **in humility of wisdom**
UST Being wise leads us to act gently toward others

James is using the possessive form to describe **humility** that comes from **wisdom**. Alternate translation: [in the humility that comes from wisdom] or [with the humble attitude that comes from being wise]
Support Reference: Possession

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
wise	very understanding
understanding	understanding
good	properly
humility	gently
wisdom	wise

James 3:14

ULT	UST
But if you have bitter jealousy and ambition in your heart, do not boast and lie against the truth.	*But if inwardly you grudgingly resent other people and you think you are more important than they are, you should not claim to be wise. That would be saying that what is false is actually true.*

ULT **you have bitter jealousy and ambition in your heart**
UST inwardly you grudgingly resent other people and you think you are more important than they are

James is using the **heart** to represent the thoughts and emotions. Alternate translation: [you have bitterly envious and ambitious thoughts and feelings]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **you have bitter jealousy and ambition in your heart**
UST inwardly you grudgingly resent other people and you think you are more important than they are

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **jealousy** and **ambition** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [in your heart you resent what other people have and you want to be more successful than anyone else]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **your heart**
UST inwardly

Since **you** and **your** are plural in this verse, if you retain the metaphor **heart** in your translation, it might be more natural in your language to use the plural form of that word. Alternate translation: [your hearts]

ULT **do not boast and lie against the truth**
UST you should not claim to be wise. That would be saying that what is false is actually true

Since James says in the previous verse that someone who is truly wise will be humble, he could be saying here that if someone claims to be wise but is jealous and ambitious, he is showing that he is actually not wise. Alternate translation: [then do not boast that you are wise, because that would not be true]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **lie against the truth**
UST what is false is actually true

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **truth** with an adjective such as “true.” Alternate translation: [tell lies that are not true]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

> ULT **lie against the truth**
> UST what is false is actually true

In your language, it might seem that this phrase expresses unnecessary extra information. If so, you could express the same meaning in a different way. Alternate translation: [say things that are not true]

Support Reference: Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
jealousy	you … resent other people

James 3:15

ULT	UST
This is not the wisdom coming down from above, but it is earthly, soulish, demonic.	*People who are envious and selfish are not wise as God wants them to be. Instead, they are thinking and acting like people who do not respect God. They are following their own evil desires. They are doing what demons would do.*

ULT **This**
UST People who are envious and selfish

This refers to the "bitter jealousy and ambition" that James describes in the previous verse. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [This bitter jealousy and ambition]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **the wisdom**
UST wise

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **wisdom** with an adjective such as "wise." Alternate translation: [the wise way of living]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **coming down from above**
UST as God wants them to be

James says **from above**, meaning "from heaven," as a spatial metaphor that means "from God." Alternate translation: [that comes from God] or [that God teaches]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **earthly**
UST they are thinking and acting like people who do not respect God

The word **earthly** refers to the values and behavior of people who do not honor God. James uses the word by association with the way such people live on earth without regard for the values and behavior that are characteristic of heaven. Alternate translation: [not honoring to God]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **soulish**
UST They are following their own evil desires

James is using one part of the human being, the soul, as opposed to another part, the spirit, to mean "unspiritual." The sense could be either that this behavior has no regard for spiritual things or that it does not come from the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: [unspiritual]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **demonic**
UST They are doing what demons would do

Alternate translation: [from demons] or [like the behavior of demons]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
wisdom	wise
earthly	they are thinking and acting like people who do not respect God
demonic	demons

James 3:16

ULT	UST
For where there is jealousy and ambition, there is unsettledness and every wicked deed.	*We can tell that people who are resentful and selfish are not wise, because they do not control themselves. They take part in many different sinful activities.*

ULT **For**
UST We can tell that … are not wise

James is giving the reason for the statement he made in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [It is clear that this is not godly wisdom, because]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **where {there is} jealousy and ambition, there {is} unsettledness and every wicked deed**
UST We can tell that people who are resentful and selfish are not wise, because they do not control themselves. They take part in many different sinful activities

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **envy**, **ambition**, and **unsettledness** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [when people are envious and ambitious, this causes them to act in disorderly and evil ways]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **every wicked deed**
UST many different sinful activities

Here, **every** is a generalization for emphasis. Alternate translation: [many kinds of wicked deeds]
Support Reference: Hyperbole

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
jealousy	people who are resentful
wicked	sinful

James 3:17

ULT	UST
But the wisdom from above first indeed is pure, then peaceable, gentle, cooperative, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial, sincere.	*But the person whom God has taught to be wise is, first of all, morally pure. Such a person also makes peace with others. He is kind to them and gets along with them well. He is generous to people who do not deserve it, and he does practical things to help others. He does not favor one person over another, and he does not pretend to be something that he is not.*

ULT **the wisdom**
UST the person whom … has taught to be wise

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **wisdom** with an adjective such as "wise." Alternate translation: [the wise way of living]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **from above**
UST God

See how you translated this phrase in 3:15. Alternate translation: [that comes from God] or [that God teaches]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **good fruits**
UST he does practical things to help others

James speaks of **good fruits** to mean kind things that people do for others as a result of having wisdom from God. Alternate translation: [good deeds]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **sincere**
UST and he does not pretend to be something that he is not

Alternate translation: [not hypocritical] or [honest] or [truthful]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
wisdom	wise
pure	pure
peaceable	peace
mercy	He is generous to people who do not deserve it
fruits	he does practical things to help others
good	he does practical things to help others

James 3:18

ULT	UST
And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those making peace.	*When people work quietly to help others get along, they can help those others to have good relationships.*

ULT **the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those making peace**
UST people work quietly to help others get along, they can help those others to have good relationships

James speaks of those who **make peace** as if they were sowing seeds, and of righteousness as if it were **fruit** that grew from those seeds. Alternate translation: [those who work in peace to make peace produce righteousness]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those making peace**
UST people work quietly to help others get along, they can help those others to have good relationships

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **righteousness** and **peace** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [those who work peacefully to help people live together peacefully are helping those people to live in the right way]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those making peace**
UST people work quietly to help others get along, they can help those others to have good relationships

If you decide to retain the metaphor of sowing, you could express it with an active verbal form, if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: [those who make peace sow the fruit of righteousness in peace]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
fruit	to have good relationships
righteousness	to have good relationships
peace	quietly
is sown	people work … they can help those others
peace	to help others get along

James 4

James 4 Introduction

James 4 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

1. Worldly desires and the sin and conflict they cause (4:1–12)
2. A warning against boasting about tomorrow (4:13–17)

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Adultery

Writers in the Bible often speak of adultery as a metaphor for people who say they love God but do things that God hates. James uses the same metaphor in 4:4. (See: Metaphor; and godly, godliness, ungodly, godless, ungodliness, godlessness)

James 4:1

ULT	UST
From where are wars and from where are battles among you? Are they not from there, from your lusts, the ones fighting in your members?	*I will tell you why you are fighting among yourselves and quarreling with each other. It is because each of you inwardly desires to do evil things. Those desires lead you to fight in order to be able to do those things.*

ULT **From where {are} wars and from where {are} battles among you**
UST I will tell you why you are fighting among yourselves and quarreling with each other

James is using the terms **wars** and **battles**. Alternate translation: [Where do the conflicts and disputes that you are having come from]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **From where {are} wars and from where {are} battles among you**
UST I will tell you why you are fighting among yourselves and quarreling with each other

James is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement. Alternate translation: [I will tell you where the conflicts and disputes that you are having come from.]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **From where {are} wars and from where {are} battles among you**
UST I will tell you why you are fighting among yourselves and quarreling with each other

The words **wars** and **battles** mean similar things. James is using them together for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection by translating them with a single expression. Alternate translation (as a statement): [I will tell you where the continual conflicts that you are having come from.]
Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **Are they not from there, from your lusts, the ones fighting in your members**
UST It is because each of you inwardly desires to do evil things. Those desires lead you to fight in order to be able to do those things

James is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement. Alternate translation: [This is where they come from: from your lusts, which fight in your members.]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

> ULT **your lusts, the ones fighting in your members**
> UST each of you inwardly desires to do evil things. Those desires lead you to fight in order to be able to do those things

As in 3:6, **members** means "parts of the body." This could mean: (1) the phrase **in your members** indicates the location of the **lusts** that James is describing. He could be saying that the outward fights between members of the community have their origin in inward lusts that lead people to fight for what they want, as he describes in the next verse. If so, he is using the parts of the body to represent a person's thoughts and emotions. Alternate translation: [the lusts inside of you that fight]; or (2) the word translated as **in** means "among." The sense would then be that these **lusts** fight against one part of the person after another, seeking to gain control of the whole person. Since the **lusts** would actually be gaining control over non-physical aspects of a person, such as his will and values, James would once again be using the physical parts of the body to express his meaning. Alternate translation: [your lusts, which fight to control you]; or (3) James is speaking of the community of believers as if it were a body and of individual believers as if they were parts of that body. Alternate translation: [your lusts, which fight against other believers]

Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **your lusts, the ones fighting in your members**
> UST each of you inwardly desires to do evil things. Those desires lead you to fight in order to be able to do those things

In all of the cases that the previous note discusses, James would be speaking of **lusts** as if they were living things that could **fight**. Alternate translation: [the lusts inside of you that cause you to fight to get what you want] or [your lusts, which cause you to value and choose certain things in order to gratify them] or [your lusts, which cause you to fight against other believers]

Support Reference: Personification

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
lusts	desires
fighting	lead you to fight in order to be able to do those things
members	inwardly

James 4:2

ULT	UST
You covet, and you do not have. You kill and envy, and you are not able to obtain. You battle and war. You do not have because you do not ask.	*You desire to have things, but you do not get them. This makes you bitterly resent the people who do have them. But you still do not get what you want, so you quarrel and fight with others. If you pray to God instead for the things you desire, then God will give you what you truly need.*

ULT **You covet, and you do not have. You kill and envy, and you are not able to obtain**
UST You desire to have things, but you do not get {them}. This makes you bitterly resent the people who do have them. But you {still} do not get what you want

In both of these sentences, James is using the word translated as **and** to introduce a contrast between the first and second clauses. Alternate translation: [You covet, but you do not have. You kill and envy, but you are not able to obtain]
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **You covet, and you do not have. You kill and envy, and you are not able to obtain**
UST You desire to have things, but you do not get {them}. This makes you bitterly resent the people who do have them. But you {still} do not get what you want

Your language may require you to specify the objects of **have** and **obtain**. Alternate translation: [You covet, but you do not have what you covet. You kill and envy, but you are not able to obtain the things that you envy]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **You covet, and you do not have. You kill and envy, and you are not able to obtain**
UST You desire to have things, but you do not get {them}. This makes you bitterly resent the people who do have them. But you {still} do not get what you want

These two sentences mean similar things. James is using them together for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them. Alternate translation: [You desperately want things that other people have, but you could not get them]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **You kill and envy**
UST This makes you bitterly resent the people who do have them

James probably does not mean the word **kill** literally. Rather, this could mean: (1) James is using the word in a figurative and spiritual sense to mean “hate.” This usage would reflect the teaching of Jesus and the apostles. Jesus said that the meaning of the commandment “do not kill” also applied to being angry with others and insulting them (Matthew 5:21–22). The apostle John wrote that “everyone who hates his brother is a murderer” (1 John 3:15). Alternate translation: [You hate and envy]; or (2) James is describing someone wanting something so badly that he would almost kill to get it. Alternate translation: [You envy almost to the point of murder]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **You kill and envy**
UST This makes you bitterly resent the people who do have them

James is expressing a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **kill** describes how his readers **envy** what others have. Alternate translation: [you envy hatefully] or [you envy murderously]
Support Reference: Hendiadys

ULT **You battle and war**
UST so you quarrel and fight with others

As in 4:1, James is using the terms **battle** and **war**. Alternate translation: [You engage in disputes and conflicts]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **You battle and war**
UST so you quarrel and fight with others

The words **battle** and **war** mean similar things. James is using them together for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this connection by translating them with a single expression. Alternate translation: [You have continual conflicts]
Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **You do not have because you do not ask**
UST If you pray {to God} instead {for the things you desire}, then God will give you what you truly need

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express more fully what this means. Alternate translation: [You do not get what you want because you do not ask God for it]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
You covet	desire
envy	This makes you bitterly resent the people who do have them

James 4:3

ULT	UST
You ask and you do not receive, because you ask badly, so that you may spend on your lusts.	*But even when you do ask God for things, he does not give them to you, because you are asking with bad motives. You are asking for things just so that you can use them to enjoy yourselves in wrong ways.*

ULT **You ask and you do not receive**
UST But even when you do ask God for things, he does not give them to you

James is using the word translated as **and** to introduce a contrast between these two clauses. Alternate translation: [You ask but you do not receive]
Support Reference: Connect — Contrast Relationship

ULT **you ask badly**
UST you are asking with bad motives. You are asking for things

James does not mean that his readers are asking for things in the wrong way. He means that they are asking for the wrong reason. Alternate translation: [you are asking for the wrong reason]

ULT **so that you may spend on your lusts**
UST just so that you can use them to enjoy yourselves in wrong ways

James says that his readers would **spend** what they acquired on their lusts. Alternate translation: [so that you could gratify your sinful desires]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
receive	he does … give them to you
badly	with bad motives

James 4:4

ULT	UST
You adulteresses! Do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wants to be a friend of the world is made an enemy of God.	*You are being disloyal to God by not obeying him! You must realize that those who behave as evil people do are hostile to God. So if that is how you decide to live, then you will be choosing to be hostile to God.*

ULT **You adulteresses**
UST You are being disloyal to God by not obeying him

Alternate translation: [Adulteresses]

ULT **You adulteresses**
UST You are being disloyal to God by not obeying him

James is describing his readers as married women who have sexual relations with men who are not their husbands. This metaphor is used many places in the Bible to represent unfaithfulness to God. Alternate translation: [You are not being faithful to God]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God**
UST You must realize that those who behave as evil people do are hostile to God

James is using the question form for emphasis and as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [Certainly you know that friendship with the world is enmity with God!]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **the friendship with the world is enmity with God**
UST those who behave as evil people do are hostile to God

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **friendship** and **enmity** by stating the ideas behind them with the concrete nouns “friend” and “enemy.” Alternate translation: [if you are a friend of the world, you are an enemy of God]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **the friendship with the world**
UST those who behave as evil people do

As in 1:27, James is using the term **world** to mean the system of values shared by people who do not honor God. Alternate translation: [friendship with an ungodly value system]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **the friendship with the world**
UST those who behave as evil people do

James is speaking of this ungodly value system as if it were a person with whom someone could be friends. Alternate translation: [living by an ungodly value system]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **is enmity with God**
UST are hostile to God

James probably does not consider that his readers have literally become sworn enemies of God. He is using the term **enmity** to describe how opposed the worldly value system is to the way God wants people to live. Alternate translation: [is contrary to what God wants]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **to be a friend of the world**
UST that is how … to live

See how you translated the term **world** earlier in this verse. Alternate translation: [to be a friend of an ungodly value system]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **to be a friend of the world**
UST that is how … to live

James speaks again of the ungodly value system as if it were a person with whom someone could be friends. Alternate translation: [to live by an ungodly value system]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **is made**
UST then you will be choosing to be

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [makes himself]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **an enemy of God**
UST hostile to God

See how you translated the similar expression earlier in this verse. Alternate translation: [someone who lives in a way contrary to what God wants]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
adulteresses	You are being disloyal to God by not obeying him
know	You must realize
world	those who behave as evil people do
enmity	hostile
God	God
world	that is how
enemy	hostile
God	God
is made	then you will be choosing to be

James 4:5

ULT	UST
Or do you think that the scripture says vainly, "The Spirit whom he caused to live in us longs with jealousy"?	*You must realize that God has purposely told us about this in the Scriptures. There he teaches us that the Spirit he placed in us yearns for us to live our lives in ways that please him.*

ULT **Or do you think that the scripture says vainly**
UST You must realize that God has purposely told us about this in the Scriptures. There he teaches us that

James is using the question form as a teaching tool. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement. (In this context, the term **vainly** means "for no good reason," not "in a conceited way.") Alternate translation: [There is a good reason why the Scripture says]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **the scripture says**
UST God has … told us about this in the Scriptures. There he teaches us that

James is describing the general teaching of the Bible, not referring to a specific passage. In cases like this, your language might use the plural instead of the singular. Alternate translation: [the Scriptures say]

ULT **the scripture says**
UST God has … told us about this in the Scriptures. There he teaches us that

James is speaking of the Bible as if it could speak on its own. Alternate translation: [it is written in the Scriptures] or [we can read in the Scriptures]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **The Spirit whom he caused to live in us longs with jealousy**
UST the Spirit he placed in us yearns for us to live our lives in ways that please him

Here, **Spirit** could mean: (1) the Holy Spirit, who could be the subject of the verb **longs**. The idea of the Spirit being jealous would fit with the adultery metaphor in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [The Spirit whom God has caused to live in us longs for us to live faithfully to God]; or (2) the Holy Spirit, who could be the object of the verb **longs**, in which case God would be the subject of that verb. This interpretation would also fit with the adultery metaphor. Alternate translation: [God longs jealously for us to live by the Spirit whom he has caused to live in us]; or (3) the human spirit, in which case the statement would be repeating what James said in 4:2 about people coveting and envying. Alternate translation: [The spirit that God has caused to live in us longs jealously for things that it does not have]

ULT **whom he caused to live in us**
UST he placed in us

Whatever the interpretation of the entire sentence, the pronoun **he** in this clause refers to God. Alternate translation: [whom God caused to live in us]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
scripture	Scriptures
jealousy	for us to live our lives in ways that please him
Spirit	Spirit

James 4:6

ULT	UST
But he gives greater grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but he gives grace to the humble."	*If we are living in ways that do not please God, he is very kind to us. He will help us live differently if we humbly admit that we have been doing wrong. That is why this teaching is in the Bible: "God does not help those who are proud, but he does help those who are humble."*

ULT **But he gives greater grace**
UST If we are living in ways that do not please God, he is very kind to us

In light of what he says in the previous two verses, James is drawing a contrast between what God might be expected to do and what God actually does. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state the contrast more explicitly. Alternate translation: [But even though God is jealous if we are friends with the world, he does not reject us. Instead, he gives us even more grace to be friends with him]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **But he gives greater grace**
UST If we are living in ways that do not please God, he is very kind to us

The pronoun **he** refers to God. Alternate translation: [But God gives greater grace]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **greater grace**
UST he is very kind to us

The comparative **greater** refers to quantity rather than to size. Alternate translation: [even more grace]

ULT **Therefore it says**
UST That is why this teaching is in the Bible

The pronoun **it** refers to the Scripture, the antecedent from the previous verse. Even though James is now quoting a specific passage, Proverbs 3:34, rather than a general teaching, the reference is to the Bible as a whole. Alternate translation: [Therefore the Scripture says] or [Therefore the Scriptures say]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **it says**
UST this teaching is in the Bible

James is speaking of the Bible as if it could speak on its own. Alternate translation: [it is written in the Scriptures] or [we can read in the Scriptures]
Support Reference: Personification

> ULT **the proud … to the humble**
> UST if we humbly admit that we have been doing wrong … those who are proud … those who are humble

James is using the adjectives **proud** and **humble** as nouns to refer to types of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate these with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [proud people … to humble people]

Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
grace	he is … kind to us
God	God
proud	proud
humble	humble
grace	He will help us live differently … he does help

James 4:7

ULT	UST
Be submitted, therefore, to God. But resist the devil, and he will flee from you.	*So choose humbly to obey God. Firmly determine not to give in to the devil's temptations. This will make the devil give up on trying to tempt you.*

ULT **Be submitted, therefore**
UST So choose humbly to obey

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [Submit, therefore]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **Be submitted, therefore**
UST So choose humbly to obey

James is giving the reason for the result he described in the previous verse. Alternate translation: [Because God gives grace to the humble, be submitted] or [Because God gives grace to the humble, submit]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **But resist the devil, and he will flee from you**
UST Firmly determine not to give in to the devil's temptations. This will make the devil give up on trying to tempt you

James is using the word translated as **and** to describe a result. Alternate translation: [But resist the devil. If you do, then he will flee from you]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **resist the devil**
UST Firmly determine not to give in to the devil's temptations

Alternate translation: [resolve not to do what the devil wants]

ULT **he will flee from you**
UST the devil give up on trying to tempt you

James is speaking of the devil as if he would run away from a believer who resisted him after humbling himself before God. Alternate translation: [he will stop trying to get you to do what he wants]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
submitted	choose humbly to obey
God	God
devil	devil's

James 4:8

ULT	UST
Come near to God and he will come near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, double-minded.	*Be honest and open with God. If you do, he will welcome you into his presence. You who are sinners, turn away from doing what is wrong and do only what is right. You who cannot decide whether you will commit yourselves to God, stop thinking wrong thoughts and think only right thoughts.*

ULT **Come near to God and he will come near to you**
UST Be honest and open with God. If you do, he will welcome you into his presence

James is using the word translated as **and** to describe a result. Alternate translation: [If you come near to God, then he will come near to you]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **Come near to God and he will come near to you**
UST Be honest and open with God. If you do, he will welcome you into his presence

James is using a spatial metaphor to describe two people in a good relationship as if they were **near** to one another. Alternate translation: [Do your part to have a good relationship with God, and you will find that God also wants to have a good relationship with you]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Cleanse your hands**
UST turn away from doing what is wrong and do only what is right

James is using the image of washing hands to describe a person removing sin from his life. Alternate translation: [Stop sinning]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **Cleanse your hands**
UST turn away from doing what is wrong and do only what is right

James is using the word **hands** to mean actions, by association with the way people use their hands to do things. Alternate translation: [Stop doing things that are wrong]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **purify your hearts**
UST stop thinking wrong thoughts and think only right thoughts

James says **hearts** to mean people's thoughts and desires. Alternate translation: [purify your thoughts and desires]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **purify your hearts**
UST stop thinking wrong thoughts and think only right thoughts

The term **purify** refers to a ceremonial cleansing that allows a person to participate in religious activities. James is speaking as if his readers' **hearts** could be cleansed in this way. Alternate translation: [make sure you are not thinking or desiring anything wrong]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **double-minded**
UST You who cannot decide whether you will commit yourselves to God

James is using the adjective **double-minded** as a noun to refer to a type of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [double-minded people]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **double-minded**
UST You who cannot decide whether you will commit yourselves to God

Alternate translation: [you double-minded people]

ULT **double-minded**
UST You who cannot decide whether you will commit yourselves to God

See how you translated the same expression in 1:8. James is speaking of his readers as if they had two minds, with one mind deciding to do one thing and the other mind deciding to do something else. Alternate translation: [you people who cannot decide whether to obey God or not]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
God	God
sinners	sinners
purify	stop thinking wrong thoughts and think only right thoughts
double-minded	You who cannot decide whether you will commit yourselves to God

James 4:9

ULT	UST
Be miserable and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be changed into mourning, and your joy into gloom.	*Show sorrow and be sad and weep because of the wrong things that you have done. You have been enjoying yourselves, but you should be serious and realize how much you need to change.*

ULT **Be miserable and mourn and weep**
UST Show sorrow and be sad and weep because of the wrong things that you have done

These three verbs have similar meanings. James is using them together to emphasize how sorry his readers should be. Alternate translation: [Be extremely sorry]
Support Reference: Doublet

ULT **Be miserable and mourn and weep**
UST Show sorrow and be sad and weep because of the wrong things that you have done

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what James is telling his readers to be sorry for. Alternate translation: [Be extremely sorry for not obeying God]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Let your laughter be changed into mourning, and your joy into gloom**
UST You have been enjoying yourselves, but you should be serious and realize how much you need to change

In the second part of this sentence, James leaves out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from the first part of the sentence. Alternate translation: [Let your laughter be changed into mourning, and let your joy be changed into gloom]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **Let your laughter be changed into mourning, and your joy into gloom**
UST You have been enjoying yourselves, but you should be serious and realize how much you need to change

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this with active verbal forms. Alternate translation: [Let your laughter become mourning, and let your joy become gloom]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **Let your laughter be changed into mourning, and your joy into gloom**
UST You have been enjoying yourselves, but you should be serious and realize how much you need to change

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **laughter**, **mourning**, **joy**, and **gloom** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [Stop laughing and be sad. Stop being joyful and be gloomy]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

> ULT **Let your laughter be changed into mourning, and your joy into gloom**
> UST You have been enjoying yourselves, but you should be serious and realize how much you need to change

These two clauses mean similar things. James is using them together for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them. Alternate translation: [Stop being so carefree. Show genuine sorrow]

Support Reference: Parallelism

> ULT **Let your laughter be changed into mourning, and your joy into gloom**
> UST You have been enjoying yourselves, but you should be serious and realize how much you need to change

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly why James is telling his readers to show such sorrow. Alternate translation: [Stop being so carefree and show genuine sorrow for your sin]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
mourn	be sad
mourning	but you should be serious and realize how much you need to change
joy	You have been enjoying yourselves

James 4:10

ULT	UST
Be humbled before the Lord, and he will lift you up.	*Humbly show the Lord how sorry you are for your sins. If you do that, he will honor you.*

ULT Be humbled before the Lord, and he will lift you up
UST Humbly show the Lord how sorry you are for your sins. If you do that, he will honor you

James is using the word translated as **and** to describe a result. Alternate translation: [If you are humbled before the Lord, then he will lift you up]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT Be humbled
UST Humbly show … how sorry you are for your sins

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [Humble yourselves]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT before the Lord
UST Humbly show the Lord how sorry you are for your sins

The word **before** means "in front of" or "in the presence of" another person. While in one sense God is present everywhere, the believers to whom James is writing are not in the direct physical presence of God, so he likely means this expression in a figurative sense. He is referring to the attitude they should have towards God. Alternate translation: [in your attitude towards God]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT he will lift you up
UST he will honor you

James is speaking as if his readers would humbly kneel down or bow down in front of God to show their repentance and as if God would have them stand up to show that he accepted them. Alternate translation: [he will show that he accepts you]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
humbled	Humbly show … how sorry you are for your sins
Lord	Lord
he will lift … up	he will honor

James 4:11

ULT	UST
Do not speak against one another, brothers. The one speaking against a brother or judging his brother speaks against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge.	*My fellow believers, stop accusing one another of doing wrong. Anyone who accuses and condemns a fellow believer is really accusing and condemning God's commandment that we should love one another. But if you speak against that commandment, you are not obeying it. Instead, you are acting like a judge who condemns it.*

ULT **Do not speak against one another**
UST stop accusing one another of doing wrong

Alternate translation: [Do not say bad things about one another]

ULT **brothers … a brother … his brother**
UST My fellow believers … a fellow believer

See how you translated the term **brothers** in 1:2. Alternate translation: [my fellow believers … a fellow believer … his fellow believer]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **speaks against the law and judges the law**
UST is really accusing and condemning God's commandment that we should love one another

By **the law**, James means the same thing that he calls the "royal law" in 2:8 and the "law of freedom" in 1:25 and 2:12. That is, he means the commandment "you will love your neighbor as yourself." James is teaching his readers that by saying or assuming that their fellow believers were doing wrong things, they were not following this commandment and they were treating the commandment as if it were not important to follow. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. See how you translated the term "neighbor" in 2:8. Alternate translation: [contradicts the law that says to love other people as oneself and judges that law to be unimportant]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law**
UST if you speak against that commandment, you are not obeying it … it

The word **you** is singular in these two cases because even though James is addressing a group of people, he is describing an individual situation.
Support Reference: Singular Pronouns that refer to Groups

ULT **you are not a doer of the law, but a judge**
UST you are not obeying it. Instead, you are acting like a judge who condemns it

In the second phrase, James is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from the first phrase. Alternate translation: [you are not a doer of the law, but you are a judge of the law]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

> ULT **you are not a doer of the law, but a judge**
> UST you are not obeying it. Instead, you are acting like a judge who condemns it

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state more explicitly what this means. See how you translated the similar phrase at the end of the previous sentence. Alternate translation: [instead of loving other people, you are saying that it is not important to love them]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
judging	condemns
law	God's commandment that we should love one another
judges	condemning
law	God's commandment that we should love one another
law	that commandment
judge	you speak against
law	it … it
judge	judge

James 4:12

ULT	UST
There is one lawgiver and judge, the one being able to save and to destroy. But who are you, the one judging your neighbor?	*The only one who can judge people according to the law is the one who gave the law. That is God, who is able not just to condemn people for breaking the law but also to pardon them even though they have broken the law. You certainly are not entitled to take God's place and judge others.*

ULT **There is one lawgiver and judge**
UST The only one who can judge people {according to the law} is the one who gave the law

Alternate translation: [The lawgiver and judge are the same person]

ULT **the one being able to save and to destroy**
UST That is God, who is able not just to condemn people {for breaking the law} but also to pardon them even though they have broken the law

James uses this phrase, which identifies God by two of his attributes, to clarify whom he means by **one lawgiver and judge**. Alternate translation: [God, who is able to save and to destroy]
Support Reference: Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

ULT **But who are you, the one judging your neighbor**
UST You certainly are not entitled to take God's place and judge others

James is using the question form to challenge and teach his readers. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [But you have no right to judge a neighbor!]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **But who are you**
UST You certainly are not entitled to take God's place

For emphasis, James includes the pronoun **you** even though it is not required with the verb. If your language does not ordinarily require pronouns with verbs but it can include them for emphasis, it would be appropriate to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may be able to convey this emphasis in other ways, such as by repeating the pronoun. Alternate translation: [But you, who are you]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **who are you**
UST You certainly are not entitled to take God's place

As in the previous verse, James is using the singular form of **you** because even though he is addressing a group of people, he is describing an individual situation.
Support Reference: Singular Pronouns that refer to Groups

> ULT **your neighbor**
> UST others

See how you translated the term **neighbor** in 2:8. Alternate translation: [another person]
Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
judge	judge
save	to pardon them even though they have broken the law
judging	judge
neighbor	others

James 4:13

ULT	UST
Come now, you ones saying, "Today or tomorrow we will travel to this city and do a year there and trade and gain."	*Some of you are arrogantly saying, "Today or tomorrow we will go to a certain city. We will spend a year there and we will buy and sell things and earn a lot of money." Now you listen to me!*

ULT **Come now**
UST Now you listen to me

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: [Now listen]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **you ones saying**
UST Some of you are {arrogantly} saying

Alternate translation: [you who say]

ULT **we will travel**
UST we will go

These people are speaking only of themselves, so the pronoun **we** is exclusive here.
Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **this city**
UST a certain city

This is an idiom. No specific city is intended. Your language may have a comparable idiom that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [such-and-such a city]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **do a year there**
UST We will spend a year there

This is another idiom. Alternate translation: [stay there for a year]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **gain**
UST earn a lot of money

Alternate translation: [make a profit]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
year	year
gain	earn a lot of money

James 4:14

ULT	UST
You who do not know the thing of the tomorrow, of what sort is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little while and then disappears.	*You should not talk like that, because you do not know what will happen tomorrow. In fact, you do not even know how long you will live! After all, your life is short, like a mist that is visible briefly but then vanishes.*

ULT **You who do not know the thing of the tomorrow, of what sort {is} your life**

UST You should not talk like that, because you do not know what will happen tomorrow. In fact, you do not even know how long you will live

James is using the question form to challenge and teach his readers. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating his words as a statement or an exclamation. Alternate translation: [You do not know what will happen tomorrow, and you may not even be alive then!]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **For you are a mist that appears for a little {while} and then disappears**

UST After all, your life is short, like a mist that is visible briefly but then vanishes

James is speaking of his readers as if they were a **mist** that forms briefly in the morning but then quickly dissipates when the sun rises. In your translation you could explain the meaning of this image, or you could represent it as a simile, as UST does. Alternate translation: [For you will only be alive for a short time, and then you will die]

Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	know

James 4:15

ULT	UST
Instead, you should say, "If the Lord wishes, we will both live and do this or that."	*Instead of what you are saying, you should say, "If the Lord is willing, we will still be alive and we will be able to do one thing or another."*

ULT **we will both live and do**
UST we will still be alive and we will be able to do

James is using a construction that puts the word "and" before two things that would both be the case, more literally "and we will live and we will do." Your language may have a similar construction that you could use here. If not, it may not be necessary for you to translate the first occurrence of "and," which ULT represents as **both**. (The term **both** in ULT does not mean "the two of us.") Alternate translation: [we will live and we will do]

ULT **we will both live and do**
UST we will still be alive and we will be able to do

These people would be speaking only of themselves, so the pronoun **we** is exclusive.
Support Reference: Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

ULT **this or that**
UST one thing or another

This is an idiom. No specific actions are intended. Your language may have a comparable idiom that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: [such-and-such]
Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Lord	Lord

James 4:16

ULT	UST
But now you are boasting in your pretensions. All such boasting is evil.	*But what you are doing is bragging about all the things you plan to do. That kind of bragging is sinful.*

ULT **you are boasting in your pretensions. All such boasting is evil**
UST bragging about all the things you plan to do. That kind of bragging is sinful

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **pretensions** and **boasting** (the second occurrence of the word in ULT) by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [you are boasting about what you presume you will be able to do. It is always wrong to boast like that]

Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
pretensions	all the things … plan to do
evil	sinful

James 4:17

ULT	UST
Therefore to the one having known to do good and not doing it, to him it is sin.	*So if anyone does not do something even though he knows it is the right thing that he should do, he has committed a sin.*

ULT **Therefore to the one having known to do good and not doing {it}, to him it is sin**
UST So if anyone does not do something even though he knows it is the right thing that he should do, he has committed a sin

James is using the word **Therefore** to describe a further inference rather than a conclusion. He is saying that if it is wrong to plan to do things without knowing whether God wants you to do them, then it is also wrong not to do things that you do know God wants. Alternate translation: [From this we can also recognize that if someone does know what God wants him to do but he does not do it, then he is also sinning]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
known	knows
good	right
sin	sin

James 5

James 5 Introduction

James 5 Chapter Introduction

Structure and Formatting

1. Rebuke of rich people (5:1–6)
2. Waiting patiently for the Lord's return (5:7–11)
3. Oaths forbidden (5:12)
4. Prayer, forgiveness, and healing (5:13–18)
5. Restoration of a sinner (5:19–20)

Religious and Cultural Concepts in This Chapter

Living for eternity

The first section of this chapter, which is a warning to rich people, contrasts living for things of this world, which will not last, with living for things that will last for eternity. The second section of the chapter is related to that first section. In it, James stresses that it is important to live with the expectation that Jesus will return soon. (See: eternity, everlasting, eternal, forever)

Oaths

In 5:12, James tells his readers not to swear any oaths. However, biblical scholars are divided over whether James intends to teach literally that all oaths are wrong. Some scholars believe that some oaths are permissible and that James is emphasizing how Christians should have integrity in what they say.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Elijah

The illustration that James gives from the life of the prophet Elijah in 5:17–18 may be difficult for your readers to appreciate if the books of 1 and 2 Kings have not yet been translated. See the first note to 5:17 for a suggestion about how to help your readers understand this illustration better.

James 5:1

ULT	UST
Come now, the rich, weep, wailing because of your coming miseries.	*Now I have something to say to you rich people who say you believe in Jesus. Listen to me! You should weep and wail loudly because you are going to experience terrible troubles!*

ULT **Come now**
UST Now I have something to say to … Listen to me

This is an idiom. See how you translated it in 4:13. Alternate translation: [Now listen]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **the rich**
UST you rich people who say you believe in Jesus

Alternate translation: [you who are rich]
Support Reference: Forms of 'You' — Singular

ULT **the rich**
UST you rich people who say you believe in Jesus

James is using the adjective **rich** as a noun to refer to a type of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [you people who are rich]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the rich**
UST you rich people who say you believe in Jesus

James is most likely addressing believers who are **rich**, or at least rich people who were attending assemblies of believers, rather than unbelievers who are rich or rich people in general. (This letter was meant to be read aloud in those assemblies, and James notes in 1:10 that some of the believers were rich.) If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: [you believers who are rich] or [you rich people who say you want to follow Jesus]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **because of your coming miseries**
UST because you are going to experience terrible troubles

Your language may similarly speak of something that is going to happen in the future as if it were **coming**. If it does not, you could express this in another way. Alternate translation: [because of the miseries you will soon experience]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **because of your coming miseries**
UST because you are going to experience terrible troubles

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **miseries** with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [because many bad things are going to happen to you soon]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

James 5:2

ULT	UST
Your wealth has rotted and your clothes have become moth-eaten.	*Your wealth is worthless, as though it were rotten. Your fine clothes are worthless, as though moths had ruined them.*

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine 5:2 and 5:3 into a verse bridge. You could put the last sentence of 5:3 first, followed by all of 5:2 and then the rest of 5:3. This would allow you to address several translation issues that are discussed in the notes to this verse and the next verse.
Support Reference: Verse Bridges

> ULT **Your wealth has rotted and your clothes have become moth-eaten**
> UST Your wealth is worthless, as though it were rotten. Your fine clothes are worthless, as though moths had ruined them

James is using the past tense to refer to things that will happen in the future. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the future tense in your translation. Alternate translation: [Your wealth is going to rot and your clothes are going to be eaten by moths]
Support Reference: Predictive Past

> ULT **Your wealth has rotted and your clothes have become moth-eaten**
> UST Your wealth is worthless, as though it were rotten. Your fine clothes are worthless, as though moths had ruined them

In these two clauses and in the first clause in the next verse (“your gold and silver have been tarnished”), James is using certain things that these rich people own to mean everything that they own. If you create a verse bridge, you could combine all of these clauses into a single sentence that expresses this meaning. (You would need to begin a new sentence right afterwards.) Alternate translation: [Everything of value that you own is going to be ruined]
Support Reference: Synecdoche

> ULT **Your wealth has rotted and your clothes have become moth-eaten**
> UST Your wealth is worthless, as though it were rotten. Your fine clothes are worthless, as though moths had ruined them

Depending on the meaning of the statement “you have stored up in the last days” in the next verse (See: the note to that statement), James may be saying that the **wealth** and expensive clothing of the rich have become worthless. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly, as UST does.
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **Your wealth has rotted and your clothes have become moth-eaten**
> UST Your wealth is worthless, as though it were rotten. Your fine clothes are worthless, as though moths had ruined them

If you decide to indicate explicitly that James is saying that the **wealth** and expensive clothing of the rich have become worthless, you could do that by expressing his past-for-future statement as a simile, as UST does.
Support Reference: Simile

James 5:3

ULT	UST
Your gold and silver have been tarnished, and their rust will be for a testimony against you and it will eat your flesh like fire. You have stored up in the last days.	*Your gold and silver are worthless, as though they were corroded. When God judges you, this worthless wealth of yours will be evidence that you are guilty of being greedy. Just as rust and fire destroy things, God will severely punish you. You should not have been trying to get richer and richer knowing that Jesus was going to return. When he returns, your riches will be worthless.*

ULT **Your gold and silver have been tarnished**
UST Your gold and silver are worthless, as though they were corroded

James is using the past tense to refer to something that will happen in the future. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the future tense in your translation. Alternate translation: [Your gold and silver are going to be tarnished]
Support Reference: Predictive Past

ULT **Your gold and silver have been tarnished**
UST Your gold and silver are worthless, as though they were corroded

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [Your gold and silver have tarnished] or [Your gold and silver are going to tarnish]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **Your gold and silver have been tarnished**
UST Your gold and silver are worthless, as though they were corroded

Depending on the meaning of the statement **You have stored up in the last days** (See: the first note to that statement below), James may be saying that the **gold and silver** of the rich have become worthless. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly, as UST does.
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **Your gold and silver have been tarnished**
UST Your gold and silver are worthless, as though they were corroded

If you decide to indicate explicitly that James is saying that the **gold and silver** of the rich have become worthless, you could do that by expressing his past-for-future statement as a simile, as UST does.
Support Reference: Simile

ULT **and their rust will be for a testimony against you**
UST When God judges you, this worthless wealth of yours will be evidence that you are guilty of being greedy … rust

If you created a verse bridge and you also combined the statement "your gold and silver have been tarnished" with the two clauses in 5:2, it would be helpful to begin a new sentence here and to use a general expression that would apply to everything that these rich people own. Alternate translation: [The ruins of your possessions will be for a testimony against you] or [The ruins of your possessions will testify against you]
Support Reference: Verse Bridges

ULT **their rust will be for a testimony against you**
UST When God judges you, this worthless wealth of yours will be evidence that you are guilty of being greedy … rust

James is speaking of this **rust** as if it would be presented as evidence in a case against the rich people. Alternate translation: [the rust on your gold and silver will show that you did the wrong thing]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **their rust will be for a testimony against you**
UST When God judges you, this worthless wealth of yours will be evidence that you are guilty of being greedy … rust

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what wrong thing these rich people have done, as evidenced by this **rust**. Alternate translation: [the rust of your gold and silver will show that you have done the wrong thing by devoting yourselves to accumulating wealth rather than to helping other people]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

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ULT **it will eat your flesh like fire**
UST Just as … and fire destroy things, God will severely punish you

James is using the word **flesh** to mean the human body, by association with the way the body is made of flesh. Alternate translation: [it will eat your bodies]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **it will eat your flesh like fire**
UST Just as … and fire destroy things, God will severely punish you

James is saying that this **rust** will corrode and consume the owners of the **gold and silver** that it is also corroding. Alternate translation: [it will consume you] or [it will ruin you]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **like fire**
UST Just as … and fire

It may be helpful to express the meaning of this simile more fully. Alternate translation: [just as fire consumes everything that it burns] or [just as fire ruins everything that it burns]
Support Reference: Simile

ULT **You have stored up in the last days**
UST You should not have been trying to get richer and richer knowing that Jesus was going to return. When he returns, your riches will be worthless

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state explicitly what these rich people have **stored up** and why it was wrong for them to do that. This could mean: (1) they have accumulated riches in the **last days**, that is, in the time just before Jesus returns. That would be wrong because once Jesus returns, earthly riches will no longer have any value. Instead of trying to get more and more wealth, these people should have been helping others with what they had. Alternate translation: [Instead of helping others, you have wrongly stored up wealth at a time when earthly riches are about to lose all of their value]; or (2) by their wrongdoing, such as he describes in 5:4–6, these rich people have **stored up** punishment for themselves. Alternate translation: [God is just about to punish wrongdoers, and you have given God many reasons to punish you]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **You have stored up in the last days**
UST You should not have been trying to get richer and richer knowing that Jesus was going to return. When he returns, your riches will be worthless

If the first interpretation of this statement in the note just above is correct, then James is giving the reason for the results that he describes in the previous verse and in the earlier part of this verse. If you created a verse bridge as described in the first note to 5:2, you could put this reason before the result by placing this statement first in that bridge.

Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **the last days**
UST knowing that Jesus was going to return. When he returns, your riches will be worthless

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: [the time just before Jesus returns]

Support Reference: Idiom

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
gold	gold
silver	silver
testimony	evidence
days	knowing that Jesus was going to return. When he returns, your riches will be worthless
last days	knowing that Jesus was going to return. When he returns, your riches will be worthless

James 5:4

ULT	UST
Behold, the pay of the workers who have reaped your fields, which has been withheld by you, is crying out, and the cries of the ones harvesting have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.	*Think about what you have done. You did not pay the wages you promised to the workers who harvested your fields. These unpaid wages show how unfair you were to these workers. They are crying out to God because of the way you have treated them. The Lord is a God of great power, and he is listening to their loud cries and he will punish you for what you have done.*

ULT **Behold, the pay of the workers**
UST Think about what you have done … the wages … to the workers … These unpaid wages

The term **Behold** focuses the attention of a listener or reader on what a speaker or writer is about to say. It may be helpful to express its meaning as a separate sentence here. Alternate translation: [Consider this! The pay of the workers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the pay of the workers who have reaped your fields, which has been withheld by you, is crying out**
UST You did not pay the wages you promised to the workers who harvested your fields. These unpaid wages show how unfair you were to these workers

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express it with an active form. When James says **by you**, he means that the rich owners of these **fields** are the ones who have withheld this payment. It was due from them, but they have not paid it to their **workers**. Alternate translation: [the pay that you have withheld from the workers who reaped your fields is crying out]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **is crying out**
UST show how unfair you were to these workers

James is speaking of this **pay** as if it were a living thing that could cry out. Alternate translation: [is obvious evidence that you have done wrong]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **the cries of the ones harvesting have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth**
UST They are crying out to God because of the way you have treated them. The Lord is a God of great power, and he is listening to their loud cries and he will punish you for what you have done

James is speaking of the **ears** of the Lord to mean his hearing. Alternate translation: [the Lord of Sabaoth has heard the cries of the harvesting ones]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **of the Lord of Sabaoth**
UST to God … The Lord is a God of great power … and he will punish you for what you have done

James assumes that his readers will know that he is speaking of God by a name by which he is often known in the Old Testament. The Hebrew term **Sabaoth** means "military forces." Alternate translation: [God, the Lord of the Heavenly Armies]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **of the Lord of Sabaoth**
UST to God … The Lord is a God of great power … and he will punish you for what you have done

James may be speaking of God's almighty power by association with the way that God has all the armies of heaven at his command. Alternate translation: [God, the Lord Almighty]
Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
of the workers	to the workers
reaped	harvested
crying out	show how unfair you were to these workers
harvesting	They
of the Lord of Sabaoth	to God … The Lord is a God of great power … and he will punish you for what you have done

James 5:5

ULT	UST
You have lived luxuriously on the earth and have lived self-indulgently. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.	*You have bought all the luxuries you wanted for yourselves. Just as cattle fatten themselves, not realizing that they will be slaughtered, you have lived just to enjoy things, not realizing that God will severely punish you.*

ULT **You have lived luxuriously on the earth and have lived self-indulgently**
UST You have bought all the luxuries you wanted for yourselves

These two phrases mean similar things. James is using them together for emphasis. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine them. Alternate translation: [You have indulged yourselves with earthly luxuries]
Support Reference: Parallelism

ULT **You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter**
UST Just as cattle fatten themselves, not realizing that they will be slaughtered, you have lived just to enjoy things, not realizing that God will severely punish you

James is speaking of these rich people as if they were cattle that had been fed luxuriously on grain so they would become **fattened** for **slaughter** as banqueting food. In this case the banquet is not a positive image, as it often is elsewhere when it describes God's future reign. Alternate translation: [Your self-indulgence has made you subject to harsh judgment]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter**
UST Just as cattle fatten themselves, not realizing that they will be slaughtered, you have lived just to enjoy things, not realizing that God will severely punish you

James is speaking of the heart as the center of human desire. Alternate translation: [You have indulged your desires]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **in a day**
UST not realizing that they will be slaughtered … not realizing that God will severely punish you

James is using the term **day** to refer to a particular time. Alternate translation: [at a time]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **in a day of slaughter**
UST not realizing that they will be slaughtered … not realizing that God will severely punish you

James is using the idea of **slaughter** to refer to God's judgment. Alternate translation: [at a time when God is about to judge everyone for what they have done]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
earth	You have bought all the luxuries you wanted for yourselves
day	not realizing that they will be slaughtered … not realizing that God will severely punish you
slaughter	slaughtered

James 5:6

ULT	UST
You have condemned, you have killed the righteous. He does not resist you.	*You have arranged for others to condemn honest people. You have arranged for others to kill people who had not done anything wrong. They were not able to defend themselves against you. But God will judge and punish you for doing all these things.*

ULT **You have condemned, you have killed the righteous**
UST You have arranged for others to condemn honest people. You have arranged for others to kill people who had not done anything wrong

James probably does not mean that these rich people have done these things personally. He is likely referring to the kind of actions he described in 2:6, where he told how rich people "overpower" the poor by taking them to court. He may mean that the rich people have gotten the courts to condemn innocent people and in some cases even to execute them. He could also mean that the rich people have gotten the courts to decide lawsuits in their favor and that as a result, some poor people have died because of the great poverty this caused them. James would be speaking of the rich people as the ones who did these actions, using them to represent all the people who were involved. Alternate translation: [You have gotten the courts to condemn and even execute innocent people] or [You have gotten the courts to decide lawsuits in your favor and, as a result, innocent people have died from poverty]
Support Reference: Synecdoche

ULT **the righteous**
UST honest people … people who had not done anything wrong

James is using the adjective **righteous** as a noun to refer to a type of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [the righteous person] or [the innocent person]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the righteous**
UST honest people … people who had not done anything wrong

The expression **the righteous** refers to righteous people in general, not to one specific person. Alternate translation: [righteous people] or [innocent people]
Support Reference: Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **He does not resist you**
UST They were not able to defend themselves against you. But God will judge and punish you for doing all these things

This could mean: (1) the innocent people are not able to resist what the rich people are doing. Alternate translation: [He is not able to resist you]; or (2) the innocent people wanted a peaceful resolution and were not fighting back. Alternate translation: [You have done this even though the innocent person wanted a peaceful resolution]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

> ULT **He does not resist you**
> UST They were not able to defend themselves against you. But God will judge and punish you for doing all these things

In light of everything that James says in 5:1–6, the implications are that even though these innocent people are not able to defend themselves, God will defend them by judging and punishing these rich people. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly, as UST does.

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
condemned	condemn
righteous	honest people … people who had not done anything wrong

James 5:7

ULT	UST
Therefore, wait patiently, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the farmer awaits the valuable fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early rain and the late rain.	*So, my fellow believers, even though rich people cause you to suffer, be patient until Jesus the Messiah comes back. Remember that when farmers plant a field, they have to wait for their valuable crops to grow. They have to wait patiently for the rain that comes at the planting season and for more rain that comes just before the harvest season. This rain is necessary for the crops to grow and mature so that the farmers can harvest them.*

ULT **Therefore**
UST So

James uses **Therefore** to introduce a description of what his readers should do as a result of what he has just said about rich people. He is referring specifically to what he said about God's judgment being imminent. Alternate translation: [Because you know that God will soon judge the people who are oppressing you]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **brothers**
UST my fellow believers

See how you translated the term **brothers** in 1:2. Alternate translation: [my fellow believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **until the coming of the Lord**
UST until Jesus the Messiah comes back

James is referring to Jesus by a respectful title. Alternate translation: [until Jesus returns] or [until the Lord Jesus returns]

ULT **Behold**
UST Remember that

The term **Behold** focuses the attention of a listener or reader on what a speaker or writer is about to say. James is using the word here to introduce an analogy, as he makes clear at the start of the next verse. So it may be helpful to express the meaning of **behold** as a separate sentence. Alternate translation: [Consider this.]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the farmer awaits**
UST when farmers plant a field, they have to wait for … to grow

The expression **the farmer** refers to farmers in general, not to one specific farmer. Alternate translation: [a farmer awaits] or [farmers await]
Support Reference: Generic Noun Phrases

ULT **the valuable fruit of the earth**
UST their valuable crops

James uses the word **fruit** in a broad sense to mean things that plants produce that are good for food. He does not mean only the kind of fruit that grows on trees and vines. Alternate translation: [the valuable crops that grow from the earth]
Support Reference: Idiom

ULT **waiting patiently for it until it receives**
UST They have to wait patiently for … that comes … for … that comes … This rain is necessary for the crops to grow and mature so that the farmers can harvest them

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could specify what the pronoun **it** refers to in each of these cases. Alternate translation: [waiting patiently for this fruit until the earth receives]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the early {rain} and the late rain**
UST the rain … at the planting season and … more rain … just before the harvest season

James is using the adjectives **early** and **late** as nouns to refer to types of rain. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate these with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: [the rain that comes early in the growing season and the rain that comes late in the growing season]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the early {rain} and the late rain**
UST the rain … at the planting season and … more rain … just before the harvest season

If it would be helpful to your readers, particularly if they would not be familiar with rainfed agriculture, you could state why these farmers needed to wait for rain to fall on their crops. UST models one way to do this.
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
wait patiently	patient
Lord	Jesus the Messiah
fruit	crops
earth	crops
waiting patiently	They have to wait patiently
receives	that comes … that comes

James 5:8

ULT	UST
You also wait patiently. Strengthen your hearts, because the coming of the Lord has come near.	*Similarly, you also should wait patiently and trust Jesus the Messiah firmly, because he is coming back soon and he will judge all people fairly.*

ULT **You also wait patiently**
UST Similarly, you also should wait patiently

Here James makes clear that what he said about farmers in the previous verse was an analogy for his readers. Alternate translation: [You should also wait patiently, just as a farmer does]

ULT **Strengthen your hearts**
UST and trust … firmly

James is using the **heart** to represent the will. Alternate translation: [Stay committed]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the coming of the Lord has come near**
UST Jesus the Messiah … he is coming back soon and he will judge all people fairly

James is referring to Jesus by a respectful title. (By **near** he means near in time. This is not a spatial metaphor.) Alternate translation: [Jesus will return soon] or [the Lord Jesus will return soon]

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
wait patiently	should wait patiently
Lord	Jesus the Messiah … he

James 5:9

ULT	UST
Do not complain, brothers, against one another, so that you may be not judged. Behold, the judge is standing at the door.	*My fellow believers, do not grumble about each other. That way the Lord Jesus will not have to punish you. He is the one who will judge us, and he will come back soon to do that.*

ULT **brothers**
UST My fellow believers

See how you translated the term **brothers** in 1:2. Alternate translation: [my fellow believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **you may be not judged**
UST the Lord Jesus will not have to punish you

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form, and you can state who would do the action. Alternate translation: [God may not judge you]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **Behold, the judge**
UST He is the one who will judge us

The term **Behold** focuses the attention of a listener or reader on what a speaker or writer is about to say. Alternate translation: [Be aware that the judge]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **the judge is standing at the door**
UST who will judge us, and he will come back soon to do that

James is comparing Jesus to a **judge** who is just about to walk into a courtroom. Alternate translation: [Jesus will soon return and judge everyone for what they have done]
Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
judged	the Lord Jesus will … have to punish you
judge	judge

James 5:10

ULT	UST
Take an example, brothers, of the suffering and the patience of the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord.	*My fellow believers, as an example of how to be patient, consider the prophets whom the Lord God sent long ago to speak his messages. Although people caused them to suffer much, they endured it patiently.*

ULT **Take an example, brothers, of the suffering**
UST My fellow believers, as an example {of how to be patient}, consider … Although people caused them to suffer much, they endured it patiently

Alternate translation: [Take as your example, brothers, the suffering]

ULT **brothers**
UST My fellow believers

See how you translated the term **brothers** in 1:2. Alternate translation: [my fellow believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **of the suffering and the patience of the prophets**
UST the prophets … Although people caused them to suffer much, they endured it patiently

James is expressing a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **patience** describes how the prophets endured **suffering**. Alternate translation: [of the patient suffering of the prophets] or [of how patiently the prophets suffered]
Support Reference: Hendiadys

ULT **in the name of the Lord**
UST the Lord God … his messages

James is using the **name** of the Lord to mean his person and authority. Alternate translation: [on behalf of the Lord] or [with the authority of the Lord]
Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
patience	Although people caused them to suffer much, they endured it patiently
prophets	prophets
Lord	Lord

James 5:11

ULT	UST
Behold, we call blessed the ones having endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is greatly compassionate and merciful.	*Consider how, when people are able to endure suffering patiently and faithfully, we say that God has blessed them. One example of this is the man named Job. You know about him from the Scriptures. You know that he suffered many things patiently. You also know that God planned to do good things through what Job suffered. And from that you can tell that God is very caring and kind.*

ULT **Behold**
UST Consider how

The term **Behold** focuses the attention of a listener or reader on what a speaker or writer is about to say. Alternate translation: [Indeed]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **You have heard of the endurance of Job**
UST One example of this is the man named Job. You know about him {from the Scriptures}. You know that he suffered many things patiently

James assumes that his readers will know the story of **Job** from the Scriptures. If your readers might not be familiar with his story, you could describe it in more detail. Alternate translation: [You know from the Scriptures how a man named Job who lived long ago patiently endured great suffering]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **you have seen the end of the Lord**
UST You … know that God planned to do good things through what Job suffered

James is continuing to refer to the story of Job. Here, **end** could mean: (1) purpose. In that case, James would be using the term **seen** to mean "recognized." Alternate translation: [you have recognized the purpose that the Lord had for Job's sufferings]; or (2) final result. In that case, James would be using the term **seen** to mean "learned." Alternate translation: [you have learned from the Scriptures how the Lord helped Job in the end]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **that the Lord is greatly compassionate and merciful**
UST And from that you can tell that God is very caring and kind

Here, **that** could mean: (1) "for" and introduce a reason. James may be giving the reason why God was pursuing a good purpose even in Job's sufferings or why God helped Job in the end. Alternate translation: [for the Lord is very compassionate and merciful]; or (2) something further that James' readers would have learned from the story of Job. Alternate translation: [and you have realized from this story that the Lord is greatly compassionate and merciful]
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
blessed	blessed
endured	endure
endurance	You know that he suffered many things patiently
Job	Job
Lord	God
compassionate	very caring
Lord	God
merciful	kind

James 5:12

ULT	UST
But before all, my brothers, do not swear, neither by the heaven nor by the earth, nor by any other oath. But let your "Yes" be "Yes" and your "No," "No," so that you may not fall under judgment.	*Now this, my fellow believers, is something very important for you to realize. You must never take an oath by calling on heaven or the earth or anything else to guarantee a promise that you make. All you need to say is "Yes" or "No." God will judge you if you go beyond that and make an oath but then do not keep your promise.*

ULT **before all**
UST this … is something very important for you to realize

James is using a spatial metaphor to emphasize the importance of what he is about to say. Your language may use a different spatial metaphor. Alternate translation: [above all]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **my brothers**
UST my fellow believers

See how you translated the term **brothers** in 1:2. Alternate translation: [my fellow believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **do not swear**
UST You must never take an oath … to guarantee a promise that you make … and make an oath but then do not keep your promise

Here, to **swear** means to guarantee, by appealing to something that is considered to be certain and reliable, that a statement is true or that an action will be performed. Alternate translation: [do not make an oath] or [do not make a vow]

ULT **let your "Yes" be "Yes" and your "No," "No**
UST All you need to say is "Yes" or "No … you go beyond that

In the second phrase, James is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages in order to be complete. These words can be supplied from the first phrase. Alternate translation: [let your "Yes" be "Yes" and let your "No" be "No"]
Support Reference: Ellipsis

ULT **let your "Yes" be "Yes" and your "No," "No**
UST All you need to say is "Yes" or "No … you go beyond that

Alternate translation: [simply give your word, without making an oath]

ULT **so that you may not fall under judgment**
UST God will judge you if

James is speaking of **judgment** as something that a person might **fall under**. Alternate translation: [so that you will not be judged]
Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **so that you may not fall under judgment**
> UST God will judge you if

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state more explicitly what this means. Alternate translation: [so that God will not have to judge and punish you for breaking your oath]

Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
swear	oath
heaven	heaven
earth	earth
oath	anything
judgment	judge

James 5:13

ULT	UST
Is anyone among you suffering hardship? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise.	*Any one of you who is experiencing trouble should pray that God would help him. Whoever is happy should sing songs of praise to God.*

ULT **Is anyone among you suffering hardship? Let him pray**
UST Any one of you who is experiencing trouble should pray that God would help him

James is not looking for information. He is using the question form to state a condition, and he describes the result in a short sentence right after the question. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating the question and that sentence together as a single statement. Alternate translation: [If anyone among you is suffering hardship, then he should pray]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise**
UST Whoever is happy should sing songs of praise to God

James is again using the question form to state a condition and describing the result in a following sentence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating the question and that sentence together as a single statement. Alternate translation: [If anyone is cheerful, then he should sing praise]

Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
suffering	who is experiencing trouble
pray	pray

James 5:14

ULT	UST
Is anyone among you sick? Let him summon the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, having anointed him with oil in the name of the Lord.	*Any one of you who is sick should call the leaders of the congregation to come and pray for him to recover. They should put olive oil on him to help him recover and, with the Lord's authority, pray.*

ULT **Is anyone among you sick? Let him summon the elders of the church, and let them pray**
UST Any one of you who is sick should call the leaders of the congregation to come and pray … pray

Once again James is using the question form to state a condition and describing the result in a following sentence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question by translating the question and that sentence together as a single statement. Alternate translation: [If anyone among you sick, then he should summon the elders of the church and they should pray]
Support Reference: Rhetorical Question

ULT **let them pray over him, having anointed him with oil in the name of the Lord**
UST pray for him {to recover}. They should put olive oil on him {to help him recover} and, with the Lord's authority, pray

It is unclear whether James means that the prayer or the anointing is to be done in the name of the Lord. Alternate translation: [let them pray over him in the name of the Lord after they have anointed him with oil] or [let them anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord and then pray for him]

ULT **let them pray over him**
UST pray for him to recover … pray

James is using a spatial metaphor to indicate that the sick person is the beneficiary of the elders' prayers. Alternate translation: [pray for him]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **having anointed him with oil**
UST They should put olive oil on him to help him recover

In the biblical culture, anointing people with **oil** was a way of consecrating them to God, but it was also a medical treatment. Since James is talking about a person who is **sick**, he seems to speak of the oil at least in part for its medical value. So he may be telling believers to do what they can practically to help the sick person recover, in addition to praying for him. If your readers would not recognize that the medical benefits were one reason why James says to anoint the sick person with oil, you could include an explanation in your translation or in a note, or you could translate this with a general expression. Alternate translation: [having done what they can to help him practically]
Support Reference: Translate Unknowns

> ULT **in the name of the Lord**
> UST and, with the Lord's authority

James is using the **name** of the Lord to mean his person and authority. Alternate translation: [on behalf of the Lord] or [with the authority of the Lord]

Support Reference: Metonymy

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Let him summon	call
elders	leaders
church	of the congregation
pray	pray
anointed	They should put
oil	oil
Lord	Lord's

James 5:15

ULT	UST
And the prayer of the faith will save the sick and the Lord will raise him up. And if he may have committed sins, it will be forgiven to him.	*When these leaders pray to God in faith, God will answer that prayer and heal the person who is sick. The Lord will restore his health. If that person has sinned, God will forgive him for those sins.*

ULT **the prayer of the faith will save the sick**
UST these leaders pray to God in faith, God will answer that prayer and heal the person who is sick

James is using the possessive form to describe **prayer** that is characterized by **faith**. Alternate translation: [the prayer that is offered in faith will save the sick]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **the prayer of the faith will save the sick**
UST these leaders pray to God in faith, God will answer that prayer and heal the person who is sick

James is using the word translated as **save** in one of its senses to mean "heal." (He uses a more specific word to mean "healed" in the next verse.) Alternate translation: [the prayer that is offered in faith will heal the sick]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **the prayer of the faith will save the sick**
UST these leaders pray to God in faith, God will answer that prayer and heal the person who is sick

James is using the adjective **sick** as a noun in order to indicate a type of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [the prayer that is offered in faith will heal the sick person]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **the prayer of the faith will save the sick**
UST these leaders pray to God in faith, God will answer that prayer and heal the person who is sick

James is speaking of this **prayer** as if it would heal the sick person itself. Alternate translation: [in answer to this prayer that is offered in faith, God will heal the sick person]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **the Lord will raise him up**
UST The Lord will restore his health

James is speaking of the sick person's restoration to health by association with the way that the person will get **up** out of bed when he recovers. Alternate translation: [the Lord will make him well] or [the Lord will enable him to resume his regular activities]
Support Reference: Metonymy

> ULT **it will be forgiven to him**
> UST God will forgive him for those sins

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form, and you can state who will do the action. Alternate translation: [God will forgive him]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
prayer	pray
faith	faith
Lord	Lord
sins	sinned
forgiven	forgive

James 5:16

ULT	UST
Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another so that you may be healed. A working prayer of the righteous is very strong.	*Because the Lord is able to heal the sick and to forgive sins, admit to each other the sinful things you have done and pray for each other. Then God will heal you. If people who are right with God pray, God will answer their prayers in powerful ways.*

ULT **Therefore**
UST Because the Lord is able to heal the sick and to forgive sins

James uses **Therefore** to introduce something that believers should do as a result of what he said in the previous verse. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain in more detail what he means, as UST does.
Support Reference: Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

ULT **you may be healed**
UST God will heal you

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this with an active form, and you could state who would do the action. Alternate translation: [God may heal you]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **A working prayer of the righteous is very strong**
UST If people who are right with God pray, God will answer their prayers in powerful ways

Alternate translation: [The prayer of the righteous is very strong as it is working] or [The prayer of the righteous is very strong in its effects]

ULT **A working prayer of the righteous is very strong**
UST If people who are right with God pray, God will answer their prayers in powerful ways

James is using the adjective **righteous** as a noun in order to indicate a type of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you could translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: [The working prayer of a person who is righteous is very strong]
Support Reference: Nominal Adjectives

ULT **A working prayer of the righteous is very strong**
UST If people who are right with God pray, God will answer their prayers in powerful ways

James is speaking of **prayer** as if it were a living thing that was **very strong** by itself. Alternate translation: [When a person who is righteous prays, God does very powerful things in response]
Support Reference: Personification

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
confess	admit
sins	sinful
pray	pray
prayer	pray
righteous	If people who are right with God

James 5:17

ULT	UST
Elijah was a man of similar passions to us, and he prayed with prayer for it not to rain, and it did not rain upon the land for three years and six months.	*The prophet Elijah was an ordinary person like us. But when he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, the land of Israel had no rain for three and a half years.*

ULT **Elijah**
UST The prophet Elijah

James assumes that his readers will know from the Scriptures about this episode in Elijah's life. If your readers might not be familiar with it, you could describe it in more detail. Alternate translation: [You know from the Scriptures how a prophet named Elijah who lived long ago]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **of similar passions to us**
UST an ordinary person like us

This expression means that Elijah had the same feelings as any other human being. In context, James is indicating specifically that he too had the kind of feelings that make it difficult for people to pray. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state that explicitly. Alternate translation: [who had the same doubts and fears that we all do]
Support Reference: Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

ULT **he prayed with prayer**
UST when he prayed earnestly

To indicate that Elijah prayed intensely, James is using an indirect object with a verb that comes from the same root. If your language uses a similar construction, it would be appropriate to have it here in your translation. But if this construction would seem to express unnecessary extra information in your language, you could express this emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: [he prayed intensely]
Support Reference: Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
Elijah	Elijah
prayer	prayed
prayed	prayed
land	land
months	a half

James 5:18

ULT	UST
And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth produced its fruit.	*Then Elijah prayed again, asking God to send rain, and God made it rain and plants grew and produced crops again.*

ULT **he prayed again**
UST Elijah prayed again, asking God to send rain

The pronoun **he** refers to Elijah. Alternate translation: [Elijah prayed again]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the heaven gave rain**
UST God made it rain

In this context, **the heaven** means "the sky." James is speaking of the sky as if it were a living thing that **gave rain**. Alternate translation: [rain fell from the sky]
Support Reference: Personification

ULT **the earth produced its fruit**
UST plants grew and produced crops again

James is speaking of the **earth** as if it were a living thing that **produced fruit**. As in 5:7, James is using the word **fruit** in a broad sense to mean things that plants produce that are good for food. He does not mean only the kind of fruit that grows on trees and vines. Alternate translation: [crops grew from the ground]
Support Reference: Personification

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
prayed	prayed
heaven	God
earth	plants grew and produced
fruit	crops again

James 5:19

ULT	UST
My brothers, if anyone among you may have been led astray from the truth and someone turns him back,	*My fellow believers, if one of you stops obeying the true message from God, then another one of you should persuade that person to do once again what God has told us to do.*

ULT **My brothers**
UST My fellow believers

See how you translated the term **brothers** in 1:2. Alternate translation: [My fellow believers]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **if anyone among you may have been led astray from the truth**
UST if one of you stops obeying the true message from God

As in 1:16, James is speaking as if a deceptive guide may have led one of his readers in the wrong direction. Alternate translation: [if anyone among you may have been deceived regarding the truth]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **if anyone among you may have been led astray from the truth**
UST if one of you stops obeying the true message from God

If your language does not use this passive form, you can express this with an active form. Alternate translation: [if someone may have deceived anyone among you regarding the truth]
Support Reference: Active or Passive

ULT **the truth**
UST the true message from God

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the idea behind the abstract noun **truth** with an adjective such as “true.” Alternate translation: [what is true]
Support Reference: Abstract Nouns

ULT **someone turns him back**
UST another one of you should persuade that person to do once again what God has told us to do

James is continuing the metaphor of someone guiding a person in the right direction. Alternate translation: [someone corrects him] or [someone shows him what is actually true]
Support Reference: Metaphor

James 5:20

ULT	UST
let him know that the one having turned back a sinner from his wandering way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.	*I want anyone who helps a sinner to repent to know that because of what he has done, God will save the sinner from spiritual death and will forgive his many sins.*

ULT **let him know**
UST I want anyone … to know

The pronoun **him** refers to the person who corrects another believer who has been deceived. Alternate translation: [the person who corrects the deceived believer should know]
Support Reference: Pronouns — When to Use Them

ULT **the one having turned back a sinner from his wandering way**
UST who helps a sinner to repent

James is using the possessive form to describe a **way** or path that is characterized by **wandering**. Alternate translation: [the one who turns back a sinner who has wandered away]
Support Reference: Possession

ULT **the one having turned back a sinner from his wandering way**
UST who helps a sinner to repent

The expressions **turns back** and **wandering** continue the metaphor of someone guiding a person in the right direction. Alternate translation: [anyone who corrects a sinner who has stopped doing what God wants]
Support Reference: Metaphor

ULT **will save his soul from death**
UST God will save the sinner from spiritual death

James is speaking as if this person's actions would save the sinner's **soul from death**. But James means by association that God will use those actions to persuade the sinner to repent and be saved. Alternate translation: [will be an instrument of God's work to save the sinner's soul from death]
Support Reference: Metonymy

ULT **will save his soul from death**
UST God will save the sinner from spiritual death

James seems to be speaking not of literal, physical death but of spiritual **death**, that is, of eternal separation from God. Alternate translation: [from spiritual death] (as in UST) or [from eternal separation from God]
Support Reference: Metaphor

> ULT **will save his soul from death**
> UST God will save the sinner from spiritual death

However, some interpreters believe that James actually is speaking of literal, physical death. They believe he is saying that a person who stops his sinful lifestyle will not experience physical death as a consequence of his sin. In that case, James would be using one part of a person, his **soul**, to mean all of the person. Alternate translation: [will keep him from dying]

Support Reference: Synecdoche

> ULT **will cover a multitude of sins**
> UST will forgive his many sins

James is speaking of one person's **sins** as if they were objects that another person could **cover** so that God would not see them. He means that by helping a sinner to repent, another believer can help that sinner to be forgiven. Alternate translation: [will help him to be forgiven]

Support Reference: Metaphor

TRANSLATION WORDS

ULT	UST
know	know
sinner	sinner
save	save
soul	the sinner
sins	sins

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.

James References:

James 1:1 James 1:1

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**.

James References:

James 1:1 James 1:2 James 1:3 James 1:5 James 1:6 James 1:9 James 1:10 James 1:11 James 1:18 James 1:20 James 1:21 James 1:21 James 1:25 James 1:25 James 1:25 James 2:1 James 2:5 James 2:12 James 2:14 James 2:14 James 2:17 James 2:18 James 2:18 James 2:20 James 2:22 James 2:24 James 2:25 James 2:26 James 3:6 James 3:10 James 3:13 James 3:14 James 3:14 James 3:15 James 3:16 James 3:17 James 3:18 James 4:4 James 4:9 James 4:16 James 5:1 James 5:19

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.

James References:

James 1:5 James 1:6 James 1:13 James 1:14 James 1:16 James 1:25 James 2:7 James 2:9 James 2:12 James 2:16 James 2:21 James 2:22 James 2:23 James 2:23 James 2:24 James 2:25 James 3:4 James 3:4 James 3:6 James 3:6 James 3:7 James 3:18 James 4:4 James 4:7 James 4:9 James 4:10 James 5:3 James 5:4 James 5:9 James 5:15 James 5:16 James 5:19

Statements — Other Uses

Description

Normally statements are used to give information. Sometimes they are used in the Bible for other functions.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages would not use a statement for some of the functions that statements are used for in the Bible.

Examples From the Bible

Statements are normally used to give **information**. All of the sentences in John 1:6-8 below are statements, and their function is to give information.

> There was a man who was sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness in order to testify about the light, that all might believe through him. John was not the light, but came that he might testify about the light. (John 1:6-8 ULT)

A statement can also be used as a **command** to tell someone what to do. In the examples below, the high priest used statements with the verb “will” to tell people what to do.

> He commanded them, saying, “This is what you **must** do. A third of you who come on the Sabbath **will** keep watch over the king’s house, and a third **will** be at the Sur Gate, and a third at the gate behind the guardhouse.” (2 Kings 11:5 ULT)

A statement can also be used to give **instructions**. The speaker below was not just telling Joseph about something Joseph would do in the future; he was telling Joseph what he needed to do.

> She will give birth to a son, and **you will call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21 ULT)

A statement can also be used to make a **request**. The man with leprosy was not just saying what Jesus was able to do. He was also asking Jesus to heal him.

> Behold, a leper came to him and bowed before him, saying, “Lord, if you are willing, **you are able to make me clean**.” (Matthew 8:2 ULT)

A statement can also be used to **perform** something. By telling Adam that the ground was cursed because of him, God actually cursed it.

> … **cursed is the ground** because of you; (Genesis 3:17b ULT)

By telling a man that his sins were forgiven, **Jesus forgave** the man’s sins.

> When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, “**Son, your sins are forgiven**.” (Mark 2:5 ULT)

Translation Strategies

(1) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, **use a sentence type** that would express that function.
(2) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, **add a sentence type** that would express that function.
(3) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, **use a verb form** that would express that function.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, use a sentence type that would express that function.

> She will give birth to a son, and **you will call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21 ULT)

The phrase “you will call his name Jesus” is an instruction. It can be translated using the sentence type of a normal instruction.

> She will give birth to a son. **Name him Jesus**, because he will save his people from their sins.

(2) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, add a sentence type that would express that function.

> Lord, if you are willing, **you are able to make me clean**. (Matthew 8:2 ULT)

The function of “you are able” is to make a request. In addition to the statement, a request can be added.

> Lord, you are able to make me clean. If you are willing, **please do so**.
> OR:
> Lord, if you are willing, **please heal me**. I know that you are able to do so.

(3) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, use a verb form that would express that function.

> She will give birth to a son, and **you will call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21 ULT)

> She will give birth to a son, and **you must call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins.

Son, your sins are forgiven. (Mark 2:5 ULT)

> Son, I forgive your sins.
> OR:
> Son, God hereby forgives your sins.

James References:

James 2:8 James 2:18

Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Description

In some languages, phrases that modify a noun can be used with the noun for two different purposes. They can either (1) distinguish the noun from other similar items, or (2) they can give more information about the noun. That information could be new to the reader, or a reminder about something the reader might already know. Other languages use modifying phrases with a noun only for distinguishing the noun from other similar things. When people who speak these languages hear a modifying phrase along with a noun, they assume that its function is to distinguish one item from another similar item.

When the phrase that modifies a noun is a relative clause (a phrase that starts with a word such as “who” or“which”), some languages use a comma to mark the difference between (1) making a distinction between similar items and (2) giving more information about an item. Without the comma, the sentence below communicates that the added phrase is making a distinction:

- Mary gave some of the food to **her sister who was very thankful**.
  - If her sister was usually thankful, the phrase “who was thankful” could distinguish this sister of Mary’s from another sister who was not usually thankful.

With the comma, the phrase is giving more information:

- Mary gave some of the food to **her sister, who was very thankful**.
  - This same phrase can be used to give us more information about Mary’s sister. It tells us about how Mary’s sister responded when Mary gave her the food. In this case it does not distinguish one sister from another sister.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Many source languages of the Bible use phrases that modify a noun both for distinguishing the noun from another similar item and also for giving more information about the noun. You (the translator) must be careful to understand which meaning the author intended in each case.
- Some languages use phrases that modify a noun only for distinguishing the noun from another similar item. When translating a phrase that is used for giving more information, translators who speak these languages will need to separate the phrase from the noun. Otherwise, people who read it or hear it will think that the phrase is meant to distinguish the noun from other similar items.

Examples From the Bible

Examples of words and phrases that are used to distinguish one item from other possible items:

(These usually do not cause any problem in translation.)

> The curtain is to separate **the holy place** from **the most holy place**. (Exodus 26:33b ULT)

The words “holy” and “most holy” distinguish two different places from each other and from any other place.

> A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to **the woman who bore him**. (Proverbs 17:25 ULT)

The phrase “who bore him” distinguishes which woman the son is bitterness to. He is not bitterness to all women, but to his mother.

Examples of words and phrases that are used to give added information or a reminder about an item:

(These are a translation issue for languages that do not use these.)

> … for **your righteous judgments** are good. (Psalm 119:39b ULT)

The word "righteous" simply reminds us that God's judgments are righteous. It does not distinguish his righteous judgments from his unrighteous judgments, because all of his judgments are righteous.

> You must surely open your hand to your brother, **to your needy and to your poor** in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 ULT)

The phrases "to your needy and to your poor" give further information about "your brother." They do not refer to a separate group of people.

> How can Sarah, **who is 90 years old**, bear a son? (Genesis 17:17b ULT)

The phrase "who is 90 years old" is a reminder of Sarah's age. It tells why Abraham was asking the question. He did not expect that a woman who was that old could bear a child. He was not distinguishing one woman named Sarah from another woman named Sarah who was a different age.

> I will wipe away mankind **whom I have created** from the surface of the earth. (Genesis 6:7 ULT)

The phrase "whom I have created" is a reminder of the relationship between God and mankind. It is the reason God had the right to wipe away mankind. There is not another mankind that God did not create.

> I hate those who serve **worthless** idols (Psalm 31:6 ULT)

By saying "worthless idols," David was commenting about all idols and giving his reason for hating those who serve them. He was not distinguishing worthless idols from valuable idols.

Translation Strategies

If readers would understand the purpose of a phrase with a noun, then consider keeping the phrase and the noun together. For languages that use words or phrases with a noun only to distinguish one item from another, here are some strategies for translating phrases that are used to inform or remind.

(1) Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose.
(2) Use one of your language's ways for expressing that this is just added information. It may be by adding a small word, or by changing the way the voice sounds. Sometimes changes in the voice can be shown with punctuation marks, such as parentheses or commas.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose.

> I hate those who serve **worthless** idols (Psalm 31:6 ULT)

> > **Because idols are worthless**, I hate those who serve them.

> … for your **righteous** judgments are good. (Psalm 119:39b ULT)

> > … for your judgments are good **because they are righteous**.

> Can Sarah, **who is 90 years old**, bear a son? (Genesis 17:17b ULT)

> > Can Sarah bear a son **even when she is 90 years old**?

> > You must surely open your hand to your brother, **to your needy and to your poor** in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 ULT)

> > You must surely open your hand to any of **your needy and poor brothers** in your land.

(2) Use one of your language's ways for expressing that this is just added information.

> You are my Son, **whom I love**. I am pleased with you. (Luke 3:22 ULT)

> > You are my Son. **I love you** and I am pleased with you.

> > **Receiving my love**, you are my Son. I am pleased with you.
>
> You must surely open your hand to your brother, **to your needy and to your poor** in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 ULT)
>
> > You must surely open your hand to your brother **who is needy and poor** in your land.

James References:

James 4:12

Double Negatives

A double negative occurs when a clause has two words that each express the meaning of "not." Double negatives mean very different things in different languages. To translate sentences that have double negatives accurately and clearly, you need to know what a double negative means in the Bible and how to express this idea in your language.

Description

Negative words are words that have in them the meaning "not." Examples in English are "no," "not," "none," "no one," "nothing," "nowhere," "never," "nor," "neither," and "without." Also, some words have prefixes or suffixes that mean "not," such as the bolded parts of these words: "**un**happy," "**im**possible," and "use**less**." Some other kinds of words also have a negative meaning, such as "lack" or "reject," or even "fight" or "evil."

A double negative occurs when a clause has two words that each have a negative meaning.

> We did this **not** because we have **no** authority … (2 Thessalonians 3:9a ULT)
>
> And this was **not** done **without** an oath! (Hebrews 7:20a ULT)
>
> Be sure of this—the wicked person will **not** go **un**punished. (Proverbs 11:21a ULT)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Double negatives mean very different things in different languages.

- In some languages, such as English, a second negative in a clause cancels the first one, creating a positive sentence. So, "He is not unintelligent" means "He is intelligent."

- In some languages, such as French and Spanish, two negative words in a clause do not cancel each other to become a positive. The Spanish sentence, “No vi a nadie,” literally says “I did not see no one.” It has both the word ‘no’ next to the verb and ‘nadie,’ which means “no one.” The two negatives are seen as in agreement with each other, and the sentence means, “I did not see anyone.”
- In some languages, a double negative creates a stronger negative statement.
- In some languages, a double negative creates a positive sentence, but it is a weak statement. So, “He is not unintelligent” means, “He is somewhat intelligent.”
- In some languages, including the languages of the Bible, a double negative can produce a stronger positive meaning than a simple positive statement. So, “He is not unintelligent” can mean “He is very intelligent.” In this case, the double negative is actually the figure of speech called litotes.

Biblical Greek can do all of the above. So to translate sentences with double negatives accurately and clearly in your language, you need to know what each double negative means in the Bible and how to express the same idea in your language.

Examples From the Bible

The Greek of John 15:5 says:

> χωρὶς ἐμοῦ **οὐ** δύνασθε ποιεῖν **οὐδέν**
>
> Without me **not** you can do **nothing**

We cannot reproduce this double negative in the English ULT because in English, a second negative in a clause cancels the first one. In English, and perhaps in your language, we need to choose only one of the negatives and say either:

Without me, you can do **nothing**.
or:
Without me, you **cannot** do anything.

> … in order **not** to be **unfruitful**. (Titus 3:14b ULT)

This means “in order to be fruitful.”

> A prophet is **not without** honor (Mark 6:4 ULT)

This means “a prophet is honored.”

> I do **not** want you to be **ignorant**. (1 Corinthians 12:1)

This means “I want you to be knowledgeable.”

Translation Strategies

If the way that the double negative is used in the Bible is natural and has the same meaning as in your language, consider using it in the same way. Otherwise, you could consider these strategies:

(1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.
(2) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives.
(3) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a stronger negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives and add a strengthening word.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.

> For we do **not** have a high priest who **cannot** feel sympathy for our weaknesses. (Hebrews 4:15a ULT)
>
> > “For we have a high priest who can feel sympathy for our weaknesses.”

> … in order **not** to be **unfruitful**. (Titus 3:14b ULT)
>
> > “… so that they may be fruitful.”

(2) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a negative statement, and if

it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives.

> χωρὶς ἐμοῦ **οὐ** δύνασθε ποιεῖν **οὐδέν**
>
> Without me **not** you can do **nothing** (John 15:5)

> > Without me, you can do **nothing**.
>
> or:
> Without me, you **cannot** do anything.

(3) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a stronger negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives and add a strengthening word.

> ...ἰῶτα ἓν ἢ μία κεραία **οὐ μὴ** παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου (Matthew 5:18)
>
> ...iota one or one serif **not not** may pass away from the law

> > ...**not even** one iota or one serif may pass away from the law
>
> or:
> ...**certainly no** iota or serif may pass away from the law

James References:

James 1:4 James 1:6 James 2:14 James 3:11 James 3:12

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!"

James References:

James 1:4 James 1:17 James 1:17 James 1:21 James 1:27 James 3:7 James 3:13 James 4:1 James 4:2 James 4:9

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.

James References:

James 1:10 James 1:22 James 1:23 James 1:25 James 3:12 James 3:12 James 3:12 James 4:2 James 4:9 James 4:11 James 5:12

Euphemism

Description

A euphemism is a mild or polite way of referring to something that is unpleasant, embarrassing, or socially unacceptable, such as death or activities usually done in private.

> … they found Saul and his sons **fallen** on Mount Gilboa. (1 Chronicles 10:8b ULT)

This means that Saul and his sons "were dead." It is a euphemism because the important thing was not that Saul and his sons had fallen but that they were dead. Sometimes people do not like to speak directly about death because it is unpleasant.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages use different euphemisms. If the target language does not use the same euphemism as in the source language, readers may not understand what it means and they may think that the writer means only what the words literally say.

Examples From the Bible

> … where there was a cave. Saul went inside to **cover his feet**. (1 Samuel 24:3b ULT)

The original hearers would have understood that Saul went into the cave to use it as a toilet, but the writer wanted to avoid offending or distracting them, so **he did not say specifically** what Saul did or what he left in the cave.

> But Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I have not **known a man**?" (Luke 1:34 ULT)

In order **to be polite**, Mary uses a euphemism to say that she has never had sexual intercourse with a man.

Translation Strategies

If euphemism would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

(1) Use a euphemism from your own culture.
(2) State the information plainly without a euphemism if it would not be offensive.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use a euphemism from your own culture.

> … where there was a cave. Saul went inside to **cover his feet**. (1 Samuel 24:3b ULT) — Some languages might use euphemisms like these:
>
> > "… where there was a cave. Saul went into the cave to **dig a hole**"
> >
> > "… where there was a cave. Saul went into the cave to **have some time alone**"
>
> But Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I have not **known a man**?" (Luke 1:34 ULT)
>
> > But Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I have not **slept with a man**?"

(2) State the information plainly without a euphemism if it would not be offensive.

> They found Saul and his sons **fallen** on Mount Gilboa. (1 Chronicles 10:8b ULT)
>
> > "They found Saul and his sons **dead** on Mount Gilboa."

James References:

James 1:10

Order of Events

Description

In the Bible, events are not always told in the order in which they occurred. Sometimes the author wanted to discuss something that happened at an earlier time than the event that he just talked about. This can be confusing to the reader.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Readers might think that the events happened in the order that they are told. It is important to help them understand the correct order of events.

Examples From the Bible

> He even added this to them all: he locked John up in prison. Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)

This could sound like John baptized Jesus after John was locked up in prison, but John baptized Jesus before John was locked up in prison.

> Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of Yahweh followed after them. But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

This could sound like Joshua gave the order not to shout after the army had already started their march, but he had given that order before they started marching.

> Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

This sounds like a person must first open the scroll and then break its seals, but the seals that lock the scroll must be broken before the scroll can be unrolled.

Translation Strategies

(1) If your language uses phrases or time words to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using one of them.
(2) If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that. (See the section on "Aspect" of Verbs.)
(3) If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occurred, consider reordering the events so they they are in that order. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6). (See Verse Bridges.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If your language uses phrases, time words or tenses to show that an event happened before the one just mentioned, consider using one of them.

> 20 he even added this to them all: he locked John up in prison. Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)
>
> > 20 But then Herod … had John locked up in prison. 21 **Before John was put in prison,** while all the people were being baptized by John, Jesus also was baptized.
>
> Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)
>
> > Who is worthy to open the scroll **after** breaking its seals?

(2) If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that.

> Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)
>
> > 8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets 10 But Joshua **had commanded** the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout."

(3) If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occur, consider reordering the events. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6).

> 8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)
>
> > 8,10 Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout." Then just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets…
>
> Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)
>
> > Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_events.

James References:

James 1:14

Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’

Description

Some languages have more than one form of “we”: an inclusive form that means “I and you” and an exclusive form that means “I and someone else but not you.” The exclusive form excludes the person being spoken to. The inclusive form includes the person being spoken to and possibly others. This is also true for “us,” “our,” “ours,” and “ourselves.” Some languages have inclusive forms and exclusive forms for each of these. Translators whose language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms for these words will need to understand what the speaker meant so that they can decide which form to use.

See the pictures. The people on the right are the people that the speaker is talking to. The yellow highlight shows who the inclusive “we” and the exclusive “we” refer to.





Reason This Is a Translation Issue

The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. Like English, these languages do not have separate exclusive and inclusive forms for “we.” If your language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms of “we,” then you will need to understand what the speaker meant so that you can decide which form of “we” to use.

Examples From the Bible

Exclusive

> They said, “There are not more than five loaves of bread and two fish with us—unless **we** go and buy food for all these people.” (Luke 9:13 ULT)

In the second clause, the disciples are talking about some of them going to buy food. They were speaking to Jesus, but Jesus was not going to buy food. So languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of “we” would use the **exclusive** form there.

> **We** have seen it, and **we** bear witness to it. **We** are announcing to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and which has been made known to **us**. (1 John 1:2 ULT)

John is telling people who have not seen Jesus what he and the other apostles have seen. So languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of “we” and “us” would use the **exclusive** forms in this verse.

Inclusive

> The shepherds said one to each other, “Let **us** now go to Bethlehem, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to **us**.” (Luke 2:15b ULT)

The shepherds were speaking to one another. When they said “us,” they were including the people they were speaking to, so languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of “we” and “us” would use the **inclusive** form in this verse.

> Now it happened that on one of those days, he indeed got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, “Let **us** go over to the other side of the lake.” So they set sail. (Luke 8:22 ULT)

When Jesus said “us,” he was referring to himself and to the disciples he was speaking to, so languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of “we” and “us” would use the **inclusive** form in this verse.

James References:

James 1:18 James 2:21 James 3:1 James 3:2 James 4:13 James 4:15

Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Assumed knowledge is whatever a speaker assumes his audience knows before he speaks and gives them some kind of information. The speaker does not give the audience this information because he believes that they already know it.

When the speaker does give the audience information, he can do so in two ways. The speaker gives explicit information in what he states directly. Implicit Information is what the speaker does not state directly because he expects his audience to be able to learn it from other things he says.

Description

When someone speaks or writes, he has something specific that he wants people to know or do or think about. He normally states this directly. This is explicit information.

The speaker assumes that his audience already knows certain things that they will need to think about in order to understand this information. Normally he does not tell people these things, because they already know them. This is called assumed knowledge.

The speaker does not always directly state everything that he expects his audience to learn from what he says. Implicit information is information that he expects people to learn from what he says even though he does not state it directly.

Often, the audience understands this implicit information by combining what they already know (assumed knowledge) with the explicit information that the speaker tells them directly.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

All three kinds of information are part of the speaker's message. If one of these kinds of information is missing, then the audience will not understand the message. Because the target translation is in a language that is very different from the biblical languages and is made for an audience that lives in a very different time and place than the people in the Bible, many times the assumed knowledge or the implicit information is missing from the message. In other words, modern readers do not know everything that the original speakers and hearers in the Bible knew. When these things are important for understanding the message, it is helpful if you include this information in the text or in a footnote.

Examples From the Bible

> Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes **have holes**, and the birds of the sky **have nests**, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:19-20 ULT)

Jesus did not say what foxes and birds use holes and nests for, because he assumed that the scribe would have known that foxes sleep in holes in the ground and birds sleep in their nests. This is **assumed knowledge**.

Jesus did not directly say here "I am the Son of Man" but, if the scribe did not already know it, then that fact would be **implicit information** that he could learn because Jesus referred to himself that way. Also, Jesus did not state explicitly that he travelled a lot and did not have a house that he slept in every night. That is **implicit information** that the scribe could learn when Jesus said that he had nowhere to lay his head.

> Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the mighty deeds had been done in **Tyre and Sidon** which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the **day of judgment** than for you. (Matthew 11:21-22 ULT)

Jesus assumed that the people he was speaking to knew that Tyre and Sidon were very wicked, and that the day of judgment is a time when God will judge every person. Jesus also knew that the people he was talking to believed that they were good and

did not need to repent. Jesus did not need to tell them these things. This is all **assumed knowledge**.

An important piece of **implicit information** here is that the people he was speaking to would be judged more severely than the people of Tyre and Sidon would be judged **because** they did not repent.

> Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For **they do not wash their hands when they eat bread**. (Matthew 15:2 ULT)

One of the traditions of the elders was a ceremony in which people would wash their hands in order to be ritually clean before eating. People thought that in order to be righteous, they had to follow all the traditions of the elders. This was **assumed knowledge** that the Pharisees who were speaking to Jesus expected him to know. By saying this, they were accusing his disciples of not following the traditions, and thus not being righteous. This is **implicit information** that they wanted him to understand from what they said.

Translation Strategies

If readers have enough assumed knowledge to be able to understand the message, along with any important implicit information that goes with the explicit information, then it is good to leave that knowledge unstated and leave the implicit information implicit. If the readers do not understand the message because one of these is missing for them, then follow these strategies:

(1) If readers cannot understand the message because they do not have certain assumed knowledge, then provide that knowledge as explicit information.
(2) If readers cannot understand the message because they do not know certain implicit information, then state that information clearly, but try to do it in a way that does not imply that the information was new to the original audience.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If readers cannot understand the message because they do not have certain assumed knowledge, then provide that knowledge as explicit information.

> Jesus said to him, "Foxes **have holes**, and the birds of the sky **have nests**, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:20 ULT)

The assumed knowledge was that the foxes slept in their holes and birds slept in their nests.

> Jesus said to him, "Foxes **have holes to live in**, and the birds of the sky **have nests to live in**, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head and sleep."

> It will be more tolerable for **Tyre and Sidon** at the day of judgment than for you (Matthew 11:22 ULT)

The assumed knowledge was that the people of Tyre and Sidon were very, very wicked. This can be stated explicitly.

> At the day of judgment, it will be more tolerable for **those cities of Tyre and Sidon, whose people were very wicked**, than it will be for you. or At the day of judgment, It will be more tolerable for those **wicked cities, Tyre and Sidon,** than for you.

> Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For **they do not wash their hands** when they eat bread. (Matthew 15:2 ULT)

The assumed knowledge was that one of the traditions of the elders was a ceremony in which people would wash their hands in order to be ritually clean before eating, which they must do to be righteous. It was not to remove germs from their hands to avoid sickness, as a modern reader might think.

> Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For **they do not go through the ceremonial handwashing ritual of righteousness** when they eat bread.

(2) If readers cannot understand the message because they do not know certain implicit information, then state that information clearly, but try to do it in a way that does not imply that the information was new to the original audience.

> Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:19-20 ULT)

The implicit information is that Jesus himself is the Son of Man. Other implicit information is that if the scribe wanted to follow Jesus, then, like Jesus, he would have to live without a house.

> Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but **I, the Son of Man**, have **no home to rest in. If you want to follow me, you will live as I live**."
>
> It will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you (Matthew 11:22 ULT)

The implicit information is that God would not only judge the people; he would punish them. This can be made explicit.

> At the day of judgment, God will **punish Tyre and Sidon**, cities whose people were very wicked, **less severely than he will punish you**.
> or:
> At the day of judgment, God will **punish you more severely** than Tyre and Sidon, cities whose people were very wicked.

Modern readers may not know some of the things that the people in the Bible and the people who first read it knew. This can make it hard for them to understand what a speaker or writer says, and to learn things that the speaker left implicit. Translators may need to state some things explicitly in the translation that the original speaker or writer left unstated or implicit.

James References:

James 1:9 James 1:10 James 1:16 James 1:17 James 1:18 James 1:18 James 1:24 James 1:24 James 1:25 James 1:27 James 2 Introduction James 2:2 James 2:3 James 2:4 James 2:5 James 2:6 James 2:6 James 2:6 James 2:9 James 2:10 James 2:11 James 2:12 James 2:12 James 2:14 James 2:18 James 2:19 James 2:19 James 2:21 James 2:21 James 2:23 James 2:23 James 2:24 James 2:25 James 2:25 James 3:1 James 3:5 James 3:9 James 3:12 James 3:14 James 3:15 James 4:2 James 4:6 James 4:9 James 4:9 James 4:11 James 4:11 James 5:1 James 5:2 James 5:3 James 5:3 James 5:3 James 5:4 James 5:6 James 5:6 James 5:7 James 5:11 James 5:12 James 5:17 James 5:17

Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

Description

Some languages have ways of saying things that are natural for them but sound strange when translated into Other Languages. One of the reasons for this is that some languages say things explicitly that some Other Languages would leave as implicit information.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

If you translate all of the explicit information from the source language into the explicit information in the target language, it could sound foreign, unnatural, or perhaps even unintelligent if the target language would not make that information explicit. Instead, it is best to leave that kind of information implicit in the target language.

Examples from the Bible

> **And** Abimelech came to the tower and fought against it and drew near to the door of the tower **to burn it with fire**. (Judges 9:52 ESV)

In Biblical Hebrew, it is normal to start most sentences with a conjunction such as "and" to show the connection between sentences. In English, it is not natural to do so, it is quite tiresome for the English reader, and it gives the impression that the author is uneducated. In English, it is best to leave the idea of connection between sentences implicit in most cases and not translate the conjunction explicitly.

In Biblical Hebrew, it is normal to say that something was burned with fire. In English, the idea of fire is included in the action of burning, and so it is unnatural to state both ideas explicitly. It is enough to say that something was burned and leave the idea of fire implicit.

> But the centurion **answered and said**, "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof" (Matthew 8:8a ULT)

In the biblical languages, it was normal to introduce direct speech with two verbs of speaking. One verb indicated the action, and the other introduced the words of the speaker. English speakers do not do this, so it is very unnatural and confusing to use two verbs. For the English speaker, the idea of speaking is included in the idea of answering. Using two verbs in English implies two separate speeches, rather than just one. So in English, it is better to use only one verb of speaking.

Translation Strategies

(1) If the explicit information of the source language sounds natural in the target language, then translate it as explicit information.
(2) If the explicit information does not sound natural in the target language or seems unnecessary or confusing, leave the explicit information implicit. Only do this if the reader can understand this information from the context. You can test this by asking the reader a question about the passage.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the explicit information of the source language sounds natural in the target language, then translate it as explicit information.

- There would be no change to the text using this strategy, so no examples are given here.

(2) If the explicit information does not sound natural in the target language or seems unnecessary or confusing, make the explicit information implicit. Only do this if the reader can understand this information from the context. You can test this by asking the reader a question about the passage.

> **And** Abimelech came to the tower and fought against it and drew near to the door of the tower **to burn it with fire**. (Judges 9:52 ESV)
>
> > Abimelech came to the tower and fought against it, and he approached the door of the tower **to burn it**. (Or) … **to set it on fire**.

In English, it is clear that the action of this verse follows the action of the previous verse without the use of the connector "and" at the beginning, so it was omitted. Also, the words "with fire" were left out, because this information is communicated implicitly by the word "burn." An alternative translation for "to burn it" is "to set it on fire." It is not natural in English to use both "burn" and "fire," so the English translator should choose only one of them. You can test if the readers understood the implicit information by asking, "How would the door burn?" If they knew it was by fire, then they have understood the implicit information. Or, if you chose the second option, you could ask, "What happens to a door that is set on fire?" If the readers answer, "It burns," then they have understood the implicit information.

> But the centurion **answered and said**, "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof" (Matthew 8:8a ULT)
>
> > The centurion **answered**, "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof"

In English, the information that the centurion responded by speaking is included in the verb "answered," so the verb "said" can be left implicit. You can test if the readers understood the implicit information by asking, "How did the centurion answer?" If they knew it was by speaking, then they have understood the implicit information.

> **He opened his mouth** and taught them, saying, (Matthew 5:2 ULT)
>
> > **He began to** teach them, saying, (Or) He taught them, saying,

In English, it would be very strange to include the information that Jesus opened his mouth when he spoke. That information is included in the verbs "taught" and "saying," so that phrase can be omitted and that information left implicit. However, "he opened his mouth" is an idiom that indicates the beginning of a speech, so that information may be included, or it may also be left implicit.

James References:

James 3:14 James 5:17

When Masculine Words Include Women

In the Bible, sometimes the words “men,” “brothers,” and “sons” refer only to men. At other times, those words include both men and women. In those places where the writer meant both men and women, you (the translator) need to translate it in a way that does not limit the meaning to men.

Description

In some languages a word that normally refers to men can also be used in a more general way to refer to both men and women. For example, the Bible sometimes says “brothers” when it refers to both brothers and sisters.

Also in some languages, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can be used in a more general way for any person if it is not important whether the person is a man or a woman. In the example below, the pronoun is “his,” but it is not limited to males.

> A wise son makes **his** father rejoice but a foolish son brings grief to **his** mother. (Proverbs 10:1 ULT)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- In some cultures words like “man,” “brother,” and “son” can only be used to refer to men. If those words are used in a translation in a more general way, people will think that what is being said does not apply to women.
- In some cultures, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can only refer to men. If a masculine pronoun is used, people will think that what is said does not apply to women.

Translation Principles

When a statement applies to both men and women, translate it in such a way that people will be able to understand that it applies to both.

Examples From the Bible

> Now we want you to know, **brothers**, the grace of God that has been given to the churches of Macedonia. (2 Corinthians 8:1 ULT)

This verse is addressing the believers in Corinth, not only men, but **men and women**.

> Then said Jesus to his disciples, “If anyone wants to follow me, **he** must deny **himself**, take up **his** cross, and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24 ULT)

Jesus was not speaking only of men, but of **men and women**.

Caution: Sometimes masculine words are used specifically to refer to men. Do not use words that would lead people to think that they include women. The words below are specifically about men.

> Moses said, ‘If **someone** dies, not having children, **his brother** must marry **his** wife and have children for **his brother**.’ (Matthew 22:24 ULT)

Translation Strategies

If people would understand that that masculine words like “man,” “brother,” and “he” can include women, then consider using them. Otherwise, here are some ways for translating those words when they include women.

(1) Use a noun that can be used for both men and women.
(2) Use a word that refers to men and a word that refers to women.
(3) Use pronouns that can be used for both men and women.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use nouns that can be used for both men and women.

> The wise **man** dies just like the fool dies. (Ecclesiastes 2:16b ULT)
>
> > "The wise **person** dies just like the fool dies."
> > "Wise **people** die just like fools die."

(2) Use a word that refers to men and a word that refers to women.

> For we do not want you to be uninformed, **brothers**, about the troubles that happened to us in Asia. (2 Corinthians 1:8) — Paul was writing this letter to both men and women.
>
> > "For we do not want you to be uninformed, **brothers and sisters**, about the troubles that happened to us in Asia."

(3) Use pronouns that can be used for both men and women.

> "If anyone wants to follow me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me." (Matthew 16:24 ULT)

English speakers can change the masculine singular pronouns, "he," "himself," and "his" to plural pronouns that do not mark gender, "they," "themselves," and "their" in order to show that it applies to all people, not just men.

> > "If **people** want to follow me, **they** must deny **themselves**, take up **their** cross, and follow me."

James References:

James 1:2 James 1:7 James 1:8 James 1:12 James 1:19 James 1:20 James 1:23 James 2:2 James 2:20 James 2:24 James 3:8 James 3:9

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."

James References:

James 2:20 James 5:6 James 5:7

Hendiadys

Description

In a hendiadys, a speaker uses two words that mean different things and that are connected with "and." These two words work together to express a single idea. Usually one of the words is the primary idea and the other word further describes the primary one.

> … his own **kingdom and glory.** (1 Thessalonians 2:12b ULT)

Though "kingdom" and "glory" are both nouns, "glory" actually tells what kind of kingdom it is: it is a **kingdom of glory** or **a glorious kingdom**.

Two phrases connected by "and" can also be a hendiadys when they refer to a single person, thing, or event.

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

Titus 2:13 contains two hendiadyses. "The blessed hope" and "appearing of the glory" refer to the same thing and serve to strengthen the idea that the return of Jesus Christ is greatly anticipated and wonderful. Also, "our great God" and "Savior Jesus Christ" refer to one person, not two.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Often a hendiadys contains an abstract noun. Some languages may not have a noun with the same meaning.
- Many languages do not use the hendiadys, so people may not understand that the second word is further describing the first one.
- Many languages do not use the hendiadys, so people may not understand that only one person or thing is meant, not two.

Examples From the Bible

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

"A mouth" and "wisdom" are nouns, but in this figure of speech "wisdom" describes what comes from the mouth.

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

"Willing" and "obedient" are adjectives, but "willing" describes "obedient."

Translation Strategies

If the hendiadys would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

(1) Substitute the describing noun with an adjective that means the same thing.
(2) Substitute the describing noun with a phrase that means the same thing.
(3) Substitute the describing adjective with an adverb that means the same thing.
(4) Substitute other parts of speech that mean the same thing and show that one word or phrase describes the other.
(5) If it is unclear that only one thing is meant, change the phrase so that this is clear.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Substitute the describing noun with an adjective that means the same thing.

> For I will give you **a mouth and wisdom** … (Luke 21:15a ULT)
>
> > For I will give you **wise words** …
>
> Walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you into **his own kingdom and glory**. (1 Thessalonians 2:12b ULT)
>
> > You should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to **his own glorious kingdom**.

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

> For I will give you **a mouth and wisdom** … (Luke 21:15a ULT)
>
> > for I will give you **words of wisdom**.
>
> You should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you into **his own kingdom and glory**. (1 Thessalonians 2:12b ULT)
>
> > You should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to **his own kingdom of glory**.

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

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

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

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

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

> > if you **obey willingly** …

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

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

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

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

James References:

James 1:27 James 3:9 James 4:2 James 5:10

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.

James References:

James 1:2 James 1:26 James 3:4 James 3:7 James 3:16

Hypothetical Situations

Consider these phrases: “If the sun stopped shining …” “What if the sun stopped shining …” “Suppose the sun stopped shining …” and “If only the sun had not stopped shining.” We use such expressions to set up hypothetical situations, imagining what might have happened or what could happen in the future but probably will not. We also use them to express regret or wishes. Hypothetical expressions occur often in the Bible. You (the translator) need to translate them in a way that people will know that the event did not actually happen and so that they will understand why the event was imagined.

Description

Hypothetical situations are situations that are not real. They can be in the past, present, or future. Hypothetical situations in the past and present have not happened, are not happening now, and ones in the future are not expected to happen.

People sometimes tell about conditions and what would happen if those conditions were met, but they know that these things have not happened or probably will not happen. (The conditions comprise a phrase that starts with “if.”)

- If he had lived to be 100 years old, he would have seen his grandson’s grandson. (But he did not.)
- If he lived to be 100 years old, he would still be alive today. (But he is not.)
- If he lives to be 100 years old, he will see his grandson’s grandson. (But he probably will not.)

People sometimes express wishes about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- I wish he had come.
- I wish he were here.
- I wish he would come.

People sometimes express regrets about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- If only he had come.
- If only he were here.
- If only he would come.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators need to recognize the different kinds of hypothetical situations in the Bible and understand that they are unreal.
- Translators need to know their own language’s ways of talking about different kinds of hypothetical situations.

Examples From the Bible

Hypothetical Situations in the Past

> “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! **If the mighty deeds had been done** in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, **they would have repented** long ago in sackcloth and ashes.” (Matthew 11:21 ULT)

Here in Matthew 11:21, Jesus said that **if** the people living in the ancient cities of Tyre and Sidon had been able to see the miracles that he performed, they would have repented long ago. The people of Tyre and Sidon did not actually see his miracles, and they did not repent. He said this to rebuke the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida who had seen his miracles and yet did not repent.

> Martha then said to Jesus, “Lord, **if you had been here, my brother would not have died**.” (John 11:21 ULT)

Martha said this to express her wish that Jesus would have come sooner so that her brother would not have died. But Jesus did not come sooner and her brother did die.

Hypothetical Situations in the Present

> And no man puts new wine into old wineskins. **But if he did do that, the new wine would burst the wineskins, and it would be spilled out, and the wineskins would be destroyed**. (Luke 5:37 ULT)

Jesus told about what would happen if a person were to put new wine into old wineskins. But no one would do that. He used this imaginary situation as an example to show that there are times when it is unwise to mix new things with old things. He did this so that people could understand why his disciples were not fasting as people traditionally did.

> Jesus said to them, "What man would there be among you, who, **if he had just one sheep, and if this sheep fell into a deep hole on the Sabbath, would not grasp hold of it and lift it out**?" (Matthew 12:11 ULT)

Jesus asked the religious leaders what they would do on the Sabbath if one of their sheep fell into a hole. He was not saying that their sheep would fall into a hole. He used this imaginary situation to show them that they were wrong to judge him for healing people on the Sabbath.

Hypothetical Situation in the Future

> **Unless those days are shortened, no flesh would be saved**. But for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened. (Matthew 24:22 ULT)

Jesus was talking about a future time when very bad things would happen. He told what would happen if those days of trouble were to last a long time. He did this to show how bad those days will be—so bad that if they lasted a long time, no one would be saved. But then he clarified that God will shorten those days of trouble so that the elect (those he has chosen) will be saved.

Expressing Emotion About a Hypothetical Situation

People sometimes talk about hypothetical situations in order to express regrets and wishes. Regrets are about the past and wishes are about the present and future.

> The Israelites said to them, "**If only we had died by Yahweh's hand in the land of Egypt when we were sitting by the pots of meat and were eating bread to the full.** For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill our whole community with hunger." (Exodus 16:3 ULT)

Here the Israelites were afraid that they would have to suffer and die of hunger in the wilderness, and so they wished that they had stayed in Egypt and died there with full stomachs. They were complaining, expressing regret that this had not happened.

> I know what you have done, and that you are neither cold nor hot. **I wish that you were either cold or hot!** (Revelation 3:15 ULT)

Jesus wished that the people were either hot or cold, but they are neither. He was rebuking them, expressing anger at this.

Translation Strategies

Find out how people speaking your language show:

- that something could have happened, but did not.
- that something could be true now, but is not.
- that something could happen in the future, but will not unless something changes.
- that they wish for something, but it does not happen.
- that they regret that something did not happen.

Use your language's ways of showing these kinds of things.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_hypo.

James References:

James 1:23 James 1:25 James 1:26 James 2:2 James 2:3 James 2:4 James 2:15 James 2:16 James 2:16 James 2:16 James 2:18 James 2:18

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**

James References:

James 1:1 James 1:12 James 1:19 James 1:22 James 1:23 James 1:23 James 1:27 James 2:3 James 2:3 James 2:5 James 2:7 James 2:8 James 2:10 James 2:14 James 2:20 James 3:6 James 3:6 James 3:10 James 4:12 James 4:13 James 4:13 James 4:13 James 4:15 James 5:1 James 5:1 James 5:3 James 5:5 James 5:7

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.”

James References:

James 2:3 James 2:3 James 2:18

Information Structure

Description

Different languages arrange the parts of the sentence in different ways. In English, a sentence normally has the subject first, then the verb, then the object, then other modifiers, like this: Peter painted his house yesterday.

Many other languages normally put these things in a different order such as: Painted yesterday Peter his house.

Although all languages have a normal order for parts of a sentence, this order can change depending on what information the speaker or writer considers to be the most important.

Suppose that someone is answering the question, “What did Peter paint yesterday?” The person asking the question already knows all of the information in our sentence above except for the object, “his house.” Therefore, that becomes the most important part of the information, and a person answering in English might say “His house is what Peter painted (yesterday).”

This puts the most important information first, which is normal for English. Many Other Languages would normally put the most important information last. In the flow of a text, the most important information is usually what the writer considers to be new information for the reader. In some languages the new information comes first, and in others it comes last.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Different languages arrange the parts of a sentence in different ways. If you (the translator) copy the order of the parts of a sentence from the source, it may not make sense in your language.
- Different languages put important or new information in different places in the sentence. If you keep the important or new information in the same place that it had in the source language, it may be confusing or give the wrong message in your language.

Examples From the Bible

> They all ate until they were satisfied. (Mark 6:42 ULT)

The parts of this sentence were in a different order in the original Greek source language. They were like this: And they ate all and they were satisfied.

In English, this means that the people ate everything. But the next verse says that they took up twelve baskets full of leftover pieces of food. In order for this to not be so confusing, the translators of the ULT put the parts of the sentence in the right order for English.

> And the day began to end, and the twelve came to him and said, “Send the crowd away so that, going into the surrounding villages and countryside, they may find lodging and food, because we are here in an desolate place.” (Luke 9:12 ULT)

In this verse, what the disciples say to Jesus puts the important information first, that he should send the crowd away. In languages that put the important information last, people would understand that the reason that they gave, being in an isolated place, is the most important part of their message to Jesus. They might then think that the disciples are afraid of the spirits in that place, and that sending the people to buy food is a way to protect them from the spirits. That is the wrong message.

> Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for their fathers treated the false prophets in the same way. (Luke 6:26 ULT)

In this verse, the most important part of the information is first, that “woe” is coming on the people for what they are doing. The reason that supports that warning comes last. This could be confusing for people who expect the important information to come last.

Translation Strategies

(1) Study how your language arranges the parts of a sentence, and use that order in your translation.

(2) Study where your language puts the new or important information, and rearrange the order of information so that it follows the way it is done in your language.

Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Study how your language arranges the parts of a sentence, and use that order in your translation.

This is the verse in the original Greek order:

> And he went out from there and came to the hometown his, and they followed him the disciples his. (Mark 6:1)

The ULT has put this into the normal order for English:

> Now Jesus went out from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. (Mark 6:1 ULT)

(2) Study where your language puts the new or important information and rearrange the order of information so that it follows the way it is done in your language.

> And the day began to end, and the twelve came and said to him, “Send the crowd away so that, going into the surrounding villages and countryside, they may find lodging and food, because we are here in a desolate place.” (Luke 9:12 ULT)

If your language puts the important information last, you can change the order of the verse.

> Now the day was about to come to an end, and the twelve came to him and said, “Because we are here in an desolate place, send the crowd away that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and food.”
>
> Woe to you, when all men speak well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets. (Luke 6:26 ULT)

If your language puts the important information last, you can change the order of the verse.

> When all men speak well of you, which is just as people's ancestors treated the false prophets, then woe to you!

James References:

James 1:3

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**!

James References:

James 2:19

Merism

Definition

Merism is a figure of speech in which a person refers to something by speaking of two extreme parts of it. By referring to the extreme parts, the speaker intends to include also everything in between those parts.

> “I am **the alpha and the omega**,” says the Lord God, “the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.” (Revelation 1:8 ULT)
>
> I am **the alpha and the omega**, **the first and the last**, **the beginning and the end**. (Revelation 22:13, ULT)

Alpha and omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. This is a merism that includes everything from the beginning to the end. It means eternal.

> … I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth** …, (Matthew 11:25b ULT)

Heaven and earth is a merism that includes everything that exists.

Reason This is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not use merism. The readers of those languages may think that the phrase only applies to the items mentioned. They may not realize that it refers to those two things and everything in between.

Examples From the Bible

> **From the rising of the sun to its setting**, Yahweh’s name should be praised. (Psalm 113:3 ULT)

This bolded phrase is a merism because it speaks of the east and the west and everywhere in between. It means “everywhere.”

> He will bless those who honor him, both **young and old**. (Psalm 115:13)

The bolded phrase is merism because it speaks of old people and young people and everyone in between. It means “everyone.”

Translation Strategies

If the merism would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

(1) Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.
(2) Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.

> I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth**. (Matthew 11:25b ULT)
>
> > I praise you, Father, Lord of **everything**.

> **From the rising of the sun to its setting**, Yahweh’s name should be praised. (Psalm 113:3 ULT)
>
> > **In all places**, people should praise Yahweh’s name.

(2) Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.

> I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth**. (Matthew 11:25b ULT)
>
> > I praise you, Father, Lord of **everything, including both what is in heaven and what is on earth**.

> He will bless those who honor him, both **young and old**. (Psalm 115:13 ULT)
>
> > He will bless **all those** who honor him, regardless of whether they are **young or old**.

James References:

James 3:7

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.

James References:

James 1:1 James 1:1 James 1:2 James 1:2 James 1:8 James 1:8 James 1:9 James 1:9 James 1:9 James 1:10 James 1:11 James 1:11 James 1:11 James 1:11 James 1:12 James 1:12 James 1:14 James 1:15 James 1:16 James 1:16 James 1:17 James 1:17 James 1:17 James 1:17 James 1:18 James 1:19 James 1:21 James 1:21 James 1:21 James 1:25 James 1:26 James 1:27 James 1:27 James 1:27 James 2:1 James 2:5 James 2:5 James 2:5 James 2:6 James 2:10 James 2:14 James 2:15 James 2:21 James 2:22 James 2:24 James 3 Introduction James 3:1 James 3:2 James 3:2 James 3:4 James 3:5 James 3:6 James 3:6 James 3:6 James 3:6 James 3:6 James 3:6 James 3:6 James 3:8 James 3:8 James 3:10 James 3:12 James 3:14 James 3:15 James 3:17 James 3:17 James 3:18 James 4 Introduction James 4:1 James 4:1 James 4:2 James 4:2 James 4:3 James 4:4 James 4:4 James 4:4 James 4:7 James 4:8 James 4:8 James 4:8 James 4:8 James 4:8 James 4:10 James 4:10 James 4:11 James 4:14 James 5:3 James 5:3 James 5:4 James 5:5 James 5:5 James 5:5 James 5:7 James 5:7 James 5:8 James 5:9 James 5:9 James 5:9 James 5:10 James 5:11 James 5:11 James 5:12 James 5:12 James 5:12 James 5:14 James 5:19 James 5:19 James 5:19 James 5:20 James 5:20 James 5:20

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.

James References:

James 1:1 James 1:18 James 1:21 James 1:22 James 1:23 James 1:25 James 1:26 James 1:27 James 2:5 James 2:7 James 2:8 James 2:13 James 2:16 James 2:16 James 3:2 James 3:3 James 3:4 James 3:6 James 3:8 James 3:9 James 3:10 James 3:15 James 3:15 James 4:4 James 4:4 James 4:8 James 5:3 James 5:4 James 5:4 James 5:10 James 5:14 James 5:15 James 5:20

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**.

James References:

James 1:10 James 1:11 James 2:2 James 2:5 James 2:6 James 2:6 James 2:10 James 2:16 James 3:5 James 3:7 James 3:8 James 3:11 James 3:12 James 4:6 James 4:8 James 5:1 James 5:6 James 5:7 James 5:15 James 5:16

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.

James References:

James 4:2 James 4:9 James 5:5

Predictive Past

Description

The predictive past is a figure of speech that uses the past tense to refer to things that will happen in the future. This is sometimes done in prophecy to show that the event will certainly happen. It is also called the prophetic perfect.

> Therefore my people have gone into captivity for lack of understanding;
> their honored leaders go hungry, and
> their common people have nothing to drink. (Isaiah 5:13 ULT)

In the example above, the people of Israel had not yet gone into captivity, but God spoke of their going into captivity as if it had already happened because he had decided that they certainly would go into captivity.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue:

Readers who are not aware of the past tense being used in prophecy to refer to future events may find it confusing.

Examples From the Bible

> Now Jericho was tightly closed because of the sons of Israel. No one went out and no one came in. Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho, and its king, and its powerful soldiers into your hand." (Joshua 6:1-2 ULT)

> For to us a child has been born, to us a son has been given;
> and the rule will be on his shoulder.
> (Isaiah 9:6a ULT)

In the examples above, God spoke of things that would happen in the future as if they had already happened.

> But even Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them, saying, "Look! The Lord came with thousands and thousands of his holy ones." (Jude 1:14 ULT)

Enoch was speaking of something that would happen in the future, but he used the past tense when he said "the Lord came."

Translation Strategies

If the past tense would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

(1) Use the future tense to refer to future events.
(2) If it refers to something in the immediate future, use a form that would show that.
(3) Some languages may use the present tense to show that something will happen very soon.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use the future tense to refer to future events.

> For to us a child **has been born**, to us a son **has been given**. (Isaiah 9:6a ULT)
>
> > For to us a child **will be born**, to us a son **will be given**.

(2) If it refers to something that would happen very soon, use a form that shows that.

> Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho, and its king, and its powerful soldiers into your hand." (Joshua 6:2 ULT)
>
> > Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I **am about to deliver** over to you Jericho, its king, and its powerful soldiers."

(3) Some languages may use the present tense to show that something will happen very soon.

> Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho, and its king, and its powerful soldiers into your hand." (Joshua 6:2 ULT)
>
> > Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I **am delivering** over to you Jericho, its king, and its powerful soldiers."

James References:

James 5:2 James 5:3

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.

James References:

James 1:4 James 1:14 James 1:15 James 1:15 James 1:21 James 2:9 James 2:13 James 2:13 James 2:17 James 2:20 James 2:20 James 2:22 James 2:26 James 3:4 James 3:5 James 3:8 James 4:1 James 4:4 James 4:4 James 4:5 James 4:6 James 5:4 James 5:15 James 5:16 James 5:18 James 5:18

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**.

James References:

James 1:12 James 1:17 James 1:18 James 1:25 James 1:25 James 2:1 James 2:1 James 2:4 James 2:12 James 3:13 James 5:15 James 5:15 James 5:20

Direct and Indirect Quotations

Description

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

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

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

An indirect quotation occurs when a speaker reports what someone else said, but in this case, the speaker is reporting it from his own point of view instead and not from the original person's point of view. This kind of quotation usually contains changes in pronouns, and it often includes changes in time, in word choices, and in length. In the example below, the narrator refers to John as "he" in the quotation and uses the word "would" to replace the future tense, indicated by "will."

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

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In some languages, reported speech can be expressed by either direct or indirect quotations. In other languages, it is more natural to use one than the other. There may be a certain meaning implied by using one rather than the other. So for each quotation, translators need to decide whether it is best to translate it as a direct quotation or as an indirect quotation.

Examples From the Bible

The verses in the examples below contain both direct and indirect quotations. In the explanation below the verse, we have marked in bold the words that are quoted.

> And he commanded him to tell no one, but, "Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them." (Luke 5:14 ULT)

- Indirect quote: He commanded him **to tell no one**,
- Direct quote: but told him, "**Go, show yourself to the priest …**"

> And being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, he answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with careful observation. Neither will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is among you." (Luke 17:20-21 ULT)

- Indirect quote: Being asked by the Pharisees **when the kingdom of God was coming,**
- Direct quote: he answered them and said, "**The kingdom of God is not coming with careful observation. Neither will they say, 'Look. here it is!' or 'There it is!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is among you.**"
- Direct quotes: Neither will they say, '**Look, here it is!**' or, '**There it is!**'

Translation Strategies

If the kind of quote used in the source text would work well in your language, consider using it. If the kind of quote used in that context is not natural for your language, follow these strategies.

(1) If a direct quote would not work well in your language, change it to an indirect quote. (2) If an indirect quote would not work well in your language, change it to a direct quote.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If a direct quote would not work well in your language, change it to an indirect quote.

> And he commanded him to tell no one, but, "**Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.**" (Luke 5:14 ULT)
>
> > He commanded him to tell no one, but **to go and show himself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for his cleansing according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them**.

(2) If an indirect quote would not work well in your language, change it to a direct quote.

> And he commanded him **to tell no one,** but, "Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them." (Luke 5:14 ULT)
>
> > He commanded him, "**Tell no one**. But go and show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them."

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_quotations.

James References:

James 2:18 James 2:18

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!

James References:

James 2:19 James 2:22

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?

James References:

James 2:4 James 2:5 James 2:6 James 2:7 James 2:14 James 2:14 James 2:16 James 2:20 James 2:21 James 2:25 James 3:11 James 3:12 James 3:12 James 3:13 James 4:1 James 4:1 James 4:4 James 4:5 James 4:12 James 4:14 James 5:13 James 5:13 James 5:14

Sentence Types

Description

A **sentence** is a group of words that expresses a complete thought. The basic types of sentences are listed below with the functions they are mainly used for.

- **Statements** — These are mainly used to give information. 'This is a fact.'
- **Questions** — These are mainly used to ask for information. 'Do you know him?'
- **Imperative Sentences** — These are mainly used to express a desire or requirement that someone do something. 'Pick that up.'
- **Exclamations** — These are mainly used to express a strong feeling. 'Ouch, that hurt!'

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Languages have different ways of using sentence types to express particular functions.
- Most languages use these sentence types for more than one function.
- Each sentence in the Bible belongs to a certain sentence type and has a certain function, but some languages would not use that type of sentence for that function.

Examples From the Bible

The examples below show each of these types used for their main functions.

Statements

> In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1 ULT)

Statements can also have other functions. (See Statements — Other Uses.)

Questions

The speakers below used these questions to get information, and the people they were speaking to answered their questions.

> Jesus said to them, "**Do you believe that I can do this?**" They said to him, "Yes, Lord." (Matthew 9:28b ULT)

> He … said, "Sirs, **what must I do to be saved?**" They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." (Acts 16:29-31 ULT)

Questions can also have other functions. (See Rhetorical Question.)

Imperative Sentences

There are different kinds of imperative sentences: commands, instructions, suggestions, invitations, requests, and wishes.

With a command, the speaker uses his authority and tells someone to do something.

> **Rise up**, Balak, and **hear**. **Listen** to me, you son of Zippor. (Numbers 23:1b8 ULT)

With an instruction, the speaker tells someone how to do something.

> … but if you want to enter into life, **keep the commandments**. … if you wish to be perfect, **go**, **sell** what you have, and **give** to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven … (Matthew 19:17b, 21b ULT)

With a suggestion, the speaker tells someone something to do or not do that he thinks might help that person. In the example below, it is best for both blind men if they do not try to lead each other.

> A blind man is not able to guide a blind man, is he? Would not both fall into a pit? (Luke 6:39b UST)

Speakers may intend to be part of the group that does what is suggested. In Genesis 11, the people were saying that it would be good for them all to make bricks together.

> They said to one another, "Come, **let us** make bricks and bake them thoroughly." (Genesis 11:3a ULT)

With an invitation, the speaker uses politeness or friendliness to suggest that someone do something if he wants. This is usually something that the speaker thinks the listener will enjoy.

> **Come** with us and we will do you good. (Numbers 10:29b)

With a request, the speaker uses politeness to say that he wants someone to do something. This may include the word 'please' to make it clear that it is a request and not a command. This is usually something that would benefit the speaker.

> **Give us** today our daily bread. (Matthew 6:11 ULT)
>
> **I ask you** to consider me excused. (Luke 14:18 ULT)

With a wish, a person expresses what they want to happen. In English they often start with the word "may" or "let."

In Genesis 28, Isaac told Jacob what he wanted God to do for him.

> **May God Almighty bless** you, make you fruitful and multiply you. (Genesis 28:3a ULT)

In Genesis 9, Noah said what he wanted to happen to Canaan.

> **Cursed be** Canaan. **May he be** a servant to his brothers' servants. (Genesis 9:25b ULT)

In Genesis 21, Hagar expressed her strong desire not to see her son die, and then she moved away so that she would not see him die.

> **Let me not look** upon the death of the child. (Genesis 21:16b ULT)

Imperative sentences can have other functions also. (See Imperatives — Other Uses.)

Exclamations

Exclamations express strong feeling. In the ULT and UST, they usually have an exclamation mark (!) at the end.

> Save us, Lord; we are about to die! (Matthew 8:25b ULT)

(See Exclamations for other ways that exclamations are shown and ways to translate them.)

Translation Strategies

(1) Use your language's ways of showing that a sentence has a particular function.
(2) When a sentence in the Bible has a sentence type that your language would not use for the sentence's function, see the pages below for translation strategies.

- Statements — Other Uses
- Rhetorical Question
- Imperatives — Other Uses
- Exclamations

James References:

James 1:19

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!

James References:

James 1:6 James 1:10 James 1:11 James 1:18 James 1:23 James 3:5 James 5:2 James 5:3 James 5:3

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

James References:

James 1:21 James 1:26 James 3:2 James 5:2 James 5:6 James 5:20

Forms of You

Singular, Dual, and Plural

Some languages have more than one word for "you" based on how many people the word "you" refers to. The **singular** form refers to one person, and the **plural** form refers to more than one person. Some languages also have a **dual** form which refers to two people, and some languages have other forms that refer to three or four people.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_younum.

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker uses a singular form of "you" even though he is speaking to a crowd. For help with translating these, we suggest you read:

- Singular Pronouns that Refer to Groups

Formal and Informal

Some languages have more than one form of "you" based on the relationship between the speaker and the person he or she is talking to. People use the **formal** form of "you" when speaking to someone who is older, or has higher authority, or is someone they do not know very well. People use the **informal** form when speaking to someone who is not older, or does not have higher authority, or is a family member or close friend.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_youform.

For help with translating these, we suggest you read:

- Forms of "You" — Formal or Informal

Masculine and Feminine

Some languages have a **masculine** form and a **feminine** form of the word for "you." People use the **masculine** form when speaking to a man or boy and the **feminine** form when speaking to a woman or girl.

English does not make any of the above distinctions, so they are absent in the ULT.

Please be aware of this and use the appropriate forms of "you" if your language does make any of these distinctions.

James References:

James 1:2 James 2:3 James 2:3 James 2:12 James 2:24

Singular Pronouns that refer to Groups

Description

The Bible was written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. These languages have a singular form of "you" for when the word "you" refers to just one person, and a plural form for when the word "you" refers to more than one person. However, sometimes speakers in the Bible used the singular form of "you" even though they were speaking to a group of people. This is not obvious when you read the Bible in English because English does not have different forms that indicate where "you" is singular and where "you" is plural. But you may see this if you read a Bible in a language that does have distinct forms.

Also, speakers and writers of the Old Testament often referred to groups of people with the singular pronoun "he," rather than with the plural pronoun "they."

Finally, Old Testament speakers and writers sometimes referred to actions that they performed as part of a group by saying 'I' did it when, really, the whole group was involved.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- For many languages, a translator who reads a Bible with a general form of "you" will need to know whether the speaker was speaking to one person or to more than one.
- In some languages, it might be confusing if a speaker uses a singular pronoun when speaking to or about more than one person.

Examples From the Bible

> 1 Now take heed that **you** do not do **your** acts of righteousness before people to be seen by them, otherwise **you** will not have a reward with **your** Father who is in heaven. 2 So when **you** give alms, do not sound a trumpet before **yourself** as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may have the praise of people. Truly I say to **you**, they have received their reward. (Matthew 6:1-2 ULT)

Jesus said this to a crowd. He used "you" plural in verse 1, and "you" singular in the first sentence of verse 2. Then, in the last sentence, he used the plural again.

> God spoke all these words: "I am Yahweh, **your** God, who brought **you** out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. **You** must have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20:1-3 ULT)

God said this to all the people of Israel. He had taken them all out of Egypt and he wanted them all to obey him, but he used the singular form of you here when speaking to them.

> This is what Yahweh says,
> "For three sins of Edom,
> even for four,
> I will not turn away punishment,
> because **he** pursued **his** brother with the sword
> and cast off all pity.
> **His** anger raged continually,
> and **his** wrath lasted forever." (Amos 1:11 ULT)

Yahweh said these things about the nation of Edom, not about only one person.

> And I arose in the night, myself and a few men with me. And I was going up by the wadi at night, and I was looking intently at the wall. And I turned back, and I entered by the gate of the valley, and I returned. (Nehemiah 2:12a,15 ULT)

Nehemiah makes clear that he brought other people with him on his inspection tour of the

wall of Jerusalem. But as he describes the tour, he just says “I” did this and that.

Translation Strategies

If the singular form of the pronoun would be natural when referring to a group of people, consider using it.

(1) If using the singular form of the pronoun when referring to a group of people would not be natural in your language, use the plural form of the pronoun.

- Whether you can use use the singular form of the pronoun may depend on who the speaker is and who the people are that he is talking about or talking to.
- It may also depend on what the speaker is saying.

Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If using the singular form of the pronoun when referring to a group of people would not be natural in your language, use the plural form of the pronoun.

> This is what Yahweh says,
> “For three sins of Edom,
> even for four,
> I will not turn away punishment,
> because **he** pursued **his** brother with the sword
> and cast off all pity.
> **His** anger raged continually,
> and **his** wrath lasted forever.” (Amos 1:11 ULT)

> > This is what Yahweh says,
> > “For three sins of Edom,
> > even for four,
> > I will not turn away punishment,
> > because **they** pursued **their brothers** with the sword
> > and cast off all pity.
> > **Their** anger raged continually,
> > and **their** wrath lasted forever.”

> And I arose in the night, myself and a few men with me. And **I** was going up by the wadi at night, and **I** was looking intently at the wall. And **I** turned back, and **I** entered by the gate of the valley, and **I** returned. (Nehemiah 2:12a,15 ULT)

> And I arose in the night, myself and a few men with me. … And **we** were going up by the wadi at night and **we** were looking intently at the wall. And **we** turned back and **we** entered by the gate of the valley, and **we** returned.

James References:

James 2:8 James 2:11 James 4:11 James 4:12

Forms of 'You' — Singular

Description

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

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

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

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

Often the context will make it clear whether the word "you" refers to one person or more than one. If you look at the other pronouns in the sentence, they will help you know the number of people the speaker was speaking to. Sometimes Greek and Hebrew speakers used the singular form of "you" even though they were speaking to a group of people. (See Forms of 'You' — Singular to a Crowd.)

Examples From the Bible

> But he said, "All these things **I** have kept from my youth." But when he heard this, Jesus said to him, "One thing is still lacking to **you**. All things, as much as **you** have, **sell** all and **distribute** to the poor, and **you** will have treasure in heaven—and **come**, **follow** me." (Luke 18:21-22 ULT)

The ruler was speaking about just himself when he said "I." This shows us that when Jesus said "you" he was referring only to the ruler and he used the singular form. So languages that have singular and plural forms of "you" need the singular form here, as well as for the verbs "sell," distribute," "come," and "follow."

> The angel said to him, "**Dress yourself** and **put on your** sandals." So he did that. He said to him, "**Put on your** outer garment and **follow** me." (Acts 12:8 ULT)

The angel used singular forms here and the context makes it clear that he was speaking to one person and that only one person did what the the angel commanded. So languages that have singular and plural forms of "you" would need the singular form here for "yourself" and "your." Also, if verbs have different forms for singular and plural subjects, then the verbs "dress," "put on," and "follow" need the form that indicates a singular subject.

> All the ones {who are} with me greet **you**. **Greet** the ones loving us in faith. Grace {be} with all of **you**. (Titus 3:15 ULT)

Paul wrote this letter to one person, Titus, so most of the time the word "you" in this letter is singular and refers only to Titus. In this verse, the first "you" is singular, so the greeting is for Titus, as well as the instruction to greet the others there. The second "you," however, is plural, so the blessing is for Titus and for all of the believers there in Crete.

> "Having gone, **search** carefully for the young child, and after **you** have found him, **report** to me so that I also, having come, might worship him." (Matthew 2:8 ULT)

Since Herod is speaking to all of the learned men, the word "you" and the commands "search" and "report" are plural.

Strategies for finding out how many people "you" refers to

(1) Look at the notes to see if they tell whether "you" refers to one person or more than one person.
(2) Look at the UST to see if it says anything that would show you whether the word "you" refers to one person or more than one person.
(3) If you have a Bible that is written in a language that distinguishes "you" singular from "you" plural, see which form of "you" that Bible has in that sentence.
(4) Look at the context to see how many people the speaker was talking to and who responded.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_younum.

James References:

James 2:3 James 2:18 James 5:1

Connect — Contrast Relationship

Logical Relationships

Some connectors establish logical relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

Contrast Relationship

Description

A contrast relationship is a logical relationship in which one event or item is in contrast or opposition to another.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In Scripture, many events did not happen as the people involved intended or expected them to happen. Sometimes people acted in ways that were not expected, whether good or bad. Often it was God at work, changing the events. These events were often pivotal. It is important that translators understand and communicate these contrasts. In English, contrast relationships are often indicated by the words "but," "although," "even though," "though," "yet," or "however."

Examples From OBS and the Bible

> You tried to do evil when you sold me as a slave, **but** God used the evil for good! (Story 8 Frame 12 OBS)

Joseph's brothers' evil plan to sell Joseph is contrasted with God's good plan to save many people. The word "but" marks the contrast.

> For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? **Yet** I am among you as one who serves. (Luke 22:27 ULT)

Jesus contrasts the proud way that human leaders behave with the humble way that he behaves. The contrast is marked by the word "yet."

> The hill country will also be yours. **Though** it is a forest, you will clear it and it will become yours to its farthest borders, for you will drive out the Canaanites, even **though** they have chariots of iron, and even **though** they are strong. (Joshua 17:18 ULT)

It was unexpected that the Israelites, who had been slaves in Egypt, would be able to conquer and lay claim to the promised land.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses contrast relationships in the same way as in the text, then use them as they are.

(1) If the contrast relationship between the clauses is not clear, then use a connecting word or phrase that is more specific or more clear.
(2) If it is more clear in your language to mark the other clause of the contrast relationship, then use a connecting word on the other clause.
(3) If your language shows a contrast relationship in a different way, then use that way.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the contrast relationship between the clauses is not clear, then use a connecting word or phrase that is more specific or more clear.

> For who is greater, the one who reclines at table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? **Yet** I am among you as one who serves. (Luke 22:27 ULT)
>
> > For who is greater, the one who reclines at table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? **Unlike that person**, I am among you as one who serves.

(2) If it is more clear in your language to mark the other clause of the contrast relationship, then use a connecting word on the other clause.

> The hill country will also be yours. **Though** it is a forest, you will clear it and it will become yours to its farthest borders, for you will drive out the Canaanites, even **though** they have chariots of iron, and even **though** they are strong. (Joshua 17:18 ULT)
>
> > The hill country will also be yours. It is a forest, **but** you will clear it and it will become yours to its farthest borders. They have chariots of iron, and they are strong, **but** you will drive out the Canaanites.

(3) If your language shows a contrast relationship in a different way, then use that way.

> {David} found favor in the sight of God, and he asked if he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob. **However**, Solomon built the house for him. **But** the Most High does not live in houses made with hands. (Acts 7:46-48a ULT)
>
> > [David] found favor in the sight of God, and he asked if he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob. **But** it was, Solomon, **not David**, who built the house for God. **Even though Solomon built him a house**, the Most High does not live in houses made with hands.

James References:

James 1:14 James 1:19 James 1:22 James 2:3 James 2:8 James 2:13 James 3:5 James 4:2 James 4:3

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**.

James References:

James 1:18

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.

James References:

James 1:11 James 1:20 James 1:21 James 2:4 James 2:10 James 2:11 James 2:13 James 2:26 James 3:2 James 3:16 James 4:7 James 4:7 James 4:8 James 4:10 James 5:3 James 5:7 James 5:11 James 5:16

Connect — Background Information

Time Relationship

Some connectors establish time relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

Background Clause

Description

A background clause is one that describes something that is ongoing. Then, in the same sentence, another clause indicates an event that begins to happen during that time. These events are also simultaneous events, but they have the further relationship of background event and main event because the event that is already happening serves as the background for the other event, the one that is in focus. The background event simply provides the time frame or other context for the main event or events.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Languages indicate a shift in time in different ways. You (the translator) need to understand how these shifts in time are indicated in the original languages in order to communicate them clearly in your own language. Background clauses often indicate a time that began long before the event that is in focus. Translators need to understand how both the source language and the target language communicate background events. Some English words that indicate background events are “now,” “when,” “while,” and “during.” Those words can also indicate simultaneous events. To tell the difference, ask yourself if all of the events seem to be equal in importance and started at about the same time. If so, they are probably simultaneous events. But if an event(s) is ongoing and another event(s) just started, then the ongoing event(s) is probably background to the other event(s). Some common phrases that indicate background events are “in those days” and “at that time.”

Examples From OBS and the Bible

> **When** Solomon was old, he also worshiped their gods. (OBS Story 18 Frame 3)

Solomon began to worship foreign gods at a time when he was old. Being old is the background event. Worshiping other gods is the main event.

> And his parents went **every year** to Jerusalem to the Feast of the Passover. And when he was 12 years old, they went up according to the custom of the feast. (Luke 2:41-42 ULT)

The first event—going to Jerusalem—is ongoing and started long ago. We know this because of the words “every year.” Going to Jerusalem is the background event. Then an event begins that started during the time “when he was twelve years old.” So the main event is the specific time Jesus and his family traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover festival **when he was twelve years old.**

> And it came about that, **while** they were there, the days were fulfilled for her to give birth. (Luke 2:6 ULT)

Being in Bethlehem is the background event. The birth of the baby is the main event.

> And in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—**while** Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, **during** the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas—the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. (Luke 3:1-2 ULT)

This example begins with five background clauses (marked by commas), signalled as background by the words “while” and “during.” Then the main event happens: “the word of God came to John.”

Translation Strategies

If the way that the Background Clauses are marked is also clear in your language, then translate the Background Clauses as they are.

(1) If the connecting word does not make it clear that what follows is a Background Clause, use a connecting word that communicates this more clearly.
(2) If your language marks Background Clauses in a different way than using connecting words (such as by using different verb forms), then use that way.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

> And in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—**while** Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, **during** the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas—the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. (Luke 3:1-2 ULT)

(1) If the connecting word does not make it clear that what follows is a background clause, use a connecting word that communicates this more clearly.

> **It happened during the time that** Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, **and during the time that** Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, **and during the time that** his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, **and during the time that** Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, **and also during the time that** Annas and Caiaphas were high priests—**that** the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

(2) If your language marks background clauses in a different way than using connecting words, such as with different verb forms, then use that way.

> Pontius Pilate **was governing** Judea, and Herod **was ruling over** Galilee, and his brother Philip **was ruling over** the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias **was ruling over** Abilene, and Annas and Caiaphas **were being** high priests—the word of God **came** to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

Example of Differences in Time Relationship Connecting Words:

Category	Example
Background setting	Yahweh's word was rare **in those days**;
Background repeated	there was no frequent prophetic vision.
Introduction of main event	**At that time**, **when** Eli
Background	**whose** eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see well,
Simultaneous background	was lying down in his own bed.
Simultaneous background	The lamp of God **had not yet** gone out,
Simultaneous background	**and** Samuel was lying down to sleep in the temple of Yahweh,
Simultaneous background	where the ark of God was.
Main event	**Yahweh called to Samuel**,
Sequential event	who said, "Here I am." (1 Sam 3:1-4 ULT)

In the above example, the first two lines talk about a condition that was going on for a long time. This is the general, long-term background. We know this from the phrase "in those days." After the introduction of the main event ("At that time,"), there are several lines of simultaneous background. The first one is introduced by "when," and then three more follow, with the last connected by "and." The background clause introduced by "where" explains a little more about the background clause before it. Then the main event happens, followed by more events. Translators will need to think about the best

way to show these relationships in their language.

James References:

James 3:3 James 3:7

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.

James References:

James 1:15

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.

James References:

James 1:27

Translating Son and Father

Door43 supports Bible translations that represent these concepts when they refer to God.

Biblical Witness

"Father" and "Son" are names that God calls himself in the Bible.

The Bible shows that God called Jesus his Son:

> After he was baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water, and … a voice came out of the heavens saying, "**This is my beloved Son**. I am very pleased with him." (Matthew 3:16-17 ULT)

The Bible shows that Jesus called God his Father:

> Jesus … said, "I praise you **Father**, Lord of heaven and earth … no one knows the **Son** except the **Father**, and no one knows the **Father** except the **Son**." (Matthew 11:25a, 27b ULT) (See also: John 6:26-57)

Christians have found that "Father" and "Son" are the ideas that most essentially describe the eternal relationship of the First and Second Persons of the Trinity to each other. The Bible indeed refers to them in various ways, but no other terms reflect the eternal love and intimacy between these Persons, nor the interdependent eternal relationship between them.

Jesus referred to God in the following terms:

> Baptize them into **the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit**. (Matthew 28:19b ULT)

The intimate, loving relationship between the Father and the Son is eternal, just as they are eternal. The Father **loves** the Son. (See John 3:35-36; 5:19-20 ULT)

> I **love** the Father, and just as the Father commanded me, thus I do. (John 14:31 ULT)
>
> **No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son**. (Luke 10:22b ULT)

The terms "Father" and "Son" also communicate that the Father and the Son are of the same essence; they are both eternal God.

> Jesus said, "Father, … glorify your Son so that the Son will glorify you … I glorified you on the earth … Now Father, glorify me … with the glory that **I had with you before the world was made**." (John 17:1, 4a, 5 ULT)
>
> But in these last days, {God the Father} has spoken to us through a Son, whom he appointed to be the heir of all things. Through him, he also made the universe. He is the brightness of God's glory and **the very exact representation of his being**. He holds everything together by the word of his power. (Hebrews 1:2-3a ULT)
>
> Jesus said to him, "I have been with you for so long and you still do not know me, Philip? **Whoever has seen me has seen the Father**. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" (John 14:9 ULT)

Human Relationships

Human fathers and sons are not perfect, but the Bible still uses those terms for the Father and Son, who are perfect.

Just as today, human father-son relationships during Bible times were never as loving or perfect as the relationship between Jesus and his Father. But this does not mean that the translator should avoid the concepts of father and son. The Scriptures use these terms to refer to God, the perfect Father and Son, as well as to sinful human fathers and sons. In referring to God as Father and Son, choose words in your language that are widely used to refer to a human "father" and "son." In this way you will communicate that God the Father and God the Son are of the same

divine essence (they are both God), just as a human father and son are of the same human essence (they are both human and share the same human characteristics).

Translation Strategies

(1) Think through all the possibilities within your language to translate the words “son” and “father.” Determine which words in your language best represent the divine “Son” and “Father.”
(2) If your language has more than one word for “son,” use the word that has the closest meaning to “only son” (or “first son” if necessary).
(3) If your language has more than one word for “father,” use the word that has the closest meaning to “birth father,” rather than “adoptive father.”

(See *God the Father* and *Son of God* pages in unfoldingWord® Translation Words for help translating “Father” and “Son.”)

James References:

James 1:27 James 3:9

Blessings

Description

Blessings are short sayings that people use to ask God to do something good for another person. In the Bible, the person saying the blessing speaks or writes directly to the person who will receive the blessing. The person who says the blessing does not directly speak to God, but it is understood that God is the one who will do the good thing mentioned. It is also understood that God hears the blessing, whether he is mentioned by name or not.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Each language has its own ways of saying blessings. There are many blessings in the Bible. They need to be translated in the way that people say blessings in your language, so that people recognize them as blessings and understand what one person wants God to do for another.

Examples From the Bible

In the Bible, people often said a blessing when they met someone or when they were leaving someone or sending someone off.

In the book of Ruth, when Boaz meets his workers in the fields, he greets them with a blessing:

> Then behold, Boaz coming from Bethlehem! And he said to the reapers, “Yahweh be with you.” And they said to him, “May Yahweh bless you.” (Ruth 2:4 ULT)

Similarly, when Rebekah leaves her family, they say farewell with a blessing:

> They blessed Rebekah, and said to her, “Our sister, may you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them.” (Genesis 24:60 ULT)

In a similar way, the writers of letters in the New Testament often wrote a blessing at the

beginning of their letters as well as at the end. Here are examples from the beginning and end of Paul's second letter to Timothy:

> Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. (2 Tim 1:2 ULT)
> The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you. (2 Tim 4:22 ULT)

Translation Strategies

Find out how people say blessings in your language. Collect a list of common blessings, noting the form of the verb, the use of certain words, and the words that are not used in a blessing but would normally be in a sentence. Also find out what differences there might be between blessings that people use when they are speaking to each other and when they are writing to each other.

If translating a blessing literally would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider doing that. If not, here are some options:

1. Add a verb if that is natural in your language.
2. Mention God as the subject of a blessing if that is natural in your language.
3. Translate the blessing in a form that is natural and clear in your language.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add a verb if that is natural in your language.

> The Lord with your spirit. The grace with you. (2 Tim 4:22, literal from the Greek)

In the Greek of this verse, there is no verb 'be.' However, in blessings in English, it is natural to use a verb. The idea that the 'grace' from God will be or remain with the person is implied in Greek.

The Lord **be** with your spirit. Grace **be** with you. (2 Tim 4:22 ULT)

(2) Mention God as the subject of a blessing if that is natural in your language.

If people expect a blessing to refer to God in your language, you might have to provide 'God' as the subject or as the source of the blessing. In Greek and Hebrew, usually God is not explicitly mentioned in the blessing, but it is implied that God is the one acting to show his kindness to the person being addressed.

> The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you. (2 Tim 4:22 ULT)

The Lord be with your spirit. **May God give** grace to you.

> They blessed Rebekah, and said to her, "Our sister, may you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them." (Genesis 24:60 ULT)

They blessed Rebekah, and said to her, "Our sister, may **God grant that** you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and may **God empower** your descendants **to** possess the gate of those who hate them."

(3) Translate the blessing in a form that is natural and clear in your language.

Here are some ideas for ways that people might say a blessing in their language.

> The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you. (2 Tim 4:22 ULT)

May the Lord be with your spirit. May God cause his grace to be with you.

May you have God's presence with you. May you experience grace from God.

> "Our sister, may you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them." (Genesis 24:60 ULT)

"Our sister, we pray to God that you may be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and appeal to him that your descendants may possess the gate of those who hate them."

"Our sister, by God's power you will be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and

your descendants will possess the gate of those who hate them.”

James References:

James 3:9 James 3:10

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.

James References:

James Introduction

Irregular Use of Tenses

Description

Normally, languages indicate when an event happens by marking it as past, present, or future (or some subset of those categories) through using different verb tenses. But sometimes speakers use those verb tenses in other ways to draw special attention to what they are saying. This article will discuss three ways that this happens in the Bible.

Past For Future

In the Bible, sometimes the past tense is used to refer to things that will happen in the future. This is a figure of speech that is used in prophecy to show that the event will certainly happen. It is sometimes called the "predictive past" or "prophetic perfect."

> Therefore my people have gone into captivity for lack of understanding; their honored leaders go hungry, and their common people have nothing to drink. (Isaiah 5:13 ULT)

In the example above, the people of Israel had not yet gone into captivity, but God spoke of their going into captivity as if it had already happened because he had decided that they certainly would go into captivity.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue:

Speakers of languages that do not use the past tense in prophecy to refer to future events may think that these are events that have already happened.

Examples From the Bible

> Now Jericho was tightly closed because of the sons of Israel. No one went out and no one came in. Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho and its king and its powerful soldiers into your hand." (Joshua 6:1-2 ULT)

> For to us a child has been born, to us a son has been given; and the rule will be on his shoulder. (Isaiah 9:6a ULT)

In the examples above, God spoke of things that would happen in the future as if they had already happened.

> But even Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them, saying, “Look! The Lord came with thousands and thousands of his holy ones.” (Jude 1:14 ULT)

Enoch was speaking of something that would happen far in the future, but he used the past tense when he said, “the Lord came.”

Present For Past

In the Bible, sometimes the present tense is used to refer to events that happened in the past. This is a figure of speech that makes these events more vivid or prominent for the reader. The effect can be to draw the reader into the story because these events are told as though they are happening now. The reader, however, knows that the events happened in the past. This is sometimes called the “historical present.”

> Now the mother-in-law of Simon was lying down, being sick with a fever, and immediately they speak to him concerning her. (Mark 1:30 ULT)

In the example above, Mark had been narrating events that happened in the past, using the past tense. But when he came to the part about the disciples speaking to Jesus about Simon’s mother-in-law, he changed from past tense to present tense.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue:

Speakers of languages that do not use the present tense to refer to past events may think that these events are happening now or that the Bible translation makes no sense.

Examples From the Bible

> And Simon and the ones with him searched for him 37 and found him and say to him, “Everyone is seeking you.” 38 And he says to them, “Let us go elsewhere, (Mark 1:36-38 ULT)

As in the above example, the historical present is often used to make direct speech stand out from the narrative.

> And he enters into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbaths, having entered into the synagogue, he began to teach. (Mark 1:21 ULT)

As in the above example, the historical present sometimes serves to set the scene for a new set of events. By using the historical present in this way, the writer draws the reader into the scene, and then relates the events using the past tense.

Present For Future

In the Bible, sometimes the present tense is used for a future event. Usually, this is to communicate that the event will happen very soon. Also, like the predictive past, this can communicate that the event is sure to happen or that the speaker is fully committed to making the event happen. This is sometimes called the “imminent future.”

> And Moses said, “Thus says Yahweh: ‘About the middle of the night I am going out in the midst of Egypt, (Exodus 11:4 ULT)

In the example above, Yahweh uses the present tense for something that he will do soon.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue:

Speakers of languages that do not use the present tense to refer to future events may think that these events are happening at the time of speaking or writing or that the Bible translation is confusing or wrong.

Examples From the Bible

> For behold me, raising up the Chaldeans, that fierce and impetuous nation… (Habakkuk 1:6 ULT)

> Therefore, remember from where you have fallen and repent and do the first works. But if not, I am coming to you and I will remove your lampstand from its place—if you do not repent. (Revelation 2:5 ULT)

In the examples above, God speaks of a future event as though he is doing it in the present. This is a way of emphasizing the certainty of the event.

> Therefore my people have gone into captivity for lack of understanding; their honored leaders go hungry, and their common people have nothing to drink. (Isaiah 5:13 ULT)

In the example above, the present tense continues the sense of the predictive past, communicating future events that are sure to happen.

Translation Strategies

If the tense that is used in the Literal Translation would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

(1) Use the future tense to refer to future events.
(2) Use the past tense to refer to past events.
(3) Use the tense that your language commonly uses to communicate the time of the event.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use the future tense to refer to future events.

> For to us a child **has been born**, to us a son **has been given**. (Isaiah 9:6a ULT)

> > For to us a child **will be born**, to us a son **will be given**.

> Yahweh said to Joshua, “See, **I have delivered** Jericho and its king and its powerful soldiers into your hand.” (Joshua 6:2 ULT)

> > Yahweh said to Joshua, “See, **I will deliver** Jericho and its king and its powerful soldiers into your hand.”

> And Moses said, “Thus says Yahweh: ‘About the middle of the night **I am going out** in the midst of Egypt, (Exodus 11:4 ULT)

> > And Moses said, “Thus says Yahweh: ‘About the middle of the night **I will go out** in the midst of Egypt,

(2) Use the past tense to refer to past events.

> And Simon and the ones with him searched for him and found him and **say** to him, “Everyone is seeking you.” And he **says** to them, “Let us go elsewhere, (Mark 1:36-38 ULT)

> > And Simon and the ones with him searched for him and found him and **said** to him, “Everyone is seeking you.” And he **said** to them, “Let us go elsewhere,

> And he **enters** into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbaths, having entered into the synagogue, he began to teach. (Mark 1:21 ULT)

> > And he **entered** into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbaths, having entered into the synagogue, he began to teach.

(3) Use the tense that your language commonly uses to communicate the time of the event.

> Yahweh said to Joshua, “See, **I have delivered** Jericho and its king and its powerful soldiers into your hand.” (Joshua 6:2 ULT)

> > Yahweh said to Joshua, “See, **I am delivering** Jericho and its king and its powerful soldiers into your hand.” Or: Yahweh said to Joshua, “See, **I am about to deliver** Jericho and its king and its powerful soldiers into your hand.”

> And Moses said, “Thus says Yahweh: ‘About the middle of the night **I am going out** in the midst of Egypt, (Exodus 11:4 ULT)

> And Moses said, “Thus says Yahweh: ‘About the middle of the night **I will be going out** in the midst of Egypt,
> Or: And Moses said, “Thus says Yahweh: ‘About the middle of the night **I shall certainly go out** in the midst of Egypt,

James References:

James 1:11 James 1:24

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. [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] If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.” [1]
>
> > [1] Some ancient manuscripts do not include verse 16.

James References:

James 2 Introduction James 2:20

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**

James References:

James 1:6 James 1:10 James 1:23 James 1:26 James 2:2 James 2:7 James 3:3 James 3:4 James 3:5 James 3:11 James 3:12 James 3:12 James 5:14

Verse Bridges

Description

In some cases, you will see in the unfoldingWord® Simplified Text (UST) that two or more verse numbers are combined, such as 17-18. This is called a verse bridge. This means that the information in the verses was rearranged so that the story or message could be more easily understood.

> 29 These were the clans of the Horites: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, and Anah, 30 Dishon, Ezer, Dishan: these are clans of the Horites, according to their clan lists in the land of Seir. (Genesis 36:29-30 ULT)

> 29-30 The people groups who were descendants of Hor lived in Seir land. The names of the people groups are Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. (Genesis 36:29-30 UST)

In the ULT text, verses 29 and 30 are separate, and the information about the people living in Seir is at the end of verse 30. In the UST text, the verses are joined, and the information about them living in Seir is at the beginning. For many languages, this is a more logical order of information.

Examples From the Bible

Where the UST has a verse bridge, the ULT will have separate verses.

> 4-5 Yahweh our God will bless you in the land that he is giving to you. If you obey Yahweh our God and obey all the commandments that I am giving to you today, there will not be any poor people among you. (Deuteronomy 15:4-5 UST)

> 4 However, there should be no poor among you (for Yahweh will surely bless you in the land that he gives you as an inheritance to possess), 5 if only you diligently listen to the voice of Yahweh your God, to keep all these commandments that I am commanding you today. (Deuteronomy 15:4-5 ULT)

> 16-17 But Yahweh said to him, “I will not permit you to eat the fruit of the tree that will enable you to know what actions are good to do and what actions are evil to do. If you eat any fruit from that tree, on the day you eat it you will surely die. But I will permit you to eat the fruit of any of the other trees in the park.” (Genesis 2:16-17 UST)

> 16 Yahweh God commanded the man, saying, “From every tree in the garden you may freely eat. 17 But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you may not eat, for on the day that you eat from it, you will surely die.” (Genesis 2:16-17 ULT)

Translation Strategies

Order the information in a way that will be clear to your readers. If the order of information is clear as it is in the ULT, then use that order. But if the order is confusing or gives the wrong meaning, then change the order so that it is more clear.

(1) If you put information from one verse before information from an earlier verse, then combine the verses and put a hyphen between the two verse numbers.

See how to mark verses in translationStudio.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If information from one verse is put before information from an earlier verse, then combine the verses and put the verse numbers before the first verse with a hyphen between them.

> 2 You must select three cities for yourself in the middle of your land that Yahweh your God is giving you to possess. 3 You must build a road and divide the borders of your land into three parts, the land that Yahweh your God is causing you to inherit, so that everyone who kills another person may flee there. (Deuteronomy 19:2-3 ULT)
>
> 2-3 You must divide into three parts the land that he is giving to you. Then select a city in each part. You must make good roads in order that people can get to those cities easily. Someone who kills another person can escape to one of those cities to be safe. (Deuteronomy 19:2-3 UST)

James References:

James 5:2 James 5:3

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.

James References:

James 1:12 James 1:24 James 2:6 James 2:16 James 2:16 James 2:25 James 3:9 James 4:5 James 4:6 James 4:6 James 4:12 James 5:7 James 5:18 James 5:20

Appendix: Translation Words

adultery, adulterous, adulterer, adulteress

Definition:

The term “adultery” refers to a sin that occurs when a married person has sexual relations with someone who is not that person’s spouse. Both of them are guilty of adultery. The term “adulterous” describes this kind of behavior or any person who commits this sin.

- The term “adulterer” refers generally to any person who commits adultery.
- Sometimes the term “adulteress” is used to specify that it was a woman who committed adultery.
- Adultery breaks the promises that a husband and wife made to each other in their covenant of marriage.
- God commanded the Israelites to not commit adultery.

Translation Suggestions:

- If the target language does not have one word that means “adultery,” this term could be translated with a phrase such as “having sexual relations with someone else’s wife” or “being intimate with another person’s spouse.”
- Some languages may have an indirect way of talking about adultery, such as “sleeping with someone else’s spouse” or “being unfaithful to one’s wife.” (See: euphemism)

(See also: commit, covenant, sexual immorality, faithful)

Bible References:

- Exodus 20:14
- Hosea 4:1-2
- Luke 16:18
- Matthew 5:28
- Matthew 12:39
- Revelation 2:22

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:6** “Do not commit **adultery**.”
- **28:2** Do not commit **adultery**.
- **34:7** “The religious leader prayed like this, ‘Thank you, God, that I am not a sinner like other men-such as robbers, unjust men, **adulterers**, or even like that tax collector.’”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5003, H5004, G34280, G34290, G34300, G34310, G34320

James References:

James 2:11 James 2:11 James 4:4

altar

Definition:

An altar was a raised structure on which the Israelites burned animals and grains as offerings to God.

- During Bible times, simple altars were often made by forming a mound of packed-down dirt or by carefully placing large stones to form a stable pile.
- Some special box-shaped altars were made of wood overlaid with metals such as gold, brass, or bronze.
- Other people groups living near the Israelites also built altars to offer sacrifices to their gods.

(See also: altar of incense, false god, grain offering, sacrifice)

Bible References:

- Genesis 8:20
- Genesis 22:9
- James 2:21
- Luke 11:49-51
- Matthew 5:23
- Matthew 23:19

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:14** After Noah got off the boat, he built an **altar** and sacrificed some of each kind of animal which could be used for a sacrifice.
- **5:8** When they reached the place of sacrifice, Abraham tied up his son Isaac and laid him on an **altar**.
- **13:9** A priest would kill the animal and burn it on the **altar**.
- **16:6** He (Gideon) built a new altar dedicated to God near where the **altar** to the idol used to be and made a sacrifice to God on it.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0741, H2025, H4056, H4196, G10410, G23790

James References:

James 2:21

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

James References:

James 5:14

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

James References:

James 3:6 James 4:4

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

James References:

James 2:19 James 2:19 James 2:23

beloved

Definition:

The term “beloved” is an expression of affection that describes someone who is loved and dear to someone else.

- The term “beloved” literally means “loved (one)” or “(who is) loved.”
- God refers to Jesus as his “beloved Son.”
- In their letters to Christian churches, the apostles frequently address their fellow believers as “beloved.”

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated as “loved” or “loved one” or “well-loved,” or “very dear.”
- In the context of talking about a close friend, this could be translated as “my dear friend” or “my close friend.” In English it is natural to say “my dear friend, Paul” or “Paul, who is my dear friend.” Other languages may find it more natural to order this in a different way.
- Note that the word “beloved” comes from the word for God’s love, which is unconditional, unselfish, and sacrificial.

(See also: love)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 4:14
- 1 John 3:2
- 1 John 4:7
- Mark 1:11
- Mark 12:6
- Revelation 20:9
- Romans 16:8
- Song of Songs 1:14

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0157, H1730, H2532, H3033, H3039, H4261, G00250, G00270, G52070

James References:

James 1:16 James 1:19 James 2:5

blasphemy, blaspheme, blasphemous

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “blasphemy” refers to speaking in a way that shows a deep disrespect for God or people. To “blaspheme” someone is to speak against that person so that others think something false or bad about him.

- Most often, to blaspheme God means to slander or insult him by saying things that are not true about him or by behaving in an immoral way that dishonors him.
- It is blasphemy for a human being to claim to be God or to claim that there is a God other than the one true God.
- Some English versions translate this term as “slander” when it refers to blaspheming people.

Translation Suggestions:

- To “blaspheme” can be translated as to “say evil things against” or to “dishonor God” or to “slander.”
- Ways to translate “blasphemy” could include “speaking wrongly about others” or “slander” or “spreading false rumors.”

(See also: dishonor, slander)

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 1:12-14
- Acts 6:11
- Acts 26:9-11
- James 2:5-7
- John 10:32-33
- Luke 12:10
- Mark 14:64
- Matthew 12:31
- Matthew 26:65
- Psalms 74:10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1288, H1442, H2778, H5006, H5007, H5344, G09870, G09880, G09890

James References:

James 2:7

bless, blessed, blessing

Definition:

To “bless” someone or something means to cause good and beneficial things to happen to the person or thing that is being blessed.

- Blessing someone also means expressing a desire for positive and beneficial things to happen to that person.
- In Bible times, a father would often pronounce a formal blessing on his children.
- When people “bless” God or express a desire that God be blessed, this means they are praising him.
- The term “bless” is sometimes used for consecrating food before it is eaten, or for thanking and praising God for the food.

Translation Suggestions:

- To “bless” could also be translated as to “provide abundantly for” or to “be very kind and favorable toward.”
- “God has brought great blessing to” could be translated as “God has given many good things to” or “God has provided abundantly for” or “God has caused many good things to happen to”.
- “He is blessed” could be translated as “he will greatly benefit” or “he will experience good things” or “God will cause him to flourish.”
- “Blessed is the person who” could be translated as “How good it is for the person who.”
- Expressions like “blessed be the Lord” could be translated as “May the Lord be praised” or “Praise the Lord” or “I praise the Lord.”
- In the context of blessing food, this could be translated as “thanked God for the food” or “praised God for giving them food” or “consecrated the food by praising God for it.”

(See also: praise)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 10:16
- Acts 13:34

- Ephesians 1:3
- Genesis 14:20
- Isaiah 44:3
- James 1:25
- Luke 6:20
- Matthew 26:26
- Nehemiah 9:5
- Romans 4:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:7** God saw that it was good and he **blessed** them.
- **1:15** God made Adam and Eve in his own image. He **blessed** them and told them, "Have many children and grandchildren and fill the earth."
- **1:16** So God rested from all he had been doing. He **blessed** the seventh day and made it holy, because on this day he rested from his work.
- **4:4** "I will make your name great. I will **bless** those who **bless** you and curse those who curse you. All families on earth will be **blessed** because of you."
- **4:7** Melchizedek **blessed** Abram and said, "May God Most High who owns heaven and earth **bless** Abram."
- **7:3** Isaac wanted to give his **blessing** to Esau.
- **8:5** Even in prison, Joseph remained faithful to God, and God **blessed** him.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0833, H0835, H1288, H1289, H1293, G17570, G21270, G21280, G21290, G31060, G31070, G31080, G60500

James References:

James 1:12 James 1:25 James 3:9 James 3:10 James 5:11

call, called, call out, called out

Definition:

The terms "call" and "call out," in this sense, mean to speak loudly.

- To "call out" to someone means to shout, to announce, or to proclaim. It can also mean to ask someone for help, especially God.
- In some contexts the terms "call" and "call out" mean to loudly ask for help.

Translation Suggestions:

- The expression "call out to you" could be translated as "ask you for help" or "pray to you urgently."
- To "call out" could be translated as "say loudly" or "shout" or "say with a loud voice." Make sure the translation of this does not sound like the person is angry.

(See also: pray, cry, call to summon, call name)

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0559, H2199, H4744, H6817, H7121, H7123, H7769, H7773, G01540, G03630, G14580, G15280, G19410, G19510, G20280, G20460, G25640, G28210, G28220, G28400, G29190, G30040, G31060, G33330, G33430, G36030, G36860, G36870, G43160, G43410, G43770, G47790, G48670, G54550, G55370, G55810

James References:

James 2:7 James 2:23 James 5:14

Christ, Messiah

Definition:

The terms “Messiah” and “Christ” mean “Anointed One” and refer to Jesus, God’s Son.

- Both “Messiah” and “Christ” are used in the New Testament to refer to God’s Son, whom God the Father appointed to rule as king over his people, and to save them from sin and death.
- In the Old Testament, the prophets wrote prophecies about the Messiah hundreds of years before he came to earth.
- Often a word meaning “anointed (one)” is used in the Old Testament to refer to the Messiah who would come.
- Jesus fulfilled many of these prophecies and did many miraculous works that proves he is the Messiah; the rest of these prophecies will be fulfilled when he returns.
- The word “Christ” is often used as a title, as in “the Christ” and “Christ Jesus.”
- “Christ” also came to be used as part of his name, as in “Jesus Christ.”

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated using its meaning, “the Anointed One” or “God’s Anointed Savior.”
- Many languages use a transliterated word that looks or sounds like “Christ” or “Messiah.” (See: How to Translate Unknowns)
- The transliterated word could be followed by the definition of the term as in, “Christ, the Anointed One.”
- Be consistent in how this is translated throughout the Bible so that it is clear that the same term is being referred to.
- Make sure the translations of “Messiah” and “Christ” work well in contexts where both terms occur in the same verse (such as John 1:41).

(See also: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Son of God, David, Jesus, anoint)

Bible References:

- 1 John 5:1-3
- Acts 2:35
- Acts 5:40-42
- John 1:40-42
- John 3:27-28
- John 4:25
- Luke 2:10-12
- Matthew 1:16

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:7** The **Messiah** was God’s Chosen One who would save the people of the world from sin.
- **17:8** As it happened, the Israelites would have to wait a long time before the **Messiah** came, almost 1,000 years.
- **21:1** From the very beginning, God planned to send the **Messiah**.
- **21:4** God promised King David that the **Messiah** would be one of David’s own descendants.
- **21:5** The **Messiah** would start the New Covenant.
- **21:6** God’s prophets also said that the **Messiah** would be a prophet, a priest, and a king.
- **21:9** The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the **Messiah** would be born from a virgin.
- **43:7** “But God raised him to life again to fulfill the prophecy which says, ‘You will not let your **Holy One** rot in the grave.’”
- **43:9** “But know for certain that God has caused Jesus to become both Lord and **Messiah**!”
- **43:11** Peter answered them, “Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus **Christ** so that God will forgive your sins.”
- **46:6** Saul reasoned with the Jews, proving that Jesus was the **Messiah**.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4899, G33230, G55470

James References:

James 1:1 James 2:1

church, Church

Definition:

In the New Testament, the term “church” refers to all people who believe in Jesus. Sometimes “church” refers to a part of that larger group who regularly met together in a certain place, such as the “church at Ephesus.”

- This term literally refers to an assembly or congregation of people who were “called out” of the general population to meet together for a special purpose.
- Often the believers in a particular city would meet together in someone’s home to pray together and to hear and discuss scripture. These local churches were given the name of the city such as the “church at Ephesus.”
- In the Bible, “church” does not refer to a building.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “church” could be translated as a “gathering together” or “assembly” or “congregation” or “ones who meet together.”
- The word or phrase that is used to translate this term should also be able to refer to all believers, not just one small group.
- Make sure that the translation of “church” does not just refer to a building.
- The term used to translate “assembly” in the Old Testament could also be used to translate this term.
- Also consider how it is translated in a local or national Bible translation. (See: How to Translate Unknowns.)

(See also: assembly, believe, Christian)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 5:12
- 1 Thessalonians 2:14
- 1 Timothy 3:5
- Acts 9:31
- Acts 14:23
- Acts 15:41
- Colossians 4:15
- Ephesians 5:23
- Matthew 16:18
- Philippians 4:15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **43:12** About 3,000 people believed what Peter said and became disciples of Jesus. They were baptized and became part of the **church** at Jerusalem.
- **46:9** Most of the people in Antioch were not Jews, but for the first time, very many of them also became believers. Barnabas and Saul went there to teach these new believers more about Jesus and to strengthen the **church**.
- **46:10** So the **church** in Antioch prayed for Barnabas and Saul and placed their hands on them. Then they sent them off to preach the good news of Jesus in many other places.
- **47:13** The good news of Jesus kept spreading, and the **Church** kept growing.
- **50:1** For almost 2,000 years, more and more people around the world have been hearing the good news about Jesus the Messiah. The **Church** has been growing.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: G15770

James References:

James 5:14

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

James References:

James 5:11

condemn, condemned, condemnation

Definition:

The terms “condemn” and “condemnation” refer to judging someone for doing something wrong.

- Often the word “condemn” includes punishing that person for what they did wrong.
- Sometimes “condemn” means to falsely accuse someone or to judge someone harshly.
- The term “condemnation” refers to the act of condemning or accusing someone.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, this term could be translated as “harshly judge” or “criticize falsely.”
- The phrase “condemn him” could be translated as “judge that he is guilty” or “state that he must be punished for his sin.”
- The term “condemnation” could be translated as “harsh judging” or “declaring to be guilty” or “punishment of guilt.”

(See also: judge, punish)

Bible References:

- 1 John 3:20
- Job 9:29
- John 5:24
- Luke 6:37
- Matthew 12:7
- Proverbs 17:15-16
- Psalms 34:22
- Romans 5:16

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6064, H7034, H7561, H8199, G01760, G08430, G26070, G26130, G26310, G26320, G26330, G29170, G29190, G29200, G52720, G60480

James References:

James 5:6

confess, confession

Definition:

To confess means to admit or assert that something is true. A “confession” is a statement or admission that something is true.

- The term “confess” can refer to boldly stating the truth about God. It can also refer to admitting that we have sinned.
- The Bible says that if people confess their sins to God, he will forgive them.
- James the apostle wrote in his letter that when believers confess their sins to each other, this brings spiritual healing.
- The apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians that someday everyone will confess or declare that Jesus is Lord.
- Paul also said that if people confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead, they will be saved.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “confess” could include, “admit” or “testify” or “declare” or “acknowledge” or “affirm.”
- Different ways to translate “confession” could be, “declaration” or “testimony” or “statement about what we believe” or “admitting sin.”

(See also: faith, testimony)

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:8-10
- 2 John 1:7-8
- James 5:16
- Leviticus 5:5-6
- Matthew 3:4-6
- Nehemiah 1:6-7
- Philippians 2:9-11
- Psalms 38:17-18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3034, H8426, G18430, G36700, G36710

James References:

James 5:16

curse, cursed, cursing

Definition:

The term “curse” means to cause negative things to happen to the person or thing that is being cursed.

- A curse can be a statement that harm will happen to someone or something.
- To curse someone can also be an expression of desire that bad things will happen to them.
- It can also refer to the punishment or other negative things that someone causes to happen to someone.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated as “cause bad things to happen to” or “declare that something bad will happen to” or “swear to cause evil things to happen to.”
- In the context of God sending curses on his disobedient people, it could be translated as “punish by allowing bad things to happen.”
- The term “cursed” when used to describe people could be translated as “(this person) will experience much trouble.”
- The phrase “cursed be” could be translated as “May (this person) experience great difficulties.”
- The phrase, “Cursed is the ground” could be translated as “The soil will not be very fertile.”
- However, if the target language has the phrase “cursed be” and it has the same meaning, then it is good to keep the same phrase.

(See also: bless)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 14:24-26
- 2 Peter 2:12-14
- Galatians 3:10
- Galatians 3:14
- Genesis 3:14
- Genesis 3:17
- James 3:10
- Numbers 22:6
- Psalms 109:28

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **2:9** God said to the snake, "You are **cursed**!"
- **2:11** "Now the ground is **cursed**, and you will need to work hard to grow food."
- **4:4** "I will bless those who bless you and **curse** those who **curse** you."
- **39:7** Then Peter vowed, saying, "May God **curse** me if I know this man!"
- **50:16** Because Adam and Eve disobeyed God and brought sin into this world, God **cursed** it and decided to destroy it.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0422, H0423, H0779, H1288, H2763, H2764, H3994, H5344, H6895, H7043, H7045, H7621, H8381, G03310, G03320, G06850, G19440, G25510, G26520, G26530, G26710, G26720, G60350

James References:

James 3:9 James 3:10

demon, evil spirit, unclean spirit

Definition:

All these terms refer to demons, which are spirit beings that oppose God's will.

- God created angels to serve him. When the devil rebelled against God, some of the angels also rebelled and were thrown out of heaven. It is believed that demons and evil spirits are these "fallen angels."
- Sometimes these demons are called "unclean spirits." The term "unclean" means "impure" or "evil" or "unholy."
- Because demons serve the devil, they do evil things. Sometimes they live inside people and control them.
- Demons are more powerful than human beings, but not as powerful as God.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term "demon" could also be translated as "evil spirit."
- The term "unclean spirit" could also be translated as "impure spirit" or "corrupt spirit" or "evil spirit."
- Make sure that the word or phrase used to translate this term is different from the term used to refer to the devil.
- Also consider how the term "demon" is translated in a local or national language. (See: How to Translate Unknowns)

(See also: demon-possessed, Satan, false god, angel, evil, clean)

Bible References:

- James 2:19
- James 3:15
- Luke 4:36
- Mark 3:22
- Matthew 4:24

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **26:9** Many people who had **demons** in them were brought to Jesus. When Jesus commanded them, the **demons** came out of the people, and often shouted, "You are the Son of God!"

- **32:8** The **demons** came out of the man and entered the pigs.
- **47:5** Finally one day when the slave girl started yelling, Paul turned to her and said to the **demon** that was in her, “In the name of Jesus, come out of her.” Right away the **demon** left her.
- **49:2** He (Jesus) walked on water, calmed storms, healed many sick people, drove out **demons**, raised the dead to life, and turned five loaves of bread and two small fish into enough food for over 5,000 people.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2932, H7307, H7451, H7700, G01690, G11390, G11400, G11410, G11420, G41900, G41510, G41520, G41890

James References:

James 2:19 James 3:15

chosen, choose, chosen people, Chosen One, elect

Definition:

The term “the elect” literally means “chosen ones” or “chosen people” and refers to those whom God has appointed or selected to be his people. “Chosen One” or “Chosen One of God” is a title that refers to Jesus, who is the chosen Messiah.

- The term “choose” means to select something or someone or to decide something. It is often used to refer to God appointing people to belong to him and to serve him.
- To be “chosen” means to be “selected” or “appointed” to be or do something.
- God chose people to be holy, to be set apart by him for the purpose of bearing good spiritual fruit. That is why they are called “the chosen (ones)” or “the elect.”
- The term “chosen one” is sometimes used in the Bible to refer to certain people such as Moses and King David whom God had appointed as leaders over his people. It is also used to refer to the nation of Israel as God’s chosen people.
- The phrase “the elect” is an older term that literally means “the chosen ones” or “the chosen people.” This phrase in the original language is plural when referring to believers in Christ.
- In older English Bible versions, the term “elect” is used in both the Old and New Testaments to translate the word for “chosen one(s).” More modern versions use “elect” only in the New Testament, to refer to people who have been saved by God through faith in Jesus. Elsewhere in the Bible text, they translate this word more literally as “chosen ones.”

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate “elect” with a word or phrase that means “chosen ones” or “chosen people.” This could also be translated as “people whom God chose” or “the ones God appointed to be his people.”

- The phrase “who were chosen” could also be translated as “who were appointed” or “who were selected” or “whom God chose.”
- “I chose you” could be translated as “I appointed you” or “I selected you.”
- In reference to Jesus, “Chosen One” could also be translated as “God’s chosen One” or “God’s specially appointed Messiah” or “the One God appointed (to save people).”

(See also: appoint, Christ)

Bible References:

- 2 John 1:1
- Colossians 3:12
- Ephesians 1:3-4
- Isaiah 65:22-23
- Luke 18:7
- Matthew 24:19-22
- Romans 8:33

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0970, H0972, H0977, H1262, H1305, H4005, H6901, G01380, G01400, G15860, G15880, G15890, G19510, G37240, G44000, G44010, G47580, G48990, G55000

James References:

James 2:5

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

James References:

James 5 Introduction

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

James References:

James 1:13 James 1:21 James 2:4 James 3:8 James 3:16 James 4:16

exalt, exalted, exaltation

Definition:

To exalt is to highly praise and honor someone. It can also mean to put someone in a high position.

- In the Bible, the term "exalt" is most often used for exalting God.
- When a person exalts himself, it means he is thinking about himself in a proud or arrogant way.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate "exalt" could include "highly praise" or "honor greatly" or "extol" or "speak highly of."
- In some contexts it could be translated by a word or phrase that means "put in a higher position" or "give more honor to" or "talk about proudly."
- "Do not exalt yourself" could also be translated as "Do not think of yourself too highly" or "Do not brag about yourself."
- "Those that exalt themselves" could also be translated as "Those who think proudly about themselves" or "Those who boast about themselves."

(See also: praise, worship, glory, boast, proud)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 5:5-7
- 2 Samuel 22:47
- Acts 5:31
- Philippians 2:9-11
- Psalms 18:46

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1361, H4984, H5375, H5549, H5927, H7311, H7426, H7682, G18690, G52290, G52510, G53110, G53120

James References:

James 4:10

faith

Definition:

In general, the term "faith" refers to a belief, trust or confidence in someone or something.

- To "have faith" in someone is to believe that what he says and does is true and trustworthy.
- To "have faith in Jesus" means to believe all of God's teachings about Jesus. It especially means that people trust in Jesus and his sacrifice to cleanse them from their sin and to rescue them from the punishment they deserve because of their sin.
- True faith or belief in Jesus will cause a person to produce good spiritual fruits or behaviors because the Holy Spirit is living in him.
- Sometimes "faith" refers generally to all the teachings about Jesus, as in the expression "the truths of the faith."
- In contexts such as "keep the faith" or "abandon the faith," the term "faith" refers to the state or condition of believing all the teachings about Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- In some contexts, "faith" can be translated as "belief" or "conviction" or "confidence" or "trust."
- For some languages these terms will be translated using forms of the verb "believe." (See: abstractnouns)
- The expression "keep the faith" could be translated by "keep believing in Jesus" or "continue to believe in Jesus."
- The sentence "they must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith" could be translated by "they must keep believing all the true things about Jesus that they have been taught."
- The expression "my true son in the faith" could be translated by something like "who is like a son to me because I taught him to believe in Jesus" or "my true spiritual son, who believes in Jesus."

(See also: believe, faithful)

Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 4:7
- Acts 6:7
- Galatians 2:20-21
- James 2:20

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **5:6** When Isaac was a young man, God tested Abraham's **faith** by saying, "Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a sacrifice to me."
- **31:7** Then he (Jesus) said to Peter, "You man of little **faith**, why did you doubt?"
- **32:16** Jesus said to her, "Your **faith** has healed you. Go in peace."
- **38:9** Then Jesus said to Peter, "Satan wants to have all of you, but I have prayed for you, Peter, that your **faith** will not fail."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0529, H0530, G16800, G36400, G41020, G60660

James References:

James Introduction James 1:3 James 1:6 James 2 Introduction James 2:1 James 2:5 James 2:14 James 2:14 James 2:17 James 2:18 James 2:18 James 2:18 James 2:20 James 2:22 James 2:22 James 2:24 James 2:26 James 5:15

favor, favorable, favoritism

Definition:

The term "favor" generally means approval. Someone who favors another person regards that person positively and approves of them.

- Jesus grew up "in favor with" God and men. This means that both God and others approved of his character and behavior.
- The expression "find favor" with someone means that someone is approved of by that person.
- When a king shows favor to someone, it often means that he approves of that person's request and grants it.
- A "favor" can also be a gesture or action towards or for another person for their benefit.
- The term "favoritism" means an attitude of acting favorably toward some people but not others. It means the inclination to pick one person over another or one thing over another because the person or item is preferred. Generally, favoritism is considered unfair.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate the term "favor" could include "approval" or "blessing" or "benefit."
- The "favorable year of Yahweh" could be translated as "the year (or time) when Yahweh will bring great blessing."
- The term "favoritism" could be translated as "partiality" or "being prejudiced" or "unjust treatment." This word is related to the word "favorite," which means to prefer above all others.

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 2:25-26
- 2 Chronicles 19:7
- 2 Corinthians 1:11
- Acts 24:27
- Genesis 41:16
- Genesis 47:25
- Genesis 50:5

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0995, H1156, H1293, H1779, H1921, H2580, H2603, H2896, H5278, H5375, H5414, H5922, H6213, H6437, H6440, H7521, H7522, H7965, G11840, G36850, G43800, G43820, G54850, G54860

James References:

James 2:9

fool, foolish, folly

Definition:

The term "fool" refers to a person who often makes wrong choices, especially choosing to disobey. The term "foolish" describes a person or behavior that is not wise.

- In the Bible, the term "fool" usually refers to a person who does not believe or obey God. This is often contrasted to the wise person, who trusts in God and obeys God.
- In the Psalms, David describes a fool as a person who does not believe in God, one who ignores all the evidence of God in his creation.
- The Old Testament book of Proverbs also gives many descriptions of what a fool, or foolish person, is like.
- The term "folly" refers to an action that is not wise because it is against God's will. Often "folly" also includes the meaning of something that is ridiculous or dangerous.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term "fool" could be translated as "foolish person" or "unwise person" or "senseless person" or "ungodly person."
- Ways to translate "foolish" could include "lacking understanding" or "unwise" or "senseless."

(See also: wise)

Bible References:

- Ecclesiastes 1:17
- Ephesians 5:15
- Galatians 3:3
- Genesis 31:28
- Matthew 7:26
- Matthew 25:8
- Proverbs 13:16
- Psalms 49:13

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0191, H0196, H0200, H1198, H1984, H2973, H3684, H3687, H3688, H3689, H3690, H5014, H5034, H5036, H5039, H5528, H5529, H5530, H5531, H6612, H8417, H8602, H8604, G04530, G04540, G07810, G08010, G08770, G08780, G27570, G31500, G31540, G34710, G34720, G34730, G34740, G39120

James References:

James 2:20

forgive, forgiven, forgiveness, pardon, pardoned

Definition:

To forgive someone means to not hold a grudge against that person even though they did something hurtful. "Forgiveness" is the act of forgiving someone.

- Forgiving someone often means not punishing that person for something he has done wrong.
- This term can be used figuratively to mean "cancel," as in the expression "forgive a debt."
- When people confess their sins, God forgives them based on Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross.
- Jesus taught his disciples to forgive others as he has forgiven them.

The term "pardon" means to forgive and not punish someone for his sin.

- This word has the same meaning as "forgive" but may also include the meaning of a formal decision to not punish someone who is guilty.
- In a court of law, a judge can pardon a person found guilty of a crime.
- Even though we are guilty of sin, Jesus Christ pardoned us from being punished in hell, based on his sacrificial death on the cross.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, "forgive" could be translated as "pardon" or "cancel" or "release" or "not hold against" (someone).
- The term "forgiveness" could be translated by a word or phrase that means "practice of not resenting" or "declaring (someone) as not guilty" or "the act of pardoning."
- If the language has a word for a formal decision to forgive, that word could be used to translate "pardon."

(See also: guilt)

Bible References:

- Genesis 50:17
- Numbers 14:17-19
- Deuteronomy 29:20-21
- Joshua 24:19-20
- 2 Kings 5:17-19
- Psalms 25:11
- Psalms 25:17-19
- Isaiah 55:6-7
- Isaiah 40:2
- Luke 5:21
- Acts 8:22
- Ephesians 4:31-32
- Colossians 3:12-14
- 1 John 2:12

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **7:10** But Esau had already **forgiven** Jacob, and they were happy to see each other again.
- **13:15** Then Moses climbed the mountain again and prayed that God would **forgive** the people. God listened to Moses and **forgave** them.
- **17:13** David repented of his sin and God **forgave** him.
- **21:5** In the New Covenant, God would write his law on the people's hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would **forgive** their sins.
- **29:1** One day Peter asked Jesus, "Master, how many times should I **forgive** my brother when he sins against me?"
- **29:8** I **forgave** your debt because you begged me.
- **38:5** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the **forgiveness** of sins."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5546, H5547, H3722, H5375, H5545, H5547, H7521, G85900, G86300, G54830

James References:

James 5:15

fulfill, fulfilled, carried out

Definition:

The term "fulfill" means to complete or accomplish something that was expected.

- When a prophecy is fulfilled, it means that God causes to happen what was predicted in the prophecy.
- If a person fulfills a promise or a vow, it means that he does what he has promised to do.
- To fulfill a responsibility means to do the task that was assigned or required.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, "fulfill" could be translated as "accomplish" or "complete" or "cause to happen" or "obey" or "perform."
- The phrase "has been fulfilled" could also be translated as "has come true" or "has happened" or "has taken place."
- Ways to translate "fulfill," as in "fulfill your ministry," could include "complete" or "perform" or "practice" or "serve other people as God has called you to do."

(See also: prophet, Christ, minister, call)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 2:27
- Acts 3:17-18
- Leviticus 22:17-19
- Luke 4:21
- Matthew 1:22-23
- Matthew 5:17
- Psalms 116:12-15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **24:4** John **fulfilled** what the prophets said, "See I send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way."
- **40:3** The soldiers gambled for Jesus' clothing. When they did this, they **fulfilled** a prophecy that said, "They divided my garments among them, and gambled for my clothing."

- **42:7** Jesus said, “I told you that everything written about me in God’s word must be **fulfilled**.”
- **43:5** “This **fulfills** the prophecy made by the prophet Joel in which God said, ‘In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit.’”
- **43:7** “This **fulfills** the prophecy which says, ‘You will not let your Holy One rot in the grave.’”
- **44:5** “Although you did not understand what you were doing, God used your actions to **fulfill** the prophecies that the Messiah would suffer and die.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1214, H5487, G10960, G41380

James References:

James 2:23

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

James References:

James 2:1

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

James References:

James 1:1 James 1:5 James 1:13 James 1:13 James 1:20 James 2:5 James 2:19 James 2:23 James 2:23 James 3:9 James 4:4 James 4:4 James 4:6 James 4:7 James 4:8

godly, godliness, ungodly, godless, ungodliness, godlessness

Definition:

The term “godly” is used to describe a person who acts in a way that honors God and shows what God is like. “Godliness” is the character quality of honoring God by doing his will.

- A person who has godly character will show the fruits of the Holy Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and self control.
- The quality of godliness shows that a person has the Holy Spirit and is obeying him.

The terms “ungodly” and “godless” describe people who are in rebellion against God. Living in an evil way, without thought of God, is called “ungodliness” or “godlessness.”

- The meanings of these words are very similar. However, “godless” and “godlessness” may describe a more extreme condition in which people or nations do not even acknowledge God or his right to rule them.
- God pronounces judgment and wrath on ungodly people, on everyone who rejects him and his ways.

Translation Suggestions:

- The phrase “the godly” could be translated as “godly people” or “people who obey God.” (See: nominaladj)

- The adjective “godly” could be translated as “obedient to God” or “righteous” or “pleasing to God.”

- The phrase “in a godly manner” could be translated as “in a way that obeys God” or “with actions and words that please God.”

- Ways to translate “godliness” could include “acting in a way that pleases God” or “obeying God” or “living in a righteous manner.”

- Depending on the context, the term "ungodly" could be translated as "displeasing to God" or "immoral" or "disobeying God."

- The terms "godless" and "godlessness" literally mean that the people are "without God" or "having no thought of God" or "acting in a way that does not acknowledge God."

- Other ways to translate "ungodliness" or "godlessness" could be "wickedness" or "evil" or "rebellion against God".

(See also evil, honor, obey, righteous)

Bible References:

- Job 27:10
- Proverbs 11:9
- Acts 3:12
- 1 Timothy 1:9-11
- 1 Timothy 4:7
- 2 Timothy 3:12
- Hebrews 12:14-17
- Hebrews 11:7
- 1 Peter 4:18
- Jude 1:16

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0430, H1100, H2623, H5760, H7563, G05160, G07630, G07640, G07650, G21240, G21500, G21520, G21530, G23160, G23170

James References:

James 4 Introduction

God the Father, heavenly Father, Father

Definition:

The terms "God the Father" and "heavenly Father" refer to Yahweh, the one true God. Another term with the same meaning is "Father," used most often when Jesus was referring to him.

- God exists as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each one is fully God, and yet they are only one God. This is a mystery that mere humans cannot fully understand.
- God the Father sent God the Son (Jesus) into the world and he sends the Holy Spirit to his people.
- Anyone who believes in God the Son becomes a child of God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit comes to live in that person. This is another mystery that human beings cannot fully understand.

Translation Suggestions:

- In translating the phrase "God the Father," it is best to translate "Father" with the same word that the language naturally uses to refer to a human father.
- The term "heavenly Father" could be translated by "Father who lives in heaven" or "Father God who lives in heaven" or "God our Father from heaven."
- Usually "Father" is capitalized when it, refers to God.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: ancestor, God, heaven, Holy Spirit, Jesus, Son of God)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 8:4-6
- 1 John 2:1
- 1 John 2:23
- 1 John 3:1
- Colossians 1:1-3
- Ephesians 5:18-21

- Luke 10:22
- Matthew 5:16
- Matthew 23:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **24:9** There is only one God. But John heard **God the Father** speak, and saw Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit when he baptized Jesus.
- **29:9** Then Jesus said, "This is what my **heavenly Father** will do to every one of you if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."
- **37:9** Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, "**Father**, thank you for hearing me."
- **40:7** Then Jesus cried out, "It is finished! **Father**, I give my spirit into your hands."
- **42:10** "So go, make disciples of all people groups by baptizing them in the name of **the Father**, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."
- **43:8** "Jesus is now exalted to the right hand of **God the Father**."
- **50:10** "Then the righteous ones will shine like the sun in the kingdom of **God their Father**."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0001, H0002, G39620

James References:

James 1:17 James 1:27 James 3:9

good, right, pleasant, better, best, goodness

Definition:

The term "good" generally refers to a positive evaluation of the quality of something or someone, often in a moral or emotional sense. However, the term conveys various nuances throughout the Bible depending on the context.

- Something that is "good" could be emotionally pleasant, morally right, excellent, helpful, suitable, or profitable.
- In the Bible, the general meaning of "good" is often contrasted with "evil."

Translation Suggestions:

- The general term for "good" in the target language should be used wherever this general meaning is accurate and natural, especially in contexts where it is contrasted to evil.
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include "kind" or "excellent" or "pleasing to God" or "righteous" or "morally upright" or "profitable."
- "Good land" could be translated as "fertile land" or "productive land"; a "good crop" could be translated as a "plentiful harvest" or "large amount of crops."
- The phrase "do good to" means to do something that benefits others and could be translated as "be kind to" or "help" or "benefit" someone or "cause someone to prosper."
- To "do good on the Sabbath" means to "do things that help others on the Sabbath."
- Depending on the context, ways to translate the term "goodness" could include "blessing" or "kindness" or "moral perfection" or "righteousness" or "purity."

(See also: righteous, prosper, evil)

Bible References:

- Galatians 5:22-24
- Genesis 1:12
- Genesis 2:9
- Genesis 2:17
- James 3:13
- Romans 2:4

James References:

James 1:17 James 2:7 James 3:13 James 3:17 James 4:17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:4** God saw that what he had created was **good**.
- **1:11** God planted the tree of the knowledge of **good** and evil.
- **1:12** Then God said, "It is not **good** for man to be alone."
- **2:4** "God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand **good** and evil like he does."
- **8:12** "You tried to do evil when you sold me as a slave, but God used the evil for **good**!"
- **14:15** Joshua was a **good** leader because he trusted and obeyed God.
- **18:13** Some of these kings were **good** men who ruled justly and worshiped God.
- **28:1** "**Good** teacher, what must I do to have eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me '**good**?' There is only one who is **good**, and that is God."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0117, H0145, H0155, H0202, H0239, H0410, H1580, H1926, H1935, H2532, H2617, H2623, H2869, H2895, H2896, H2898, H3190, H3191, H3276, H3474, H3788, H3966, H4261, H4399, H5232, H5750, H6287, H6643, H6743, H7075, H7368, H7399, H7443, H7999, H8231, H8232, H8233, H8389, H8458, G00140, G00150, G00180, G00190, G05150, G07440, G08650, G09790, G13800, G20950, G20970, G21060, G21070, G21080, G21090, G21140, G21150, G21330, G21400, G21620, G21630, G21740, G22930, G25650, G25670, G25700, G25730, G28870, G29860, G31400, G36170, G37760, G41470, G46320, G46740, G48510, G52230, G52240, G53580, G55420, G55430, G55440

grace, gracious

Definition:

The word “grace” refers to help or blessing that is given to someone who has not earned it. The term “gracious” describes someone who shows grace to others.

- God’s grace toward sinful human beings is a gift that is freely given.
- The concept of grace also refers to being kind and forgiving to someone who has done wrong or hurtful things.
- The expression to “find grace” is an expression that means to receive help and mercy from God. Often it includes the meaning that God is pleased with someone and helps him.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways that “grace” could be translated include “divine kindness” or “God’s favor” or “God’s kindness and forgiveness for sinners” or “merciful kindness.”
- The term “gracious” could be translated as “full of grace” or “kind” or “merciful” or “mercifully kind.”
- The expression “he found grace in the eyes of God” could be translated as “he received mercy from God” or “God mercifully helped him” or “God showed his favor to him” or “God was pleased with him and helped him.”

Bible References:

- Acts 4:33
- Acts 6:8
- Acts 14:4
- Colossians 4:6
- Colossians 4:18
- Genesis 43:28-29
- James 4:7
- John 1:16
- Philippians 4:21-23
- Revelation 22:20-21

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2580, H2587, H2589, H2603, H8467, G21430, G54850, G55430

James References:

James 4:6 James 4:6

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

James References:

James 2:10

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

James References:

James 5:12 James 5:18

hell, lake of fire

Definition:

Hell is the final place of unending pain and suffering where God will punish everyone who rebels against him and rejects his plan of saving them through Jesus' sacrifice. It is also referred to as the "lake of fire."

- Hell is described as a place of fire and severe suffering.
- Satan and the evil spirits who follow him will be thrown into hell for eternal punishment.
- People who do not believe in Jesus' sacrifice for their sin and do not trust in him to save them, will be punished forever in hell.

Translation Suggestions:

- These terms should probably be translated differently since they occur in different contexts.
- Some languages cannot use "lake" in the phrase "lake of fire" because it refers to water.
- The term "hell" could be translated as "place of suffering" or "final place of darkness and pain."
- The term "lake of fire" could also be translated as "sea of fire" or "huge fire (of suffering)" or "field of fire."

(See also: heaven, death, Hades, abyss)

Bible References:

- James 3:6
- Luke 12:5
- Mark 9:42-44
- Matthew 5:21-22
- Matthew 5:29
- Matthew 10:28-31
- Matthew 23:33
- Matthew 25:41-43
- Revelation 20:15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **50:14** He (God) will throw them into **hell**, where they will weep and grind their teeth in anguish forever. A fire that never goes out will continually burn them, and worms will never stop eating them.
- **50:15** He will throw Satan into **hell** where he will burn forever, along with everyone who chose to follow him rather than to obey God.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7585, G00860, G04390, G04400, G10670, G30410, G44420, G44430, G44470, G44480, G50200, G53940, G54570

James References:

James 3:6

Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, Spirit

Definition:

These terms all refer to the Holy Spirit, who is God. The one true God exists eternally as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit is also referred to as "the Spirit" and "Spirit of Yahweh" and "Spirit of truth."
- Because the Holy Spirit is God, he is absolutely holy, infinitely pure, and morally perfect in all his nature and in everything he does.
- Along with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit was active in creating the world.
- When God's Son, Jesus, returned to heaven, God sent the Holy Spirit to his people to lead them, teach them, comfort them, and enable them to do God's will.
- The Holy Spirit guided Jesus and he guides those who believe in Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could simply be translated with the words used to translate "holy" and "spirit."
- Ways to translate this term could also include "Pure Spirit" or "Spirit who is Holy" or "God the Spirit."

(See also: holy, spirit, God, Lord, God the Father, Son of God, gift)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 10:10
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8
- Acts 8:17
- Galatians 5:25
- Genesis 1:1-2
- Isaiah 63:10
- Job 33:4
- Matthew 12:31
- Matthew 28:18-19
- Psalms 51:10-11

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:1** But **God's Spirit** was there over the water.
- **24:8** When Jesus came up out of the water after being baptized, **the Spirit of God** appeared in the form of a dove and came down and rested on him.
- **26:1** After overcoming Satan's temptations, Jesus returned in the power of **the Holy Spirit** to the region of Galilee where he lived.
- **26:3** Jesus read, "God has given me **his Spirit** so that I can proclaim good news to the poor, freedom to captives, recovery of sight for the blind, and release to the oppressed."
- **42:10** "So go, make disciples of all people groups by baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and **the Holy Spirit** and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."
- **43:3** They were all filled with the **Holy Spirit** and they began to speak in other languages.
- **43:8** "And Jesus has sent the **Holy Spirit** just as he promised he would do. The **Holy Spirit** is causing the things that you are are now seeing and hearing."
- **43:11** Peter answered them, "Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that God will forgive your sins. Then he will also give you the gift of the **Holy Spirit**."
- **45:1** He (Stephen) had a good reputation and was full of the **Holy Spirit** and of wisdom.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3068, H6944, H7307, G00400, G41510

James References:

James 4:5

humble, humbled, humility

Definition:

The term “humble” describes a person who does not think of himself as better than others. He is not proud or arrogant. Humility is the quality of being humble.

- To be humble before God means to understand one’s weakness and imperfection in comparison with his greatness, wisdom and perfection.
- When a person humbles himself, he puts himself in a position of lower importance.
- Humility is caring about the needs of others more than one’s own needs.
- Humility also means serving with a modest attitude when using one’s gifts and abilities.
- The phrase “be humble” could be translated as “do not be prideful.”
- “Humble yourself before God” could be translated as “Submit your will to God, recognizing his greatness.”

(See also: proud)

Bible References:

- James 1:21
- James 3:13
- James 4:10
- Luke 14:11
- Luke 18:14
- Matthew 18:4
- Matthew 23:12

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:2** David was a **humble** and righteous man who trusted and obeyed God.
- **34:10** “God will **humble** everyone who is proud, and he will lift up whoever **humbles** himself.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1792, H3665, H6031, H6035, H6038, H6041, H6800, H6819, H7511, H7807, H7812, H8213, H8214, H8215, H8217, H8467, G08580, G42360, G42390, G42400, G50110, G50120, G50130, G53910

James References:

James 4:6 James 4:10

jealous, jealousy

Definition:

The terms “jealous” and “jealousy” in this sense refer to a strong desire to protect the purity of a relationship. They can also refer to a strong desire to keep possession of something or someone (See Numbers 11:29).

- The term “jealous” is used to describe the angry feeling that a person has toward their spouse when they suspect that their spouse has been unfaithful in their marriage (See Numbers 5:14).
- The terms “jealous” and “jealousy” are often used to describe God’s strong desire that his covenant people love him, remain spiritually faithful to him, and keep him foremost in their affections.
- When used in the Bible, these terms often refer to God’s strong desire for his people to remain pure and unstained by sin.
- God is “jealous” for his glory, desiring that he be treated with honor and reverence.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “jealous” could include “strong protective desire” or “possessive desire.”
- The term “jealousy” could be translated as “strong protective feeling” or “possessive feeling.”
- When talking about God, make sure the translation of these terms does not give a negative meaning of being resentful or envious of someone else.

(See also: envy)

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H7065, H7067, H7068, H7072, G22050, G22060, G38630

James References:

James 3:14 James 3:16

Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ Jesus

Definition:

Jesus is God’s Son. The name “Jesus” means “Yahweh saves.” The term “Christ” is a title that means “anointed one” and is another word for Messiah.

- The two names are often combined as “Jesus Christ” or “Christ Jesus.” These names emphasize that God’s Son is the Messiah, who came to save people from being punished eternally for their sins.
- In a miraculous way, the Holy Spirit caused the eternal Son of God to be born as a human being. His mother was told by an angel to call him “Jesus” because he was destined to save people from their sins.
- Jesus did many miracles that revealed that he is God and that he is the Christ, or the Messiah.

Translation Suggestions:

- In many languages “Jesus” and “Christ” are spelled in a way that keeps the sounds or spelling as close to the original as possible. For example, “Jesucristo,” “Jezus Christus,” “Yesus Kristus”, and “Hesukristo” are some of the ways that these names are translated into different languages.
- For the term “Christ,” some translators may prefer to use only some form of the term “Messiah” throughout.
- Also consider how these names are spelled in a nearby local or national language.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Christ, God, God the Father, high priest, kingdom of God, Mary, Savior, Son of God)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 6:11
- 1 John 2:2
- 1 John 4:15
- 1 Timothy 1:2

- 2 Peter 1:2
- 2 Thessalonians 2:15
- 2 Timothy 1:10
- Acts 2:23
- Acts 5:30
- Acts 10:36
- Hebrews 9:14
- Hebrews 10:22
- Luke 24:20
- Matthew 1:21
- Matthew 4:3
- Philippians 2:5
- Philippians 2:10
- Philippians 4:21-23
- Revelation 1:6

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **22:4** The angel said, "You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. You are to name him **Jesus** and he will be the Messiah."
- **23:2** "Name him **Jesus** (which means, 'Yahweh saves'), because he will save the people from their sins."
- **24:7** So John baptized him (Jesus), even though **Jesus** had never sinned.
- **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**.
- **25:8** **Jesus** did not give in to Satan's temptations, so Satan left him.
- **26:8** Then **Jesus** went throughout the region of Galilee, and large crowds came to him. They brought many people who were sick or handicapped, including those who could not see, walk, hear, or speak, and **Jesus** healed them.
- **31:3** Then **Jesus** finished praying and went to the disciples. He walked on top of the water across the lake toward their boat!
- **38:2** He (Judas) knew that the Jewish leaders denied that **Jesus** was the Messiah and that they were plotting to kill him.
- **40:8** Through his death, **Jesus** opened a way for people to come to God.
- **42:11** Then **Jesus** was taken up to heaven, and a cloud hid him from their sight. **Jesus** sat down at the right hand of God to rule over all things.
- **50:17** **Jesus** and his people will live on the new earth, and he will reign forever over everything that exists. He will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, evil, pain, or death. **Jesus** will rule his kingdom with peace and justice, and he will be with his people forever.

Word Data:

- Strong's: G24240, G55470

James References:

James 1:1 James 2:1

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

James References:

James 2:12 James 2:13 James 2:13 James 3:1 James 4:11 James 4:11 James 4:11 James 4:12 James 5:9 James 5:12

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

James References:

James Introduction James 2 Introduction James 2:21 James 2:24 James 2:25 James 3:6

kingdom of God, kingdom of heaven

Definition:

The terms "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven" both refer to God's rule and authority over his people and over all creation.

- The Jews often used the term "heaven" to refer to God, to avoid saying his name directly. (See: metonymy)
- In the New Testament book that Matthew wrote, he referred to God's kingdom as "the kingdom of heaven," probably because he was writing primarily for a Jewish audience.
- The kingdom of God refers to God ruling people spiritually as well as ruling over the physical world.
- The Old Testament prophets said that God would send the Messiah to rule with righteousness. Jesus, the Son of God, is the Messiah who will rule over God's kingdom forever.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, "kingdom of God" can be translated as "God's rule (as king)" or "when God reigns as king" or "God's rule over everything."
- Depending on the context, the term "kingdom of heaven" could also be translated as "God's rule from heaven as king" or "God in heaven reigning" or "heaven's reign" or "heaven ruling over everything." If it is not possible to translate this simply and clearly, the phrase "kingdom of God" could be translated instead.
- Some translators may prefer to capitalize "Heaven" to show that it refers to God. Others may include a note in the text, such as "kingdom of heaven (that is, 'kingdom of God')."
- A footnote at the bottom of the page of a printed Bible may also be used to explain the meaning of "heaven" in this expression.

(See also: God, heaven, king, kingdom, King of the Jews, reign)

Bible References:

- 2 Thessalonians 1:5
- Acts 8:12-13
- Acts 28:23
- Colossians 4:11
- John 3:3
- Luke 7:28
- Luke 10:9
- Luke 12:31-32
- Matthew 3:2
- Matthew 4:17
- Matthew 5:10
- Romans 14:17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **24:2** He (John) preached to them, saying, "Repent, for the **kingdom of God** is near!"
- **28:6** Then Jesus said to his disciples, "It is extremely hard for rich people to enter into the **kingdom of God**! Yes, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the **kingdom of God**."
- **29:2** Jesus said, "The **kingdom of God** is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants."
- **34:1** Jesus told many other stories about the **kingdom of God**. For example, he said, "The **kingdom of God** is like a mustard seed that someone planted in his field."
- **34:3** Jesus told another story, "The **kingdom of God** is like yeast that a woman mixes into some bread dough until it spreads throughout the dough."
- **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."
- **34:5** "The **kingdom of God** is also like a perfect pearl of great value."
- **42:9** He proved to his disciples in many ways that he was alive, and he taught them about the **kingdom of God**.
- **49:5** Jesus said that the **kingdom of God** is more valuable than anything else in the world.

- **50:2** When Jesus was living on earth he said, “My disciples will preach the good news about the **kingdom of God** to people everywhere in the world, and then the end will come.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: G09320, G23160, G37720

James References:

James 2:5

last day, last days, latter days

Definition:

The term “the last days” refers generally to the time which begins with the first coming of Jesus and ends with his second coming and the final day of judgement. The Bible also calls the final day of judgement “the last day.” The phrase “the latter days” is sometimes used in the Bible with the same meaning as the phrase “the last days” but other times it can refer only to a time that is after the time in which the speaker is speaking but before the second coming of Jesus. The term “the last day” refers to the day of final judgement.

- This time period of “the last days” will have an unknown duration.
- “The last day” is a time of judgment upon those who have turned away from God.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “the last days” can also be translated as “the final days” or “the end times.”
- The term “the last day” can also be translated as “the final day.”
- In some contexts, this could be translated as “end of the world” or “when this world ends.”

(See also: day of the Lord, judge, turn, world)

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 3:3-4
- Daniel 10:14-15
- Hebrews 1:2
- Isaiah 2:2
- James 5:3
- Jeremiah 23:19-20
- John 11:24-26
- Micah 4:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0319, H3117, G20780, G22500

James References:

James 5:3

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

James References:

James 2:9 James 2:10 James 2:11 James 4:11 James 4:11 James 4:11 James 4:11

lord, Lord, master, sir

Definition:

In the Bible, the term "lord" generally refers to someone who has ownership or authority over other people. In the Bible, however, the term is used to address many different kinds of people, including God.

- This word is sometimes translated as "master" when addressing Jesus or when referring to someone who owns slaves.
- Some English versions translate this as "sir" in contexts where someone is politely addressing someone of higher status.

When "Lord" is capitalized, it is a title that refers to God. (Note, however, that when it is used as a form of addressing someone or it occurs at the beginning of a sentence it may be capitalized and have the meaning of "sir" or "master.")

- In the Old Testament, this term is also used in expressions such as "Lord God Almighty" or "Lord Yahweh" or "Yahweh our Lord."

- In the New Testament, the apostles used this term in expressions such as "Lord Jesus" and "Lord Jesus Christ," which communicate that Jesus is God.

- The term "Lord" in the New Testament is also used alone as a direct reference to God, especially in quotations from the Old Testament. For example, the Old Testament text has "Blessed is he who comes in the name of Yahweh" and the New Testament text has "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord."

- In the ULT and UST, the title "Lord" is only used to translate the actual Hebrew and Greek words that mean "Lord." It is never used as a translation of God's name (Yahweh), as is done in many translations.

- Some languages translate "Lord" as "Master" or "Ruler" or some other term that communicates ownership or supreme rule.

- In the appropriate contexts, many translations capitalize the first letter of this term to make it clear to the reader that this is a title referring to God.

- For places in the New Testament where there is a quote from the Old Testament, the term "Lord God" could be used to make it clear that this is a reference to God.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term can be translated with the equivalent of "master" when it refers to a person who owns slaves. It can also be used by a servant to address the person he works for.
- When it refers to Jesus, if the context shows that the speaker sees him as a religious teacher, it can be translated with a respectful address for a religious teacher, such as "master."
- If the person addressing Jesus does not know him, "lord" could be translated with a respectful form of address such as "sir." This translation would also be used for other contexts in which a polite form of address to a man is called for.
- When referring to God the Father or to Jesus, this term is considered a title, written as "Lord" (capitalized) in English.

(See also: God, Jesus, ruler, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- Genesis 39:2
- Joshua 3:9-11
- Psalms 86:15-17
- Jeremiah 27:4
- Lamentations 2:2
- Ezekiel 18:29
- Daniel 9:9
- Daniel 9:17-19
- Malachi 3:1
- Matthew 7:21-23
- Luke 1:30-33
- Luke 16:13
- Romans 6:23
- Ephesians 6:9
- Philippians 2:9-11
- Colossians 3:23
- Hebrews 12:14
- James 2:1

- 1 Peter 1:3
- Jude 1:5
- Revelation 15:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:5** But Jesus replied to Satan by quoting from the Scriptures. He said, “In God’s word, he commands his people, ‘Do not test the **Lord** your God.’”
- **25:7** Jesus replied, “Get away from me, Satan! In God’s word he commands his people, ‘Worship only the **Lord** your God and only serve him.’”
- **26:3** This is the year of the **Lord’s** favor.
- **27:2** The law expert replied that God’s law says, “Love the **Lord** your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind.”
- **31:5** Then Peter said to Jesus, “**Master**, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water”
- **43:9** “But know for certain that God has caused Jesus to become both **Lord** and Messiah!”
- **47:3** By means of this demon she predicted the future for people, she made a lot of money for her **masters** as a fortuneteller.
- **47:11** Paul answered, “Believe in Jesus, the **Master**, and you and your family will be saved.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0113, H0136, H1167, H1376, H4756, H7980, H8323, G02030, G06340, G09620, G12030, G29620

James References:

James 1:1 James 1:7 James 2:1 James 3:9 James 4:10 James 4:15 James 5:7 James 5:8 James 5:10 James 5:11 James 5:11 James 5:14 James 5:15

love, beloved

Definition:

To love another person is to care for that person and do things that will benefit him. There are different meanings for “love” some languages may express using different words:

1. The kind of love that comes from God is focused on the good of others even when it does not benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do. God himself is love and is the source of true love.
    - Jesus showed this kind of love by sacrificing his life in order to rescue us from sin and death. He also taught his followers to love others sacrificially.
    - When people love others with this kind of love, they act in ways that show they are thinking of what will cause the others to thrive. This kind of love especially includes forgiving others.
    - In the ULT, the word “love” refers to this kind of sacrificial love, unless a Translation Note indicates a different meaning.
2. Another word in the New Testament refers to brotherly love, or love for a friend or family member.
    - This term refers to natural human love between friends or relatives.
    - The term can also be used in such contexts as, “They love to sit in the most important seats at a banquet.” This means that they “like very much” or “greatly desire” to do that.
3. The word “love” can also refer to romantic love between a man and a woman.

Translation Suggestions:

- Unless indicated otherwise in a Translation Note, the word “love” in the ULT refers to the kind of sacrificial love that comes from God.

- Some languages may have a special word for the kind of unselfish, sacrificial love that God has. Ways to translate this might include, “devoted, faithful caring” or “care for unselfishly” or “love from God.” Make sure that the word used to translate God’s love can include giving up one’s own interests to benefit others and loving others no matter what they do.
- Sometimes the English word “love” describes the deep caring that people have for friends and family members. Some languages might translate this with a word or phrase that means “like very much” or “care for” or “have strong affection for.”
- In contexts where the word “love” is used to express a strong preference for something, this could be translated by “strongly prefer” or “like very much” or “greatly desire.”
- Some languages may also have a separate word that refers to romantic or sexual love between a husband and wife.
- Many languages must express “love” as an action. So for example, they might translate “love is patient, love is kind” as, “when a person loves someone, he is patient with him and kind to him.”

(See also: covenant, death, sacrifice, save, sin)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 13:7
- 1 John 3:2
- 1 Thessalonians 4:10
- Galatians 5:23
- Genesis 29:18
- Isaiah 56:6
- Jeremiah 2:2
- John 3:16
- Matthew 10:37
- Nehemiah 9:32-34
- Philippians 1:9
- Song of Songs 1:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **27:2** The law expert replied that God’s law says, “**Love** the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. And **love** your neighbor as yourself.”
- **33:8** “The thorny ground is a person who hears God’s word, but, as time passes, the cares, riches, and pleasures of life choke out his **love** for God.”
- **36:5** As Peter was talking, a bright cloud came down on top of them and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son whom I **love**.”
- **39:10** “Everyone who **loves** the truth listens to me.”
- **47:1** She (Lydia) **loved** and worshiped God.
- **48:1** When God created the world, everything was perfect. There was no sin. Adam and Eve **loved** each other, and they **loved** God.
- **49:3** He (Jesus) taught that you need to **love** other people the same way you love yourself.
- **49:4** He (Jesus) also taught that you need to **love** God more than you **love** anything else, including your wealth.
- **49:7** Jesus taught that God **loves** sinners very much.
- **49:9** But God **loved** everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with God forever.
- **49:13** God **loves** you and wants you to believe in Jesus so he can have a close relationship with you.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0157, H0158, H0159, H0160, H2245, H2617, H2836, H3039, H4261, H5689, H5690, H5691, H7355, H7356, H7453, H7474, G00250, G00260, G53600, G53610, G53620, G53630, G53650, G53670, G53680, G53690, G53770, G53810, G53820, G53830, G53880

James References:

James 1:12 James 2:5 James 2:8

mercy, merciful

Definition:

The terms “mercy” and “merciful” refer to helping people who are in need, especially when they are in a lowly or humbled condition.

- The term “mercy” can also include the meaning of not punishing people for something they have done wrong.
- A powerful person such as a king is described as “merciful” when he treats people kindly instead of harming them.
- Being merciful also means to forgive someone who has done something wrong against us.
- We show mercy when we help people who are in great need.
- God is merciful to us, and he wants us to be merciful to others.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “mercy” could be translated as “kindness” or “compassion” or “pity.”
- The term “merciful” could be translated as “showing pity” or “being kind to” or “forgiving.”
- To “show mercy to” or “have mercy on” could be translated as “treat kindly” or “be compassionate toward.”

(See also: compassion, forgive)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 1:3-5
- 1 Timothy 1:13
- Daniel 9:17
- Exodus 34:6
- Genesis 19:16
- Hebrews 10:28-29
- James 2:13
- Luke 6:35-36
- Matthew 9:27
- Philippians 2:25-27
- Psalms 41:4-6
- Romans 12:1

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **19:16** They (the prophets) all told the people to stop worshiping idols and to start showing justice and **mercy** to others.
- **19:17** He (Jeremiah) sank down into the mud that was in the bottom of the well, but then the king had **mercy** on him and ordered his servants to pull Jeremiah out of the well before he died.
- **20:12** The Persian Empire was strong but **merciful** to the people it conquered.
- **27:11** Then Jesus asked the law expert, “What do you think? Which one of the three men was a neighbor to the man who was robbed and beaten?” He replied, “The one who was **merciful** to him.”
- **32:11** But Jesus said to him, “No, I want you to go home and tell your friends and family about everything that God has done for you and how he has had **mercy** on you.”
- **34:9** “But the tax collector stood far away from the religious ruler, did not even look up to heaven. Instead, he pounded on his chest and prayed, ‘God, please be **merciful** to me because I am a sinner.’”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2551, H2603, H2604, H2616, H2617, H2623, H3722, H3727, H4627, H4819, H5503, H5504, H5505, H5506, H6014, H7349, H7355, H7356, H7359, G16530, G16550, G16560, G24330, G24360, G36280, G36290, G37410, G46980

James References:

James 2:13 James 2:13 James 3:17 James 5:11

perish

Definition:

The term “perish” means to die or be destroyed, usually as the result of violence or disaster. In the New Testament, it often has the spiritual meaning of being lost or separated from the people of God.

Spiritual Meaning of “Perish:”

- People who are “perishing” are those who have refused to trust in Jesus for their salvation.
- Those who “perish” will not live eternally with God in heaven. Instead, they will live eternally in hell under God’s punishment.
- Everyone will die physically, but only those who do not trust in Jesus for their salvation will perish eternally.
- When “perish” is used in a spiritual sense, make sure that your translation expresses this differently than dying physically.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate this term could include “be lost from God’s people,” “die eternally,” “be punished in hell,” or “be destroyed.”
- Try to use a term or expression that does not only mean “die physically” or “cease to exist.”

(See also: death, everlasting)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 1:23
- 2 Corinthians 2:16-17
- 2 Thessalonians 2:10
- Jeremiah 18:18
- Psalms 49:18-20
- Zechariah 9:5-7
- Zechariah 13:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0006, H0007, H0008, H1478, H1820, H1826, H5486, H5595, H6544, H8045, G05990, G06220, G06840, G08530, G13110, G27040, G48810, G53560

James References:

James 1:11

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

James References:

James 5:13 James 5:14 James 5:15 James 5:16 James 5:16 James 5:17 James 5:17 James 5:18

promise, promised

Definition:

When used as a verb, the term “promise” refers to the action of a person saying that he will do something in such way that he obligates himself to fulfill what he has said. When used as a noun, the term “promise” refers to the thing that a person obligates himself to do.

- The Bible records many promises that God has made for his people.
- Promises are an important part of formal agreements such as covenants.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “promise” could be translated as “commitment” or “assurance” or “guarantee.”
- To “promise to do something” could be translated as “assure someone that you will do something” or “commit to doing something.”

(See also: covenant, oath, vow)

Bible References:

- Galatians 3:15-16
- Genesis 25:31-34
- Hebrews 11:9
- James 1:12
- Numbers 30:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:15** God said, “I **promise** I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are sinful from the time they are children.”Â
- **3:16** God then made the first rainbow as a sign of his **promise**. Every time the rainbow appeared in the sky, God would remember what he **promised** and so would his people.
- **4:8** God spoke to Abram and **promised** again that he would have a son and as many descendants as the stars in the sky. Abram believed God’s **promise**.
- **5:4** “Your wife, Sarai, will have a son—he will be the son of **promise**.”
- **8:15** The covenant **promises** that God gave to Abraham were passed on to Isaac, then to Jacob, and then to Jacob’s twelve sons and their families.
- **17:14** Though David had been unfaithful to God, God was still faithful to his **promises**.
- **50:1** Jesus **promised** he would return at the end of the world. Though he has not yet come back, he will keep his **promise**.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0559, H0562, H1696, H8569, G18430, G18600, G18610, G18620, G36700, G42790

James References:

James 1:12 James 2:5

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

James References:

James 5:10

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

James References:

James 1:27 James 3:17 James 4:8

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

James References:

James 1:20 James 2 Introduction James 2:23 James 3:18 James 5:6 James 5:16

Satan, devil, evil one

Definition:

Although the devil is a spirit being that God created, he rebelled against God and became God's enemy. The devil is also called "Satan" and "the evil one."

- The devil hates God and all that God created because he wants to take the place of God and be worshiped as God.
- Satan tempts people to rebel against God.
- God sent his Son, Jesus, to rescue people from Satan's control.
- The name "Satan" means "adversary" or "enemy."
- The word "devil" means "accuser."

Translation Suggestions:

- The word "devil" could also be translated as "the accuser" or "the evil one" or "the king of evil spirits" or "the chief evil spirit."
- "Satan" could be translated as "Opponent" or "Adversary" or some other name that shows that he is the devil.
- These terms should be translated differently from demon and evil spirit.
- Consider how these terms are translated in a local or national language.

(See: How to Translate Unknowns)

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: demon, evil, kingdom of God, tempt)

Bible References:

- 1 John 3:8
- 1 Thessalonians 2:17-20
- 1 Timothy 5:15
- Acts 13:10
- Job 1:8
- Mark 8:33
- Zechariah 3:1

Examples from the Bible stories:

- 21:1 The snake who deceived Eve was **Satan**. The promise meant that the Messiah who would come would defeat **Satan** completely.
- 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."
- 25:8 Jesus did not give in to **Satan's** temptations, so **Satan** left him.
- 33:6 So Jesus explained, "The seed is the word of God. The path is a person who hears God's word, but does not understand it, and the **devil** takes the word from him."
- 38:7 After Judas took the bread, **Satan** entered into him.
- 48:4 God promised that one of Eve's descendants would crush **Satan's** head, and **Satan** would wound his heel. This meant that **Satan** would kill the Messiah, but God would raise him to life again, and then the Messiah will crush the power of **Satan** forever.
- 49:15 God has taken you out of **Satan's** kingdom of darkness and put you into God's kingdom of light.
- 50:9 "The weeds represent the people who belong to the **evil one**. The enemy who planted the weeds represents the **devil**."
- 50:10 "When the world ends, the angels will gather together all the people who belong to the **devil** and throw them into a raging fire, where they will cry and grind their teeth in terrible suffering."
- 50:15 When Jesus returns, he will completely destroy **Satan** and his kingdom. He will throw **Satan** into hell where he will burn forever, along with everyone who chose to follow him rather than to obey God.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7700, H7854, H8163, G11390, G11400, G11410, G11420, G12280, G41900, G45660, G45670

James References:

James 4:7

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

James References:

James 1:21 James 2:14 James 4:12 James 5:20

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

James References:

James 1:15 James 1:15 James 2:9 James 4:8 James 4:17 James 5:15 James 5:16 James 5:20 James 5:20

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

James References:

James 1:21 James 5:20

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

James References:

James 2:26

tempt, temptation

Definition:

To tempt someone is to try to get that person to do something wrong.

- A temptation is something that causes a person to want to do something wrong.
- People are tempted by their own sinful nature and by other people.
- Satan also tempts people to disobey God and to sin against God by doing wrong things.
- Satan tempted Jesus and tried to get him to do something wrong, but Jesus resisted all of Satan’s temptations and never sinned.
- Someone who is “tempting God” is not trying to get him to do something wrong, but rather, is continuing in stubborn disobedience of him to the point that God must respond by punishing him. This is also called “testing God.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “tempt” can be translated as “try to cause to sin” or “entice” or “cause a desire to sin.”
- Ways to translate “temptations” could include, “things that tempt” or “things that entice someone to sin” or “things that cause desire to do something wrong.”
- To “tempt God” could be translated as to “put God to the test” or to “test God” or to “try God’s patience” or to “cause God to have to punish” or to “stubbornly keep disobeying God.”

(See also: disobey, Satan, sin, test)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 3:4-5
- Hebrews 4:15
- James 1:13
- Luke 4:2
- Luke 11:4
- Matthew 26:41

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:1** Then Satan came to Jesus and **tempted** him to sin.
- **25:8** Jesus did not give in to Satan's **temptations**, so Satan left him.
- **38:11** Jesus told his disciples to pray that they would not enter into **temptation**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0974, H4531, H5254, G05510, G15980, G39850, G39860, G39870

James References:

James 1:13 James 1:13 James 1:13 James 1:14

test, tested, testing, testing in the fire

Definition:

The term "test" refers to a difficult or painful experience that reveals a person's strengths and weaknesses.

- God tests people, but he does not tempt them to sin. Satan, however, tempts people to sin.
- God sometimes uses tests to expose people's sin. A test helps a person to turn away from sin and to draw closer to God.
- Gold and other metals are tested with fire to find out how pure and strong they are. This is a picture of how God uses painful circumstances to test his people.
- To "put to the test" can mean, "challenge something or someone to prove its value."
- In the context of putting God to the test, it means to try to make him do a miracle for us, taking advantage of his mercy.
- Jesus told Satan that it is wrong to put God to the test. He is the almighty, holy God who is above everything and everyone.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term to "test" could also be translated as, to "challenge" or to "cause to experience difficulties" or to "prove."
- Ways to translate "a test" could be, "a challenge" or "a difficult experience."
- To "put to the test" could be translated as to "test" or to "set up a challenge" or to "force to prove oneself."
- In the context of testing God, this could be translated as "trying to force God to prove his love."
- In some contexts, when God is not the subject, the term "test" can mean "tempt."

(See also: tempt)

Bible References:

- 1 John 4:1
- 1 Thessalonians 5:21
- Acts 15:10
- Genesis 22:1
- Isaiah 7:13
- James 1:12

- Lamentations 3:40-43
- Malachi 3:10
- Philippians 1:10
- Psalm 26:2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5254, H5713, H5715, H5749, H6030, H8584, G12420, G12630, G13030, G13820, G19570, G31400, G31410, G31420, G31430, G39840, G43030, G44510, G48280, G60200

James References:

James 1:3

testimony, testify, witness, eyewitness, evidence

Definition:

When a person gives "testimony" he makes a statement about something he knows, claiming that the statement is true. To "testify" is to give "testimony."

- In some places in the Old Testament, "Testimony" refers specifically to the tablets of stone on which Yahweh wrote his ten commandments. From that use it came to refer to God's law more broadly.
- Often a person "testifies" about something he has experienced directly.
- A witness who gives "false testimony" does not tell the truth about what happened.
- Sometimes the term "testimony" refers to a prophecy that a prophet has stated.
- In the New Testament, this term was often used to refer to how Jesus' followers testified about the events of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

The term "witness" refers to a person who has personally experienced something that happened. Usually a witness is also someone who testifies about what they know is true. The term "eyewitness" emphasizes that the person was actually there and saw what happened.

- To "witness" something means to see it happen.
- At a trial, a witness "gives witness" or "bears witness." This has the same meaning as "testify."
- Witnesses are expected to tell the truth about what they have seen or heard.
- A witness who does not tell the truth about what happened is called a "false witness." He is said to "give false witness" or to "bear false witness."
- The expression "be a witness between" means that something or someone will be evidence that a contract has been made. The witness will make sure each person does what he has promised to do.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term "testify" or "give testimony" could also be translated as "tell the facts" or "tell what was seen or heard" or "tell from personal experience" or "give evidence" or "tell what happened."
- Ways to translate "testimony" could include, "report of what happened" or "statement of what is true" or "evidence" or "what has been said" or "prophecy."
- Ways to translate "Testimony" could include, "the stone slabs on which I wrote my commands" or "God's law" or "God's commands" or "the record of the agreement between Yahweh and Israel."
- The phrase, "as a testimony to them" could be translated as to "show them what is true" or to "prove to them what is true."
- The phrase, "as a testimony against them" could be translated as "which will show them their sin" or "exposing their hypocrisy" or "which will prove that they are wrong."
- To "give false testimony" could be translated as "say false things about" or "state things that are not true."
- The term "witness" or "eyewitness" could be translated with a word or phrase that means "person seeing it" or "the one who saw it happen" or "those who saw and heard (those things)."
- Something that is "a witness" could be translated as "guarantee" or "sign of our promise" or "something that testifies that this is true."
- The phrase "you will be my witnesses" could also be translated as "you will tell other people about me" or "you will teach people the truth that I taught you" or "you will tell people what you have seen me do and heard me teach."
- To "witness to" could be translated as to "tell what was seen" or to "testify" or to "state what happened."
- To "witness" something could be translated as to "see something" or to "experience something happen."

(See also: ark of the covenant, guilt, judge, prophet, true)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 31:28
- Micah 6:3
- Matthew 26:60
- Mark 1:44
- John 1:7
- John 3:33
- Acts 4:32-33
- Acts 7:44
- Acts 13:31
- Romans 1:9
- 1 Thessalonians 2:10-12
- 1 Timothy 5:19-20
- 2 Timothy 1:8
- 2 Peter 1:16-18
- 1 John 5:6-8
- 3 John 1:12
- Revelation 12:11

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **39:2** Inside the house, the Jewish leaders put Jesus on trial. They brought many **false witnesses** who lied about him.
- **39:4** The high priest tore his clothes in anger and shouted, "We do not need any more **witnesses**. You have heard him say that he is the Son of God. What is your judgment?"
- **42:8** "It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to receive forgiveness for their sins. They will do this starting in Jerusalem, and then go to all people groups everywhere. You are **witnesses** of these things."
- **43:7** "We are **witnesses** to the fact that God raised Jesus to life again."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5707, H5713, H5715, H5749, H6030, H8584, G02670, G12630, G19570, G26490, G31400, G31410, G31420, G31430, G31440, G43030, G48280, G49010, G55750, G55760, G55770, G60200

James References:

James 5:3

transgress, transgression

Definition:

The term “transgress” means to cross a line or to violate a boundary. The term is often used figuratively, meaning to break a command, rule, or moral code.

- This term is very similar to the word “trespass,” but is generally used more often to describe violations against God than against other people.
- To “transgress” can also be described as to “cross a line,” that is, to go beyond a limit or boundary that has been set for the good of the person and others.

Translation Suggestions:

- To “transgress” could be translated as to “sin” or to “disobey” or to “rebel.”
- If a verse or passage uses two terms that mean “sin” or “transgress” or “trespass,” it is important, if possible, to use different ways to translate these terms. When the Bible uses two or more terms with similar meanings in the same context, usually its purpose is to emphasize what is being said or to show its importance.

(See: parallelism)

(See also: disobey, sin, trespass, iniquity)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 4:6
- Daniel 9:24-25
- Galatians 3:19-20
- Galatians 6:1-2
- Numbers 14:17-19
- Psalm 32:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0898, H4603, H4604, H6586, H6588, G04580, G04590, G38450, G38470, G38480, G39280

James References:

James 2:9 James 2:11

wise, wisdom

Definition:

The term “wise” describes someone who understands what is the right and moral thing to do and then does that. “Wisdom” is the understanding and practice of what is true and morally right.

- Being wise includes the ability to make good decisions, especially choosing to do what pleases God.
- People become wise by listening to God and humbly obeying his will.
- A wise person will show the fruits of the Holy Spirit in his life, such as joy, kindness, love, and patience.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate “wise” could include “obedient to God” or “sensible and obedient” or “God-fearing.”
- “Wisdom” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “wise living” or “sensible and obedient living” or “good judgment.”
- It is best to translate “wise” and “wisdom” in such a way that they are different terms from other key terms like righteous or obedient.

(See also: obey, fruit)

Bible References:

- Acts 6:3
- Colossians 3:15-17
- Exodus 31:6
- Genesis 3:6
- Isaiah 19:12
- Jeremiah 18:18
- Matthew 7:24

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **2:5** She also wanted to be **wise**, so she picked some of the fruit and ate it.
- **18:1** When Solomon asked for **wisdom**, God was pleased and made him the **wisest** man in the world.
- **23:9** Some time later, **wise** men from countries far to the east saw an unusual star in the sky.
- **45:1** He (Stephen) had a good reputation and was full of the Holy Spirit and of **wisdom**.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0998, H1350, H2445, H2449, H2450, H2451, H2452, H2454, H2942, H3820, H3823, H6195, H6493, H6912, H7535, H7919, H7922, H8454, G46780, G46790, G46800, G49200, G54280, G54290, G54300

James References:

James 1:5 James 3:13 James 3:13 James 3:15 James 3:17

word of God, word of Yahweh, word of the Lord, word of truth, scripture

Definition:

In the Bible, the term "word of God" refers to anything that God has communicated to people. This includes spoken and written messages. Jesus is also called "the Word of God."

- The term "scriptures" means "writings." It is only used in the New Testament and refers to the Hebrew scriptures, which is the Old Testament. These writings were God's message that he had told people to write down so that many years in the future people could still read it.
- The related terms "word of Yahweh" and "word of the Lord" often refer to a specific message from God that was given to a prophet or other person in the Bible.
- Sometimes this term occurs as simply "the word" or "my word" or "your word" (when talking about God's word).
- In the New Testament, Jesus is called "the Word" and "the Word of God." These titles mean that Jesus fully reveals who God is, because he is God himself.

The term "word of truth" is another way of referring to "God's word," which is his message or teaching. It does not refer to just one word.

- God's word of truth includes everything that God has taught people about himself, his creation, and his plan of salvation through Jesus.
- This term emphasizes the fact that what God has told us is true, faithful, and real.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include "the message of Yahweh" or "God's message" or "the teachings from God."

- It may be more natural in some languages to make this term plural and say "God's words" or "the words of Yahweh."

- The expression "the word of Yahweh came" is often used to introduce something that God told his prophets or his people. This could be translated as "Yahweh spoke this message" or "Yahweh spoke these words."

- The term "scripture" or "scriptures" could be translated as "the writings" or "the written message from God." This term should be translated differently from the translation of the term "word."

- When "word" occurs alone and it refers to God's word, it could be translated as "the message" or "God's word" or "the teachings." Also consider the alternate translations suggested above.

- When the Bible refers to Jesus as "the Word," this term could be translated as "the Message" or "the Truth."

- "Word of truth" could be translated as "God's true message" or "God's word, which is true."

- It is important for the translation of this term to include the meaning of being true.

(See also: prophet, true, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- Genesis 15:1
- 1 Kings 13:1
- Jeremiah 36:1-3
- Luke 8:11
- John 5:39
- Acts 6:2
- Acts 12:24
- Romans 1:2
- 2 Corinthians 6:7
- Ephesians 1:13
- 2 Timothy 3:16
- James 1:18
- James 2:8-9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:7** In **God's word** he commands his people, "Worship only the Lord your God and only serve him."
- **33:6** So Jesus explained, "The seed is the **word of God**."

- **42:3** Then Jesus explained to them what **God's word** says about the Messiah.
- **42:7** Jesus said, "I told you that everything written about me in **God's word** must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds so they could understand **God's word**.
- **45:10** Philip also used other **scriptures** to tell him the good news of Jesus.
- **48:12** But Jesus is the greatest prophet of all. He is the **Word of God**.
- **49:18** God tells you to pray, to study his **word**, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0561, H0565, H1697, H3068, G30560, G44870

James References:

James 1:21 James 1:22 James 1:23 James 2:8 James 2:23 James 4:5

world, worldly

Definition:

The term "world" usually refers to the part of the universe where people live: the earth. The term "worldly" describes the evil values and behaviors of people living in this world.

- In its most general sense, the term "world" refers to the heavens and the earth, as well as everything in them.
- In many contexts, "world" actually means "people in the world."
- Sometimes it is implied that this refers to the evil people on earth or the people who do not obey God.
- The apostles also used "world" to refer to the selfish behaviors and corrupt values of the people living in this world. This can include self-righteous religious practices which are based on human efforts.
- People and things characterized by these values are said to be "worldly."

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, "world" could also be translated as "universe" or "people of this world" or "corrupt things in the world" or "evil attitudes of people in the world."
- The phrase "all the world" often means "many people" and refers to the people living in a certain region. For example, "all the world came to Egypt" could be translated as "many people from the surrounding countries came to Egypt" or "people from all the countries surrounding Egypt came there."
- Another way to translate "all the world went to their hometown to be registered in the Roman census" would be "many of the people living in regions ruled by the Roman empire went…"
- Depending on the context, the term "worldly" could be translated as "evil" or "sinful" or "selfish" or "ungodly" or "corrupt" or "influenced by the corrupt values of people in this world."
- The phrase "saying these things in the world" can be translated as "saying these things to the people of the world."

- In other contexts, “in the world” could also be translated as “living among the people of the world” or “living among ungodly people.”

(See also: corrupt, heaven, Rome, godly)

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:15
- 1 John 4:5
- 1 John 5:5
- John 1:29
- Matthew 13:36-39

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0776, H2309, H2465, H5769, H8398, G10930, G28860, G28890, G36250

James References:

James 1:27 James 2:5 James 3:6 James 4:4 James 4:4

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

James References:

James 1:19 James 1:20

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

James References:

James 5:4

Abraham, Abram

Definition:

Abram was a Chaldean man from the city of Ur who was chosen by God to be the forefather of the Israelites. God changed his name to “Abraham.”

- The name “Abram” means “exalted father.”
- “Abraham” means “father of many.”
- God promised Abraham that he would have many descendants, who would become a great nation.
- Abraham believed God and obeyed him. God led Abraham to move from Chaldea to the land of Canaan.
- Abraham and his wife Sarah, when they were very old and living in the land of Canaan, had a son, Isaac.

(Translation suggestions: Translate Names)

(See also: Canaan, Chaldea, Sarah, Isaac)

Bible References:

- Galatians 3:8
- Genesis 11:29-30
- Genesis 21:4
- Genesis 22:2
- James 2:23
- Matthew 1:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **4:6** When **Abram** arrived in Canaan, God said, “Look all around you. I will give to you and your descendants all the land that you can see as an inheritance.”
- **5:4** Then God changed **Abram**’s name to **Abraham**, which means “father of many.”
- **5:5** About a year later, when **Abraham** was 100 years old and Sarah was 90, Sarah gave birth to Abraham’s son.
- **5:6** When Isaac was a young man, God tested **Abraham’s** faith by saying, “Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a sacrifice to me.”
- **6:1** When **Abraham** was very old and his son, Isaac, had grown to be a man, **Abraham** sent one of his servants back to the land where his relatives lived to find a wife for his son, Isaac.
- **6:4** After a long time, **Abraham** died and all of the promises that God had made to him in the covenant were passed on to Isaac.
- **21:2** God promised **Abraham** that through him all people groups of the world would receive a blessing.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0087, H0085, G00110

James References:

James 2:21 James 2:23

Elijah

Definition:

Elijah was one of the most important prophets of Yahweh. Elijah prophesied during the reigns of several kings of Israel and Judah, including King Ahab.

- God did many miracles through Elijah, including raising a dead boy back to life.
- Elijah rebuked King Ahab for worshiping the false god Baal.
- He challenged the prophets of Baal to a test that proved that Yahweh is the only true God.
- At the end of Elijah's life, God miraculously took him up to heaven while he was still alive.
- Hundreds of years later, Elijah, along with Moses, appeared with Jesus on a mountain, and they talked together about Jesus' coming suffering and death in Jerusalem.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: miracle, prophet, Yahweh)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 17:1
- 2 Kings 1:3-4
- James 5:16-18
- John 1:19-21
- John 1:24-25
- Mark 9:5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **19:2** **Elijah** was a prophet when Ahab was king over the kingdom of Israel.
- **19:2** **Elijah** said to Ahab, "There will be no rain or dew in the kingdom of Israel until I say so."
- **19:3** God told **Elijah** to go to a stream in the wilderness to hide from Ahab who wanted to kill him. Every morning and every evening, birds would bring him bread and meat.
- **19:4** But they took care of **Elijah**, and God provided for them so that their flour jar and their bottle of oil never became empty.
- **19:5** After three and a half years, God told **Elijah** to return to the kingdom of Israel and speak with Ahab because he was going to send rain again.
- **19:7** Then **Elijah** said to the prophets of Baal, "Kill a bull and prepare it as a sacrifice, but do not light the fire."
- **19:12** Then **Elijah** said, "Do not let any of the prophets of Baal escape!"
- **36:3** Then Moses and the prophet **Elijah** appeared. These men had lived hundreds of years before this. They talked with Jesus about his death that would soon happen in Jerusalem.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0452, G22430

James References:

James 5:17

Isaac

Definition:

Isaac was the only son of Abraham and Sarah. God had promised to give them a son even though they were very old.

- The name "Isaac" means "he laughs." When God told Abraham that Sarah would give birth to a son, Abraham laughed because they were both very old. Some time later, Sarah also laughed when she heard this news.
- But God fulfilled his promise and Isaac was born to Abraham and Sarah in their old age.
- God told Abraham that the covenant he had made with Abraham would also be for Isaac and his descendants forever.
- When Isaac was a youth, God tested Abraham's faith by commanding him to sacrifice Isaac.
- Isaac's son Jacob had twelve sons whose descendants later became the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Abraham, descendant, eternity, fulfill, Jacob, Sarah, twelve tribes of Israel)

Bible References:

- Galatians 4:28-29
- Genesis 25:9-11
- Genesis 25:19
- Genesis 26:1
- Genesis 26:8
- Genesis 28:1-2
- Genesis 31:18
- Matthew 8:11-13
- Matthew 22:32

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **5:4** "Your wife, Sarai, will have a son—he will be the son of promise. Name him **Isaac**."
- **5:6** When **Isaac** was a young man, God tested Abraham's faith by saying, "Take **Isaac**, your only son, and kill him as a sacrifice to me."
- **5:9** God had provided the ram to be the sacrifice instead of **Isaac**.
- **6:1** When Abraham was very old and his son, **Isaac**, had grown to be a man, Abraham sent one of his servants back to the land where his relatives lived to find a wife for his son, **Isaac.**
- **6:5** **Isaac** prayed for Rebekah, and God allowed her to get pregnant with twins.
- **7:10** Then **Isaac** died, and Jacob and Esau buried him. The covenant promises God had promised to Abraham and then to **Isaac** now passed on to Jacob.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3327, H3446, G24640

James References:

James 2:21

James (brother of Jesus)

Definition:

James was a son of Mary and Joseph. He was one of Jesus' younger half-brothers.

- Jesus' other half-brothers were named Joseph, Judas, and Simon.
- During Jesus' lifetime, James and his brothers did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah.
- Later, after Jesus was raised from the dead, James believed in him and became a leader of the church in Jerusalem.
- The New Testament book of James is a letter that James wrote to Christians who had fled to other countries to escape persecution.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: apostle, Christ, church, Judas the son of James, persecute)

Bible References:

- Galatians 1:18-20
- Galatians 2:9-10
- James 1:1-3
- Jude 1:1-2
- Mark 9:1-3
- Matthew 13:54-56

Word Data:

- Strong's: G23850

James References:

James 1:1

Job

Definition:

Job was a man who is described in the Bible as blameless and righteous before God. He is best known for persevering in his faith in God through times of terrible suffering.

- Job lived in the land of Uz, which was located somewhere east of the land of Canaan, possibly near the region of the Edomites.
- It is thought that he lived during the time of Esau and Jacob because one of Job's friends was a "Temanite," which was a people group named after Esau's grandson.
- The Old Testament book of Job tells about how Job and others responded to his suffering. It also gives God's viewpoint as the sovereign creator and ruler of the universe.
- After all the disasters, God eventually healed Job and gave him more children and wealth.
- The book of Job says that he was very old when he died.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Abraham, Esau, flood, JacobNoah, people group)

Bible References:

- Ezekiel 14:12-14
- James 5:9-11
- Job 1:1
- Job 3:5

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0347, G24920

James References:

James 5:11

Rahab

Definition:

Rahab was a woman who lived in Jericho when Israel attacked the city. Rahab was also the name of a mythical monster of primeval chaos.

- Rahab was a prostitute who hid the two Israelites who came to spy on Jericho before the Israelites attacked it. She helped the spies escape back to the Israelite camp.
- Rahab became a believer in Yahweh.
- She and her family came to live with the Israelites after the Israelites destroyed Jericho and spared Rahab and her family.
- The mythical sea monster was pictured as ruling the chaotic sea and God was pictured as defeating that sea monster when he brought order into the world during creation.
- The sea monster Rahab was pictured as a serpent or dragon, and may have been considered the same as the mythical creature called Leviathan.

(Translation suggestions: How to Translate Names)

(See also: Israel, Jericho, prostitute)

Bible References:

- Hebrews 11:29-31
- James 2:25
- Joshua 2:21
- Joshua 6:17-19
- Matthew 1:5
- Psalms 87:4
- Psalms 89:10
- Job 9:13

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **15:1** In that city there lived a prostitute named **Rahab** who hid the spies and later helped them to escape. She did this because she believed God. They promised to protect **Rahab** and her family when the Israelites would destroy Jericho.
- **15:5** The Israelites destroyed everything in the city as God had commanded. **Rahab** and her family were the only people in the city that they did not kill. They became part of the Israelites.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7343, G44600

James References:

James 2:25

twelve tribes of Israel, twelve tribes

Definition:

The term “twelve tribes of Israel” refers to the twelve sons of Jacob and their descendants.

- These are the names of Jacob’s twelve sons: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph and Benjamin.
- There are several places in the Bible where the list of the twelve tribes is slightly different. Sometimes Levi, Joseph, or Dan is left out of the list and sometimes Joseph’s two sons Ephraim and Manasseh are included in the list.

(See also: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh, Israel, Jacob, tribe)

Bible References:

- Acts 26:7
- Genesis 49:28
- Luke 22:28-30
- Matthew 19:28

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3478, H7626, H8147, G14270, G24740, G54430

James References:

James 1:1

adversary, enemy

Definition:

An “adversary” is a person (or group of people) who is opposed to someone else. The term “enemy” has a similar meaning.

- Your adversary can be a person who tries to oppose or harm another person.
- When two nations fight, each can be called an “adversary” of the other.
- In the Bible, the devil is referred to as an “adversary” and an “enemy.”
- The term “adversary” may be translated as “opponent” or “enemy,” but it suggests a stronger form of opposition.

(See also: Satan)

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 5:14
- Isaiah 9:11
- Job 6:23
- Lamentations 4:12
- Luke 12:59
- Matthew 13:25

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0341, H6146, H6887, H6862, H6965, H7790, H7854, H8130, H8324, G04760, G04800, G21890, G21900, G52270

James References:

James 4:4 James 4:4

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

James References:

James 4:16

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

James References:

James 2:2

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

James References:

James 3:7

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

James References:

James 5:3 James 5:5

month, monthly

Definition:

The term “month” refers to a period of time lasting about four weeks. The number of days in each month varies depending on whether a lunar or solar calendar is used.

- In the lunar calendar, the length of each month is based on the amount of time it takes for the moon to go around the earth, about twenty-nine days. In this system there are twelve or thirteen months in a year. Despite the year being twelve or thirteen months, the first month is always called the same name even though it may be a different season.
- The “new moon,” or beginning phase of the moon with its sliver of light, marks the beginning of each month in the lunar calendar.
- All the names of months referred to in the Bible are those of the lunar calendar since this was the system used by the Israelites. Modern Jews still use this calendar for religious purposes.
- The modern-day solar calendar is based on how long it takes the earth to go around the sun (about 365 days). In this system, the year is always divided up into twelve months, with the length of each month ranging from twenty-eight to thirty-one days.

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 20:34
- Acts 18:9-11
- Hebrews 11:23
- Numbers 10:10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2320, H3391, H3393, G33760

James References:

James 5:17

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

James References:

James 4:13

create, created, creation, creator

Definition:

The term “create” means to make something or to cause something to be. Whatever is created is called a “creation.” God is called the “Creator” because he caused everything in the entire universe to come into existence.

- When this term is used to refer to God creating the world, it means he made it out of nothing.
- When human beings “create” something, it means they made it out of things that already existed.
- Sometimes “create” is used in a figurative way to describe something abstract, such as creating peace, or creating a pure heart in someone.
- The term “creation” can refer to the very beginning of the world when God first created everything. It can also be used to refer generally to everything that God created. Sometimes the word “creation” refers more specifically to just the people in the world.

Translation Suggestions:

- Some languages may have to directly say that God created the world “out of nothing” to make sure this meaning is clear.
- The phrase, “since the creation of the world” means “since the time when God created the world.”
- A similar phrase, “at the beginning of creation” could be translated as “when God created the world at the beginning of time,” or “when the world was first created.”
- To preach the good news to “all creation” means to preach the good news to “all people everywhere on earth.”
- The phrase “Let all creation rejoice” means “Let everything that God created rejoice.”
- Depending on the context, “create” could be translated as “make” or “cause to be” or “make out of nothing.”

- The term “the Creator” could be translated as “the One who created everything” or “God, who made the whole world.”
- Phrases like “your Creator” could be translated as “God, who created you.”

(See also: God, good news, world)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 11:9-10
- 1 Peter 4:17-19
- Colossians 1:15
- Galatians 6:15
- Genesis 1:1
- Genesis 14:19-20

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3335, H4639, H6213, H6385, H7069, G20410, G26020, G26750, G29360, G29370, G29390, G41600, G54800

James References:

James 1:18

crown, crowned

Definition:

A crown is a decorative, circular headpiece worn on the head of rulers such as kings and queens. The term to “crown” means to put a crown on someone’s head; figuratively it means, to “honor.”

- Crowns are usually made of gold or silver, and are embedded with precious gems such as emeralds and rubies.
- A crown was intended to be a symbol of a king’s power and wealth.
- By contrast, the crown made of thorn branches that the Roman soldiers placed on Jesus’ head was meant to mock him and hurt him.
- In ancient times, winners of athletic contests would be awarded a crown made out of olive branches. The apostle Paul mentions this crown in his second letter to Timothy.
- Used figuratively, to “crown” means to honor someone. We honor God by obeying him and praising him to others. This is like putting a crown on him and acknowledging that he is King.
- Paul calls fellow believers his “joy and crown.” In this expression, “crown” is used figuratively to mean that Paul has been greatly blessed and honored by how these believers have remained faithful in serving God.
- When used figuratively, “crown” could be translated as “prize” or “honor” or “reward.”
- The figurative use of to “crown” could be translated as to “honor” or to “decorate.”
- If a person is “crowned” this could be translated as “a crown was put on his head.”
- The expression, “he was crowned with glory and honor” could be translated as “glory and honor were bestowed on him” or “he was given glory and honor” or “he was endowed with glory and honor.”

(See also: glory, king, olive)

Bible References:

- John 19:3
- Lamentations 5:16
- Matthew 27:29
- Philippians 4:1
- Psalms 21:3
- Revelation 3:11

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3803, H3804, H5145, H5849, H5850, H6936, G12380, G47350, G47370

James References:

James 1:12

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

James References:

James 5:4

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

James References:

James 1:22 James 1:26

defile, defiled, desecrate

Definition:

The terms “defile” and “be defiled” refer to becoming polluted or dirty. Something can be defiled in a physical, moral, or ritual sense.

- God warned the Israelites to not defile themselves by eating or touching things that he had declared as “unclean” and “unholy.”
- Certain things such as dead bodies and contagious diseases were declared by God to be unclean and would defile a person if they touched them.
- God commanded the Israelites to avoid sexual sins. These would defile them and make them unacceptable to God.
- There were also certain kinds of bodily processes that defiled a person temporarily until he could become ritually pure again.
- In the New Testament, Jesus taught that sinful thoughts and actions are what truly defile a person.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “defile” can also be translated as “cause to be unclean” or “cause to be unrighteous” or “cause to be ritually unacceptable.”
- To “be defiled” could be translated as “become unclean” or “be caused to be morally unacceptable (to God)” or “become ritually unacceptable.”

(See also: profane, clean)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 23:8
- Exodus 20:24-26
- Genesis 34:27
- Genesis 49:4
- Isaiah 43:27-28
- Leviticus 11:43-45
- Mark 7:14-16
- Matthew 15:10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1351, H1352, H1602, H2490, H2491, H2610, H2930, H2931, G28390, G28400, G33920, G34350

James References:

James 3:6

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

James References:

James 1:1

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

James References:

James 3:15 James 5:5 James 5:7 James 5:12 James 5:17 James 5:18

elder

Definition:

The term "elder" refers to people (in the Bible, usually men) who have grown old enough to become mature adults and leaders within a community and to be respected for their wisdom and experience.

- The term "elder" came from the fact that elders were originally older men who, because of their age and experience, had greater wisdom.
- In the Old Testament, the elders helped lead the Israelites in matters of justice and the Law of Moses.
- In the New Testament, Jewish "elders" continued to be leaders in their communities and also were judges for the people.
- In the early Christian churches, Christian "elders" gave spiritual leadership to the local assemblies of believers. Elders in these churches sometimes included young men who were spiritually mature.
- This term could be translated as "respected leaders" or "spiritually mature men leading the church."

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:1-3
- 1 Timothy 3:1-3
- 1 Timothy 4:14
- Acts 5:19-21
- Acts 14:23
- Mark 11:28
- Matthew 21:23-24

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1419, H2205, H7868, G10870, G31870, G42440, G42450, G48500

James References:

James 5:14

endure, endurance

Definition:

The term “endure” means to last a long time or to bear something difficult with patience.

- It also means to stand firm when times of testing come, without giving up.
- The term “endurance” can mean “patience” or “bearing up under a trial” or “persevering when being persecuted.”
- The encouragement to Christians to “endure to the end” is telling them to obey Jesus, even if this causes them to suffer.
- To “endure suffering” can also mean to “experience suffering.”

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate the term “endure” could include “persevere” or “keep believing” or “continue to do what God wants you to do” or “stand firm.”
- In some contexts, to “endure” could be translated as to “experience” or to “go through.”
- With the meaning of lasting for a long time, the term “endure” could also be translated as “last” or “continue.” The phrase “will not endure” could be translated as “will not last” or “will not continue to survive.”
- Ways to translate “endurance” could include “perseverance” or “continuing to believe” or “remaining faithful.”

(See also: persevere)

Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 2:11-13
- James 1:3
- James 1:12
- Luke 21:19
- Matthew 13:21
- Revelation 1:9
- Romans 5:3-5

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0386, H3201, H3557, H5331, H5375, H5975, G04300, G09070, G15260, G20050, G20760, G25940, G33060, G47220, G52780, G52810, G52970, G53420

James References:

James 1:3 James 1:4 James 1:12 James 5:11 James 5:11

envy, covet, jealous, jealousy

Definition:

The terms “envy” and “envious” refer to being jealous of someone because of what that person possesses or because of that person’s admirable qualities or abilities. The term “covet” means to strongly desire to have something.

- Envy is normally a negative feeling of resentment because of another person’s success, good fortune, possessions, or abilities.
- Coveting is a strong desire to have someone else’s property, or even someone else’s spouse.
- In some contexts the terms “jealous” and “jealousy” can mean “envy.”

Translation Suggestions

- When the terms “jealous” and “jealousy” refer to being wrongfully “envious” of someone the terms “envious” or “envy” could be used if the context permits.

(See also: jealous)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
- 1 Peter 2:1
- Exodus 20:17
- Mark 7:20-23
- Proverbs 3:31-32
- Romans 1:29

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0183, H1214, H1215, H2530, H3415, H5869, H7065, H7068, G08660, G19370, G22050, G22060, G37130, G37880, G41230, G41240, G41900, G53540, G53550, G53660

James References:

James 4:2 James 4:5

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

James References:

James 3:12 James 3:12

firstfruit, firstfruits

Definition:

The term “firstfruits” refers to a portion of the first crop of fruits and vegetables that was reaped during each harvest season.

- The Israelites offered these first fruits to God as a sacrificial offering.
- This term is also used figuratively in the Bible to refer to a firstborn son as being the first fruits of the family. That is, because he was the first son to be born into that family, he was the one who carried on the family name and honor.
- Because Jesus rose from the dead, he is called the “firstfruits” of all believers in him, believers who have died but who will some day come back to life.
- Believers in Jesus are also called the “firstfruits” of all creation, indicating the special privilege and position of those whom Jesus redeemed and called to be his people.

Translation Suggestions:

- The literal use of this term could be translated as “first portion (of crops)” or “first part of the harvest.”
- If possible, the figurative uses should be translated literally, to allow for different meanings in different contexts. This will also show the correlation between the literal meaning and the figurative uses.

(See also: firstborn)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 31:4-5
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13
- Exodus 23:16-17
- James 1:18
- Jeremiah 2:3
- Psalms 105:36

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1061, H6529, H7225, G05360

James References:

James 1:18

footstool

Definition:

The term “footstool” refers to an object which a person puts his feet on, usually to rest them while sitting. This term also has figurative meanings of submission and lower status.

- People in Bible times considered feet to be the least honorable parts of the body. So a “footstool” was of even lower honor because feet were rested on it.
- When God says “I will make my enemies a footstool for my feet” he is declaring power, control, and victory over the people who rebel against him. They will be humbled and conquered to the point of submitting to God’s will.
- To “worship at God’s footstool” means to bow down in worship before him as he sits on his throne. This again communicates humility and submission to God.
- David refers to the temple as God’s “footstool.” This could refer to his absolute authority over his people. This could also be picturing God the King on his throne, with his feet resting on his footstool, which represents all that is in submission to him.

Bible References:

- Acts 7:49
- Isaiah 66:1
- Luke 20:43
- Matthew 5:35
- Matthew 22:44
- Psalm 110:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1916, H3534, H7272, G42280, G52860

James References:

James 2:3

fountain, source, spring

Definition:

The terms “fountain” and “spring” usually refer to a large amount of water that flows out naturally from the ground.

- These words are also used figuratively in the Bible to refer to blessings flowing from God or to refer to something that cleanses and purifies.
- In modern times, a fountain is often a manmade object that has water flowing out of it, such as a drinking fountain. Make sure that the translation of this term refers to a natural source of flowing water.
- Compare the translation of this term with how the term “flood” is translated.

(See also: flood)

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 2:17
- Genesis 7:11
- Genesis 8:2
- Genesis 24:13
- Genesis 24:42
- James 3:11

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0953, H1530, H1543, H3222, H4002, H4161, H4456, H4599, H4726, H5033, H5869, H5927, H6524, H6779, H8444, H8666, G02420, G40770

James References:

James 3:11

free, freed, freedom, freeman, freewill, liberty

Definition:

The terms “free” or “freedom” refer to not being in slavery, or any other kind of bondage. Another word for “freedom” is “liberty.”

- The expression to “set someone free” or to “free someone” means to provide a way for someone to no longer be in slavery or captivity.
- In the Bible, these terms are often used figuratively to refer to how a believer in Jesus is no longer under the power of sin.
- Having “liberty” or “freedom” can also refer to no longer being required to obey the Law of Moses, but instead being free to live by the teachings and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “free” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “not bound” or “not enslaved” or “not in slavery” or “not in bondage.”
- The term “freedom” or “liberty” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “the state of being free” or “the condition of not being a slave” or “not being bound.”
- The expression to “set free” could be translated as to “cause to be free” or to “rescue from slavery” or to “release from bondage.”
- A person who has been “set free” has been “released” or “taken out of” bondage or slavery.

(See also: bind, enslave, servant)

Bible References:

- Galatians 4:26
- Galatians 5:1
- Isaiah 61:1
- Leviticus 25:10
- Romans 6:18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1865, H2600, H2666, H2668, H2670, H3318, H4800, H5068, H5069, H5071, H5337, H5352, H5355, H5425, H5674, H5800, H6299, H6362, H7342, H7971, G04250, G05250, G05580, G06290, G06300, G08590, G13440, G14320, G16570, G16580, G16590, G18490, G30890, G39550, G45060, G54830

James References:

James 1:25 James 2:12

fruit, fruitful, unfruitful

Definition:

The term “fruit” refers to the part of a plant that can be eaten. Something that is “fruitful” produces a lot of fruit. Something that is “unfruitful” does not produce fruit.

- In general, the expression “fruit of” refers to anything that comes from or that is produced by something else. For example, the phrase “the fruit of every tree” refers to the fruit that comes from these trees.
- The expression “fruit of the land” refers generally to everything that the land produces for people to eat. This includes not only fruits such as grapes or dates, but also vegetables, nuts, and grains.

Translation Suggestions:

- When the term “fruit” refers to what a specific plant produces, the specific term for the fruit of that plant can be used, otherwise, use a general word for the edible things that plants produce, if possible. In many languages it may be more natural to use the plural “fruits” whenever it refers to more than one fruit.
- When used literally, the term “fruitful” could be translated as “producing much fruit.”
- The expression “fruit of the land” could also be translated as “food that the land produces” or “food crops that are growing in that region.”
- When used literally, the expression “will be more fruitful” could also be translated as “will produce more fruit.”

(See also: descendant, grain, grape, Holy Spirit, vine, womb)

Bible References:

- Genesis 1:11
- Matthew 7:17

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0004, H1061, H1063, H1069, H2233, H2981, H3581, H3759, H3899, H3978, H4022, H5108, H6509, H6529, H7019, H8393, H8570, G10810, G25900, G25920, G25930, G37030, G50520, G53520

James References:

James 3:17 James 3:18 James 5:7 James 5:18

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

James References:

James 2:2 James 5:3

harvest, reap

Definition:

The term "harvest" refers to the gather the ripe fruits, vegetables, seeds, or grains from the plants on which they were growing. The term "reap" means to harvest crops.

- The harvest time normally happens at the end of a growing season.
- The Israelites held a "Festival of Harvest" or "Festival of Ingathering" to celebrate the reaping of the food crops. God commanded them to offer the first fruits of these crops as a sacrifice to him.
- In biblical times, reapers usually harvested crops by hand, either pulling up the plants or cutting them with a sharp cutting tool.

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate the concept with the word that is commonly used in the language to refer to the harvesting of crops.
- The event of harvesting could be translated as "time of gathering in" or "crop gathering time" or "fruit picking time."
- The verb to "harvest" could be translated as to "gather in" or to "pick up" or to "collect."

(See also: firstfruits, festival, good news)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 9:9-11
- 2 Samuel 21:7-9
- Galatians 6:9-10
- Isaiah 17:11
- James 5:7-8
- Leviticus 19:9
- Matthew 9:38
- Ruth 1:22
- Galatians 6:9-10
- Matthew 6:25-26
- Matthew 13:30
- Matthew 13:36-39
- Matthew 25:24

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2758, H4395, H4672 H7105, H7114, H7938, G02700, G23250, G23260, G23270

James References:

James 5:4 James 5:4

heir

Definition:

An "heir" is a person who legally receives property or money that belonged to a person who has died.

- In Bible times, the main heir was the firstborn son, who received most of the property and money of his father.
- The Bible also uses "heir" in a figurative sense to refer to person who as a Christian receives spiritual benefits from God, his spiritual father.
- As God's children, Christians are said to be "joint heirs" with Jesus Christ. This could also be translated as "co-heirs" or "fellow heirs" or "heirs together with."
- The term "heir" could be translated as "person receiving benefits" or whatever expression is used in the language to communicate the meaning of someone who receives property and other things when a parent or other relative dies.

(See also: firstborn, inherit)

Bible References:

- Galatians 4:1-2
- Galatians 4:7
- Genesis 15:1
- Genesis 21:10-11
- Luke 20:14
- Mark 12:7
- Matthew 21:38-39

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1121, H3423, G28160, G28180, G28200, G47890

James References:

James 2:5

horse, warhorse, horseback, stallion, steed, mare

Definition:

A horse is a large, four-legged animal that in Bible times was mostly used for war and for transporting people. A stallion is a male horse and a mare is a female horse. "Steed" is a poetic word referring to a horse that is powerful or fast.

- Some horses were used to pull carts or chariots, while others were used to carry individual riders.
- In the Bible, horses were considered to be valuable possessions and a measure of wealth, mainly because of their use in war. For example, part of King Solomon's great wealth was the thousands of horses and chariots that he had.
- Animals that are similar to the horse are the donkey and the mule.
- Horses often wear a bit and bridle on their heads so they can be guided.

(See also: chariot, donkey, Solomon)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:4
- 2 Kings 2:11
- Exodus 14:23-25
- Ezekiel 23:5-7
- Zechariah 6:8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0047, H5483, H5484, H6571, H7409, G24620

James References:

James 3:3

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

James References:

James 1:2 James 4:9

judge

Definition:

A judge is a person who decides what is right or wrong when there are disputes between people, usually in matters that pertain to the law.

- In the Bible, God is often referred to as a judge because he is the one perfect judge who makes the final decisions about what is right or wrong.
- After the people of Israel entered the land of Canaan and before they had kings to rule them, God appointed leaders called "judges" to lead them in times of trouble. Often these judges were military leaders who rescued the Israelites by defeating their enemies.
- The term "judge" could also be called "decision-maker" or "leader" or "deliverer" or "governor," depending on the context.

(See also: governor, judge, law)

Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 4:8
- Acts 7:27
- Luke 11:19
- Luke 12:14
- Luke 18:1-2
- Matthew 5:25
- Ruth 1:1

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0148, H0430, H1777, H1778, H1779, H1781, H1782, H6414, H6416, H6419, H8199, G03500, G12520, G13480, G29190, G29220, G29230

James References:

James 2:4 James 4:11 James 4:12 James 5:9

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

James References:

James 1:3 James 1:19 James 2:20 James 3:1
James 4:4 James 4:14 James 4:17 James 5:20

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

James References:

James 1:20 James 5:4

law, principle

Definition:

A “law” is a legal rule that is usually written down and enforced by someone in authority. A “principle” is a guideline for decision-making and behavior, and is usually not written down or enforced. However, sometimes the term “law” is used to mean a “principle.”

- A “law” is similar to a “decree,” but the term “law” is generally used to refer to something written rather than spoken.
- Both “law” and “principle” can refer to a general rule or belief that guides a person’s behavior.
- This meaning of “law” is different from its meaning in the term “law of Moses,” where it refers to commands and instructions that God gave the Israelites.
- When a general law is being referred to, “law” could be translated as “principle” or “general rule.”

(See also: law of Moses, decree, command, declare)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 4:2
- Esther 3:8-9
- Exodus 12:12-14
- Genesis 26:5
- John 18:31
- Romans 7:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1285, H1881, H1882, H2706, H2708, H2710, H4687, H4941, H6310, H7560, H8451, G17850, G35480, G35510, G47470

James References:

James 1:25 James 2:8 James 2:12

lowly, lowliness

Definition:

The terms “lowly” and “lowliness” refer to being poor or having low status. Being lowly can also have the meaning of being humble.

- Jesus humbled himself to the lowly position of becoming a human being and serving others.
- His birth was lowly because he was born in a place where animals were kept, not in a palace.
- Having a lowly attitude is the opposite of being proud.
- Ways to translate “lowly” could include “humble” or “of low status” or “unimportant.”
- The word “lowliness” could also be translated as “humility” or “little importance.”

(See also: humble, proud)

Bible References:

- Acts 20:19
- Ezekiel 17:14
- Luke 1:48-49
- Romans 12:16

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6041, H6819, H8217, G50110, G50120, G50140

James References:

James 1:9

lust, lustful, passion, desire

Definition:

Lust is a very strong desire, usually in the context of wanting something sinful or immoral. To lust is to have lust.

- In the Bible, "lust" usually referred to sexual desire for someone other than one's own spouse.
- Sometimes this term was used in a figurative sense to refer to worshiping idols.
- Depending on the context, "lust" could be translated as "wrong desire" or "strong desire" or "wrongful sexual desire" or "strong immoral desire" or to "strongly desire to sin."
- The phrase to "lust after" could be translated as to "wrongly desire" or to "think immorally about" or to "immorally desire."

(See also: adultery, false god)

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:16
- 2 Timothy 2:22
- Galatians 5:16
- Galatians 5:19-21
- Genesis 39:7-9
- Matthew 5:28

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0183, H0185, H0310, H1730, H2181, H2183, H2530, H5178, H5375, H5689, H5691, H5869, H7843, G07660, G19370, G19390, G22370, G37150, G38060

James References:

James 1:14 James 1:15 James 4:1 James 4:2

meek, meekness

Definition:

The term "meek" describes a person who is gentle, submissive, and willing to suffer injustice. Meekness is the ability to be gentle even when harshness or force might seem appropriate.

- Meekness is often associated with humility.
- This term could also be translated as "gentle" or "mild-mannered" or "sweet-tempered."
- The term "meekness" could be translated as "gentleness" or "humility."

(See also: humble)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 3:15-17
- 2 Corinthians 10:1-2
- 2 Timothy 2:25
- Matthew 5:5
- Matthew 11:29
- Psalms 37:11

Word Data:

- Strong's: H6035, H6037, G42350, G42360, G42390, G42400

James References:

James 1:10 James 3:13

member, body part

Definition:

The term “member” refers to one part of a complex body or group.

- The New Testament describes Christians as “members” of the body of Christ. Believers in Christ belong to a group that is made up of many members.
- Jesus Christ is the “head” of the body and individual believers function as the members of the body. The Holy Spirit gives each member of the body a special role to help the entire body to function well.
- Individuals who participate in groups such as the Jewish Council and the Pharisees are also called “members” of these groups.

(See also: body, Pharisee, council)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 6:15
- 1 Corinthians 12:14-17
- Numbers 16:2
- Romans 12:5

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1004, H1121, H3338, H5315, H8212, G10100, G31960, G36090

James References:

James 3:5 James 3:6 James 4:1

messenger

Definition:

The term “messenger” refers to someone who is given a message to tell others.

- In ancient times, a messenger would be sent from the battlefield to tell people back in the city what was happening.
- An angel is a special kind of messenger whom God sends to give people messages. Some translations translate “angel” as “messenger.”
- John the Baptist was called a messenger who came before Jesus to announce the Messiah’s coming and to prepare people to receive him.
- Jesus’ apostles were his messengers to go share with other people the good news about the kingdom of God.

(See also: angel, apostle, John (the Baptist))

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 19:1-3
- 1 Samuel 6:21
- 2 Kings 1:1-2
- Luke 7:27
- Matthew 11:10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1319, H4397, H4398, H5046, H5894, H6735, H6737, H7323, H7971, G00320, G06520

James References:

James 2:25

mind, mindful, remind, reminder, likeminded

Definition:

The term “mind” refers to the part of a person that thinks and makes decisions.

- The mind of each person is the total of his or her thoughts and reasoning.
- To “have the mind of Christ” means to be thinking and acting as Jesus Christ would think and act. It means being obedient to God the Father, obeying the teachings of Christ, being enabled to do this through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- To “change his mind” means someone made a different decision or had a different opinion than he had previously.

Translation Suggestions

- The term “mind” could also be translated as “thoughts” or “reasoning” or “thinking” or “understanding.”
- The expression “keep in mind” could be translated as “remember” or “pay attention to this” or “be sure to know this.”
- The expression “heart, soul, and mind” could also be translated as “what you feel, what you believe, and what you think about.”
- The expression “call to mind” could be translated as “remember” or “think about.”
- The expression “changed his mind and went” could also be translated as “decided differently and went” or “decided to go after all” or “changed his opinion and went.”
- The expression “double-minded” could also be translated as “doubting” or “unable to decide” or “with conflicting thoughts.”

(See also: believe, heart, soul)

Bible References:

- Luke 10:27
- Mark 6:51-52
- Matthew 21:29
- Matthew 22:37
- James 4:8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3629, H3820, H3824, H5162, H7725, G12710, G13740, G33280, G35250, G35400, G35630, G49930, G55900

James References:

James 1:8 James 4:8

mourn, mourner, weeping

Definition:

The terms “mourn” and “mourning” refer to expressing deep grief, usually in response to the death of someone.

- In many cultures, mourning includes specific outward behaviors that show this sadness and grief.
- The Israelites and other people groups in ancient times expressed mourning through loud wailing and lamenting. They also wore rough clothing made of sackcloth and put ashes on themselves.
- Hired mourners, usually women, would loudly weep and wail from the time of death until well after the body was put in the tomb.
- The typical period of mourning was seven days, but could last as long as thirty days (as for Moses and Aaron) or seventy days (as for Jacob).
- The Bible also uses the term figuratively to talk about “mourning” because of sin. This refers to feeling deeply grieved because sin hurts God and people.

(See also: sackcloth, sin)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 15:34-35
- 2 Samuel 1:11
- Genesis 23:2
- Luke 7:31-32
- Matthew 11:17

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0056, H0057, H0060, H0205, H0578, H0584, H0585, H1058, H1065, H1068, H1671, H1897, H1899, H4553, H4798, H5092, H5098, H5110, H5594, H6937, H6941, H8386, G23540, G28750, G36020, G39960, G39970

James References:

James 4:9 James 4:9

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

James References:

James 2:8 James 4:12

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

James References:

James 5:12 James 5:12

oil

Definition:

Oil is a thick, clear liquid that can be taken from certain plants. In Bible times, oil usually came from olives.

- Olive oil was used for cooking, anointing, sacrifice, lamps, and medicine.
- In ancient times, olive oil was highly prized, and the possession of oil was considered a measurement of wealth.
- Make sure the translation of this term refers to the kind of oil that can be used in cooking, not motor oil. Some languages have different words for these different kinds of oil.

(See also: olive, sacrifice)

Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 1:21
- Exodus 29:2
- Leviticus 5:11
- Leviticus 8:1-3
- Mark 6:12-13
- Matthew 25:7-9

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2091, H3323, H4887, H6671, H7246, H8081, G16370, G34640

James References:

James 5:14

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

James References:

James 3:12

partial, partiality

Definition:

The terms “be partial” and “show partiality” refer to making a choice to treat certain people as more important than other people.

- This is similar to showing favoritism, which means to treat some people better than others.
- Usually partiality or favoritism is shown to people because they are more rich or more popular than other people.
- The Bible instructs his people to not show partiality or favoritism to people who are rich or of high status.
- In his letter to the Romans, Paul teaches that God judges people fairly and with no partiality.
- The book of James teaches that it is wrong to give someone a better seat or better treatment because they are rich.

(See also: favor)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 1:17
- Malachi 2:9
- Mark 12:13-15
- Matthew 22:16
- Romans 2:10-12

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5234, H6440, G09910, G15190, G29830, G42990, G43830

James References:

James 2:1

patient, patience, impatient

Definition:

The terms “patient” and “patience” refer to persevering through difficult circumstances. Often patience involves waiting.

- When people are patient with someone, it means they are loving that person and forgiving whatever faults that person has.
- The Bible teaches God’s people to be patient when facing difficulties and to be patient with each other.
- Because of his mercy, God is patient with people, even though they are sinners who deserve to be punished.

(See also: endure, forgive, persevere)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 3:20
- 2 Peter 3:8-9
- Hebrews 6:11-12
- Matthew 18:28-29
- Psalms 37:7
- Revelation 2:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0750, H0753, H2342, H3811, H6960, H7114, G04200, G04630, G19330, G31140, G31150, G31160, G52780, G52810

James References:

James 5:7 James 5:7 James 5:8 James 5:10

peace, peaceful, peacemaker

Definition:

The term “peace” refers to a state of being or a feeling of having no conflict, anxiety, or fearfulness. A person who is “peaceful” feels calm and assured of being safe and secure.

- In the Old Testament, the term “peace” often means a general sense of a person’s welfare, wellness, or wholeness.
- “Peace” can also refer to a time when people groups or countries are not at war with each other. These people are said to have “peaceful relations.”
- To “make peace” with a person or a group of people means to take actions to cause fighting to stop.
- A “peacemaker” is someone who does and says things to influence people to live at peace with each other.
- To be “at peace” with other people means being in a state of not fighting against those people.
- A good or right relationship between God and people happens when God saves people from their sin. This is called having “peace with God.”
- The greeting “grace and peace” was used by the apostles in their letters to their fellow believers as a blessing.
- The term “peace” can also refer to being in a good relationship with other people or with God.

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3
- Acts 7:26
- Colossians 1:18-20
- Colossians 3:15
- Galatians 5:23
- Luke 7:50
- Luke 12:51
- Mark 4:39
- Matthew 5:9
- Matthew 10:13

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **15:6** God had commanded the Israelites not to make a **peace** treaty with any of the people groups in Canaan.
- **15:12** Then God gave Israel **peace** along all its borders.
- **16:3** Then God provided a deliverer who rescued them from their enemies and brought **peace** to the land.
- **21:13** He (Messiah) would die to receive the punishment for other people’s sin. His punishment would bring **peace** between God and people.
- **48:14** David was the king of Israel, but Jesus is the king of the entire universe! He will come again and rule his kingdom with justice and **peace**, forever.
- **50:17** Jesus will rule his kingdom with **peace** and justice, and he will be with his people forever.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5117, H7961, H7962, H7965, H7999, H8001, H8002, H8003, H8252, G02690, G15140, G15150, G15160, G15170, G15180, G22720

James References:

James 2:16 James 3:17 James 3:18 James 3:18

perfect, complete

Definition:

In the New Testament, the term “perfect” means to be mature in our Christian life. To perfect something means to work at it until it is excellent and without flaws. Old Testament sacrifices needed to be “perfect” or “complete,” that is, without blemish.

- Being perfect and mature means that a Christian is obedient, not sinless.
- The term “perfect” also has the meaning of being “complete” or “whole.”
- The New Testament book of James states that persevering through trials will produce completeness and maturity in the believer.
- When Christians study the Bible and obey it, they will become more spiritually perfect and mature because they will be more like Christ in their character.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated as “without flaw” or “without error” or “flawless” or “without fault” or “not having any faults.”

(See also: blemish)

Bible References:

- Hebrews 12:2
- James 3:2
- Matthew 5:46-48
- Psalms 19:7-8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3632, H3634, H4359, H8003, H8503, H8537, H8549, H8552, G01990, G26750, G26760, G36470, G50460, G50470, G50480, G50500

James References:

James 1:4 James 1:4 James 1:17 James 1:25 James 2:22 James 3:2

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

James References:

James 2:14 James 2:16 James 4:13

prostitute, harlot, whored

Definition:

The terms “prostitute” and “harlot” both refer to a person who performs sexual acts for money or for religious rites. Prostitutes or harlots were usually female, but some were male.

- In the Bible, the word “prostitute” is sometimes used figuratively to refer to a person who worships false gods or who practices witchcraft.
- The expression “play the harlot” means to act like a harlot by being sexually immoral. This expression is also used in the Bible to refer to a person who worships idols.
- To “prostitute oneself” to something means to be sexually immoral or when used figuratively, to be unfaithful to God by worshiping false gods.
- In ancient times, some pagan temples used male and female prostitutes as part of their rituals.
- This term could be translated by the word or phrase that is used in the project language to refer to a prostitute. Some languages may have a euphemistic term that is used for this. (See: euphemism)

(See also: adultery, false god, sexual immorality, false god)

Bible References:

- Genesis 34:31
- Genesis 38:21
- Luke 15:30
- Matthew 21:31

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2154, H2181, H2183, H2185, H6945, H6948, H8457, G42040

James References:

James 2:25

proud, pride, prideful, boast, boastful, boasting

Definition:

The terms “proud” and “pride,” in this sense, refer to a person thinking too highly of themself, and especially, thinking that he is better than other people. The term “boast,” when used with this sense, means to talk proudly about something or someone. Often it means to brag about oneself.

- A proud person often does not admit his own faults. He is not humble.
- Pride can lead to disobeying God in other ways.
- The term “prideful” is always negative, with the meaning of being “arrogant” or “conceited” or “self-important.”
- The term “boastful” is always negative, and refers to a person who brags about themself or what they possess or have done or can do.
- Someone who is “boastful” frequently talks about himself in a proud way.
- God rebuked the Israelites for “boasting in” their idols. They arrogantly worshiped false gods instead of the true God.
- The Bible also talks about people boasting in such things as their wealth, their strength, their fruitful fields, and their laws. This means that they were proud about these things and did not acknowledge that God is the one who provided these things.

Translation Suggestions:

- The noun “pride” could be translated as “arrogance” or “conceit” or “self-importance.”
- Other ways to translate “boast” could include “brag” or “talk proudly” or “be proud.”
- The term “boastful” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “full of prideful talk” or “prideful” or “talking proudly about oneself.”

(See also: arrogant, humble, proud positive sense)

Bible References:

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **4:2** They were very **proud**, and they did not care about what God said.
- **34:10** Then Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, God heard the tax collector’s prayer and declared him to be righteous. But he did not like the prayer of the religious leader. God will humble everyone who is **proud**, and he will lift up whoever humbles himself.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1343, H1344, H1346, H1347, H1364, H1431, H2087, H2102, H3093, H4994, G51870, G52430, G52440, G53080, G53090, G54260, G54500

James References:

James 4:6

receive, welcome, taken up, acceptance

Definition:

The term “receive” generally means to get or accept something that is given, offered, or presented.

- To “receive” can also mean to suffer or experience something, as in “he received punishment for what he did.”
- There is also a special sense in which we can “receive” a person. For example, to “receive” guests or visitors means to welcome them and treat them with honor in order to build a relationship with them.
- To “receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” means we are given the Holy Spirit and welcome him to work in and through our lives.
- To “receive Jesus” means to accept God’s offer of salvation through Jesus Christ.
- When a blind person “receives his sight” means that God has healed him and enabled him to see.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “receive” could be translated as “accept” or “welcome” or “experience” or “be given.”
- The expression “you will receive power” could be translated as “you will be given power” or “God will give you power” or “power will be given to you (by God)” or “God will cause the Holy Spirit to work powerfully in you.”
- The phrase “received his sight” could be translated as “was able to see” or “became able to see again” or “was healed by God so that he was able to see.”

(See also: Holy Spirit, Jesus, lord, save)

Bible References:

- 1 John 5:9
- 1 Thessalonians 1:6
- 1 Thessalonians 4:1
- Acts 8:15
- Jeremiah 32:33
- Luke 9:5

- Malachi 3:10-12
- Psalms 49:14-15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **21:13** The prophets also said that the Messiah would be perfect, having no sin. He would die to **receive** the punishment for other people's sin. His punishment would bring peace between God and people.
- **45:5** As Stephen was dying, he cried out, "Jesus, **receive** my spirit."
- **49:6** He (Jesus) taught that some people will receive him and be saved, but others will not.
- **49:10** When Jesus died on the cross, he **received** your punishment.
- **49:13** God will save everyone who believes in Jesus and **receives** him as their Master.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3557, H3947, H6901, H6902, H8254, G03080, G03240, G03530, G03540, G05680, G05880, G06180, G11830, G12090, G15230, G16530, G19260, G28650, G29830, G30280, G33350, G33360, G35490, G38580, G38800, G43270, G43550, G43560, G46870, G52640, G55620

James References:

James 1:7 James 1:12 James 1:21 James 2:25 James 3:1 James 4:3 James 5:7

royal, royalty, king's, queen's

Definition:

The term "royal" describes people and things associated with a king or queen.

- Examples of things that could be called "royal" include a king's (or queen's) position, clothing, palace, throne, and crown.
- A king or queen usually lived in a royal palace.
- A king wore special clothing, sometimes called "royal robes." Often a king's robes were purple, this color could only be produced by a rare and expensive type of dye.
- In the New Testament, believers in Jesus were called a "royal priesthood." Other ways to translate this could include "priests who serve God the King" or "called to be priests for God the King."
- The term "royal" could also be translated as "kingly" or "belonging to a king."

(See also: king. palace, priest, purple, queen, robe)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 10:13
- 2 Chronicles 18:28-30
- Amos 7:13
- Genesis 49:19-21

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0643, H1921, H1935, H4410, H4428, H4430, H4437, H4438, H4467, H4468, H7985, G09330, G09340, G09370

James References:

James 2:8

servant, serve, maidservant, young man, young women

Definition:

A "servant" refers to a person who works for (or obeys) another person, either by choice or by force. A servant was under his master's direction. In the Bible, "servant" and "slave" are mostly interchangeable terms. The term "serve" generally means to do work for someone, and the concept can be applied in a wide variety of contexts.

- In the Bible the words "young man" or "young woman" often mean "servant" or "slave." This meaning will be discerned from context. One indicator of this situation is if the possessive is used, eg. "her young women" which could be translated as "her servants" or "her slaves."

Translation Suggestions

- The term "serve" can also be translated as "minister to" or "work for" or "take care of" or "obey," depending on the context.
- To "serve God" can be translated as to "worship and obey God" or to "do the work that God has commanded."
- In the Old Testament, God's prophets and other people who worshiped God were often called his "servants."
- In the New Testament, people who obeyed God through faith in Christ were often called his "servants."
- To "serve tables" means to bring food to people who are sitting at tables, or more generally, to "distribute food."
- In the context of a person serving guests, this term means "care for" or "serve food to" or "provide food for." When Jesus told the disciples to "serve" the fish to the people, this could be translated as, "distribute" or "hand out" or "give."
- People who teach others about God are said to serve both God and the ones they are teaching.
- The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians about how they used to "serve" the old covenant. This refers to obeying the laws of Moses. Now they "serve" the new covenant. That is, because of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, believers in Jesus are enabled by the Holy Spirit to please God and live holy lives.
- Paul talks about their actions in terms of their "service" to either the old or new covenant. This could be translated as "serving" or "obeying" or "devotion to."
- Often, when a person referred to himself as "your servant" he was showing respect to the person addressed. That person may have had higher social status, or the speaker may be showing humility. It did not mean that the person speaking was an actual servant.

(See also: enslave, works, obey, house, lord)

Bible References:

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **6:1** When Abraham was very old and his son, Isaac, had grown to be a man, Abraham sent one of his **servants** back to the land where his relatives lived to find a wife for his son, Isaac.
- **19:10** Then Elijah prayed, "O Yahweh, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, show us today that you are the God of Israel and that I am your **servant**."
- **29:3** "Since the **servant** could not pay the debt, the king said, 'Sell this man and his family as **slaves** to make payment on his debt.'"
- **35:6** "All my father's **servants** have plenty to eat, and yet here I am starving."
- **47:4** The **slave** girl kept yelling as they walked, "These men are servants of the Most High God."
- **50:4** Jesus also said, "A **servant** is not greater than his master."

Word Data:

- Strong's for Servant: H0519, H5288, H5647, H5649, H5650, H5657, H7916, H8198, H8334, G12490, G14010, G14020, G23240, G34070, G34110, G36100, G38160, G49830, G52570

Strong's for Serve: H3547, H4929, H4931, H5647, H5656, H5673, H5975, H6213, H6399, H6402, H6440, H6633, H6635, H7272, H8104, H8120, H8199, H8278, H8334, G12470, G12480, G13980, G14020, G14380, G19830, G20640, G22120, G23230, G29990, G30000, G30090, G43370, G43420, G47540, G50870, G52560

James References:

James 1:1

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

James References:

James 5:3

slaughter, slaughtered

Definition:

The term “slaughter” refers to killing a large number of animals or people, or to killing in a violent way. It can also refer to killing an animal for the purpose of eating it. The act of slaughtering is also called “slaughter.”

- When Abraham received three visitors at his tent in the desert, he ordered his servants to slaughter and cook a calf for his guests.
- The prophet Ezekiel prophesied that God would send his angel to slaughter all those who would not follow His word.
- 1 Samuel records a great slaughter in which 30,000 Israelites were killed by their enemies because of disobedience to God.
- “Weapons of slaughter” could be translated as “weapons for killing.”
- The expression “the slaughter was very great” could be translated as “a large number were killed” or “the number of deaths was very great” or “a terribly high number of people died.”
- Other ways to translate “slaughter” could include “kill” or “slay” or “killing.”

(See also: angel, cow, disobey, Ezekiel, servant, slay)

Bible References:

- Ezekiel 21:10-11
- Hebrews 7:1
- Isaiah 34:2
- Jeremiah 25:34

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2026, H2027, H2028, H2076, H2491, H2873, H2874, H2878, H4046, H4293, H4347, H4660, H5221, H6993, H7524, H7819, H7821, G28710, G49670, G49690

James References:

James 5:5

sow, sower, plant, planted, replanted, transplanted

Definition:

To “sow” means to put seeds on top of or in the ground in order to grow plants. A “sower” is a person who sows or plants seeds. A “plant” is generally something that grows and is attached to the ground.

- One method of sowing or planting seeds during biblical times was to take handfuls of seeds and scatter them on the ground.
- Farmers would often plow the ground on which they had sown seeds after they had sown the seeds. The reason farmers would plow the ground after they had sown the seed is so that the seed would be covered with soil.
- Sometimes farmers may have plowed the field that they sowed seeds in both before and after sowing seeds.

Translations Suggestions

- The term to “sow” could also be translated as to “plant.” Make sure the word or phrase you use to translate this term refers to, or can include, planting seeds by scattering them because this is the method of sowing that Jesus was referring to in his parable in Matthew 13:3-23, Mark 4:2-20, and Luke 8:4-8 where he describes a sower who sowed seeds.
- Other ways to translate “sower” could include “planter” or “farmer” or “person who plants seeds.”
- In English, “sow” is only used for planting seeds, but the English word “plant” can be used for planting seeds as well as larger things, such as trees. Other languages may also use different words, depending on what is being planted.

(See also: harvest)

Bible References:

- Luke 8:5
- Matthew 6:25-26
- Matthew 13:4

- Matthew 13:19
- Matthew 25:24

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2221, H2232, H2233, H2236, H4218, H4302, H5193, H7971, H8362, G46870, G47030, G54520

James References:

James 3:18

stumble, reeling

Definition:

The term "stumble" means "almost fall" when walking or running. Usually it involves tripping over something.

- Figuratively, to "stumble" can mean to "sin" or to "falter" in believing.
- This term can also refer to faltering or showing weakness when fighting a battle or when being persecuted or punished.

Translation Suggestions

- In contexts where the term "stumble" means to physically trip over something, it should be translated with a term that means "almost fall" or "trip over."
- This literal meaning could also be used in a figurative context, if it communicates the correct meaning in that context.
- For figurative uses where the literal meaning would not make sense in the project language, "stumble" could be translated as "sin" or "falter" or "stop believing" or "become weak," depending on the context.
- Another way to translate this term could be, "stumble by sinning" or "stumble by not believing."
- The phrase "made to stumble" could be translated as "caused to become weak" or "caused to falter."

(See also: believe, persecute, sin, stumbling block)

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 2:8
- Hosea 4:5
- Isaiah 31:3
- Matthew 11:4-6
- Matthew 18:8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1762, H3782, H4383, H5062, H5063, H5307, H6328, H6761, H8058, G06790, G43480, G43500, G44170, G46240, G46250

James References:

James 2:10 James 3:2 James 3:2

submit, submitted, submitting, submission, in submission

Definition:

To “submit” usually means to voluntarily place oneself under the authority of a person or government.

- The Bible tells believers in Jesus to submit to God and other authorities in their lives.
- The instruction to “submit to one another” means to humbly accept correction and to focus on the needs of others rather than on our own needs.
- To “live in submission to” means to put oneself under the authority of something or someone.

Translation Suggestions:

- The command “submit to” could be translated as “put yourself under the authority of” or “follow the leadership of” or “humbly honor and respect.”
- The term “submission” could be translated as “obedience” or “the following of authority.”
- The phrase “live in submission to” could be translated as “be obedient to” or “put oneself under the authority of.”
- The phrase “be in submission” could be translated as “humbly accept authority.”

(See also: subject-submission)

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong’s: G52260, G52920, G52930

James References:

James 4:7

suffer, suffering

Definition:

The terms “suffer” and “suffering” refer to experiencing something very unpleasant, such as illness, pain, or other hardships.

- When people are persecuted or when they are sick, they suffer.
- Sometimes people suffer because of wrong things they have done; other times they suffer because of sin and disease in the world.
- Suffering can be physical, such as feeling pain or sickness. It can also be emotional, such as feeling fear, sadness, or loneliness.
- The phrase “suffer me” means “bear with me” or “hear me out” or “listen patiently.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “suffer” can be translated as “feel pain” or “endure difficulty” or “experience hardships” or “go through difficult and painful experiences.”
- Depending on the context, “suffering” could be translated as “extremely difficult circumstances” or “severe hardships” or “experiencing hardship” or “time of painful experiences.”
- The phrase “suffer thirst” could be translated as “experience thirst” or “suffer with thirst.”
- To “suffer violence” could also be translated as “undergo violence” or “be harmed by violent acts.”

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16
- 2 Thessalonians 1:3-5
- 2 Timothy 1:8
- Acts 7:11-13
- Isaiah 53:11
- Jeremiah 6:6-8
- Matthew 16:21
- Psalms 22:24
- Revelation 1:9
- Romans 5:3-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **9:13** God said, “I have seen the **suffering** of my people.”
- **38:12** Jesus prayed three times, “My Father, if it is possible, please let me not have to drink this cup of **suffering**.”
- **42:3** He (Jesus) reminded them that the prophets said the Messiah would **suffer** and be killed, but would rise again on the third day.
- **42:7** He (Jesus) said, “It was written long ago that the Messiah would **suffer**, die, and rise from the dead on the third day.”
- **44:5** “Although you did not understand what you were doing, God used your actions to fulfill the prophecies that the Messiah would **suffer** and die.”
- **46:4** God said, “I have chosen him (Saul) to declare my name to the unsaved. I will show him how much he must **suffer** for my sake.”
- **50:17** He (Jesus) will wipe away every tear and there will be no more **suffering**, sadness, crying, evil, pain, or death.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0943, H1741, H1934, H4531, H5142, H5375, H5999, H6031, H6040, H6041, H6064, H6090, H6770, H6869, H6887, H7661, G00910, G09410, G09710, G22100, G23460, G23470, G25520, G25530, G25610, G38040, G39580, G43100, G47780, G47770, G48410, G50040

James References:

James 5:13

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

James References:

James 3:1

tongue, language

Definition:

The term “tongue” refers to the organ inside a person’s mouth that is used to speak. The term is often used figuratively to mean “language” or “speaking.” There also several other figurative meanings as well.

- In the Bible, the most common figurative meaning for this term is “language” or “speech.”
- Sometimes “tongue” may refer to a human language spoken by a certain people group.
- Other times it refers to a supernatural language that the Holy Spirit gives believers in Christ as one of the “gifts of the Spirit.”
- In the book of Acts, the expression “tongues” of fire refers to “flames” of fire, presumably shaped like tongues.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, the term “tongue” can be translated as “language” or “supernatural language.” If it is not clear which one it is referring to, it is better to translate it as “language.”
- When referring to fire, this term could be translated as “flames.”
- The expression “my tongue rejoices” could be translated as “I rejoice and praise God” or “I am joyfully praising God.”
- The phrase, “tongue that lies” could be translated as “person who tell lies” or “people who lie.”
- Phrases such as “with their tongues” could be translated as “with what they say” or “by their words.”

(See also: gift, Holy Spirit, joy, praise, rejoice, spirit)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 12:10
- 1 John 3:18
- 2 Samuel 23:2
- Acts 2:26
- Ezekiel 36:3
- Philippians 2:11

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3956, G11000, G12580, G20840

James References:

James 1:26 James 3:5 James 3:6 James 3:6 James 3:8

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

James References:

James 2:19

trial, proving

Definition:

The term “trial” refers to a situation in which something or someone is “tried” or tested.

- A trial can be a judicial hearing in which evidence is given to prove whether a person is innocent or guilty of wrongdoing.
- The term “trial” can also refer to difficult circumstances that a person goes through as God tests their faith. Another word for this is “a testing” or “a temptation” is one particular type of trial.
- Many people in the Bible were tested to see if they would continue to believe and obey God. They went through trials which included being beaten, imprisoned, or even killed because of their faith.

(See also: tempt, test, innocent, guilt)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 4:34
- Ezekiel 21:12-13
- Lamentations 3:58-61
- Proverbs 25:7-8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0974, H4531, H4941, H7378, G01780, G13830, G29190, G39860

James References:

James 1:2 James 1:12

tribe, tribal, tribesmen

Definition:

A tribe is a group of people who are descended from a common ancestor.

- People from the same tribe usually also share a common language and culture.
- In the Old Testament, God divided the people of Israel into twelve tribes. Each tribe was descended from a son or grandson of Jacob.
- A tribe is smaller than a nation, but larger than a clan.

(See also: clan, nation, people group, twelve tribes of Israel)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 10:19
- 2 Kings 17:16-18
- Genesis 25:16
- Genesis 49:17
- Luke 2:36-38

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0523, H4294, H7625, H7626, G14290, G54430

James References:

James 1:1

tribulation, distress, distresses, trouble

Definition:

The term "tribulation" refers to a time of hardship, suffering, and distress.

- It is explained in the New Testament that Christians will endure times of persecution and other kinds of tribulation because many people in this world are opposed to Jesus' teachings.
- The term "tribulation" could also be translated as "time of great suffering" or "deep distress" or "severe difficulties."

(See also: earth, teach, wrath)

Bible References:

- Mark 4:17
- Mark 13:19
- Matthew 13:20-21
- Matthew 24:9
- Matthew 24:29
- Romans 2:9

Word Data:

- Strong's: H6869, G23470, G44230

James References:

James 1:27

understand, understanding, thinking

Definition:

The term “understand” means to hear or receive information and know what it means.

- The term “understanding” can refer to “knowledge” or “wisdom” or realizing how to do something.
- To understand someone can also mean to know how that person is feeling.
- While walking on the road to Emmaus, Jesus caused the disciples to understand the meaning of the scriptures about the Messiah.
- Depending on the context, the term “understand” could be translated by “know” or “believe” or “comprehend” or “know what (something) means.”
- Often the term “understanding” can be translated by “knowledge” or “wisdom” or “insight.”

(See also: believe, know, wise)

Bible References:

- Job 34:16-17
- Luke 2:47
- Luke 8:10
- Matthew 13:12
- Matthew 13:14
- Proverbs 3:5

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0995, H0998, H0999, H1847, H2940, H3045, H3820, H3824, H4486, H7200, H7919, H7922, H7924, H8085, H8394, G00500, G01450, G01910, G08010, G10970, G11080, G12710, G19210, G19220, G19870, G19900, G26570, G35390, G35630, G49070, G49080, G49200, G54240, G54280, G54290

James References:

James 3:13

vain, vanity

Definition:

The terms “vain” and “vanity” describe something that is useless or extremely temporary.

- In the Old Testament, idols are sometimes described as “vain” things that are worthless and cannot do anything.
- If something is done “in vain,” it means that there the effort or action did not accomplish what was intended. The phrase “in vain” might be translated in various ways, including: “without result;” “with no result;” “for no reason;” “for no purpose,” or “with no purpose.”
- Depending on the context, the term “vain” could be translated as “empty,” “useless,” “hopeless,” “worthless,” “meaningless,” etc.

(See also: false god, worthy)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 15:1-2
- 1 Samuel 25:21-22
- 2 Peter 2:18
- Isaiah 45:19
- Jeremiah 2:29-31
- Matthew 15:9

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1891, H1892, H2600, H7307, H7385, H7387, H7723, H8193, H8267, H8414, G09450, G15000, G27560, G27580, G27610, G31510, G31520, G31530, G31550

James References:

James 1:26

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

James References:

James 3:12

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

James References:

James 4:1

wrong, wronged, wrongdoer, mistreat, hurt, hurtful

Definition:

To “wrong” someone means to treat that person unjustly and dishonestly.

- The term “mistreat” means to act badly or roughly toward someone, causing physical or emotional harm to that person.
- The term “hurt” is more general and means to “cause someone harm in some way.” It often has the meaning of “physically injure.”
- Depending on the context, these terms could also be translated as “do wrong to” or “treat unjustly” or “cause harm to” or “treat in a harmful way” or “injure.”

Bible References:

- Acts 7:26
- Exodus 22:21
- Genesis 16:5
- Luke 6:28
- Matthew 20:13-14
- Psalms 71:13

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0205, H0816, H2248, H2250, H2255, H2257, H2398, H2554, H2555, H3238, H3637, H4834, H5062, H5142, H5230, H5627, H5753, H5766, H5791, H5792, H5916, H6031, H6087, H6127, H6231, H6485, H6565, H6586, H7451, H7489, H7563, H7665, H7667, H7686, H8133, H8267, H8295, G00910, G00920, G00930, G00950, G02640, G08240, G09830, G09840, G15360, G16260, G16510, G17270, G19080, G25560, G25580, G25590, G26070, G30760, G30770, G37620, G41220, G51950, G51960

James References:

James 4:3